

MÜRGELMASCHINE

ALLES MÜRGEL, ODER WAS?



From left to right: Eerik Aunin, Erik Salum (guest vocalist), Indrek Koppel, Oliver Pulges, Martin Voltri



Our first press photo.

PERHAPS IT WAS MÜRGELMASCHINE'S PRESS RELEASE PRIOR TO OUR FIRST EVER GIG IN 2005 CLAIMING US TO BE AN "INDIE-KRAUTROCK SYNTH-POP-ELECTRO BAND FORMED IN 1988 FROM DÜSSELDORF, GERMANY" that got people so interested in us even before we had actually released anything. But for a band that never planned to give any concerts the takeoff was fast. The first gig went well (albeit the pauses between tracks were longer than the tracks themselves, as DJ Alari Orav rightly put it) and many more followed.

The story of a German Mürgelmaschine didn't hold for too long (although Discogs still thinks it's true). We got caught red-handed with the same first press release, for Siim Nestor (a music journalist with his own "Siim Nestor recommends" section in a weekly newspaper) noticed our press photo to be of a Mötley Crüe guy having fun with his groupies and didn't find our faux-german names to be plausible at all. So what's the story behind the story?

THE STORY

MÜRGELMASCHINE IS THE BRAINCHILD OF EERIK AUNIN (ALIAS MANFRED KAFFEL), INDREK KOPPEL (ALIAS JÖRG KORG) AND OLIVER PULGES (ALIAS WINFRIED "CASIO-WILLY" SCHTUNGRAUD) and was meant to be a fictitious electronic band from Germany making weird, slightly off music. A fiction formed in 2004 in Tartu, Estonia, the idea of being German perhaps having something to do with German



satellite TV, a German-speaking Michael Knight and Kraftwerk. Nevertheless, nothing went as planned and writing "a few ridiculous tunes" turned into being serious about making weird music and resulted in a list of 40+ tracks.

A productive summer of 2004 gave birth to some of the most important Mürgelmaschine tunes ever – Autogumi, Isländische Krabben, Kirschlimonade, to name a few. Written jointly by Eerik and Martin Voltri (alias Helmut Doppler, who joined in slightly later) literally on a staircase, these tracks set the sound and attitude for Mürgelmaschine. The sound reached the ears of DJ's Erik Morna and Alari Orav who insisted on a Mürgelmaschine gig (something that seemed quite impossible at that time) and from there on the group went bang!

THE MUSIC

The sound of Mürgelmaschine was inspired by 80's synth-pop (think frequency-modulated synthesis), cheesy synthesizer soundtracks of educational videos (think VHS), early 90's tracker music with chiptune-ish elements (think Norton Commander) and of course Kraftwerk, New Order, Depeche Mode and Dopplereffekt.

Being completely computer-based, Mürgelmaschine never subscribed to the genres of lo-fi, Gameboys or hardware-only sequencer purism, the sound instead being the result of lo-tech computer gear and basic software. There's a lot that can be done with a 160 MHz computer running MS-DOS (the gear being long outdated by 2004), Impulse Tracker (a software for music production resembling a text editor) and a pair of cheap headphones. As Allar Lepa noted about Eerik: "Here's a guy with \$1 headphones and a medieval computer who writes better music than most of the producers in \$100 000 studios".

THIS MIXTURE OF DIFFERENT INFLUENCES AND TECHNICAL CONSTRAINTS LED TO A SOUND AND MUSIC UNLIKE ANY OTHER AT THAT TIME. What became the standard a few years later – 80's-inspired synth sounds, electronic disco beats & bass-lines, "pixel" sounds & effects – was then uniquely fresh.



Liisa Vurma

At the time of the band's highest activity from 2004 to 2007 another great group emerged from Tartu – Popidiot (Hendrik Luuk and Matti Peura) – with whom we had some mutual influence. Although plans of making a collaboration never fully materialised, some of Popidiot is heard in Mürgelmaschine's "Wir Sind So Ülbe" (originally titled "Bête Noir" by Popidiot) and we do hope there's some Mürgelmaschine in later Popidiot, too.

Although being a vociferous part of the band's gigs, most of the vocal parts never quite suited Mürgelmaschine's recordings with the exception of a few notable tracks sung by Liisa Vurma (Liisa Proske, alias Luisa Neuankömmling), Helmut Doppler and Kairi Prints (alias Katja Prinz) with guest appearances



Kairi Prints



by Erik Salum (alias Enrico Salmon) and Eero-Jaak Vaitmaa (alias Herbert-Joachim Ruheland). Well, the majority of the music wasn't even meant for singing, anyway.



THE GIGS

Being what is commonly known as a studio band and being honestly pretty much incapable of playing any instrument (this regards Helmut and Manfred), Mürgelmaschine's live setup was a matter of its own. Ever-changing, it included a live bass (played by Jörg), keyboards and effects (played by Manfred, Casio-Willy and Helmut), a variable cast of vocalists (Helmut, Luisa and Katja) and the occasional popping up of a set of acoustic drums (played by Luisa) with the backbone of the gigs being one, two, three or even four computers.

A few years' time took Mürgelmaschine to the stages in Tallinn, Tartu, Pärnu and Purila. Von Krah!l, Kultuuritehas Polymer, Kellele ei meeldiks Johnny Depp?, Genialistide Klubi, Purila Summer, Kuku klubi – to name a few venues and festivals. How was it? To quote Erik Morna: "Like no other!"

THE ARCHIVES

MÜRGELMASCHINE'S ARCHIVES – AS BEING RELEASED HERE AND NOW – IS THE WHOLE COLLECTION OF EVERY MÜRGELMASCHINE TRACK EVER MADE THAT'S LONG ENOUGH TO BE CALLED A TUNE. Made between 2004 and 2007 (some fine-tuned later), these 40 MP3s and additional 11 ImpulseTracker and ScreamTracker files therefore represent the majority of the band's production. Rather than releasing it as an album (what an outdated concept!) and having to do cuts and go for compromises, we decided to release them all. As they are. As they were supposed to be. For fun and enjoyment.

This is Mürgelmaschine. This is it.

Tallinn, Estonia
2012



MURGELMASCHINE.COM

THE TRACKLIST

MP3s

Aerobik 2005
Autogumi 2004 – first ever Mürgelmaschine track
Bundespolizei 2006
Casio 2004
Digital 2004
Elektrorasenmäher 2004
Fahrrad 2005
Fichte 2007
Frühstück 2006
Fussball 2006
Hebebühne 2006
Illegale Regalen 2004
Isländische Krabben 2004 – vocals by Kairi Prints and AT&T speech synthesizer, released on EKA Muusika Fond
Kaleidoskop 2007
Kapitalismus 2004 – vocals by Liisa Vurma, lyrics written by Liisa Vurma, featuring a quote from Fidel Castro
Kilometer 2005
Kirschlimonade 2004
Käse 2007
Lollipop 2004
Luftwaffe 2004
Medicopter 2004
Miniviiner 2005 – for Laks Recordings, released on "Miniviiner Remixed"
Müsli 2004
Pipettenspitze 2005
Plexiglas 2006
Plexiglas Reduziert 2006
Polymer 2005
Roboschwarzeneger 2004
Schnitzel 2004
Schtepsel 2004
Sommerferien 2007
Super Rambo 3000 2004
Zeitung 2007
Zitronensaure 2007
Zoodirektor 2004
Umwelt 2005 – vocals by Martin Voltri, lyrics written by Eerik Aunin for German language class homework
Weltraumreise 2006
Wie Eine Jungfrau 2005 – vocals by Martin Voltri and Liisa Vurma, lyrics based on "Like a Virgin" by Madonna
Wir Sind So Ülbe 2005 – additional keyboards by Popidiot
Wunderbaum 2005 – vocals by Liisa Vurma and Martin Voltri, lyrics written by Peter Kolski

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Audio mastered by Talis Paide.

ITs and S3Ms

Elektrorasenmäher
Frühling
Frühstück
Fussball
Illegale Regalen
Wie Eine Jungfrau
Käse
Kirschlimonade
Plexiglas reduziert
Schnitzel
Sommerferien