

A new recipe for mixed beats

DJ Amon Tobin brings music to campus after Carnival

After Thursday’s Spring Carnival Concert featuring the The Roots, AB Coffeehouse will keep up the good music by rounding out Carnival weekend with the groundbreaking DJ Amon Tobin on Sunday at 8 p.m. in McConomy.

Tobin is best known for his distinctive use of sampling and sound manipulation. Though Tobin spent years pulling apart and remixing vinyl sources, his more recent work features sounds of all origins. Tobin distorts everyday sounds beyond recognition, then pieces them back together over distinctive breakbeats.

Tobin’s influences include (but are by no means limited to) kitchen utensils, robotics, animals, motorcycles, and, of course, other musicians. The resulting sound is often spacious, sometimes frenetic, and never stale, ranging from the spooky churchiness of “El Cargo” to the swanky chill of “Night Fire.”

Although his use of sound inarguably pushes the envelope, a statement on Tobin’s personal website makes it clear that he doesn’t consider his music avant-garde, just enriched by different sounds and techniques. According to his label Ninja Tune’s website, the end result of all this sound-play is “still pure Amon Tobin, but pushed miles forward in sonics and melody due to the depth of source material.”

Ninja Tune was founded by DJs Matt Black and Jon More (AKA Coldcut), and signs electronic, nu jazz, and instrumental

and abstract hip-hop artists such as Bus Driver and Kid Koala, who made an appearance at Carnegie Mellon last year.

Tobin, a Brazilian ex-pat working out of Montreal, made his debut on the electronica scene in the mid-’90s with *Adventures in Foam*, at the time styling himself Cujo, after the famous Stephen King novel.

Ninja Tune records took instant notice of Cujo and signed him on in 1996. Tobin has since generated six albums under his own name, most recently *Foley Room*, which came out in February of last year.

Tobin’s “Sabotuer,” off of *Supermodified*, gained notoriety as the main theme of the blockbuster *The Italian Job*, starring Mark Wahlberg. In recent radio interviews, filmmaker Luc Besson has indicated that he might be interested in incorporating Tobin’s music in the third installment of *The Transporter* series, due out in 2009.

Tobin has also done work on video game music, scoring and producing the latest sequel in the Tom Clancy *Splinter Cell* franchise in January 2005.

Opening for Amon Tobin will be local break-core artist Xanopticon and down-tempo IDM artist Discuss.

Since 2000, Xanopticon has been touring nationally and internationally, mixing fast, cutting beats in psychotic style.



Courtesy of amontobin.com

Groundbreaking DJ Amon Tobin.

Nearly every track on the group’s November 2007 EP, *The Silver Key*, is a frantic hybrid of IDM, drum, and bass.

Discuss takes a much different tack, with a slower tempo that creates a more relaxed and introverted sound, which has often been compared to Scottish duo Boards of Canada. Discuss gained local momentum with a self-released, self-titled album in late 2006.

Andrew Peters | Publisher

The Cavalera brothers’ triumphant return

Also: Kingdom of Sorrow’s debut album mixes popular metal band sounds

There is a certain fire contained in any good metal disc that is very hard to fake. Where that fire comes from, whether a true misanthropy or just everyday frustration, is something the end product reflects. Such an album can be an epic (Metallica’s ...*And Justice for All*) or short and brutal (Slayer’s *Reign in Blood*), but usually, the shorter the better.

So, imagine that you have two brothers who founded a seminal thrash band that conquered the metal world, put out albums that took rock further into its tribal roots than anyone before them, and then didn’t speak to each other for over a decade. One could guess that, upon reuniting first as brothers, and then second as musicians, they would create at least a double album of furious metal, loaded with metaphors and solos, all bolted down with heavy riffs and thunder drums. In the case of the Cavalera brothers, all they needed was 30 minutes.

Max and Iggor Cavalera, for those of you who don’t know, formed Sepultura in the early ’80s in a Brazilian town called Belo Horizonte. Belo, about as far from the beaches of Rio as your mind can carry you, could be said to mirror the hard, industrial, punk edge that formed Sepultura’s early sound. Maybe a death metal band to begin with, the punk/hardcore sound that rounded out later masterpieces like *Chaos A.D.* is definitely the focus of what has become, for now anyway, the much longed-for Cavalera reunion and the brothers’ new album, *Inflikted*.

Before the album came the two brothers’ reunion. After not speaking since their fallout in ’96, Iggor picked up the phone and began the process of reuniting his family. Max, in turn,

suggested that Iggor come to Phoenix, where he is now based. What followed, naturally, was a jam session that took them back to being two kids, brothers united in their love for aggressive music. Naming their album *Inflikted*, the Cavalera Conspiracy is more a gang than a band. Cliché as it seems, there is no better way to describe the two brothers.

The energy that spills out from the title track and opener is reminiscent of Sepultura’s “Arise,” but the sound is raw and the attitude is definitely “us against them.” Choosing Marc Rizzo on guitar was the right choice here. Not only a huge Sepultura fan, Rizzo also plays with Max in his post-Sepultura outfit Soulfly and has a built-in chemistry with Max that naturally carries over to Iggor’s drumming.

And may I say that Iggor is a beast on the drums. His thunder on the next track, “Sanctuary,” makes me want to get a blue, green, yellow, and white Camaro and blast this track over and over again. It alone is worth the price of the album, standing out as the first new direction in thrash metal I have heard in years. “Sanctuary” really isn’t comparable to other work I’ve heard before — it has awesome soloing from Rizzo, deep bass drum, looping riffs, all the requisite fast growls that have become Max’s trademark vocal style. The way they have arranged it all, though, makes it sound new. That style evolves further in “Ultra-Violent,” with a double-bass attack from Iggor that brings tears to my eyes. Matching up perfectly with guest-bassist Rex (Pantera, Down), the track becomes the perfect soundtrack to your own apocalyptic visions.

Lyrically, the album is violent, and it works perfectly. Beneath

the violence, the desire to witness the fall of Babylon, as Max growls, is a sense that the brothers are united in their attack on the rest of us.

One other recent album that has caught my ear is *Sludge*, the debut from Kingdom of Sorrow, or “Crowbreed” as fans of Hatebreed and Crowbar call them. Mixing hardcore with metal may seem like a strange idea at first, but it works well. Take one part doom a la Black Sabbath, one part mid-’90s metal-hardcore, two vocalists that are surprisingly alike, and *voila!* Relapse Records were kind enough to unleash this upon the masses, and the album has been received well. The force of hardcore, with all the karate kids in the pit, is in its fast delivery. *Sludge*, with its drawn out solos, is best enjoyed slowly, like whiskey. Jamey Jasta and Kirk Windstein, frontmen for Hatebreed and Crowbar, respectively, trade vocals on their new album effortlessly, with the closing track “Buried in Black” as the highlight. With Hatebreed, the subject matter is usually of the pull-yourself-up-by-your-bootstraps variety. Crowbar is just heavy. The combination here works, but definitely veers into heavy emotional territory. It is definitely more like Crowbar (maybe even Down) with more hardcore vocals. It may lay the foundation for yet another sub-genre of metal, or be a cult classic in the years to come. In any case, it’s a great disc for long, rainy drives.

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