

**Almut Kühne/Joke Lanz/Alfred Vogel**

***How Noisy Are The Rooms?***

Boomslang DL/LP

**Joke Lanz & Ute Wassermann**

***Half Dead Half Alive (Live In Nickelsdorf)***

Klanggalerie CD/DL

Joke Lanz, renowned turntablist and linchpin of noise-dada outfit Sudden Infant, brings his considered improvisational approaches to bear on two dynamic releases that showcase his originality and creative range.

On *Half Dead Half Alive*, a 35 minute live set hewn from a Nickelsdorf jazz festival performance, Lanz and vocalist Ute Wassermann engage in a roiling cornucopia of fleeting horn samples, vinyl crackles and grating vocal fry. The 33 minute centerpiece "Half Dead" opens with Wassermann's voice, which elicits an often absurdist series of growls, grunts, gasps and screeches that eventually pair with the circus-like fanfare on the turntable. The two play off each other in a mesmerisingly intricate call and response with Wassermann's vocals at its forefront. While the turntable's slapdash swipes and scratches are often so nimble as to render the original material elusive, there are less obscured moments that call to mind folk music and musette. Otherwise, the arrangement collapses in formless experiments in texture and noise.

*How Noisy Are The Rooms?* is an equally unconventional yet more structured approach to improvisation, leaning more heavily on the generic frameworks of triphop and jazz to shape its wild fluctuations. Here, Lanz is joined by the Berlin based vocalist Almut Kühne and the Austrian drummer Alfred Vogel. Like *Half Alive*, this record commences with seemingly random vocalisations and guttural grunts that climb to a dizzyingly high frequency. On "Sim Sim Sum" Kühne delivers a bestial wail only to be somewhat comically joined by a drum beat that could have been cribbed from a 1990s hip-hop backing track.

The simplicity of Lanz's production process belies its musical complexity. In an interview with the *Fifteen Questions* website, the musician remarked that he's never had a proper studio, choosing instead to work with turntables and speakers found on the street. "I love to bang two cobblestones together and record the sound," he said. This approach comes through in his music, where he stretches the sonic possibilities of a given instrument or object with an infectious wide-eyed curiosity.

Chloe Lula