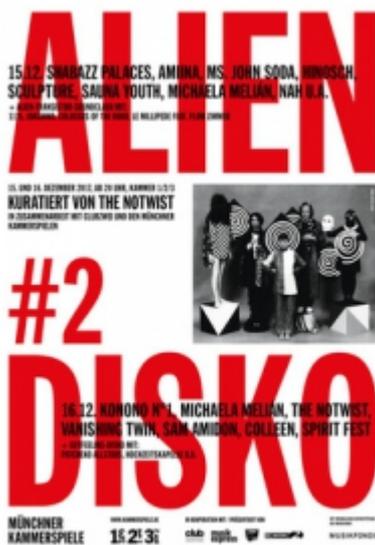


Music | Bittles' Magazine: The music column from the end of the world

There comes a time in everyone's life when you find yourself standing in a muddy field with a plastic glass of warm ,beer', straining to hear the muffled soundsystem in the far off distance thinking to yourself, »I'd rather be home watching EastEnders«. By **JOHN BITTLES**

With shoddy promoters, phoned-in performances, crazed space cadets wanting to lick your face, and the usual array of drunken louts, going to a musical gathering these days can be as much fun as watching the new Justice League movie.



With an eclectic line-up, an inviting venue, and organisers who seem to love music rather than the contents of your bank account, *Alien Disko II* is the type of event capable of getting us all excited about festivals again. Founded by brothers **Markus** and **Micha Acher** of the band **The Notwist**, the festival runs on the 15th and 16th of December and will be held at Munich's lush theatre space *Kammerspiele*. Full details can be found [here](#). Last year's inaugural event (which included performances from **Ras G**, **Cala Del Forno**, **Tenniscoats**, **Joanna Gruesome**, etc) proved to be a huge success, so it made sense to repeat the feat in 2017. Spread over three rooms, this year's line-up is wonderfully diverse, with intergalactic hip hop sitting next to Congolese rhythms, glitchy electronica, and more. Acts including **Shabazz Palaces**, **Amiina**, **Ms. John Soda**, **Konono N.1**, **Michaela Melián** and **The Notwist** have all been confirmed, ensuring that, for anyone in or near Munich, the purchase of a [ticket](#) is a must.

Amid last minute preparations *Alien Disko* founder **Markus Acher** kindly took some time from his busy schedule to answer a few questions I sent his way. In the following interview we discuss the festival, the city of Munich, **Shabazz Palaces**, *Münchner Kammerspiele*, and lots more.

So, press play on the official *Alien Disko II* [playlist](#), and let us begin...

[To get us started can you tell us a bit about Alien Disko II?](#)

After we made *Alien Disko* last December, and all were very happy with the whole festival, we decided to try to organize one again this year. It was not so easy, and in between we even cancelled it again, but now it's happening, and I think, it will be very nice in the end.

Who will be playing?

Konono N.1 from Kongo, a band, we are big fans of. Also, **Shabazz Palaces** from Seattle are a band I really adore for being totally unique and an incredible live-experience. We are also very happy **Michaela Melián** will, for the first time play her solo-music in Munich. Apart from now being a very well-known artist, she is part of the band **FSK**, and with her various activities is a very important and influential figure in the German underground-music and art-Scenes.

The great **Sam Amidon** will be playing, also **Amiina** from Iceland, with her music to the silent-movie *Phantomias*. **Stefan Schneider**, who was part of the great **To Rococo Rot** will bring his new project **Hinosch** together with **Koshiro Hino** from Osaka. We are very happy to have **Vanishing Twin** from the UK playing their first concert in Germany....I have listened to their album so often this year, I'm very much looking forward to hear their music live. **Colleen** will present her new album...she is a very special artist, and is always trying to find new ways and sounds for her very personal and touching music.

Sculpture from London are an audio-visual-duo, and their live-shows are an extra-ordinary live-experience. **NAH** is an American producer and performer, who worked with **Moor Mother**, and at the moment tours with a dance-theatre, combining electronic music and live-drumming, electro, hip-hop and noise, and is an incredible live-performer.

There are more acts to come, as some of them are not yet confirmed. My brother Micha will play with **Ms. John Soda**, **The Notwist** will play soundtrack-music, and **Spirit Fest**, the band, that was founded last December with the **Tenniscoats** from Tokyo, **Mat Fowler** from **Jam Money**, **Cico Beck** and me will also Play.

And then, after the concerts on stage, there will again be an *Alien-Transistor-Soundclash* with the bands **1115**, **le millipede feat. Flow Zimmer**, **Colossus Of The Road** and **Joasihno** on Friday, and the *Gutfeeling-Disko* on Saturday with **Hochzeitskapelle**, **Patcheko Allstars** and guests....

The festival has a very eclectic line-up. What, if anything, links all the acts?

All the bands and musicians are hard to categorize and have a very individual approach. They have very special ideas and experiment a lot, are adventurous and have no stylistic boundaries. So, from people like **Sam Amidon**, who twists Appalachian folk songs, to the futuristic dance-music of **Konono N.1** or the one-of-a-kind songs of the **Tenniscoats**, this can be everything.

The wonderful **Shabazz Palaces** will be headlining on the first night, (Friday the 15th December) with their set sure to be a highlight of the weekend. How did they get involved?

We already invited them last year, so we are very happy they can come this year! We are big fans since their first record, and their music is its own planet...totally unique, and although rooted in hip-hop, you can't compare it to anything else. One of the greatest contemporary bands.

Your band **The Notwist** will be playing on the second night (16th of December). Do you have anything special planned for your set?

We will try to play a very different program to what we normally play...music from soundtracks and theater-plays. We have very little time to rehearse for this...but we will do our best ;)

Like last year, the event will be held in the *Münchner Kammerspiele*. What made you decide to host the festival there?

We know **Christoph Gurk**, who is curating the musical program for the *Kammerspiele*, from Berlin, where he

did the same for the *Volksbühne*, as he invited us several times for festivals and concerts. He was interested in this festival, and for us, that's really great, as it offers us the possibility to invite bands onto three stages for two days in the middle of Munich...which is incredible! We are very happy to have this opportunity.

A ticket for both nights comes to the very reasonable price of 49 Euro. With a host of great artists performing in a stunning venue, how did you manage to keep prices this low?

We decided to make it a little cheaper this time to make it more attractive also to people, who maybe don't know any of the bands. And except for the bands, who get their fee and good food and everything of course, we don't earn any money from this...so hopefully it will work ;)

Alien Disko is in its second year now. How did it first come about?

When we play in Munich with **The Notwist**, normally there are many people coming to the show.... as we are from Munich and we've been around for a long time now. On the other hand, many international bands we would love to see live don't come to Munich anymore, as it's hard to get an audience here. So we had the idea to play with **The Notwist** and invite as many bands we would love to see as possible. In Munich, there is a really really great scene of bands at the moment, many artists, too, but there are not many festivals for international Independent/experimental/pop-bands in the city. So, we thought this is something we should try at least once. Now we will see, how often it will be possible.

What were your personal highlights of last year's Event?

Puh...that's really hard to say, as I love every single band that played there, and they all were great. For me personally the highlight was, that the festival made it possible to invite my favourite band the **Tenniscoats** and record an album with them called *Spirit Fest*, which has just been released on *Morr Music/Alien Transistor/afterhours*.

The press release says that the idea behind the first Alien Disko »was simply to breathe some new life into the city's slow concert scene«. Has Munich's night life changed much since then?

There are always a lot of great concerts in Munich, by local and international bands, anyway. The *Alien Disko* is just a small addition. But maybe the Disko brought different people together and showed, that it's possible just to try something. Although this is happening in a big theatre, in the end this is all very DIY and enthusiastic, so hopefully it inspires other people to also try and organize something outside of categories and the usual cultural concepts.

Welcome To The Alien Disko: An Interview With Markus Acher



[With numerous new music festivals popping up all over recently, what makes Alien Disko II stand out?](#)

Oh, we first thought mainly about Munich, and what we miss here, so we can't or won't compete with international festivals. My dream would be, that it becomes some sort of freak-family of Munich and international people over the years, that meets once a year and makes a lot of noise.

Also in the current political situation in Germany, but also in the rest of the world, where everything drifts to the conservative, nationalistic, racist etc..., it is more and more important to celebrate diversity and creativity without borders and limitations.

[Do you have any final words for our Readers?](#)

Thank you.

Thank you very much !!

| [JOHN BITTLES](#)

| FOTOS: JOHANNES HASLINGER

Here is the full line up of acts for both days.

FRIDAY, 15th Dec.

SHABAZZ PALACES

MATS GUSTAFSSON FIRE!

TOMAGA

AMIINA

1. JOHN SODA

MICHAELA MELIÁN

HINOSCH

NAH

DRAHLA

ALIEN-TRANSISTOR- SOUNDCLASH

feat.: 1115, JOASIHNO, COLOSSUS OF THE ROAD, LE MILLIPEDE FEAT. FLOW ZIMMER

SATURDAY, 16th Dec.

KONONO N°1

MICHAELA MELIÁN

THE NOTWIST

VANISHING TWIN

SAM AMIDON

COLLEEN

SPIRIT FEST

SCULPTURE

GUTFEELING-DISKO

feat.: PATCHEKO ALLSTARS, HOCHZEITSKAPELLE