HUOM! Tämä teksti on ns. final draft eli viimeinen käsikirjoitusversio, joka on käynyt läpi vertaisarvioinnin ja hyväksytty. Viittaukset ainoastaan julkaistuun versioon teoksessa *Made in Finland. Studies in Popular Music*. Edited by Toni-Matti Karjalainen & Kimi Kärki. Routledge 2020. ISBN 978-0367-228-910. Sivut 141–156.

From underground to the spotlight: Finnish minimal techno in the 1990s

Pertti Grönholm

In March 1997, Joe Martin wrote in an American dance music magazine *XLR8R*:

So if all us basement illuminati are finally pledging allegiance to the Finnish minimal nation, why is everyone involved so convinced that it doesn't exist? Even [Kim] Rapatti [a.k.a. Mono Junk of Dum Records], who freely admits his connection with the mono traxx image, denies the existence of an underlying scene. (Quoted in Rautio 1995 [2019])

The above quote aptly refers how reluctantly Finnish techno musicians and label managers used to engage themselves in discussion on the relevance of their own music back in the 1990s. However, within a few years, Finnish underground techno artists – often the experimentally minded – were noticed in the scattering European, British and American techno scenes of the mid-1990s. Some Finnish artists, such as Kimmo Rapatti, Mika Vainio and Ilpo Väisänen were effortlessly labeled as the culmination of a new and original wave in the Northern European electronic music scene. Despite their musical differences, they were considered embodying a puritan, even austere, return to the core of the 1980s Detroit techno and early industrial and experimental electronic music. After the emergence of Dum Records and Sähkö Recordings, some famous techno DJs, journalists, record shops, and label managers began to talk about "Finnish minimal techno", which was supposed to reflect not only the qualities of the music but also the "arctic" living conditions of the musicians, such as the harsh climate and ubiquitous darkness.

In this chapter, I focus on the experimental side of Finnish popular electronic music, particularly on such musicians who became the embodiments of a style where structural and rhythmic rigidity, melodic and harmonic minimalism, and rawness of sounds were portrayed as typical, even "natural" for Finnish techno. This kind of narrative was mainly employed by media. I ask how the artists and label managers who were labelled as the envoys of "Finnish austerity" understood the music, its cultural context, and historical background. This also relates to the question, how was "Finnishness" constructed in foreign and domestic music magazines and newspapers? To shed light on these questions, I have used a selection of published reviews, interviews, and feature articles on Finnish electronic musicians and label founders. I have also conducted a couple of more interviews especially for this purpose.

In the following pages, I outline a historical overview of the emergence of the "Finnish minimal techno" and what happened prior to and during that in Finnish electronic popular music scene, especially in the 1990s. The first section is a very brief summary on the introduction and adoption of electronic instruments in Finnish pop and rock. The second section depicts how the club and rave cultures were born in Finland at the turn of the decade and how they worked as a platform for electronic musicians and labels in the early 1990s. The third section informs the reader on the birth of the most influential Finnish underground electronic label, Sähkö Recordings. The fourth section portrays Sähkö, its main artists, and especially Pan Sonic when they rose up to international fame. It also analyses the foreign and domestic media discourse where the images and narratives on "quiet but loud" and "reserved but committed" Finnish musicians were constructed and echoed. In the conclusion, I summarize my findings concerning the impact of "Finnish minimal techno" to the broadening field of Finnish electronic music at the turn of the millennium.

Popularizing synthetic sounds: 1968–1988

The emergence of electronic sound in Finnish popular music is rooted in the experimentalism and underground art movement of the late 1960s. Finnish inventors and technicians, such as Erkki Kurenniemi (1941–2017) and Jukka Ruohomäki (b. 1947), introduced analogue sound synthesis to underground rock and pop musicians (Tiekso 2007). For example, the sähkökvartetti (electric quartet), a four-piece set of synthesizers that was built by Kurenniemi became famous in the hands of underground musician M.A. Numminen and his band in 1968. They performed and recorded the song "Kaukana väijyy ystäviä" (Far away there lurk some friends) using the sähkökvartetti and vocals only. In 1968, Kurenniemi built a synthesizer named Andromatic for composers Ralph Lundsten and Leo Nilsson. Prior to handing the instrument to Sweden he recorded a track entitled as "The Dance of the Anthropoids", which eventually was included as a shorter edit on Finnish progressive rock band Wigwam's 1968 album *Tombstone Valentine* (Kuljuntausta 2002, 384, 613–614, 632–634). This piece and another one by Kurenniemi, "Sähkösoittimen ääniä #1" (Sounds of an electronic instrument #1, 1971) significantly resemble the electronic pulses, raw sounds and minimalistic structures that became the backbone of the Finnish experimental techno of the mid-1990s.

Importantly, early Finnish inventors did not consider themselves to be musicians or artists; their main purpose was to create new tools and practices for musicians and artists. Even so, Kurenniemi's and other inventors' experiments reflect the ultra-modernist ethos of the 1960s among Finnish cultural and technocratic elites.

Despite the work of some inventors and visionaries, electronic musical instruments remained marginal in Finnish pop and rock throughout the 1970s. Only some professional keyboardists and guitarists were inspired by electronic sounds. Most played progressive rock and jazz. Small, compact, and monophonic analogue synthesizers, especially the Minimoog and EMS VCS-3 synthesizers, opened both the ears and new opportunities for some musicians, such as Esa Kotilainen, Matti Bergström, Pirjo Bergström, and Hasse Walli. In the early 1970s, synthesizers were used in creating unexpected and amusing sound effects for commercials and children's songs, but eventually "synths" and string machines entered the studio and the stage. Kotilainen, was now sought-after and eventually fully occupied, because he could create exciting sounds for many kinds of performers: mainstream rock artists, jazz and progressive rock bands and pop singers. Finnish producers and record companies happily employed those musicians who mastered their synthesizers and string machines. In disco and light pop, synthesizers became more familiar to musicians. The space disco craze of the late 1970s also introduced synthesizers as rhythmic and harmonic instruments (Grönholm 2019, 9, 15–20; see also Mattlar 2019, 11–33; Korvenpää 2005, 130–152).

In the early 1980s, a small number of new wave and postpunk bands adopted synthesizers, sequencers, and even rhythm boxes and programmable drum machines. Some turned into new romantic pop acts, and some converted to Gothic rock bands. Bands and artists like Stressi (Stress), Argon, Organ, Jimi Sumén, Tyhjät patterit (Empty Batteries), Tapa paha tapa (Kill a Bad Habit), Belaboris and Musta paraati (The Black Parade) were shamelessly – some even exclusively – using electronic instruments. These groups remained short-lived but they gained popularity among small circles in Helsinki and elsewhere in Southern Finland. Despite the fact that synthesizers were embraced by some well-known and street-credible ex-punk and new wave musicians, many fellow rockers perceived the "synth bands" with suspicion and disdain. Among the well-known "synth-converts" were keyboardist Ari Taskinen of Pelle Miljoona Oy (Clown the Million Ltd) and Mikko Saarela of Organ, who was the ex-bassist and lyricist of nationally very popular Eppu Normaali (Abby Normal) (Grönholm 2019, 9–11; see also Mattlar 2019, 35–102, 132–179).

In Finland, electronic instruments gained popularity in jumps, which were accented by the turns in international pop trends and new synthesizers. At the beginning of the 1980s, there were a number of reasons that kept synthesizers from being an option for mainstream rock keyboardists. One reason was the price. Despite the fact that a new breed of more affordable synthesizers, sequencers, and drum machines entered the market, they remained too expensive for most non-professional musicians. This factor was accompanied by an accelerated "arms race" between synth manufacturers. In 1983, the industry introduced more affordable polyphonic analogue synthesizers that were equipped with digital MIDI communication protocol, factory-made preset

sounds, and non-volatile memory banks. Soon after, digital synthesis and sample-playing programmable drum machines entered the world of pop. In the mid-1980s, first digital samplers and versatile digital sequencers became available. All this happened within a half of a decade (Grönholm 2019, 14–16, 29–31).

The fast marketing cycles evoked suspicion among rock and pop musicians; many thought that synthesizers could be left aside as novelty gimmicks and the earmarks of a momentary trend. While new technological advances marked a breakthrough in international pop and rock, in Finland, only a few rock and pop musicians adopted synthesizers as their primary instruments. However, the most popular teeny pop bands of the early and mid-1980s, such as SIG, Paul Oxley's Unit, Broadcast, Yö (The Night), Dingo and Bogart Co. welcomed synthesizers as their main keyboards. Gradually, the audience also familiarized with electronic sounds (Grönholm 2019, 14–16, 29–31).

An extra motive for a Finnish rocker to stay away from electronic instruments was the extensive use of them in Finnish light pop and disco. This created an aura of artificiality and a pretense of electronic instruments; many musicians considered them the least authentic of all musical instruments. In contrast to rock, a handful of light pop and schlager composers, arrangers, and musicians experienced intensively with new technology. In the early 1980s, some producers replaced all musicians except themselves with synthesizers, drum machines, and sequencers. In 1982, Jori Sivonen even bought a very expensive digital synthesizer and sampler, the Fairlight CMI II and used it as his main instrument in some recordings (Grönholm 2019; 15, 29–31; see also Mattlar 2019, 103–131; Korvenpää 2005, 130–152).

The latter half of the 1980s saw the emergence of a new generation of musicians who were born in the late1960s and early 1970s. They had no inhibition about experimenting with electronic instruments, which were welcomed in the margins of rock, pop, and jazz. Especially, electronic sounds and rhythms flourished in underground genres, such as hip hop, darker synth pop, and electronic body music (EBM), the latter being a mixture of Gothic rock, industrial music, and electronic pop (Grönholm 2019, 14–16).

One Finnish peculiarity in accommodating to electronic sounds – an alliance of electronics and humor – surfaced in the late 1980s. As it had been in the early 1970s and early 1980s, it was proved again that for the average music consumer, humor was still one of the most acceptable excuses for using synthesizers and pre-programmed rhythms and bass lines. Some artists and producers managed to amuse the audience for almost a decade by mimicking rap and mixing naughty lyrics with machine-generated beat. The combination also resulted in the breakthrough of Finnish hip hop in the turn of the 1990s; for example a small town rap posse called Raptori broke into the mainstream pop charts and sold almost 140 000 copies of their two first albums altogether. (Grönholm 2019, 10, 27–28)

In the early 1990s, electronic sounds and rhythms were increasingly accepted in pop and the electronic instruments, along with computers and musical software which all found their ways in recording studios. Some main stream rock musicians and artists, such as singer-songwriter Ismo Alanko and a pop rock band Neljä ruusua (Four roses, later 4R) adopted them as ordinary tools in composing and performing in the early 1990s. (Grönholm 2019, 16.) After that synthesizers and samplers did not totally undermine your credibility as a musician whether you played jazz, rock, pop, metal or folk.

Outdoor raves and bedroom studios: 1988–1993

The birth of Finnish electronic underground scene dates to years 1988–90 when Finland's first techno and acid house clubs called Berlin and Deep opened in restaurant Botta in Helsinki in 1988. Behind these clubs was a handful of deejays such as Jokke (Jouni Helminen), Ender (Hannu Nurminen) and Kaippa (Kari Kaivola) who imported new sounds and rhythms to Finnish dance floor from Ibiza, London and Berlin. At the same time, young people, usually between 16 to 25 years of age, began to organize unlicensed dance parties in abandoned industrial premises, occupied warehouses, private residences and outdoors. If Helsinki was the focal point of alternative clubbing, the other cities, especially Turku, became famous for their unlicensed rave parties. Within

a couple of years rave activity expanded in Turku, Tampere, Rauma, Helsinki, Vaasa, Lahti, Oulu and Jyväskylä. It became organized, frequent and determined. During the early years raves normally gathered 100–500 party-goers. In the end of the 1990s and early years of the 2000s, professionally organized dance parties in bigger cities expanded the attendance to 1500–2000 ravers, sometimes even to several thousands. In the early years, party music varied from US hip hop to European EBM, from Detroit techno to UK acid house and hardcore. (Rautio 1995a [2019]. See also *Suomen rave-kulttuurin historia* 2011)

A new generation of deejays and rave organizers emerged from local neighborhoods; self-taught vinyl spinners gathered other enthusiasts and formed party crews of 5–15 people. Most active and long-living party crews were born in Turku, Tampere, Espoo and Helsinki.[1] Gradually, some of the organizations developed into contending brands which had their distinctive identities and well-kept party concepts. Most active groups in Helsinki were formed around DJ Eliot Ness and DJ Orkidea (Tapio Hakanen). (Rautio 1995 [2019]. See also *Suomen rave-kulttuurin historia* 2011; Hakanen 2011)[2] As in many other Western European countries, the early rave party crews and DJs not only introduced new styles, but the loose organizations also created a platform for frequent dance clubs, live tour organizing, support for emerging electronic musicians and live acts, sometimes even a basis for record labels and stores. (Rautio 1995a [2019]; Lehtinen 2017b, 114–121; Hakanen 2011)

While the unlicensed raves increasingly attracted negative attention from the local authorities and police in 1992–94, electronic dance music conquered ordinary discos and clubs. House music, with its numerous subgenres, became the most popular electronic style in clubs but acid house, minimal techno and early trance continued to dominate rave parties, both in warehouses and outdoors. Since 1989, open air and forest raves had been organized in suburbia, smaller towns and countryside. For example in Turku, Hyperdelic Housers encouraged the ravers to party in open fields, islands and forest. (Grönholm 2017a, 201–206) In the early 1990s, the capital region around Helsinki saw the first wave of trance parties, which were organized by a fistful of Finnish Goa-ravers and their first party collectives. In the late 1990s and after the millennium, outdoor partying grew into national phenomenon. (Rautio 1995a [2019]; Tähti 2017, 92–109)

From the mid-1990s onwards many styles of electronic music began to flourish in Finland. Within a couple of years sequenced rhythms, synthetic bass lines and drum machines found their way also to Finnish dance pop. Gradually such styles as house, trance, breakbeat, jungle, electronic ambient, hip hop and electro gathered more audience. (Grönholm 2017a, 210, 221–222) Genre-dedicated groups and artists started to emerge almost in every corner of Finland. However, compared to Sweden, Finnish electronic dance music scene remained quite marginal and unassuming until the turn of the millennium.

The first generation of Finnish techno artists was deeply rooted in rave culture and party crews. Monotonous and minimal, but sometimes also playful and experimental techno remained he driving force especially in the South-Western scene around Turku until the late 1990s. As regards the first internationally known Finnish electronic artists and DJs, such as Mono Junk (aka Kimmo Rapatti), Marko Laine and Ø (Mika Vainio) it was the techno of Detroit and acid house of Chicago which inspired them most. Also some producers and artists who became later famous for dance pop and trance, such as JS16 (Jaakko Salovaara), began their career in releasing hardcore techno singles. From the mid-1990s onwards the musical and conceptual impact of underground techno was so strong in Finland that it tempted many electronic musicians to produce techno-influenced tracks. Among such artist and groups were internationally famous Jimi Tenor and Jori Hulkkonen, Klas Lindblad (aka Sasse, Freestyle Man) and Mr. Velcro Fastener (a duo of Tatu Metsätähti and Tatu Peltonen). (Grönholm 2017a, 221–222)

With the exception of Finnish light pop and disco of the early 1980s, electronic dance music had not been popular in Finland. Therefore, the majority of young electronic musicians needed to rely on their own instruments and home studio facilities. However, already in the early 1990s Finnish techno musicians – most of them were males in their early twenties – formed groups and networks where borrowing the fellow musician's equipment and working in his private studio was common. Recording and mixing were completed in most advanced and versatile private studios, such as in Kari Kaivola's studio in Helsinki. Some electronic

artists and private labels released joint or split singles and EPs with their friends. Sometimes collaborations resulted in the birth of new projects and performing groups. (Interview with Rapatti 2016)

For the underground artists, releasing electronic music on a private label was the only way to get the records distributed abroad and draw international attention. Especially in the first half of the 1990s, the releases of Dum Records (in Helsinki, Turku and Imatra) and Sähkö (Electricity) Recordings (in Turku and Helsinki), were distributed by the artists and label managers themselves. Sometimes they were handed out by their fellow deejays and friends who travelled to London and Berlin and took along a full case of records to be sold in carefully picked record stores. In 1995, Finnvox studios which had the country's last record plant gave up pressing vinyl and sold their equipment to Estonia. After that getting into business with an international distributor became even more crucial. Usually, the agreement included that the distributing company had the records pressed in European factories. The number of copies of techno vinyl releases varied between 200 and 1500 copies. (Interview with Rapatti, 2016; Grönholm 2017a, 221–222; Hirvonen 2010, 55–56) Dum Records, Sähkö Recordings and Mind Records (in Turku) were responsible for the releasing Finnish techno and related styles in the mid-1990s. Their output, along with the recording and performing artists, gathered international attention and had a profound impact on the birth of the idea of Finnish electronic music as experimental, introvert and eccentric. (Grönholm 2017a, 221–222; *Discogs*)

One of the first internationally noticed Finnish techno artists is Kimmo Rapatti[3]. In 1990–92 he released few 12" singles under an alias B-Rock. His single "My Mind Is Goin" (1990) for Kari Kaivola's Dancebeat Records was the first ever techno release in Finland. Kaivola's private studio in Helsinki was central for the first Finnish techno artists. For example, JS16 recorded his first tracks in Kaivola's studio in 1991. Since there were no record companies for techno in Finland, Rapatti established his own label, Dum Records. Until the end of 2019, label has released 50 EP's and 12" singles. Besides his own label, Rapatti has released almost 30 singles, EP's and albums under several aliases. Minimal techno is not Rapatti's only style, but still he is mostly known for that. Rapatti's own musical output has been defined as "raw analogous minimal icy dark techno woven together in an experimental and hypnotic stone cold form". His style has been characterized in adjectives which refer to Finnish nature and climate and especially "seemingly endless winters" of Finland are mentioned. Rapatti was one of those who fell under the concept of "Finnish minimal techno sound". In 1993–96, several other Finnish techno musicians, such as Aural Expansion (Jouni Alkio) and Marko Laine, were able to release through not only Dum Records and Mind Records but some European labels as well. (Interview with Rapatti, 2016; Rautio 1995a [2019]; Mathys 2018. *Resident Advisor*; *Discogs*)

If house dominated the evolving club scene in the cities it was trance that broke through in the expanding dance party scene with its star-like deejays, impressive lighting, visual effects and large venues. Towards the new millennium the outdoor partying scene, especially forest parties, grew into large phenomenon in Finland. Hippy open sky parties, such as Konemetsä (2004–09) in Marttila, South-Western countryside, were organized by several groups which most often stemmed from the capital region. Outdoor ravers still enjoyed many styles of electronic music, but in the turn of the millennium the unrivalled genre was trance, especially psychedelic and Goa trance. Finnish Goa trance genre expanded rapidly in the mid-1990s and evolved into a distinctive "Suamisaundi" (Finnish Sound). This freeform psy-trance style, characterized by tongue-in-cheek attitude, self-irony, unrestrained sounds, hilarious samples and quirky melodies was created by many artists and groups.[4] The first record label which focused on commercializing Finnish psy-trance was Exogenic Records, founded in 1997. Another major label is Freakdance Records. In addition, numerous foreign labels have released Finnish psy-trance. The scene lived its high season in the first decade of this century. (Rautio 1995a [2019]; Grönholm 2017a, 216–218; *Discogs*)

Quiet men make loud sounds: 1993–1997

As regards the early Finnish rave collectives, probably the most adventurous, productive and influential was Hyperdelic Housers in Turku. In 1995, after organizing – within six years – more than hundred warehouse parties, club nights, festival raves and outdoor happenings, Mika Vainio, Esko Routamaa and Tommi Grönlund decided to desist the activity. Even before that Vainio had already made experimental, techno-inspired music,

which soon would be called minimal techno. In those days, Vainio had only a Roland TR-808 drum machine and a handful of monophonic analogue synthesizers which often steered him to explore the electronic sound itself. According to Grönlund, it was Vainio's way in constructing sounds and composing music with a small range of instruments that made his music stand out among the electronic music of the time. Vainio's early solo tracks were sparsely populated with dedicatedly crafted sounds. Despite this his music was welcomed also by a certain segment of techno enthusiasts. The early tracks of Vainio usually progressed in 4/4 time and were danceable. (Interview with Grönlund 2019; Lehtinen 2017a, 45–54; Grönholm 1994, 254–256)

Vainio himself considered that his sound is a combination of music that had been done for decades in the realms of industrial techno and electroacoustic music. (Allan 2017 [2018]) In 2013 interview, Vainio defined himself as "brutalist minimalist" which referred both to the minimalism of the early Detroit techno and Chicago acid and the brutalism of industrial music in Britain and Europe. (Law 2013; Grönholm 2017b, 225)

As Rapatti had done earlier, Vainio and Grönlund chose to release music by themselves under a label Sähkö. Vainio's first two solo EP's *Kvantti* and *Röntgen* were released in 1993 with a help of small grant from the City of Turku. Initially, Vainio used a stage name Ø which became his best known solo alias.[5] According to Grönlund, the original idea was to release only a couple of vinyl EP's, but soon Vainio's scarce sounds and meditative pulses along with Grönlund's brutally modernist visual and material design gathered international attention. In 1993, Sähkö released three more EP's, one from each: Hertsi (Sami Salo), Orchestra Guacamole (Vainio and Jaakko Salovaara) and Philus (Vainio). Soon also Jimi Tenor (Lassi Lehto), an experimentally minded jazz-musician found his home in Sähkö Recordings. Sähkö's releases were welcomed as unexpected and unconventional. Encouraged by positive response by the deejays and foreign music media Grönlund established the label in 1993 and relocated it to Helsinki where he had moved. Since that Sähkö has continued in releasing music from selected artists, mostly from Finland. (Interview with Grönlund 2019; Howe 1994, p.14; *Discogs*)

In 1994, Mika Vainio, Sami Salo and Ilpo Väisänen[6] joined to form an electronic trio. Initially, the group named itself Panasonic, but after getting signed to Daniel Miller's Mute Records and gaining international attention the group was – expectedly – persuaded to change their name in favor of Japanese electronics company of the same name. The name change to Pan Sonic was announced in 1998. The unofficial "fourth member" of Pan Sonic was Jari Lehtinen, who had designed custom-built electronic instruments for Väisänen's previous group Ultra 3. For Pan Sonic, Lehtinen designed and constructed robust analogue synthesizers and other sound generators, which usually were housed in cast-off typewriter casings, vintage cigar-boxes and wooden toolboxes. These instruments – often pictured in promotional images and on the record sleeves – gave the group its distinctive visual and aural characteristics. (Grönholm 2017a, p.214–215; *Ultra 3 and Sin Ø*; Dalton 1995, p.20)

In their music, Pan Sonic used excessive distortion and signal modulation in order to elaborate sine waves and noises which often were their main raw ingredients. Other characteristics of their music were microtonal variations, repetitive clusters, sculptural sound arrangements and expanded aural spectrum. (Wanke 2015, 336) Their background as industrial musicians could be heard in Pan Sonic's static drones, sub basses and occasional "hypnotic" downtempo rhythms. Some journalists and reviewers (Montgomery 1997, 61) defined Pan Sonic's music as "dirty minimalism" and David Toop (2004, 241) has characterized Pan Sonic's live music "as physical as a weather system" since it affects the listener not only through ears but also through bodily sensations and other senses. In early interviews, the group expressed their wish to produce bodily effective, stunningly powerful sounds in the extreme spectral range. (Dalton 1995, 20; Grönholm 2017a, 214–215) Later, some musicologists have qualified Pan Sonic's music as an equivalent for brutalist aesthetic in late modern architecture and a puritan return to the basics of the Modernism (Zareei, McKinnon, Carnegie and Kapur 2016, 51–60). Furthermore, their music has been interpreted as an example of "(ec)static" (non-narrative and atemporal) listening experience and a "corporeal event" as it reflects some integral cross-genre qualities of contemporary experimental music. (Wanke 2015, 331–339)

In the mid-1990s, when techno broke through in the media and dance music scene, there emerged a social demand for more experimental sound. Sähkö releases found the listeners through independent and specialized record stores such as Hard Wax in Berlin and Fat Cat in London. Personal connections to journalists, DJs and artists, resellers and distributors, such as Bunker Records in The Hague were in a crucial role in promoting Finnish underground artists. German techno DJ and journalist Richard Riley Reinhold from Cologne was one of the early key persons in promoting Sähkö artists in Europe. Underground deejays from continental Europe, the UK and the US forwarded Finnish sound to their audiences. In addition, many famous deejays, such as DJ Hell and DJ Electric Indigo also worked in Hard Wax and organized parties where they played Sähkö releases. According to Grönlund, also Jeff Mills and other famous American techno DJs and artists became attracted by the Finnish sound. (Interview with Grönlund 2019; Grönholm 2017a, 211–213; Lehtinen 2017a, 57)

Personal contacts in Berlin, Paris, London and New York effectively promoted the idea of "Finnish minimal techno". A distinctive image of Finnish techno artists started to develop in the UK in 1994 when a pre-Panasonic combination of Väisänen and Salo (without Vainio) along with Jimi Tenor and Kimmo Rapatti played some gigs in London and elsewhere. In 1994 autumn, the short-lived trio of Panasonic played in club Vox in London and next year the group made a short UK tour and performed also in Knitting Factory in New York City. The live performances, rehearsals, traveling, record sleeve design and social life have been documented by Jimi Tenor in his low budget 16mm and video documentary *Sähkö – The Movie* (1995). The movie not only underlines some stereotypically Finnish features such as boozing and saving one's breath but it also captures the mixed reactions of the concert audiences. (Interview with Grönlund 2019; *Sähkö – The Movie* 1995; Dalton 1997, 31)

Miller's Mute Records had an alternative rock-oriented sub label Blast First, which was managed by Paul Smith. In late 1994, within a few months after Panasonic's first shows in the UK, Miller and Smith adopted Panasonic. Jimi Tenor, who had a breakthrough in the UK with his *Sähkömies* album (Sähkö Recordings, 1994) was signed to Warp Records. Soon after that, Vainio's solo and collaborative works which he had produced under several pseudonyms were released by other labels such as Touch (UK) and Raster Noton (GER). Also The KLF's Bill Drummond and Jimmy Cauty became attracted to Sähkö artists. In the late 1995, they organized a widely reported Panasonic performance in East End, London where the band drove around on a street on KLF's 'Audio Weapons Armoured Car System' and played their music through an excessively powerful amplifier system. (Rautio 1995b [2019]; Young 1997, 29) This coup gathered even more media attention and made Pan Sonic appear like a rogue bunch of urban audio guerillas.

Underground mentality vs. media hype: 1997–2000

In the UK, journalist Rob Young (*New Musical Express* and *The Wire*) was an important figure for Sähkö. He attentively followed the emerging electronic artists of Finland and wrote many articles and interviews from the mid-1990s until the death of Vainio in 2017. (For example, see Young 1997, pp. 26–29; Young 2017) In late 1994 and early 1995, Panasonic and Tenor became increasingly covered in the British music press. In September 1995, *NME* praised Warp Records' "Sahko Night" in Sheffield as one of the most important pop music events in the UK in 1995. The journalists tried – sometimes desperately – to scan the brainwaves of the quiet Finns. For example, Stephen Dalton of *NME* described the difficulties with the Panasonic trio: "Huddled into a grubby East End pub, wringing an interview out of Mika Vainio, Ilpo Väisänen and Sami Salo is like squeezing vodka from three particularly stubborn stones. At a funeral." (Dalton 1995, 20)

Combined with an almost total lack of interest on the live audience, media and publicity, Finnish artists' quietness and plainness inflicted confusion among journalists. Some of them were suspicious about the true nature of their acts. "Are Panasonic perhaps some complex private joke at the expense of non-Finnish techno fans everywhere?" Dalton asked. " 'I wouldn't say it's a joke, but there's a lot of humour in the music', nods Miko (sic) sternly. 'But we don't tell you if it's humour or not, of course', grunts Ilpo. 'It's private.' " (Dalton 1995, 20) Some journalists merged their experiences of Finnish musicians with their facile knowledge on Finland, its physical nature, society and culture. Furthermore, they often interpreted their experiences in the context of minimalism or Minimalism[7] in contemporary music. (For example, see Lewis 2001, B12). This kind

of interpretation was the easiest bridge for some journalist for connecting Vainio's and Väisänen's music to something already familiar. (Interview with Grönlund 2019)

In spring 1996, Jali Wahlsten – back then a secretary for cultural affairs in the Finnish Institute in London – was responsible for arranging a music fest in the Finnish Institute. Grönlund remembers that the party was a big success, since it managed in gathering a notable amount of journalists, cultural persons and young artists to the institute. The program consisted of live music by Jimi Tenor and Pan Sonic. A considerable amount of alcoholic beverages were also served. (Interview with Grönlund 2019; Dalton 1997, 31) An important factor supporting the "breaking Finns" was that in the mid-1990s, after Björk had made an impression on the British press and audiences, Finland started to sound interesting and even "cool". In 1998, Wahlsten concluded that Finnish electronic and post-rock groups had not just benefitted from Björk's success but had proved their originality and unconventionality. He added that despite their eccentricity Finnish music were somewhat more accessible to wider audience than experimental music in general. (Hannula 1998, 13)

In early 1997, Stephen Dalton of *NME* visited Turku and wrote a feature article on Panasonic. He started the article by picturing the "long, dark and savage" winter and the "typical" Finnish Saturday night entertainment: "drinking and fighting". However, this time Panasonic members were prepared for a visit by a British journalist. Vainio and Väisänen had bought some raw reindeer, lots of beer and vodka and they had also heated up the sauna which was then an integral part of their studio domain. Among many other exotic details, Dalton portrayed picturesquely how the band members dipped raw meat to vodka, drank steadily for nine hours and dived completely naked into a pile of snow from sauna. (Dalton 1997, 30–31) Wahlsten confirms that in this case the "arctic impressions" were carefully planned beforehand. He recalls that Dalton's visit was organized so that his flight landed on Turku after sunset. Dalton was driven through some unlit side roads straight to band's studio which located in their friend's parents' premises in the North Eastern outskirts of the city. The journalist and the band entered the backyard through a snowbank and a hole on a fence. The studio itself was built on the changing room of a sauna, inside an old wooden outhouse and it was filled with custom-built and modified analogue synthesizers and other studio equipment. (Interview with Wahlsten 2019)

Grönlund ponders that the "natural reserve" expressed by Sähkö musicians was not an invented stereotype, but a genuine quality that seemingly match well with journalists' and label managers' presumptions on physical, social and cultural context of Finnish techno. Grönlund says he did not always recognize the musicians behind the images and narratives, but he still allows the idea that some stereotypes on Finnish male musicians, their temperament and mindset corresponded reasonably enough with the self-image of the musicians and that of their scene. (Interview with Grönlund 2019)

In February 1997, Finnish tabloid *Ilta-Sanomat* interviewed Dalton who had just been drawn into Turku a few weeks earlier. In order to hear his opinion about some other promising Finnish artists and bands he was blind-tested and exposed to their releases. (Kostiainen, 1997, 12–15) This all reflected the dominant attitude of Finnish media towards all efforts to export Finnish music: the possibility of a long-waited breakthrough excited journalists but if there was not enough buzz on foreign media, the media at home would remain highly susceptible and even ironical.

In the mid-1990s, many music magazines which were specialized on the alternative and electronic side of popular music, such as *The Wire* (UK), *Option* (US), *Spex* (GER) and *Frontpage* (GER) turned their ears towards Sähkö artists and other electronic acts from Finland. In 1997–2001, the media fascination with quiet talkers and their loudspeakers materialized as a constant flow of interviews and reviews in pop magazines and newspapers. However, journalists and reviewers had sometimes difficulties in reviewing their concerts and releases. For example, Pan Sonic's music was described as "soul music for the new generation of microchip-regulated toasters" (Jenkins 1999) but also "[…] industrial ambient music, and it's surprisingly addictive." (Edwards 1997, 26)

Compared to major newspapers the pop music press was more prepared to welcome a new turn in electronic music. For example, Douglas Wolk of *Spin* educated his readers: " 'That's not music – that's just *noise*!' Yeah,

well, sometimes that just means that you're not ready for it. Pan Sonic's music is noise for sure, but it's as quiet a noise gets; its ticks and buzzes call attention to themselves only because they violate the silence that serves as their background. It's also startlingly musical, organized into patterns as regular, subtle, and intense as breath." (Wolk 1999, 166) By the end of the decade the music journalists learned to hear more nuances and evolution in Pan Sonic's music. Some reporters were able to dig deeper into the world of Sähkö artists and also the musicians were more willing to contemplate their ideas on music and sound and their own history. (For example, see Montgomery 1999)

In comparison with Pan Sonic, Jimi Tenor's artistic image corresponded somewhat more easily to media expectations. Although his approach to the pop lounge aesthetics of the late 1990s was more practical than stylish and more humorous than glamorous, his style was still recognizable. Tenor's easy-listening music, being a mixture of 1970s funk, soul and jazz, lo-fi electronic sounds and rhythms and tongue-in-cheek lyrics was accessible to both journalists and wider audience. In the late 1996, a few months before *Intervision*, his first album release for Warp, *The Face*, *Arena*, *Loaded* and *Elle* wrote on Tenor as the high-flying Finnish pop star. By then, he had already toured a couple of years in night clubs in Central Europe and the UK. (Goodacre, 1997, pp.18, 73. See also Karvala 1997, pp. 62–63)

Many journalists noticed that while Tenor was associated to the marginal of electronic music through both Sähkö and Warp, even there he remained an outsider since he draw inspiration from many styles and times. Barry Walters of *Spin* wrote: "From his pop-art image to his playfully freaky techno-pop, Tenor radiates a hipster vibe that reflects his outsider status. He does things that knobtwiddlers aren't supposed to – wear nice outfits (via his Tenorwear outfit line), combine electronics and acoustics (he plays sax and flute), write proper songs, even sing." (Walters 1999, 136.) However, sometimes the pop reviewers' response to Tenor's performances was mixed, especially in the UK, since Tenor seemed to ridicule the coolness, laid-back mentality and irony itself. Sam Taylor of *The Observer Review* exclaimed: "Mr. Las Vegas? He looked as though someone had just run his cat over". (Taylor 1997, 9)

It was typical for the Finnish idea of publicity that Sähkö Recordings and its artists got exposure in domestic media only after being discovered by the foreign press. In 1994–96, just a handful of articles and interviews was published in Finnish newspapers and magazines. Even so, most of them were written by people of the immediate entourage of Sähkö artists. (See Grönholm 1994a, 32–33; Mattila 1995a; Hannula 1995, 12; Mattila 1995b, C8; Rekinen 1996, 22–23; Joenniemi 1996) All this changed in 1997–2000, when Grönlund, Vainio and Tenor moved to Barcelona and also Väisänen preferred to stay in Barcelona for several months. Pan Sonic, its members and Tenor toured around the world and released numerous releases both in solo and in collaboration with well-known musicians, Tenor even with a symphony orchestra. Pan Sonic were invited to play in fashion shows and produce sound installations in art galleries. Vainio found himself making a remix on request for Björk. (Interview with Grönlund 2019. See also Isokangas 1998, 64–71; Keto 1999, 16–17)

In the turn of the millennium, foreign media attention, along with Pan Sonic's and Vainio's musical output had a fertile effect in Finland where experimental electronic music still sprouted free in the underground. Contrary to the beliefs of some foreign journalists, prior to exporting Sähkö and Dum releases Finland had not been a Nordic cornucopia of electronic underground. In the mid-1990s, techno had been just one of the most monotonous genres of new dance music and trance was surpassing it in popularity. However, a new breed of techno, acid house and electro musicians emerged at the end of the decade. Musicians such as Sasu Ripatti (aka Vladislav Delay), Esa Ruoho (aka Lackluster), Aleksi Perälä (aka Ovuca) and Klas Lindblad (aka Sasse) and groups like Mr. Velcro Fastener[8], Imatran voima[9], Pepe Deluxé[10], Op:l Bastards[11] and Acid Kings[12] did not adopt either Pan Sonic's puritan extremism or Tenor's eclectic playfulness, but followed their own taste and ideas, along with international influence and trends. Still, many of these musicians have declared and displayed inspiration and artistic impact delivered by the Sähkö musicians. (Rautio 1995 [2019]; Häkkinen 2017, 122–135; Grönholm 2017a, 221–222, 226–227, 240–242)

Grönlund recalls that year 2000 marked a watershed also for Sähkö Recordings, much due to the first music streaming websites, such as Napster, which drove many independent record distributors into bankruptcy. Also

Sähkö's main distributor EFA in Germany closed down and copies of Sähkö releases were returned in masses to Finland. The setback threatened the very existence of Sähkö and other underground labels. In the end, Sähkö survived, partly due to a new upswing in vinyl sales in the mid-2000s. By the summer of 2019, Sähkö and its sub labels have released about 120 EPs and albums. Keeping in mind that Sähkö has operated 26 years the number of titles is very small. However, from the outset of the label the appreciation of Sähkö's artists and releases has sustained through three decades. One reason for that has been the scarcity of releases, since the amount of copies of each release has been small, usually ranging from 500 to 1000 copies which has made them highly collectable. Another reason is that the music of Vainio, Pan Sonic and Tenor has attracted not only techno enthusiasts but also fans of experimental and minimalistic music and listeners of modern classical music, funk and jazz. (Rautio 1995 [2019], Grönholm 2017a, 211–216; Interview with Grönlund 2019; White 2013; *Discogs*)

Rapatti remembers being wondering why there was just a couple of tiny labels in exporting Finnish techno, but concludes: "It would have been fun if there were others, but in the end our labels were enough to get 'Finnish minimal techno' known out there." (Interview with Rapatti 2016) Afterwards, Grönlund has not been content with the concept "minimal techno" and reminds that for example Vainio's solo production cannot be classified into any genre of techno since it constitutes "a style of his own". Grönlund thinks that the same applies to Tenor's music, although it has more audible references to popular styles. "I'm not sure, if there still exists a genre that one could call 'minimal techno'. There are so many different genres of techno… or maybe there is such a style, but it can refer to almost anything… any techno that has sparse elements and 4/4 beat – no matter how dull and easy to make it sounds – may be called 'minimal'. " (Interview with Grönlund 2019)

Conclusion

Prior to year 2000, popular music in Finland had been produced primarily for Finnish audiences, but that year changed permanently the game, especially regarding Finnish musician's and producers' mindset, the attitudes within the national music media and the efforts in national music exporting. Singles "Freestyler" by electro group Bomfunk MC's and "Sandstorm" and "Feel the Beat" by trance DJ Darude (Ville Virtanen) – all produced by Jaakko Salovaara – made their way into the top ten of the UK singles chart and many other charts around the globe. The unexpected success has been particularly meaningful for Finns, since before that both the Finnish music industry and the common people had considered themselves as the last remaining underdog in the world of pop. The rankings appeared especially shocking because they were achieved by a quite unknown and young dance music producer and his even more uncharted artists. Another revolutionary step was that the "bad spell" was broken by electronic sounds and rhythms, not by electric guitar. (Muikku 2000; Mattila 2005; Grönholm 2017a, 218–221.)

In this chapter, I have not focused on the highest-flying electronic artists of the new millennium but a very small group of underground musicians and label managers whose impact on the development of Finnish electronic music – both experimental and popular – started from the early 1990s and has continued in the following two decades. While Dum Records and Sähkö Recordings "broke the ice" in the international techno and experimental scenes they also showed the way for many other previously mentioned Finnish electronic artists and groups, regardless of their style. Experimental and playful Finnish musicians grew more popular in the underground and some of them became discovered by the British, European and American electronic music labels and media.

However, in 2019 it would be an enormous exaggeration to conclude that the process created a distinctive Finnish style, school or sound in electronic popular music. On the contrary, most of the Finnish musicians were discovered because they were clearly distinguishable, both from each other and within the international context and genres. It seems that because of the smallness of the Finnish scene all electronic music makers somehow knew each other, at least in the end of the 1990s, and many were collaborating actively, even regardless of their different tastes. This led to certain specialization and differentiation among the musicians, which paradoxically became manifested both as playful and humorous cross-genre experimentations and devoted immersion to sounds expressing the deepest inner emotions of the self.

It appears that “Finnish minimal techno”, regardless of the small number of artists who wanted to fell on that category, was not a trivial matter for Finns, since it has been an important source of pride and inspiration for at least two generations of Finnish electronic music makers and labels. Besides that, it became a tag that carried such qualities and mentality which were easy to adopt or at least they were recognizable for other Finnish electronic musicians – regardless of the caricature-like elements and national stereotypes which were attached to it in the media.

SOURCES

Interviews

Grönlund, Tommi. 27th of May 2019, Turku. Audio recording in author’s possession.

Rapatti, Kimmo. 16th of December 2016, Turku. Audio recording in author’s possession.

Wahlsten, Jali. 6th and 24th of June 2019. Email correspondence in author’s possession.

Bibliography

Allan, Jennifer Lucy. 2017 [2018]. “Mika Vainio's quiet influence on electronic music was deafening”, *The Guardian*, 18 April, Online article. Updated on 22 February 2018. Accessed 15 October 2019. https://www.theguardian.com/music/musicblog/2017/apr/18/mika-vainios-quiet-influence-on-electronic-music-was-deafening

Dalton, Stephen. 1995. “Finns and Sonic”, *New Musical Express*, 4 November.

Dalton, Stephen. 1997. “Finns that make you go mmm…”, *New Musical Express*, 8 February.

Edwards, Mark. 1997. “Panasonic: *Kulma*” [Album review], *Sunday Times*. London (UK), 2 February.

Goodacre, Martyn. 1997. “Sleaze – Gotta have it”, *New Musical Express*, 14 June.

Grönholm, Pertti. 2019. ”Menneiden ja tulevien äänten risteyksessä. Syntetisoijien tie suomalaiseen rock- ja popmusiikkiin 1970- ja 1980-luvuilla”, *Tekniikan waiheita* 4/2018: 6–36.

Grönholm, Pertti. 2017a. ”Konemusiikin pieni suurkaupunki. Tanssijuhlia, listahittejä ja maanalaisia sankareita”. In *Toisen soinnun etsijät. Turkulaisen populaarimusiikin villit vuodet 1970–2017*, edited by Pertti Grönholm, and Kimi Kärki, 199–222, 226–242. Turun Historiallinen Arkisto 70. Turku: Turun Historiallinen Yhdistys.

Grönholm, Pertti. 2017b. ”Mika Vainio jätti elektroniseen musiikkiin pitkän kaiun”. In *Toisen soinnun etsijät. Turkulaisen populaarimusiikin villit vuodet 1970–2017*, edited by Pertti Grönholm, and Kimi Kärki, 223–225. Turun Historiallinen Arkisto 70. Turku: Turun Historiallinen Yhdistys.

Grönholm, Pertti. 1994a. ”Sähköä ilmassa... ja levylautasella. Tommi Grönlund vie maailmalle röntgeneitä, kvantteja ja kohinaa”. *Rytmimusiikki*, Issue 3.

Grönholm, Pertti. 1994b. ”Hyperdelic Houserseista Saksan teknolistoille. Dj Om vie turkulaista underground-teknoa maailmalle”. In *Tekno. Digitaalisen tanssimusiikin historia, filosofia ja tulevaisuus*, edited by Sam Inkinen, 254–256. Helsinki: Aquarian Publications.

Hakanen, Tapio (DJ Orkidea). 2011. *20.* [CD Liner notes], Solaris Recordings – SLRSCDLP010.

Hannula, Mika. 1998. ”Jali Wahlstenin resepti toimii. Viileä pohjoinen kiinnostaa lontoolaisia.”’ *Turun Sanomat*, 4 January.

Hannula, Mika. 1995. ”Panasonic – Maailmankaikkeuden äänet”, *Image*, Issue 3.

Hirvonen, Teemu. 2010. *Finnvox Studiot Oy 1965–2005. Musiikkituotannon historia ja muutos.* Master’s thesis. Department of Musicology. Jyväskylä: University of Jyväskylä. Pdf version.

Howe, Rupert. 1994. “Finns ain’t what they used to be”, *New Musical Express*, 10 December.

Häkkinen, Perttu. 2017. ”Made in Turku”. In *Kone-Suomi*, edited by Kalle Kinnunen, 122–135. Helsinki: Khaos Publishing.

Isokangas, Antti. 1999. ”Barcelonan taivaan alla eli pitkä päivä suomalaisten muusikko-emigranttien kaupungissa”, *Image*, Issue 9.

Jenkins, Mark. 1999. “Music a Machine Could Love”. Pan Sonic’s *A* EP [Album review], *The Washington Post*, 12 May.

Joenniemi, Minna. 1996. ”Panasonic tuuttaa matalilla taajuuksilla”, *Aamulehti*, November. An online version reissued at *Phinnweb* website, edited by Erkki Rautio. Accessed 15 October 2019. http://www.phinnweb.org/scrapbook/panasonic_al.html

Karvala, Kaappo. 1997. ”Jimi Tenor – Supertähti”, *Image*, Issue 1.

Keto, Satu. 1999. ”Jimi Tenor – Epätarkka poptähti”. *Rumba*, Issue 2.

Kostiainen, Pasi. 1997. ”Finntastic. Jimi Tenor on synnyttänyt Britannian rock-piireissä suurimman Suomi-buumin sitten Hanoi Rocksin”, *Ilta-Sanomat / IS Viikonvaihde*, 1 February 1997.

Kuljuntausta, Petri. 2002. *On/Off – Eetteriäänistä sähkömusiikkiin*. Helsinki: Like Publishing and Kiasma, Nykytaiteen museo.

Law, Ruaridh. 2013. ”Playful brutality”, *Fact*, Online article. Updated and reissued as “Playful brutality: Revisit our 2013 conversation with electronic music icon Mika Vainio” in 15 April 2017. Accessed 15 October 2019. https://www.factmag.com/2017/04/15/mika-vainio-interview/

Lehtinen, Erkko. 2017a. ”Olipa kerran Turussa”. In *Kone-Suomi*, edited by Kalle Kinnunen, 44–57. Helsinki: Khaos Publishing.

Lehtinen, Erkko. 2017b. ”Prinssi, joka katosi”. In *Kone-Suomi*, edited by Kalle Kinnunen, 114–121. Helsinki: Khaos Publishing.

Lewis, Nick. 2001. “Duo makes art of noise: Pan Sonic's sounds a treat for the open-minded or deluded listener”, *Calgary Herald*, 22 March.

Mattila, Ilkka. 1995a. ”Sähköisen äänen paimenet”, *Helsingin Sanomat*, 15 December.

Mattila, Ilkka. 1995b. ”Sähkö on osa teknon kansainvälistä eliittiä”, *Helsingin Sanomat*, 9 January.

Mattila Ilkka. 2005. “Finnish rock’s move out to the world”, *Finnish Music Quarterly*, Issue 4, 1 December. Online article. Accessed 15 October 2019. https://fmq.fi/articles/finnish-rocks-move-out-to-the-world

Mattlar, Mikko. 2019. *Synteettinen Suomi. Syntetisaattorimusiikin tekijöitä Suomessa 1970- ja 1980-luvuilla*. Turku: Svart Records.

Mathys, Mischa. 2018. “An Interview with Mono Junk”, *Formant*, 18 December. Online article. Accessed 15 October 2019. https://theformant.info/an-interview-with-mono-junk/

Montgomery, Will. 1997. “Soundcheck – Panasonic: *Kulma*” [Album review], *The Wire*. Issue 157. March.

Montgomery, Will. 1999. “Deadpan Sonics”. *The Wire*, March. An online version reissued in *Phinnweb* website by Erkki Rautio. Accessed 15 October 2019. http://www.phinnweb.org/scrapbook/pan_sonic/wire2.html

Muikku, Jari. 2000. “Exporting popular Finnish music”, *Finnish Music Quarterly*, Issue 3-4, 1 December. Online article. Accessed 15 October 2019. https://fmq.fi/articles/exporting-popular-finnish-music

Rautio, Erkki. 1995a (2019). “FinnScene”, *The Skreem*, Issue 11 (May). Online article, continually updated by Rautio. Accessed 15 October 2019. http://www.phinnweb.org/finn/

Rautio, Erkki. 1995b (2019). ”Pan Sonic History”, *The Skreem*, Issue 11 (May). Online article, continually updated by Rautio. Accessed 15 October 2019. http://www.phinnweb.org/panasonic/history.html

Rekinen, Jyri-Jussi. 1996. “Sähköllä käyvää musiikkia”, *Rytmimusiikki*, Issue 6, pp. 22–23.

Taylor, Sam. 1997. “Mr. Las Vegas? He looked as though someone had just run his cat over”, *The Observer Review*, 30 March.

Tiekso, Tanja. 2007. “Experimental music in Finland - enjoying a Renaissance?”, *Finnish Music Quarterly*, 1 September. Online Version. Accessed 15 October 2019. https://fmq.fi/articles/experimental-music-in-finland-enjoying-a-renaissance#

Toop, David. 2004. *Haunted weather. Music, silence and memory*. London: Serpent’s Tail.

Tähti, Inkeri. 2017. ”Metsään haluan mennä nyt”. In *Kone-Suomi*, edited by Kalle Kinnunen, 92–111. Helsinki: Khaos Publishing.

White, Michelle. 2013. “Sähkö 20 years anniversary special interview with Mika Vainio & Tommi Grönlund”, *Mosaic Theory*. Online article. Accessed 15 October 2019. https://cargocollective.com/mosaictheory/filter/Pan-Sonic

Wolk, Douglas. 1999. “Pan Sonic – *A*” [Album review], *Spin* vol.15, Issue 4, 1 April.

Young, Rob. 1997. “Exotic audio research”, *The Wire*. Issue 157. March.

Young, Rob. 2017. “Mika Vainio 1963–2017. Finland’s great stone-faced sonic violator remembered”. *The Wire*, April 2017. Online article. Accessed 15 October 2019. https://www.thewire.co.uk/in-writing/essays/mika-vainio-rob-young

Zareei, Mo H., McKinnon, Dougal; Carnegie, Dale A. & Kapur, Ajay. 2016. “Sound-based Brutalism: An emergent aesthetic”, *Organised Sound* 21(1): 51–60.

Walters, Barry. 1999. “Jimi Tenor – Organism” [Album review], *Spin*, Issue 6, 1 June.

Wanke, Riccardo. 2015. “A Cross-genre Study of the (Es)Static Perspective of Today’s Music”, *Organised Sound* 20(3): 331–339.

Filmography

Railo, Matthias (director and editor), and Lehtinen, Erkko (editor). *Suomen rave-kulttuurin historia. Osa 1: Acidin nousu*. Basso Media. Originally broadcast at *BassoTV* website in 5 November 2011. http://www.basso.fi/television]. Online version at *Youtube*. Uploaded by Bassoradio in 5 December 2012. Accessed 15 October 2019. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qnXb51k-OAw

Tenor, Jimi (director). *Sähkö – The Movie*. Produced by Alex Serrano and Jimi Tenor. Music by Mika Vainio, Ilpo Väisänen and Sami Salo. Finland 1995. Online version at the *4:3 The Boiler Room*. Accessed 15 October 2019. https://fourthree.boilerroom.tv/film/sahko-the-movie

Databases and websites

Discogs. Entries: Acid Kings, Aural Expansion, Dum Records, Exogenic Records, Freakdance Records, Imatran Voima, Jimi Tenor, Jouni Alkio, Klas Lindblad, Kim Rapatti, Marko Laine, Mika Vainio, Mind Records, Mr. Velcro Fastener, Op:l Bastards, Pan Sonic, Sähkö Recordings. Accessed 15 October 2019. https://www.discogs.com

Ultra 3 and Sin Ø. Website maintained by Kasimir Pihlasviita. Accessed 15 October 2019. http://kasimir.pihlasviita.fi/ultra3/

Resident Advisor. Entry: Mono Junk. Accessed 15 October 2019. https://www.residentadvisor.net/dj/monojunk/biography

Endnotes

[1] The most active party organizations were Hyperdelic Housers (Turku, 1988–1994), X-Rust (Turku, founded in 1993), Metal Bass Organization (Rauma, founded in 1991), Pumpkinhead Promotions (Tampere, founded 1991), Spinni (Tampere, founded in 1996), Techmu (Tampere, founded in 1997), Entropy (Espoo, founded in 1993), Unity (Helsinki, 1996–2008), Hytky (Helsinki, founded in 1996) and various organizations such as Vision, Members of Mayday and Planet of Love. Rautio 1995[2019].

[2] Other important DJs in the 1990s were Jori Hulkkonen (Kemi/Oulu), Sasse (Klas Lindblad, Turku), D-Code (Mika Vainio, Turku), Esko Routamaa (Turku), Tommi Grönlund (Turku/Helsinki), Marko Laine (Turku), Kaippa (Kari Kaivola, Helsinki), Jokke (Jouni Helminen, Helsinki), Borzin (Borzin Panbehtchi, Helsinki) and Proteus (Harri Andersson, Helsinki).

[3] Kimmo Rapatti aka Kim Rapatti, B-Rock, Mono Junk, Detroit Diesel and Melody Boy 2000.

[4] Finnish "Suamisoundi" groups and artists include: Flippin' Bixies, Haltya, Texas Faggott, GAD, MacMavis, James Reipas and Squaremeat.

[5] Mika Vainio's early stage name Ø is pronouced as 'ohm' and sometimes it was also spelled as Øm.

[6] In early 1990s Väisänen was a member of experimental noise performance group Ultra 3. In 1993–95, Vainio and Väisänen also performed with other Ultra 3 musicians (Kasimir Koistinen and Jari Jula) in the line-up called Sin Ø. For more details, see website *Ultra 3 & Sin Ø*.

[7] Minimalism as a style of modern classical music.

[8] A duo of Tatu Peltonen and Tatu Metsätähti.

[9] A duo of Perttu Häkkinen and Jaakko Kestilä.

[10] A trio of Vellu Maurola, Tomi Castrén and Jari Salo.

[11] A trio of Mikko Viljakainen, Timo Kaukolampi and Tuomo Puranen.

[12] A quartet of Kimmo Oksanen, Petri Salonen, Roberto Rodriguez and Tuomas Toivonen.