



**Klaus Dinger & preJapandorf:
!2000!**

Interview with

V.W.: Viktoria Wehrmeister (Toresch, DECHA, La!NEU?, vickywehrmeister.de)

M.N.: Masaki Nakao (Japandorf, masaki-nakao.com)

K.O.: (Japandorf, ex sub-tle. , k-onouchi.com)

A.R.: Andreas Reihse (Kreidler La!NEU?, www.ikreidler.de)

1. How did you start working with Klaus Dinger?

V.W.: Klaus called me 1995 and asked if I would like to meet up with him. He had heard my voice on a maxi single. We met in an ice cream parlor at Worringer Platz in Düsseldorf. He was wearing mirrored sunglasses. We introduced ourselves, had a chat und he asked me if I knew NEU! or La Düsseldorf. I knew neither of them and said – no. He asked if I have time and would feel like coming to his studio to sing a song? Yes I had time, and so we both drove our bikes along the river Rhine to his studio. From sunshine into the dark studio – tape machine was switched on and off we went. I sang on Heros – one time – it was released by Captain Trip in 1996 – the first la!NEU? album.

M.N.: Beginning of summer 1998 I was introduced to Klaus from Viktoria Wehrmeister. I was studying at the same Art Academy Düsseldorf as she was. In the winter I visited Klaus' Zeeland Studio. I played spontaneously harmonica and organ. From there on, I started to trust my intuition – to follow my intuition, feeling my way to play with „Sound“ in the free atmosphere. It was so to say the moment of development; it was a new artistic way for me. That was how it began to collaborate with Klaus. Form 1999 on, I had chance to take part in sessions with different artists not only in Zeeland but also in Düsseldorf Studio.

K.O.: In 1999, I met Klaus through Nakao 's introduction, Klaus has asked Nakao for a person who can record and mix. At that time Klaus wanted to make a remix of VIVA (3rd la duesseldorf album), he was looking for someone who could digitize his multi-track tape, and record music in the spontaneous session with friends and artists. I started by recording and editing the fragments.

A.R.: The first contact with Klaus Dinger was at the beginning of Kreidler, early/mid 1990s. Stefan Schneider, Bassist of Kreidler at that time and Marc Knauer from the label Stewardess, now Italic, and I were on the way to find out what really was going on at the end of 60s and early 70s in Düsseldorf. Detlef Weinrich of Kreidler was working in a copy shop at that time where Emil Schulte, the graphic designer and lyric author of Kraftwerk regularly came. It was one of the connection to Klaus and the other was through Gehard Michel, who was the member of the band Engel des Herrn.

We did a session in his Düsseldorf Studio, though unreleased and without Detlef. Klaus did not recognize sampling or DJ-ing, which Detlef's contribution at that time for Kreidler, as music. After the session, I kept in touch with Klaus, we met regularly, without making music. Klaus was probably already working on the idea of the project La!NEU?

For Klaus was this way of getting to know each other and building trust was important.

He had painful past with people and was lonesome wolf for a long time–willingly or not, after the negative experience in La Düsseldorf, conflict with Rother, with record companies, with media, and after so many court cases.

2. How did it work in Studio? How did you make music together?

V.W.: We sat in the garden for a long time. There was a lot of coffee, cigarettes and other treats. We talked quite a deal. Then Klaus said – it's time to go into the studio. The tape machine got

started and we recorded. Klaus waited for the “right” moment. It wasn’t about rehearsing or practicing, or about discussing matters like how do we proceed. It was more like intense listening or feeling. I remember a very nice moment as we worked together on the project La! NEU?(1995 - 1998). It was a warm summer day, Thomas (Dinger) was there for a visit and somehow everyone ended up in the studio – I knew all about the long term fights between the brothers, the pain, the scars that resulted from that. On this day, it was a gift, to be together with them, with music. Thomas on the violin - it was a pleasure to witness both brothers like that. Only music can achieve that. Make room for everyone. You can hear it on the la!NEU? Goldregen. I’m often thinking back and I miss them. It’s sad that they are not longer with us. Klaus was a generous, bright and free spirit. Full of idealism and ready to fight for the good cause. Klaus gave me a lot of space personally. I felt completely accepted, encouraged to trust myself completely with my being. This was a damn good feeling, the trust from his side. I attended the art academy at this time – what I learned from Klaus and what I was allowed to experience – that was what I’ve had been searching for in regards of the art professors, but couldn’t find. Freedom, courage, and energy. Therefore I was really happy to have met him.

M.N.: In 2000, Kazuyuki Onouchi came and started to work (without any limit) with Klaus. The process of each phase of creating music was recorded and analysed, then we worked further with those results.

3. Could you describe the process of preJapandorf production?

V.W.: Klaus was always searching people to collaborate with. As I said before – people – not just musicians. I’ve asked Nakao before the Japan tour 1996 (he also was on the art academy) if he could teach me some Japanese words – for example how I could order a beer. I recorded that for the purpose of learning – Klaus played those recording at the concerts in Tokyo and Osaka. Klaus later met Nakao. That’s how people came to Zeeland (Studio), Zeeland – an oasis. The ocean in front of the door – the wild garden, roses, berries, wind in the trees, couple of tents, and the sky – at night we always made a fire. Salty hair, sweet Japanese plum wine, warm feet, glowing cheeks and more. And then the studio – doors always open and ready for everything to come.

M.N.: From me, all process of the sessions brought out elements, they were not formal or conceptual.

K.O.: This album is like taking a snapshot of the music and its atmosphere as if it is photography. At the moment when I felt the opportunity, I pushed the record button, and record whole session, no matter if something interesting or not. We were trying to find out. At that time, I recorded on a 24-track ADAT digital tape, and I felt like making archives of that time. After that, we have selected the material, I took it into Protools HD and mixed it together with Klaus.

A.R.: Zeeland Studio was build in a garage/ the barn. There were kitchen and primitive toilet (which you had to bring out the bucket and dig ground in the garden to throw away afterwards) in the main house. The studio looked quite abandoned from outside, it was a camouflage, because sometimes Klaus was not in Zeeland for months. Production began in spring, when it was warm outside, and in May and Midsummer was its peak. Klaus insisted on sleeping outside in tents, honestly, I hated it. In the daytime, we went to the sea or sitting around in the garden. In the evening we sat around the campfire and smoked endlessly, trunk Grimbergen and awful liqueur endlessly. At some point maybe someone goes into studio and others followed or no one went into studio. Klaus was always waiting for the magic moment. Alcohol or the narcotics were of course to create that ‘moment’, but they never worked for everyone, at least not for the times when I was there. The result was the best when participants knew each other well and had worked together before, for example Klaus, Vicky, me and Thea, and later of course with the member of Japandorf. Smaller the group, the results was better, we simply felt the trust, lightness and the flow in the air.

4. Could you describe Klaus from your view? What did you learn from Klaus?

M.N.: Without doubt, Klaus can be described as one of the kind multimedia-artist. He took importance when all participants of the session reacted and exchanged themselves spontaneously and intuitively. Inspired from such process, next decision were made, as pure and true as possible. The sessions with Klaus were truly unique and unforgettable for me even now.

K.O.: I learned from him the importance of memory and document, to leave documents is necessary for our future. Currently I have returned to Japan, I work with various artists, and I am trying to work freely to help them make their own documents as they wish.

A.R.: As I met Klaus, mid 90s, I was making music with Kreidler and also was a editor at a leftwing radical magazine, and earned money through freelance graphic design at an advertisement company. All was great, only advertisement company was not so; most of the people were nice, secure payment. However, it was a problem to earn money with what I really wanted to do.

There were two figures, the father of my girlfriend at that time, a non-corporate architect, who suffered from his attitude not to compromise, and also Klaus, for his radicalism, who gave me courage to jump: If you want to make music, make it right, make music. Since then it worked out, sometimes better, sometimes not so...from that point all my activities have something to do with music and fine art. Pity, that Klaus is not there anymore... :(

5. Which position do you think this album takes in Klaus' work and music?

K.O.: I feel that this album is a document for him.

6. Klaus was strongly inspired by year 2000, do you think it has proven its truth in some way?

K.O.: 2000 is a meaningful goal like the song "CHA CHA 2000!" is for Klaus, maybe it is a bright future. I think it is necessary to record it, and he recognized the future will follow. And this became "Japandorf" later.

7. Tell me about the drawing on the front-cover.

V.W.: In 2000, I did an exhibition with drawings on soft tissue paper. Klaus liked them, choose two drawings and bought them from me. One would later been eaten by mice in the storage and this one (called „Japanese women“) has survived. And now it goes around... Thanks Miki!