

CHAMÆLEO VULGARIS



Created in 1993, Chamæleo Vulgaris is a band having oscillated between two and ten musicians, before being resolved, as initially, as a duet : Frederick Galiay plays the bass and Jean-Sébastien Mariage the guitar (few members were B. Denzler, G. Roggi, F. Vaillant, H. Koch, H. Poulsen, M. Collignon, O. Benoit, or D. Ashour...).

Both amplifiers face each other, both musicians are in the center, the public goshawk. The principle of the installation is to establish the most direct contact between the gesture and the sound, the string and the loudspeaker. The electric sound is an organic, acoustic matter in the full sense : guitar, bass and amplifiers (without any addition of pedals of effects or digital electronics), are not separated, but are the same instrument.

The sound limits of the instrumentarium are deliberately repelled, its ambitus is widened. The sound is bitter, full, precise. The dichotomy suited between improvisation and composition is considered as invalid: Chamæleo Vulgaris composes spontaneously, real time, sound frescoes where the moment is an urgency, and the time construction.

After "Dans la Chair" (1997), "Ouverture facile" (1999), "Les Falaises", "Toter Hirsch" (2000), "Inversus Doxa" (2001) and "Rebut" (2003), a new project is just released : "Reset", wich, after a sound recording break, many concerts, and a consequent number of parallel projects, is a restart of a work which reaches its almost twenty years.

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Reset

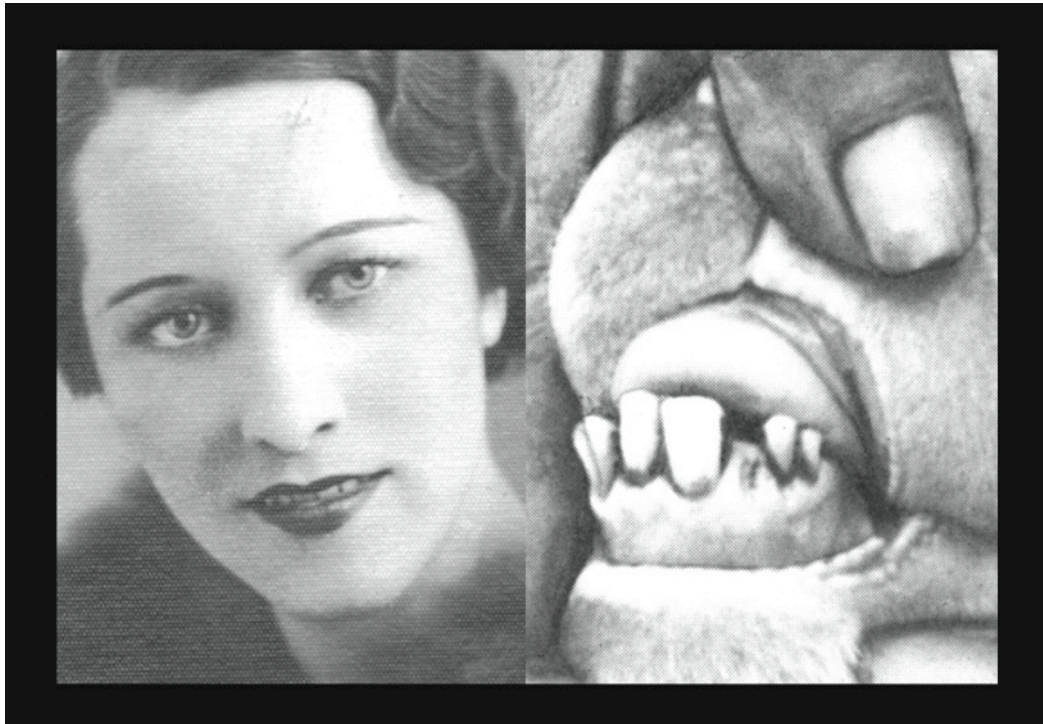
Since 1993, bassist Frederick Galiay and guitarist Jean-Sebastien Mariage have explored the uses and sounds of their electric instruments and amplifiers in an environment as immediate and natural as possible. As Chamæleo Vulgaris, the duo use minimalism and tone, feedback and resonance, to tell their tale. Recorded in Paris in 2011, live and without effects pedals and with the musicians sitting facing each other along with their amplifiers, "Reset" celebrates the duo's intimate approach to their instruments, an improvisational interplay in which naturally generated sounds act as a third member. The audience normally would sit around the musicians, creating not only intimacy but other acoustic opportunities.

"Pūjā" opens the eleven song set with humble fanfare. Meditative, sparse and metallic, it announces the environment the duo are creating, without completely showing all their cards. After such a seemingly passive opening, "Skhêma" announces its single note boldly, and various fitful, agitated gestures, that give the impression of cymbals but are again organic to the instruments and amps.

"Pshat," the longest track at just over thirteen minutes, paces itself through silence with deliberate tones that sound like argumentative birds or dueling wine corks. "Boo Murgel" follows. It is minimal but chaotic and assaultive, an explosion of feedback-and-string-conjured demons.

As an example of the blending of the various ideas explored, "Yoni" is an exercise in sounds, both loud and soft, sustained and muted. "Tabula Rasa" and "Drash" end the set with more silence than sound, more echo than statement, creating a somber but bright hymn-like feel.

"Reset" is not easy listening, but it ought to sound familiar. By building off of natural acoustics and sounds generated by the nearness of their instruments and amps to each other, Chamæleo Vulgaris merely work with the natural sounds of the spaces they inhabit, however briefly. What music are you missing in your daily routine ?



Press

“Au total, une musique libre qui convoque par guitares frottées de diverses façons tout un univers de matières sonores où le bruissement de la vie s’entend non comme une mélodie mais comme un recours.”
Philippe Méziat, Jazz Magazine

“This kind of music smells like the future.”

Richard Cochrane, musings

”This is a formidable chunk of sound from the outer edges.”

Robert Spencer

“European avant-garde musicians such as saxophonist Bertrand Denzler and electric guitarist Jean-Sebastien Mariage delve into the sound with some psychotic and flat out wacky electronically produced effects, odd rhythms, eerie vocalizations and surreal passages. This is “delightfully” strange music who toy with our emotions and psyche. Halloween for modernists ? Abstract, crazy - wild... you name it, yet we believe these folks are making a statement on the human condition. If you have a weak heart don’t bother ; otherwise, if you’re mind needs a good cleaning, than this may very well be the brainfood you need ! ”

Glenn Astarita

“Bam ! That uppercut hurts ! Chamæleo Vulgaris delivers a strenght potion where avant-core meets with free jazz and sonic experimentations. It is with great pleasure that I give this record my strongest recommendation... Chamaeleo Vulgaris was nominated in the category “Best album of the year (10 nominees, the 10 best of 1999)” for the album ‘Ouverture Facile’.”

François Couture, Délire Actuel

“Entre cris et râles, formes mouvantes, déviance assumée, brute pénétration ou chaos destructeur, Chamæleo Vulgaris dérouté. Musique vibratoire, intestinale, magnétique, électrique. Entre spasmes et remous. La convulsion comme art suprême, la décharge sonore comme fil conducteur.”

Luc Bouquet, Improjazz

“Their music and inner sleeve artwork would seem to indicate they grew up with the Dead Kennedys and the Butthole Surfers-Gibby wouldn't sound at all out of place in “Jungfrau”... This is pretty extreme stuff, at times sounding like Naked City's “Absinthe”, at times like Ground Zero (on a casual listening, Jean-Sébastien Mariage's guitar could be taken for Otomo Yoshihide)... Not for the faint-hearted.”

Dan Warburton

“Quand on vous enfonce un tournevis dans la cuisse, le dos ou le ventre, et qu'on tourne consciencieusement l'objet au milieu de vos cris éplorés, c'est dans la chair que vous avez le plus mal. Chamæleo Vulgaris enfonce le clou jusqu'à l'os dans une session de torture sado musicale dont vous êtes la victime.”

Octopus

“Ici, les deux musiciens font preuve d'une remarquable habileté à gérer la douleur musicale et d'une notable volonté à présenter une musique protéiforme qui sait gérer les stridences et les pauses sonores pour rendre la musique plus inattendue et ludique.”

Jérôme Schmidt, Artzero

“De ce chaos d'ondes, de cette pagaille de sons, ressortent les influences certaines de Merzbow et de Throbbing Gristle, mais aussi du Zero Tolerance For Nothing de Pat Metheny (présenté comme essentiel par Thurston Moore de Sonic Youth) et de Keiji Haino. Autant dire le futur du rock.”

Marie-Pierre Bonniol, Nouvelle vague

“French collective Chamæleo Vulgaris offer a dark improvised soundscape which never settles in one place for very long. The juxtaposition of free jazz saxophone and percussion with electronics and Borbetomagus-like feedback guitar gives a music rich in detail... They illustrate just what a healthy creative state free jazz and improvised music are in as we move towards the next century.”

Fred Grand, Rubberneck

“Apnée au coeur du son. Hypnose asymétrique. L'air est taillé au microscope, le métal au scalpel. Puis tout bascule vers des matières brutes, des torrents de scories qui s'étirent progressivement pour se transformer en longs filaments. La tension est érodée par les frottements et les impacts. Bribe de timbres, pointillés, espace, respiration. Il ne reste plus que des grésillements, un monde sous-terrain qui grouille, des particules à peine perceptibles qui s'entrechoquent, s'entrecroisent et tissent une toile de plus en plus serrée débouchant sur des trames. A la prochaine rupture, elles seront sculptées, ajourées, attaquées pour se désintégrer définitivement. Un reflet précis du monde. Trituré, pétri, propulsé. Mais apaisant.”

Arjuna Arkos

History



1991

- Frederick Galiay bases Chamæleo Vulgaris with Frank Vaillant.
- Concerts in France.

1995

- Chamæleo Vulgaris become a duet (Frederick Galiay/ Jean-Sébastien Mariage).
- Concerts in France.

1997

- First CD, "Dans la chair" (Inversus Doxa).

1998

- Chamæleo Vulgaris becomes a quartet, with saxophonist Bertrand Denzler and percussionist Gilbert Roggi.

1998 - 2005

- Numerous concerts in France and Belgium.
- The band invites several musicians, in particular Hans Koch, Hasse Poulsen, Olivier Benoit, Médéric Collignon, Xavier Charles, Frantz Guiraud, Jérôme Jeanmart...
- Chamæleo Vulgaris performs in a lot of festivals: "Conte de Suisse" (Instants Chavirés, Montreuil), "Musique Action" (CCAM, Vandœuvre-lès-Nancy), "Les 20 ans de Radio Libertaire", "Nuit de l'improvisation" (Théâtre sur le Pavé, Paris)...
- In October 2001, résidence in Mortcerf, recording of the project "Hors Gabarit".
- Five other CDs, "Ouverture Facile" (Leo Records), "Toter Hirsch", "Les Falaises", "Inversus Doxa" and "Rebut" (Inversus Doxa).

2005 - 2010

- Stop of Chamæleo Vulgaris. During this time, F. Galiay and J.S. Mariage work in the band FOGO with Jacques Di Donato and Isabelle Duthoit.

2010

- Creation of a video and live music project with Jacques Di Donato, on a film by Frederick Galiay, "Succulent Dead Bodies"

2011

- Back to the initial project for a new album : RESET.
- Creation of the project «Chamæleo Vulgaris Plays Romero» : the film and live music project with Franck Vaillant on a visual remix by Frederick Galiay of the film «The Night Of The Living Dead» by Georges A. Romero.

FREDERICK GALIAY

was born in Paris July 26, 1971.
He is orchestral and electroacoustic music composer, electric bass player and visual artist.

Complete and atypical artist, creative and rigorous sprawling, hard worker, he is a blurring of boundaries of form and artistic aesthetics of his time.



Curious and eager for new languages, he is one of these artists that are reminiscent of the renaissance, pushing the boundaries of the forms which it confronts, in a total search of art, away from considerations of narrow specialists with mind and concepts easy and arrogant.

He has sounds, colors and shapes in the head, this is why he left school at sixteen. A hard work makes him learn to shape his ideas. With a stubborn autodidact he learned music theory and the language is constructed by following a path theoretical assiduously conferences, courses and debates of the College de France, the Sorbonne or the IRCAM on the various issues of contemporary music, while sharing his time with the work of drawing and painting.

Although very good on the bass, its propensity to instrumental practice is not enough, he turned to the great masters: Narendra Batajù with whom he learned the sitar and Indian music, along with Robert Andrée, he practices double bass, along with the study of jazz at the CIM. He knocks on the door of Allain Gaussain with whom he studied composition, writing and analysis and then he joined Michel Zbar's class of electroacoustic composition.

From 1991 to 2011 he composed many musics for several orchestras, electroacoustic pieces and film soundtracks, most recently Dubai Flamingo Delphine Kreuter, feature film produced by Paulo Branco.

Also very invested in the improvised stage he met many musicians, defending this practice around the globe and increasing its interventions in many European festivals of contemporary art galleries or other places more underground. Since 2005 he is also leading master classes and improvisation workshops.

He did not neglect his other artistic areas of investigation, visual arts (painting, photography and sculpture) and writing a resolutely contemporary and tense prose.

Finally, the video - or to use his words - the audiovisual composition is for him, since 2003, a logical outcome of its work, both as sound, visual and semantics. These compositions are made for "traditional" projections in video, film, digital or multimedia art festivals as well as art galleries. Some of them are destined for decline in performance, installations and photographic exhibitions.

"... The interpenetration of these different disciplines and the influence of each other, the identification of non-translatability of an art in a different and the manifest complementary of their respective fields ..." Are at the heart of the concerns of Frederick Galiay.



JEAN-SÉBASTIEN MARIAGE

Born in Paris in 1973 and grew up in suburban middle class, that's on clotheslines in the back yard that Jean-Sébastien Mariage introduced to the guitar, well before the transmutation of his BEPC in black Stratocaster, changed quickly for the Gibson Les Paul that he has not dropped since. At the age of 17 and up to his 23, he follows the improvisation workshops of the man he still considers as his music master, Patricio Villarroel. In his brief stint at the Sorbonne (musicology), he will mostly retain , during the lessons of acoustic, recordings of songs of Amazonian Indians or Vatican bells: in parallel the true musical adventure began - first job at the age of 19 with a dance company, then meeting Frederick Galiay at 20, bassist with whom he founded Chamaeleo Vulgaris, and first concerts at the "Instants Chavirés", the main club for improv in Paris. He plays on many other scenes, and then decides to studie classical guitar for six years.

Then he realizes two dozen recordings and hundreds of concerts, in solo and in various formations of free improvisation, free rock or free jazz or noise, including the still active Hubbub (since 1999, with quintet F. Blondy on piano, E. Perraud on drums, B. Denzler and JL Guionnet on saxophones), Baise En Ville (since 2002, with singer N. Muslera) Wiwili (since 2003, with Charles X. on vibrating surfaces , H. Gudin on guitar and M. Deltruc on drums), X_Brane (since 2004, with B. Gauguet on saxophones and M. Pontévia on horizontal drums), Suce Pas Ton Pouce, J'Ai Mieux (since 2006, with D. Chiesa on bass and M. Radke on drums) and Oort (2008, on acoustic guitar, with D. Chiesa on bass). Collaborations with dance (Karol Armitage and Yukiko Nakamura), drama, poetry and visual art. In short, a career, it depends, purist or monomaniacal: there has never been, and there will never be, no doubt, only the guitar, he knows only that but knows all of that - especially what only him can do. Namely: calmly, with authority, make emerge from chaos a material and accept it anyway, even welcome it, and conscientiously work on it, polish it or whatever but always to the maximum, and then suddenly give it back. Leave the land. Rip time.