

MADENSUYU, THE NEW ONE

Twice I have seen the inside of their rehearsal space. Each time it felt like a privilege to me, as if I had entered a sanctuary. The first rehearsal room was a garden shed somewhere in the west end of the city Ghent. The second room was part of a transformed stable on a farm in the country. Immediately, I recognized the perfectly organized clutter, half full ashtrays, the empty beer cans and the penetrating smell of creative thinking. A shed where boys feel at home and girls are not tolerated. Or maybe only sometimes during the endless conversations concerning them.

To make music that hits you like a sledgehammer in slow motion, to play one or at most three strings of a guitar, to hold two drumsticks and to own a voice that seems to have carried many lives... Il faut le faire. Pieterjan once gave me a pair of his used drumsticks. Two shattered and splintered pieces of wood, that was all there was left of them after one of their concerts.

MADENSUYU's music is not definable in words in search for styles or references. It's just MADENSUYU. Perhaps it's the fruit of the very accidental and unique meeting of two guys, out of seven billion people, who stick in each other's minds. Let us make music together, they must have said, with an arrogance that is typical for their age and a belief that they possibly might be able to add a god damn thing to the enormous history of music. To that strange history of combining notes and sounds...

No sooner said than done, they released "ADJUST WE" (2005) – "A FIELD BETWEEN" (2006) – "D IS DONE" (2008) and "STABAT MATER" (2013). With only those albums, the duo climbed up and along the way, they became a reference for many people.

They stayed loyal to the Ghentian device 'nie pleuje, nie neute' (keep on going and no complaining) and they did everything themselves, even filling up the albums... with a piece of reinforcing steel, a palm tree leaf or something they found in their electricity toolbox...

And now there is CURRENT, their latest album.

During the course of their lives, the two had to overcome some serious obstacles. The Great Doubts, bringing new life into this world, getting older, not being able to live off their passion, probably not even wanting to only live off their passion, pulling each other from the dirt, crying and laughing their heads off at the same time, condemning creation, irritating one another or wasting time together, or, on the contrary, getting excited about each other's ideas... So you can hear all of this and a lot more on their latest album.

For the first time, a classic piano has been introduced on CURRENT. The piano could be Stijn's first love and it is probably the instrument that allows him to express himself at his best. But along the way the piano had also become a dark beast in his life. It's a long and personal story that doesn't need explaining, you can feel it somewhere in the MADENSUYU music. Something like this will – just like every other trauma that is swept under the carpet – eventually burst out through some kind of crack. Now it's time to tame the beast.

I know Pieterjan partly, because he's my cousin (one hell of a cousin!). I never really understood where he got infected by the drumming virus, but I always looked at and listened to his talent with open eyes and wide open mouth. When he plays, there is so much power breaking out of this man who actually mostly shows kindness. This also goes for Stijn. Maybe their music became such a powerful statement because of this external softness?

Everybody is convinced that their sound is unique and deserves all the attention it gets, but for now MADENSUYU rather remains a band in the outlying areas of the Big Music Scene. Still, people from all over the world have been able to experience their music. The shows in Brazil, for example, will never be forgotten by both the audience and the band. Their goal is to reach and touch as many people as possible. But at the same time, MADENSUYU chooses not to give in to the current marketing strategies. Maybe this way they cut into their own flesh, but it could also be a strategy to guarantee a long, interesting and wayward artistic life.

Their live performances are legendary to those who ever attended them. You just can't go to a MADENSUYU concert and plan something else afterwards. You vibrate in what is going on and afterwards you can only order yourself a double whisky or take a ride in the dark... So let's go!

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