

# FFanzeen: Rock'n'Roll Attitude With Integrity

Through the writings and photography of Robert Barry Francos, a view of the arts and culture, including everyday life.

SATURDAY, MAY 4, 2013

## DVD Review: Einstürzende Neubauten: Live at Rockpalast 1990

Text © Robert Barry Francos / FFanzeen, 2013

Images from the Internet



### Einstürzende Neubauten: Live at Rockpalast 1990

Directed by Christian Wagner

MIG / WDR

71 min, 1990 / 2012

[MIG-music.de](http://MIG-music.de)

[MVDvisual.com](http://MVDvisual.com)

After watching a few of the German concert series Rockpalast releases, including artists from the British Isles and the US (many from Dixie territory), it almost seems strange to hear one from Deutschland, albeit not your typical band-next-door.

Recorded at the Philipshalle, in Düsseldorf, on November 24, 1990, it's fascinating to watch Einstürzende Neubauten (EN) - translated as Collapsing New Buildings - after having only heard them before (mostly on the classic 1984 ROIR cassette, 2 x 4).

Their sound has been called Industrial and Soundscapes, but it's

### Blog Archive

▼ 2013 (14)

▼ May (1)

DVD Review: Einstürzende Neubauten: Live at Rockpa...

► April (5)

► March (3)

► February (2)

► January (3)

► 2012 (36)

► 2011 (100)

► 2010 (151)

► 2009 (78)

► 2008 (70)

► 2007 (22)

### About Me

Robert Barry Francos  
Currently living in Saskatoon (email at RBF55@msn.com for address). From 1977-88, I used to publish a print version of a music magazine in New York called FFanzeen, which dealt with the wide-ranging independent music scene. I also photographed many bands from the period (and since). Now I write this blog, and have a column at jerseybeat (dot) com (slash) quietcorner (dot) html. And the beat goes on.

[View my complete profile](#)

[Some of my photos](#)

[Jersey Beat magazine](#)

[Life and Blog of Gary Pig Gold](#)

[Lethal Dose by Donna Lethal](#)

[Blitz! Magazine: Mike McDowell](#)

certainly more than that. There is a bit of No Wave thrown in there, and what makes *all* those descriptors inadequate is that there is so much more going on at the same time.

Right up front is Blixa Bargeld, the focal point and locus of the group. Looking a bit like a tall and lanky version of Dwight Frye, he appears as though he stepped out of an 18th Century romantic novel, with a touch of that Euro-Disco/goth black suit and Ziggy Stardust /Bowie-styled hair (sans the magenta). There is also just the hint of blue eyeshadow. He is the voice of EN, and that is not limited to his singing. And this is the part that makes me sad, as I don't *sprechen sie Deutsch*. Apparently, Bargeld is fascinated with the use of German, mixing old and new, making it into something else. You can tell *something* different is going on by the way he carefully pronounces each *wort*, as though trying to make sure the audience catches the differences. And yet, he is not unknown to make guttural screeches that sound like a pick running up and down an electric guitar string, or some pterodactyl shriek that makes the listener wonder how his throat can stand it. Yet, somewhere, I get the feeling that Bertolt Brecht is smiling.

The rest of the band is an odd mixture of images, as well as sounds. For example, the guitarist, Alexander Hacke, looks like he just stepped out of a '80s metal band, with long, flowing hair that he whips around. There are some metalish licks, for sure, but most of it is played atonally, in a purposefully disjointed and prepared way. Bassist Marc Chung, like Bargeld, dresses in the period this was film, in very neat, white shirt and a thin right tie of light-reflecting sequins. He excitedly jumps around the stage, and it's pretty obvious he is having a blast. He seems the least "serious" of the bunch, and derives pleasure out of the moment.

There are two percussionists (I honestly don't know which is which, though I could probably look it up...), are fascinating to watch, but not always painless to hear. Using ordinary (e.g., shopping carts) and custom-made devices they designed themselves, they bash and crash objects against other objects, and for one instrument, bang and slide metal pieces along another metal trough, making a screeching sound reminiscent of fingers on a blackboard. Over and over again. You really have to be game for this stuff.

Obviously, I couldn't really tell you song contents, and even if I could, as I said, there is the inside language references and context that would be lost if one were to just transpose the lyrics from the original to English. For example, the opening of "Der Tod Ist Ein Dandy" (Death is a Dandy) is translated as "Lung trains deep into space / No nags, no mare / As the knight in the game of games... / Death is a dandy on a horse." Let me say it for you, in the clearest way I can: whaaaa?

Many of the songs represented here, such as the one above and "Armenia," exemplifies the historical catalog of the group, from its beginning in 1980, a full decade before this was recorded, and apparently EN are still going with more than 25 full length albums released. As par with the Rockpalast series, the image is clear and the sound is exceptional, which is actually quite important when dealing with such unconventional musical conglomerations as EN posit.

[Tom Bingham's blog](#)

[G-Mole: Bruce Farley Mowat](#)

[Suburban Voice: Al Quint](#)

[Blog of Lance Strate of General Semantics/Media Ecology Association](#)

[Who Really Cares blog of Craig Davison](#)

Now, I have to say that if I had my choice between a nose band like EN and a Euro-disco genre - even a classic like Kraftwerk - I'd go for EN any day. I may not understand what the hell it's about, but you can tell the earnestness of it.

While there aren't really any extras to speak of, this does also include a second disc that is the CD of the show. Nice touch.

#### **Band**

Blixa Bargeld: Vocals/guitar/keyboard

Alexander Hacke: Guitar

N.U. Unruh: Percussion

FM Einheit: Percussion

Mark Chung: Bass

#### **Set List:**

*Prolog*

*Feurio*

*Der Tod Ist Ein Dandy*

*Sehnsucht*

*Armenia*

*Yu Gung*

*Zerstorte Zelle*

*Trinkled*

*Ich Bin's*

*Ein Stuhl in Der Holle*

*Der Kuss*

*Haus Der Luge*

*Kein Bestandteil Sein*

*Zeichnungen des Patienten O.T.*

*Sand*

*Letztes Biest Am Himmel*

Posted by [Robert Barry Francos](#) at [12:01 AM](#) 

Labels: [Blixa Bargeld](#), [Einstürzende Neubauten](#), [Eurodisco](#), [FFanzeen](#), [German music](#), [industrial music](#), [MIG Music](#), [MVD Visual](#), [no wave](#), [Robert Barry Francos](#), [Rockpalast](#)

Reactions:    interesting (0)    cool (0)    informative (0)