

It's just songs

The first interview after decades of absence. *Josephine Couteaux Renegade* spoke to world-famous Olympiade O.S.T.'s suspected mastermind *Olympiade*

For a shy guy, *Olympiade*, a.k.a. *iNi*, a.k.a. *Olympiade O.S.T.*, is pretty forthcoming. He's wearing a baseball cap, a scarf and sunglasses. Indoors. He's covered his face in a full beard, and places his hand in front of his mouth as he talks. But he does talk. *Olympiade* says *Comparing you to a summer's day*, the upcoming album, will be "about living life by all means". His last well-known record was *Sing me a song then*, a dark, mournful but hopeful work about „breaking up with some real big storys, one or two funerals and some guy called Richard“. This time, he's created a beautiful, cinematic epic that celebrates life and love as it contemplates loss.



Olympiade O.S.T.'s suspected mastermind Olympiade (archive picture)

There's a steady stream of cheeky or sarcastic lyrics for the cynical kids, too. [*"She says that she hates partys, too / so we take a ride to the party crew / she kills everybody with her gun / she's monkey funky."*] Using his cornucopia of basement toys, a hired orchestra and guests like some crazy French guy called *Pierrot Ritaline* and famous actress and singer *Claire Sinclär*, *Johnny Lee Lookgood*, the famous post-grunge-veteran-producer of *Olympiade O.S.T.*, mixed lo-fi basement sounds with big sweeping arrangements. Not much chance of a mainstream hit single like "Richard's song" this time but that's OK. *Olympiade* would rather be back in his house writing the next record anyway. *Comparing you to a summer's day* will be released this fall.

Josephine Couteaux Renegade: Are you a loner? *Olympiade*: Yeah. That's been said. I don't leave the house and I never have anyone over.

What do you do when you're not writing music? When you're making quadruple albums that Johnny has to edited down to double albums, there isn't time to have a life. You do that for years then look around and realize you don't have any friends. But I brought it upon myself. It's the price you pay.

This record actually sounds twinkly. What's the secret? There are some main ingredients for twinkliness. I got to warn you, it's not inexpensive, that's why I'm willing to import the wisdom because you have to be as rich as Johnny to pull it off. It's a combination of brass, rimshot, sampling and most of all an old kinda oversized reverb-machine, that Johnny has in his „labs“. Some of the songs are a sea of a mixture of all these things, especially reverb. Johnny's very into these so called „Hellverbs“ but they are difficult to find. One company in Austria still makes them, but they cost at least \$30,000.

How did you get to know Claire Sinclär? In spite of rumors saying that we made friends in Tokyo, wet actually met at Neil Young's house and made friends there. That sounds like I lead a more glamorous life than I really do. If you play the Lookgood-Grunge-Survivors-Benefit, you get to go to Neil Young's house. I did. Anyway.

What about working with Pierrot Ritaline? That was done through the mail. He's one of my very favourite artists ever. To have him involved in my thing was such a thrill. He makes his old Atari cry like a baby on the record and at the same time it kinda yells and stomps around. He didn't do anything I asked him to do. Which is exactly what you would want.

Will you tour? Now that you're out of the house and all... I don't think so. The thing I love to do more than anything is make records. Everything after that is pain and heartache. I want to just keep making them and not putting them out. That's my dream. If I cared enough, I could catalogue them all neatly and let someone else sort them out someday. I put them out because I have to. I have enough money now, but eventually I would run out. That's the one thing I haven't figured out about my plan.

Sam the Artist? Oh, yeah!

What does that mean? Well, in fact, he's awesome. One of the best visual-artists ever. Johnny once brought him to the Tequila-Bar-Studios. He had some strange kinda helmet with laser-beams. We had a few drinks. Next morning we found ourselves sitting on some copier, talking about the artwork for *Sing me a song then*.

Will he do the artwork for *Comparing you to a summer's day*? I hope so.

Talking about your songs: Why is there a „song“ at the end of EVERY title? First of all it'd be pretty absurd if not ALL of them were songs. Second, they ARE songs.

But there must be an idea behind all this... Well, yeah. Maybe. It all started with *Simple song*. It was the first „song“. And then we went on with this. Asking Johnny it's about making up a brand or something. One of his main commercial ideas is that you gotta be unique. Early Coca-Cola company said that everyone shall identify a coke-bottle in the dark. That's what Johnny's idea is all about. In a way. But it's also about reflecting what we're doing all the time: It's just songs.

What the hell is the „T“ (like in „Trying to make you smile for a second while you listen to this song“)? Lyrics that are easy to decrypt are kinda obsolete to me. This one is probably some experience I made and it has something to do with some T-alike roads somewhere in Manchester. And the danger and chances it bears. If you leave them.

Talking of enigmas: Who's Richard? He's a guy with a dog. But he's not famous. No story for you here. I'm sorry.

There's so many strange characters all over the place. Is Olympiade O.S.T. some kinda Mafia-alike? Well, in fact we're even more powerful than the Mafia. It has to do with Galactic-Records. We have our guys everywhere. Right now there's five of them observing us. Two for you and three for me. One by satellite.

One last question: „Where is the one, that you need the most, to show to yourself, to proof the fact, like you gotta know that you're still in love?“ I wish I knew. I've been searching on alligator-farms and all over Africa for some years. But so far... I don't know. Next question.

There's no next question. Let's get some coffee then.