

## VICE MAGAZINE (SPRING 2003) ON INSTITUT FUER FEINMOTORIK

Techno obviously has sucked for years now, so what's the best way to kill/reinvent the genre? Why by ripping those records off the turntable and playing the slipmats! The Institut Fuer Fienmotorik does this plus some. The 4 member German group improvises amazingly intricate patterns of clicks and thuds by using the mechanism of the turntable itself as a musical instrument.

What does it sound like? Well, I guess you could make comparisons with Thomas Brinkman, but that's not saying enough really. The IFF (as they will be hitherto known) has really been exploring the options of what a turntable can do. Pieces of metal and plastic rhythmically bash the tone arm; needles play paper, glass, and whatever they can find. They even figured out how to stretch rubberbands over the platter to allow the needle to "strum" them.

So what does it sound like? It's good! The chaotic mess of thumps and squeaks congeals into compositions that weave around each other like Bossanova and swing like Bassie. Yes, this is music not noise, and it's so good that you might actually want to listen to it more than once.

But the big question is; can you dance to it? IFF member Marc says: "Unfortunately, there are always just a few people who start to dance at our shows... but the few who start to dance freak out seriously!" I bet. Anyone hammered enough to pull out their glow sticks to this is just aching for a beating. This is music that, when you hear it, sounds important. This is the sound of one of those major gestures, something that inspires you to go out and use some gadget very inappropriately.

But don't be fooled, they don't have a stick up their ass. "Sometimes spectators take over at the turntables and mixers to try out themselves, which is ok. We like that. We are abetting this in a way as some of us always leave the table during performance to go to the bar etc. which makes it more relaxed, and we also like to put our set-up just in the middle of a venue-space, so people can come really close and see what's going on." And with a US tour in the works now for the fall, I'd say we might just get a chance to see for ourselves.

- Jason Forrest