

OFF Festival Katowice 2013: Musical Experiments by Stephen O'Malley

Spring is finally here, the flowers are blooming, the birds are chirping: it's the perfect time to announce that Stephen O'Malley, whom you may know from such projects as Sunn O))), KTL, and Khanate, will be curating one whole day at this year's Experimental Stage.

Stephen O'Malley is no stranger to any music fan brave enough to venture into the borderlands of extreme metal and avant garde. The artists he selects during his one-day stint as Experimental Stage curator should come as a surprise to no one. The concerts themselves, on the other hand, might come as quite a shock to many.

KTL

The curator of the Experimental Stage will make an appearance himself, naturally, performing in Katowice with the project known as KTL, in which he is joined by Vienna-based artist Peter Rehberg. The duo have spent the last six years and five records searching for disharmony in the kinds of sounds that unite fans of Fennesz, Merzbow, and Sunn O))). KTL melds the genres of drone, dark ambient, and noise into a new, unpleasantly majestic and disturbingly palatable form. You might leave this concert a different person.

Chelsea Wolfe

This Californian artist upholds the beautiful traditions of American folk, although she herself claims to draw inspiration from Russian singer-songwriters and Norwegian black metal. And you can definitely tell. Miss Wolfe can sing beautifully hypnotic and dark songs, but you'll tremble at the funereal atmosphere she conjures up and her distorted guitar will wrack your nerves. Her 2011 album *Apokalypsis* raised her up from the obscure corners of the underground music scene, while *Unknown Rooms: A Collection of Acoustic Songs*, which premiered last fall, confirmed just what an excellent and original Chelsea Wolfe is.

Bohren & der Club of Gore

This German band was founded nearly two decades ago by four extreme metal-loving musicians who wanted to play jazz. Or, more precisely, something like Black Sabbath meets Sade. The band is even more precise about its intentions: "The audience must have the feeling of being in a grave." That might sound like a bad joke, but there's no kidding around with Bohren & der Club of Gore. Their latest album to date, *Beleid*, was released on Mike Patton's Ipecac Records. Pitchfork calls them "the gentlest black metal band on earth," and we think they might be onto something.

Zeni Geva

The Japanese act Zeni Geva put all the legends of hardcore rock to shame when they redrew the borders of extreme music with their 1990 album *Maximum Money Monster*. They've only gotten better since. Produced by Steve Albini, their records are a unique avant garde cocktail of math rock, noise, and industrial with a pinch of madness, while the band's concerts are a

downright physical experience that tests the audience's endurance. Zeni Geva is now a rockstar duo: KK Null screams, plays the guitar, and mans the electronics, while the uncanny Tatsuya Yoshida (Ruins, Korekyojinn) drives this diabolic machine from behind the drums. You have to see this.

Circle

They call their music the New Wave of Finnish Heavy Metal, but if you think that's all there is to it, you couldn't possibly be more wrong. This Finnish band has played practically everything in the twenty-odd years since they've been together; their discography features an astounding thirty records (and that's just their studio albums – add to that over a dozen live releases and countless EPs), and spans everything from kraut, progressive, and noise rock to psychedelic and ambient music. We don't know what incarnation they'll appear in at the OFF Festival, but we're looking forward to the surprise.

Furia

Furia's brand of metal is black as coal. Nihil's suggestive lyrics are a paralytically explosive combination of naturalism and original metaphors. The members of this Katowice-based band are behind Poland's recent black metal renaissance, leading the way with such dramatic and genre-bending albums as *Grudzień za grudniem* and *Marzannie, Królowej Polski*. They're not about to win any mainstream music industry awards, and you're not going to hear them on the radio. If you don't have the guts to see a black metal show, this might be your only chance to confront your fears.

Piotr Kurek

The Great Electronic Musician from Warsaw, an original and versatile artist. We've already hosted him at the OFF Festival, where he performed with the project Piętnastka. This time we'll see what he has in store as a solo act and what hypnotic, fantastic sonic landscapes emerge from his vintage synthesizers.

Tickets are now available at the OFF Shop at the official festival website, as well as at Ticketpro.pl, eilet.pl and Empik stores in Poland, and internationally at seetickets.com and festicket.com.

Ticket prices:

- Three Day Pass with campsite: 190 zł
- Three Day Pass without campsite: 150 zł