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MERCREDI 20 JUILLET 2011

CENTRE PRESSE
DE QUOTIDIENS DE LA RÉGION

>> CD

L'Attirail : Wanted Men

C'est à un univers musical proche de Calexico et des B.O de Tarentino, que nous convie le groupe L'Attirail avec son 8e album : Wanted Men. Un road movie surréaliste dans le Grand Ouest, version western, avec des personnages hauts en couleur, pleins de méchants sans foi ni loi de la deuxième moitié du XIXe siècle... Un road movie qui pourrait aussi bien passer par le Grand Canyon, que la Vallée de la Mort, ou encore l'Europe, les Balkans, la Mer Noire, l'Asie Mineure. Le groupe formé par Xavier Demerliac en 1994 propose ainsi des voyages oniriques et des images qui défilent. Wanted Men fait la part belle à la guitare sous toutes ses formes, électrique et rugueuse, acoustique et veloutée. Le banjo tient souvent le second rôle en contrepoint. Ac-



WANTED M

L'ATTIRAIL

cordéon, ukulélés, flûtes, piano et batterie plantent le reste du décor. Comme toujours chez L'Attirail, un album très inspiré. C'est bon, très bon, tout simplement.

Chez Absilone/Socadisc



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LE TÉLÉGRAMME

La belle partition des festivals

La Bretagne des festivals a fait salle comble. Renforçant, du même coup, sa réputation festive. Certaines organisations, pour ne pas devenir victimes de leur succès, ont limité volontairement la jauge.

Photo F. Destoc



Avec 212.000 billets vendus pour la 20^e édition, les Vieilles Charrues, à Carhaix, caracolent en tête. La fête !

Les éléments pourront se déchaîner, ils n'arriveront jamais à refroidir la fièvre festive bretonne.

Pas la course au chiffre

Les organisateurs des Vieilles Charrues, qui caracolent en tête de sillon, ont vendu cette année 212.000 billets pour la 20^e édition. Ils ont promis qu'ils n'iraient pas au-delà. « On ne fait pas la course au chiffre, explique Jean Philippe Quignon, le coprésident. On ne veut pas perdre notre âme. »

Le **Festival de Cornouaille**, aussi, affiche une belle santé avec 58.000 entrées comptabilisées pour les spectacles payants. Dépassant les précédents

records. À noter aussi, les quelque 30.000 personnes qui ont assisté aux défilés de la journée de clôture.

« Il faut préserver l'esprit artisanal »

À Lorient, on avance le chiffre de 700.000 visiteurs pour le Festival interceltique. 93.500 billets ont été vendus pour les spectacles. Seul bémol, la seconde Nuit interceltique a dû être annulée pour cause de pluie.

À Paimpol, plus de 140.000 visiteurs ont foulé les pavés du port pour le Festival du chant de marin et des musiques des mers du monde.

Le Bout du Monde, sur la presqu'île de Crozon, avec 60.000 fes-

tivaliers, n'est pas en reste. Les organisateurs, qui ont limité l'accès au site, se méfient du gigantisme. « Il faut préserver l'esprit artisanal et les bonnes conditions d'accueil », précise Jacques Guérin, le grand gourou de ce rendez-vous des musiques du monde.

Le week-end dernier, sonnaient les premières notes de la troisième édition de la Fête du bruit dans Landerneau. Un festival qui monte. 26.000 spectateurs sont venus applaudir Moby, Amy Mac-Donald ou encore Simple Minds. Dans le même temps, à Saint-Malo, s'ouvrait La Route du Rock. Malgré la pluie battante, qui a douché le site, samedi, 20.000 spectateurs ont été

accueillis sur trois jours.

Entre Terre et Mer : une première à succès

Le patrimoine rural et maritime a attiré beaucoup de monde dans son sillage. Ainsi, plusieurs dizaines de milliers de visiteurs ont côtoyé marins et paysans sur les quais morlaisiens pour la première édition du Festival Entre Terre et Mer. Une fête qui a rassemblé 400 agriculteurs et 300 voiliers traditionnels.

L'an prochain, les records de fréquentation devraient exploser avec Les Tonnerres de Brest 2012, le grand rassemblement de la voile classique et des gens de mer, qui se tiendra du 13 au 19 juillet.

l'ena

hors les murs

Magazine des Anciens Élèves de L'ENA

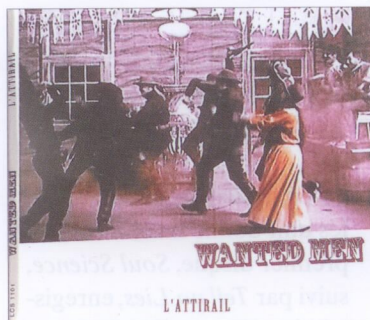
Juillet-Août 2011

■ WESTERN GUITARE

L'ATTIRAIL

Wanted Men

(Réf. : LCS 1101 – Les Chantiers sonores – Absilone – Socadisc – Juillet 2011)



En constante évolution depuis ses débuts, le collectif *L'Attirail* ne cesse de nous étonner. A l'origine faisant la part belle aux rythmes balkaniques et aux mélodies décalées, avec notamment *La bolchevita* en 2002, *La Bonne Aventure* en 2004⁷ ou encore *Kara Deniz* en 2007⁸, il a su constamment renouveler le concept d'une musique avant tout visuelle, faite de voyages oniriques et à contre-courant. Autant de *road movies* surréalistes, nous entraînant dans le Grand Canyon, la Vallée de la Mort, ou encore les Balkans, la Mer Noire et l'Asie Mineure. Ayant souvent changé de musiciens depuis l'album fondateur, *Musiques des Préfectures Autonomes* (1996), le quintette de Xavier Demerliac est désormais composé de Xavier Milhou à la contrebasse, Sébastien Palis à l'accordéon, Alexandre Michel

à la flûte, à la clarinette et aux percussions, ainsi que d'Eric Laboulle à la batterie.

Après *Wilderness*, sorti en 2009, il nous propose aujourd'hui un deuxième volet centré sur le Grand Ouest américain. Dans un univers musical proche de Calexico⁹ et des B.O. des films de Quentin Tarantino, *Wanted Men* dresse le tableau de personnages hauts en couleur et souvent sans foi ni loi de cette seconde moitié du XIX^e siècle : ces méchants qui ont inspiré nombre de westerns. Fascinés par l'or, roublards, sans parole, prêts à trahir, sales, violents et portés sur l'alcool, ils réussissent l'exploit d'être passés de véritable fléau pour leurs contemporains à mythe fondateur d'une liberté disparue pour une nation qui contrôle désormais l'ensemble de son territoire.

Constitué de dix-sept pièces instrumentales, *Wanted Men* emprunte les routes mythiques et poussiéreuses que les cow-boys ont su tracer sans relâche. La guitare est reine de cette célébration, que ce soit sous sa forme électrique et rugueuse ou acoustique et veloutée. Le banjo tient souvent le second rôle, en contrepoint, et accordéon, ukulélés, flûtes, piano et batterie plantent le reste du décor. Les différents morceaux racontent plusieurs histoires : l'ultime nuit d'un homme encerclé par ses anciens associés (*Goosebumps*), la petite ville typique de l'Ouest américain avec sa rue principale façon western (*Mariposa*), l'orchestre imaginaire du fameux Wild Bill Hickok, shérif et bagarreur mort lors d'une partie de poker à Deadwood (*Will Bill Band*), la montagne mexicaine et ses chercheurs d'or polonais (*La Sierra Polka*), la traditionnelle bagarre en sortant du saloon (*Trouble in main street*), le pactole rêvé du coffre fort (*Bonanza in the strongbox*) ou encore la mélancolie du vieux de la vieille perdu dans les souvenirs de sa splendeur (*The stager spleen*). Musique d'image ou images de musique, *Wanted Men* reconstitue l'ambiance des canyons

et des saloons avec passion et réalisme, mais sans copier l'abondante musique existant à ce sujet. Il en résulte un nouveau *road movie* plein de saveur, dont les frontières sont sans cesse repoussées et où s'invitent cactus, rocailles, mexicains, bons, brutes et truands... L'ailleurs demeure la quête éperdue de *L'Attirail* qui se situe au-delà de la tradition, avec un *melting pot* au carrefour de l'hacienda et du ranch, sans que l'on puisse vraiment dire si l'on est en Amérique. Mais c'est peut-être justement là-bas qu'il est possible de toujours réinventer les mythes fondateurs d'une société paradoxalement autant conservatrice qu'innovante ! ■

Arnaud Roffignon
Averroès 2000

Christophe Jouannard

7 - Cf. Ena Hors les Murs, novembre 2004.

8 - Cf. Ena Hors les Murs, mai 2007.

9 - Originaire de l'Arizona, Calexico oscille entre mariachis, musique planante et alternative country.

L'ATTIRAIL AND OTHER PARAPHERNALIA

BY ROGER HOLDSWORTH



Some noise from the hallway led me to open the door. And there was Xavier Demerliac, searching for the apartment number, but now beaming at me, raising his hat in greeting. He'd walked across Paris (despite the Metro stop under the building) and climbed five floors, ignoring the elevator. "I'm a little claustrophobic", he shrugged.

L'Attirail, the band that Xavier leads, has been one of my quiet obsessions for many years. I was first attracted by an early CD in a Parisian record store, entranced by the old images of a vanished Soviet Union: the broad and smiling faces, classic monuments, abandoned and rusted ships on Uzbeki sand, a past that had been stranded by the retreating Aral Sea. I'd continued to scour Paris' diminishing secondhand CD stores and built a small collection of L'Attirail's strangely wonderful albums. L'Attirail, by the way, translates as 'paraphernalia' or 'tackle' – I assume in the sense of 'fishing tackle'.

"I wanted to make a bridge between European music – occidentale, French, English music – and Eastern European music," explained Xavier.

"In the 1990s, French people didn't know the music of Eastern Europe well, and my idea was to make one music that permitted people here to have a new approach to this music. That was the first idea of L'Attirail."

My research into the band had indicated that this was early in 1994, when Xavier and a colleague founded L'Attirail 'on the road', a spontaneous decision to create a band (initially accordion and guitar, then adding percussion) that 'mingled rock n roll energy and the influence of the festive music of Central Europe'. Their 'Balkan-Parisian' trio was launched that year in the Alibi Bar in the 18th *arrondissement*.

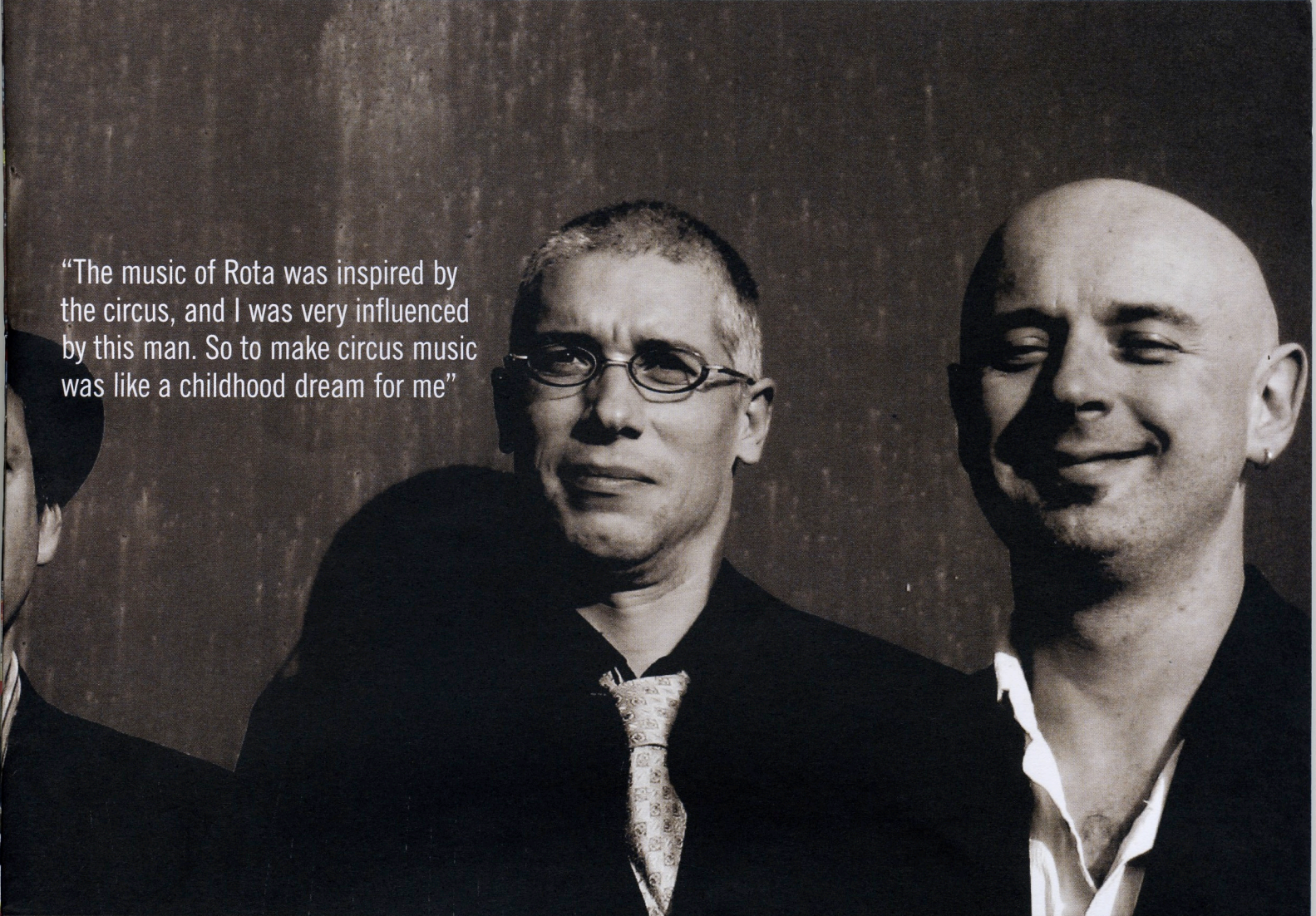
I'd now arranged to meet Xavier on the Boulevard St Germain in the Left Bank, to find out where this music came from. Was he listening to and collecting original music during these travels, or was he sitting at home with the CDs that he enjoyed?

"Both," he said. "When I was young (in my 20s and 30s) I listened to a lot of music from all over the world. Then I said: 'I think I have heard enough music now; it's time for me to make music.' When I was 28, I went to Russia and

took the Trans Siberian train: Paris to Moscow and after that, Moscow to Peking on the train. It was nice travel – very aesthetic for me. In the first CD of L'Attirail, I made a lot of recordings during my travels on the train: the people on the train and the railway stations, in the streets, of markets in the streets. I put people in that ambience. It's easier for me to write a story afterwards. For me, it's more important to have a lot of images, landscapes. It's my way to imagine music. I like musical travel – it's in my mind you know."

Those early recordings attracted global interest, and (unbeknownst to me) Xavier had also been in contact with Melbourne-based Tatar singer, Zulya – and they'd admired each other's work.

Following the early Russian influenced CDs (through to *La Bolchevita*, 2002), the Turkish influenced *Kara Deniz (Black Sea)* came to my attention. I think I heard that album just after I'd been to Turkey for the first time myself, and the street sounds and the music were both Turkish, but also impressionistic of the experience of the traveler – and particularly attracted me for that reason.



“The music of Rota was inspired by the circus, and I was very influenced by this man. So to make circus music was like a childhood dream for me”

“Yes, but I have a confession for you: I never went to Turkey,” Xavier laughed. “I like this country, but I never went. I like the Black Sea – and I’ve seen a little part of the Black Sea – but Istanbul, never, never. But I am not too old; I hope I will go soon to Turkey and Istanbul.”

Most recently, the last two L’Attirail albums have moved their inspiration and focus to the other side of the world – to the American west.

“After ten years of the music of Eastern Europe,” Xavier explained, “I said: ‘It’s time now to do other things for my mind. I want to travel in other places now for two or three years.’ I like the beginning of the United States of America. You know, a lot of European people went to America in the nineteenth century, a lot of French, German, English and Irish people. But it wasn’t just interesting for me to think about that, but also the beginning of this new nation. I like those old people too, Indians and Mexicans who were in this place before. Another thing that was very important for me is that it’s a big landscape. My mind likes that, to have a horizon. Your eyes don’t see the end. For me that’s very important. I live in such a landscape in France, I see very far away. I like big skies

and I like the wind, where the clouds are very speedy. The sky changes very quickly, so you can *respirer* – breathe.”

Xavier’s hands sketched this expansive space, and I wondered if he saw the music he created in visual terms.

“Yes I think you’re right,” he replied. “I see the music and I have a lot of images for it. I make a story without words. It’s like a movie for me, it’s like ‘world movies’. I also make a lot of movie music and that’s the same for me. I like music and images together.”

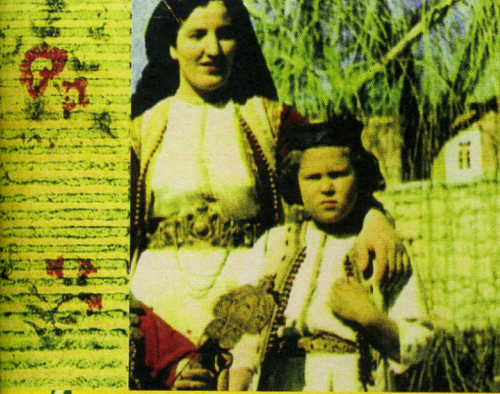
As well as the band L’Attirail and the movie scores he produces, Xavier works musically with the circus.

“Six years ago I made a circus cabaret where we mixed the music of L’Attirail and acrobatics. It was a very good experience for me, to work with a real circus, like the *Cirque d’Hiver* in Paris or the *Cirque Jules Verne* – it’s the same ambiance. I like the music of Nino Rota, who was the composer for Fellini’s films. The music of Rota was inspired by the circus, and I was very influenced by this man. So to make circus music

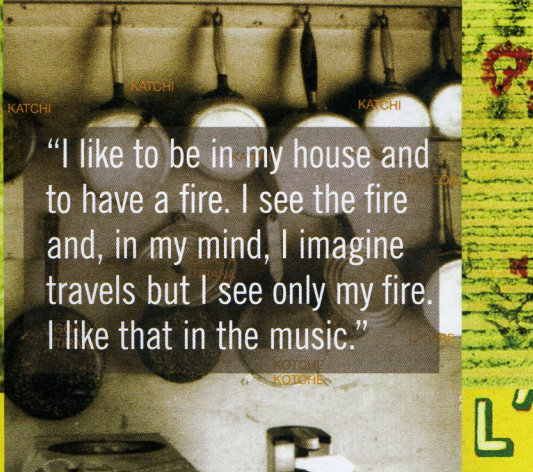
was like a childhood dream for me.”

Was this Xavier’s childhood ambition: to make music?

“When I was a child, I made music like everybody – at the Conservatoire in Brittany (because I was young in Brittany). I didn’t intend that it would be my work afterwards – I didn’t know. I studied in Economics in Paris afterwards, with no rapport with music. Then I was a teacher of Economics, but I stopped brusquely at 30 years of age and said, ‘I don’t want to do that work now; I want to make music.’ I had worked for years and had some money to live for two years. So I said, ‘I have two years to make a good project, a good CD’, and in two years (in 1996) I made the first album for L’Attirail – that was *Musiques des Préfectures Autonomes*. It was my first CD; I was totally unknown at that moment. I posted the album to all the newspapers in Paris – and all of them published articles on it. I said, ‘It’s incredible; they liked my work! It’s easy to make music!’ That was the beginning. After that I became a real musician and have earned my living with music.” >



L'ATTIRAIL



"I like to be in my house and to have a fire. I see the fire and, in my mind, I imagine travels but I see only my fire. I like that in the music."

L'ATTIRAIL AND OTHER PARAPHERNALIA

But L'Attirail is not just Xavier Demerliac.

"On the first album there were four musicians. I worked a lot with Jean-Stephane Brosse at the beginning of L'Attirail. We worked on the compositions together. But afterwards Jean-Stephane stopped because he didn't want to make his life with music. I respect that, I am not a born musician, I have had a lot of jobs before – and perhaps I will have many after! Now L'Attirail has had the same line up for ten years. Alexandre Michel plays clarinet and bass clarinet and monochord. That's an instrument from Vietnam with only one string. In Vietnamese it's a *dan bau*. It's a very interesting instrument and we put a lot of effects on delays. People don't know where this instrument comes from – it's strange. I like that because I like global music where you don't know where the influence comes from. We have Sebastien Palis on accordion and little clarinet – smaller than the classical clarinet. Xavier Milhou on contrebasse, and Eric Laboulle on drums. And me, I play guitars, trombone, tuba and other stringed instruments, banjo, saz. But I am not a specialist on these instruments."

What attracted him – and other members of L'Attirail – to create their particular sound?

"I like to test the sonorities of instruments. That's very important for me. When we make instrumental music – no songs, no words – we have to have a lot of sonorities. Then I can make a mixture, like cooking you know, you have a lot of spices, and for each song you have a particular mixture. Each song has to be different in sound."

Again we came to those analogies; between food and travel and music.

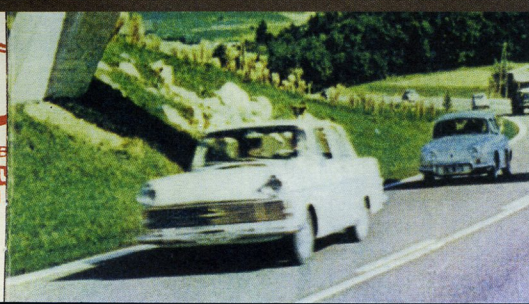
"You know," Xavier concluded, "I think I am like an old traveler from the 19th Century. In my mind I am like a 19th Century journalist – someone who didn't know the world very well, but they're *imagining* this world. With their minds they travel. I like this idea of traveling with your mind where you create for yourselves the smells and the sounds of travel. It's a construction, a multi-construction in your mind. I like to be in my house and to have a fire. I see the fire and, in my mind, I imagine travels but I see only my fire. I like that in the music. It has a capacity to teleport you – to put yourself outside of your own world. I like that capacity of music."

We may have to be content with those imaginary travels of L'Attirail. Xavier's claustrophobia perhaps renders it unlikely that we will see them encased in a plane for the 24 hour trip to Australia. However, we can hitch-hike with Xavier Demerliac's imagination through the diverse sounds of the worlds that L'Attirail explores. ■

For further information about L'Attirail visit chantiers.sonores.free.fr

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