

Irmin Schmidt & Kumo



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BIOGRAPHY

Irmin Schmidt & Kumo's first album, *Masters of Confusion* released in 2001, was born out of the studio work around Irmin Schmidt's fantasy opera *Gormenghast* when Kumo, a.k.a. producer, programmer and sound-designer Jono Podmore, was drafted in in 1997 on the recommendation of manager and impresario Jazz Summers to assist Schmidt with the creation of the work. The duo, who make an intense and unique form of music that feeds off their respective musical histories, first played live on the Can-Solo-Projects tour which marked the 30th anniversary of the group, and have since continued to play live regularly. In 2001 they created the multi-channel sound installation *Flies, Guys and Choirs* as a commission for the Barbican Centre in London. They are currently working on a second album - which will include a 5.1 surround sound DVD of *Flies, Guys and Choirs* - due for release in Summer 2007.

Irmin Schmidt's work with the seminal and highly respected Can is well documented, but between 1957 and 1964, Schmidt studied piano and french horn, composition under Ligeti and Stockhausen alongside conducting with Istvan Kertesz amongst others. As a conductor he won several prestigious awards including the Folkwang Leistungs-Preis in 1963 and the 1st Prize at the Mozarteum, Salzburg in 1964.

Between 1962 and 1969 Schmidt conducted numerous orchestras including Wiener Sinfoniker, Bochumer Sinfoniker, Radio-Sinfonie-Orchester Norddeutscher Rundfunk Hannover and the Dortmunder Ensemble für Neue Musik which he founded. Schmidt also gave numerous new music recitals and was amongst the first German pianists to interpret the work of John Cage.

His compositions *Hexapussy* and *Ilgom* were premiered in 1967 and 1968 by Radio Stuttgart. He worked as a musical director at the Stadttheater Aachen and taught at the Bochum stage school. He also composed music for various film and theatre productions.

His post-Can work includes three solo albums (*Toy Planet*, *Musk at Dusk* and *Impossible Holidays*), 120 film scores (20 of which in the last 4 years alone), the three CD anthology *Soundtracks 1978-1993*, the opera *Gormenghast* and *Masters of Confusion* with Kumo. Throughout this body of work, Schmidt continues his habit of making music that embraces all forms while sounding like nobody else.

The fantasy opera *Gormenghast* premiered in the Wuppertal Opera House in 1999. A second production premiered in Saarbrücken and Luxembourg in 2004.

Times critic Rodney Milnes wrote about Schmidt's opera: "If Richard Strauss had written rock music, this is what it would have sounded like - gloriously, unashamedly lush." Excerpts were released as a CD in January 2000 (Spoon 44).

Schmidt is currently composing a Ballet for full orchestra, commissioned by the Ballett der Deutschen Oper Am Rhein Düsseldorf. Choreographed by Youri Vamos, the ballet is scheduled to be premiered in Düsseldorf, Duisburg, Tallin, Prague and Riga throughout 2008.

Jono Podmore was born in Liverpool in 1965 and began to play violin at the age of 10. He left Liverpool to study electronic music at Middlesex University in 1983. By 1986 Podmore was composing music for theatre and TV (Eugene Ionesco's **Journeys Among The Dead** and **Stanley's Vision** for Channel 4) and together with Peter Hope released the album **Dry Hip Rotation**.

In 1987 Podmore joined The Corn Dollies as violinist and string arranger. Following the split of the band in 1990, he went to Japan to continue his studies in Karate. On returning to London he began working as an engineer, producer and string arranger with artists such as Jamiroquai, The Shamen, Jhelisa, Ian McCulloch, Robert Owens, D*Note, Republica, Sunship, A.P.E. and Kid Loops whilst continuing to compose and produce music for stage and screen.

In 1994, together with Mr. C of The Shamen, he set up Watershed Studios and began to work with Plink Plonk Records. Podmore also started to compose and record under the name Kumo and founded 2 sister labels to Plink Plonk: Autoi (Drum n' Bass) and Psychomat (Abstract Beats/Trip Hop). After a string of singles and remixes as Kumo, March 1997 saw the release of his first album **Kaminari** - to significant critical acclaim. A series of live shows and DJ gigs followed, including the Essential Music Festival in Brighton, the Sonar festival in Barcelona, and the Graz Biennale in Austria. 1997 was also the year that Podmore moved temporarily to France to work with Irmin Schmidt on the **Gormenghast** project - which led to **Masters of Confusion**.

Alongside **Masters of Confusion**, Jono has continued his work as producer, engineer, programmer and arranger with artists such as Tim Simenon a.k.a. Bomb The Bass, José Padilla (Cafe del Mar compiler and DJ), Jaki Liebezeit, Corker Conboy and many others. He also worked on a number of film and TV productions including **The Hamburg Cell** by Antonia Bird and wrote orchestral arrangements for the film **Drei Grad Kälter** (Silver Leopard at the 58th Locarno Film Festival 2005) performed by the Nüremburg Sinfoniker.

Kumo's 2nd album **1+1=1** was released in 2000 on Spoon Records as part of the Can Connection Edition series, followed by the **Kumo and Friends** EP on Electric Tones records (2003) and a collaboration with BJ Cole on the album **Trouble in Paradise** (2004).

He worked closely with Spoon records on the **Can DVD**, remixing Can in 5.1, producing the **Can Solo Projects** CD, and remastering the entire Can back catalogue

In November 2004 Jono was appointed Professor of Popular Music at the Köln Musikhochschule (Cologne University of Music) where he runs regular practical workshops ranging from dub reggae to music business, composing for film to house music

As work began on the 2nd Irmin Schmidt and Kumo album, the duo also made remixes (incl. P.I.L.); performed live and gave workshops in Germany and Portugal; and, produced the album **dot i/o** for Japanese artist Mito Ichikawa.

Other recent and ongoing work includes: composition for the series of art installations **Tatlin's Tower and the World**; mixing the debut albums of Sun Zoom Spark and Icelandic artist Biggi Orn Steinarsson; mixing jingles for FIFA for the 2006 World Cup; recording an album with Thai band Futon in Bangkok; studio and live work with U.K label City Rockers; and new series of recordings with Jaki Liebezeit.

In February 2007 Irmin Schmidt & Kumo composed the music for German film **Einsatz in Hamburg**.

IRMIN SCHMIDT & KUMO - CONCERTLIST (extract)

BERLIN - COLUMBIAHALLE, **HAMBURG** - GROÙE FREIHEIT, **COLOGNE** - PALLADIUM, **FRANKFURT** - JAHRHUNDERTHALLE, **KÖLN** - POPKOMM KICK ZONE, **DUBLIN** - TRANSISSION FESTIVAL, **DEN HAAG** - CROSSINGBORDER FESTIVAL, **LONDON** - BARBICAN HALL - QUEEN ELIZABETH HALL LONDON JAZZ FESTIVAL, **AMIENS** FESTIVAL DE JAZZ, **BARCELONA** - SONAR, **DÜSSELDORF** - FESTIVAL ALTSTADT-HERBST, **GENT** - NOVEMBERFESTIVAL, **ESSEN** - NOVEMBERFESTIVAL, **s'HERTOGENBOSH** - NOVEMBERFESTIVAL, **NANTES** - OBLIQUE LU NIGHTS, **BOURGES**, CATHEDRALE DE BOURGES AU PRINTEMPS DE BOURGES, **BOLOGNA** - LINK, **TRIEST**, **MONTREUX** - JAZZFESTIVAL, **LILLE/TOURCOING** - LE GRAND MIX, **STRASBOURG** - FESTIVAL MUSICA, **PARIS** - LA VILLETTE, **PORTO** - CASA MUSICA.....

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