

world culminating with the claustrophobic "Graveyard Breath", a track so panic-inducing it's guaranteed to bring sweat to your upper lip no matter what climate you happen to be listening in. Would I classify either *Loud As Laughter* or *The Next World* as something you'd want to take in before bedtime? Certainly not. But would I brand it required listening for those sleeping through our imminent demise? Most definitely.  
Tony Rettman

**Psychic Sounds Ensemble**

**Sonic Fermentations**

Psychic Sounds LP

**Million Brazilians**

**Strange Oasis**

Nonlocal Research CD/DL

**Urban Fossickated Octave**

Feeding Tube LP

I first became aware of Psychic Sounds and its orbiting belt of artists and labels when listening to Ambassador Dulgoon's *Hydrorion Remnants* at the end of 2018.

That record (reviewed in *The Wire* 418) turned exotica inside out, the dirt under its fingernails the result of grubbing around in rock pools and searching through long grasses for weird beasties. This most recent batch of releases – all of which feature Psychic Sound founder Grant Corum – takes that aesthetic and follows it into other, quite different places. *Sonic Fermentations* – split into "Batch 1" and "Batch 2" – is a brew of bubbling ingredients. My stepdad refers

to improvisation and free jazz as "fire in a pet shop music". To his ears, the squawks and scratches are reminiscent of a room full of animals flapping and stampeding to exit. If that's the case, he'd likely describe this recording as the sound of a fire in a laboratory, the elixir intoxicating as it boils over and spills, tempting the animals into horizontal sedation. *Strange Oasis* has a similar improvisational feel, but blown up and writ large. Each of the six pieces brims with



Worm charmers: Tears|Ov

**Tears|Ov**

**A Hopeless Place**

The Wormhole DL/LP

**Laura Agnusdei**

**Laurisilva**

The Wormhole DL/LP

**Jay Glass Dubs**

**Two Devotional Songs For Spacemen 3 In The Style Of Love Inc**

The Tapeworm MC

Celebrating its tenth anniversary in 2019, the London born, bred and based The Tapeworm label has stayed relevant while remaining true to its initial intention. Begun in Balham by three anonymous core members with their own creative industry day jobs, the prolific label has put out countless cassettes by Dale Cornish, Oren Ambarchi, Fennesz, Sharon Gal and more over the past decade. Right about the midway mark the collective diversified its output into vinyl and digital releases, but rather than compromise the initial intention of The Tapeworm – which was conceptually tied to the format it released on – they gave it another name. Along with their irregular and considerably less prolific Bookworm publishing series, The Wormhole sister label puts out complete works free from the small run restrictions of a physical, two-sided magnetic tape release and available (unlike The Tapeworm's cassettes) to stream through the internet.

Some artists though, are better heard in analogue. That's particularly true for Greek post-dub producer Dimitris Papadatos's Jay Glass Dubs project who has already released on cassette, not only through

The Tapeworm but other labels like Seagrave, THRHNDRDSVNTNN and Origin Peoples. It makes sense, given the somewhat overstated conceptual focus of Papadatos's "counter-factual" approach to the Jamaican rhythm. He once again reminds us that his interests lie in the methodologies, rather than the historical context of this sound – with which he initially engaged through Fugazi and Bauhaus rather than King Tubby or Lee 'Scratch' Perry. *Two Devotional Songs For Spacemen 3 In The Style Of Love Inc* presents more of the musique concrète exploration of the drum/bass/vocals/effects compositional form over two durational pieces that build upon – and are overcome by – their own haunting reverb and disintegrating echo. These sounds will only become more degraded on tape over time.

While the remit of what The Tapeworm, and by extension The Wormhole, is looking for seems rather broad, its output has managed to stay relatively cohesive. Along with recordings of a Derek Jarman interview and Ray Gallon's compositional documentary on Nam June Paik there's always been an multidisciplinary element to the kind of work it has released. That's reflected not only in its own cross-platform organisation but in the very names of its invertebrate branches touching on biology, astronomy and literature. That interrelationship between art and science is particularly apparent on two recent The Wormhole releases.

The Tears|Ov trio explores loss, grief and love through the structured improvisation of sound artist and media archaeologist Lori E Allen and illustrator

and prison psychotherapist Deborah Wale, along with cellist Katie Spafford. Initially a Tate commission for Wolfgang Tillmans's 2017 retrospective *A Hopeless Place* is developed from Allen's initial loops, field recordings and framework, which would then be deconstructed by the others' percussive, spoken word, sonic and musical contributions. These would ultimately become what Wale describes as its own sort of symphony, with a number of movements comprising a greater whole. Allen's signature broadcast excavations are cut up and reassembled along distorted synth lines on "I Stand On The Cable". A morose, screaming, squealing interlude on the hysterical "Dancing Without" echoes the eerie no wave and post-industrial collaboration of the likes of Einstürzende Neubauten and Lydia Lunch.

Laura Agnusdei's reinforcement of the mushrooming cross-disciplinary Tapeworm/Wormhole catalogue is reflected more in her choice of theme rather than her practice as an electroacoustic composer and saxophonist. "Epiphyte Blues", "Lungs Dance" and "Jungle Shuffle" rattle through bubbling synths and field recordings that reverberate with what the artist describes as her own "personal musical ecosystem". Inhabited by the resonant accents of Agnusdei's saxophone, along with additional wind instruments from Elisabeth Lusche, Giacomo Bertocchi and Thomas Reyna, the record bristles with the visceral, percussive energy of a space in constant motion in keeping with The Tapeworm's own broadly encompassing creative universe.  
Steph Kretowicz

Wolfgang Tillmans