

The Story of Stereo Total

The Beginning 1992-1994

In the winter 1992/93 Françoise Cactus and Brezel Göring met while shopping in a bakery in Adalbertstraße, Berlin. Françoise played in the French girl-garage-punk-R'n'R-Band Lolitas (they released 5 albums in Germany and France and toured all over Europe and America) and Brezel had the experimental-noise-copyright-ignoring-tape-loop-sound-effects project called Sigmund Freud Experience (they did 3 vinyl-records, 100 copies each). In 1993 they started playing together. Their first recording was a 10 minute cooking-recipe, in which all ingredients had sexual connotations. The recording is sadly lost. In 1994 Stereo Total started recording in Hamburg at the Alien Sound Studio of Peter Stein. They started to do concerts in Berlin and Germany. The line-up at this time was Françoise Cactus (vocals and drums), Lesley Campell (distortion guitar) from Scotland and Brezel Göring (vocals, guitar, organ, synthesizer). The logo of the band was two tits (shown on the backside of the first record "OH AH"). This sign was painted on a mix-tape Françoise made for Brezel that was named STEREO TOTAL. At this time it was impossible to find a label with this unusual mix of musical influences and languages: the band played French Chanson, Disco, Rockabilly, Garage in a very minimal, simplified, essential way with self built guitars and cheap electronics: the lyrics were French or German.

The first 45-EP 1995

In 1995 they released their first 4-track-EP: "Allô j'écoute", which came out on the small label Desert Records. (It is sad, but this was their only release). The songs were recorded in New Orleans by Alex Chilton, a friend of Françoise who had produced one album by her former band Lolitas. He also played the drums on one track. The Palestinian Iznogood came in the band and played bass-balls-bass.

Oh Ah 1996

January 1996 Stereo Total released their first album "OH AH" on the label Peace 95 on CD, the vinyl was on Little Teddy records. It featured recordings from 94 to 95 made at Alien Sound and a lot of 4-track home recording. The song "Dactylo Rock" (which featured a typewriter-solo) was released as a single with a video. The single had remixes from A CERTAIN FRANK, which has Pyrolator and Frank Fenstermacher from the legendary early 80ties children-electronics-band der Plan, which had a huge influence on Stereo Total), Alec Empire, Chrislo Haas (who was playing in Liaisons Dangereuses and DAF), Le Hammond Inferno, Poptarts and Sons of 68. Stereo Total started to do a long tour through Germany, Switzerland and Austria. After this tour the band split up, and once again it was only Françoise and Brezel, going on touring and recording new material.

Monokini 1997

"Monokini" came out in 1997. The press-info sounded like this: 40% Chanson, 20% R'n'R, 10% Punkrock, 3% DAF-Sequencer, 4% Jacques Dutronc-Rhythmique, 7% Brigitte Bardot and Serge Gainsbourg, 1,5% Cosmonaute, 10% really old synthesizers, 10% 8-bit Amiga-sampling, 10% transistor amplifier, 1% really expensive and advanced instruments. Françoise was singing in French, German, Italian and Japanese language. The record was released on the new label Bungalow and at the same time released in Japan by the label Appareil Photo. For the song "Schön von hinten" they made a video and remix-single that featured remixes by Momus & Laila France and Andreas Dorau & DJ IT& Michel. Françoise and Brezel did a one week Tour (6 concerts) in New York, where they played in the Other-Music-recordstore and on a French disco night in the world trade center. The tour was organized by the Vampyros Lesbos-DJ Franco. In Germany they formed a new live-band with Angie Reed on Bass-guitar and San Reimo on portable Keyboard and made a long tour on which they invited the Finnish bands Aavikko and Opel Bastards, and a tour through Scandinavia. At a theater in Berlin, the Volksbühne, Stereo Total showed the Jean-Luc Godard-Movie "Weekend" and played their own soundtrack to the movie live.

Jukebox Alarm 1988

In 1998 the record "Jukebox Alarm" came out. It was mixed and produced by Kurt Dahlke, aka Pyrolator, in Düsseldorf. For this record Stereo Total used a lot of home recording equipment and a big 16-bit-sampler, to cut up their 4-track and studio recordings. The result was a continuation of their

garage-"trash"-sound with new weapons. The record was released in Europe by Bungalow and in Japan by Appareil Photo. Stereo Total toured in Japan for the first time, and in Germany, Austria and Switzerland. In the USA the label Bobsled made a compilation of the first two Stereo Total-records, which was followed by a one-month tour.

My Melody 1999–2000

"My Melody", the 4th Stereo Total record, was put out in 1999. It was released in Europe (Bungalow) and America (Bobsled). Stereo Total started an extensive tour in the US and all over Europe (France, Italy, Spain, Scandinavia, England, Belgium...). After this the band split up, and once again it was only Françoise Cactus and Brezel Göring. Brezel started to build more instruments, making it easier for two people to play on stage. In 2000 Françoise issued a book - her third novel called "Zitterparties", after "Autobigophonie" and "Abenteuer einer Provinzblume". She did a reading-tour, on which Brezel accompanied her musically. Stereo Total also did another 4-week-tour in the US. In the Volksbühne Stereo Total presented a special evening about the French movie director Jacques Tati. They showed parts of his movies, played over the top, all in the full stage decoration of the movie "Mon Oncle". Françoise sang two songs on the record of the glamorous Khan.

Musique Automatique 2001-2004

Françoise and Brezel started recording again with the help of their producer Cem Oral, a half Turkish, half Finnish technical genius from the band Air Liquide, who focused the widespread ideas for the new record and gave the band a new sound - away from the home recording practice of the older records. The record came out in Europe at Bungalow/labels, in Japan at Avex and in America by Bobsled and was re-released after the split from Bobsled records on Kill Rock Stars. After the release Stereo Total - still a duo, like in the early days - began a 5 month tour, which started in the US, Canada, Mexico and went on all over Europe (France, Spain, Italy, Portugal, England, Belgium, Netherlands, Sweden, Norway, Czech Republic, Ireland, Germany, Austria, Switzerland) to Russia. They continued in 2002, and for part of the tour they played as a support act for the American band The Strokes. In Summer 2002, Stereo Total played Festivals all over Europe and were invited to play at the Gay Pride in Iceland. They made two singles and two videos for "Musique Automatique": "Liebe zu dritt" was made by Cabine, who also designed of the album cover, and "Wir tanzen im 4 Eck", which was made by Randy Kolbe. The singles featured remixes by Felix Kubin, Christopher Just, Jammin Unit, Candy Hank and Bis. In October Stereo Total played at the exhibition of Wolfgang Müller, member of the band Die Tödliche Doris, who released the song "Wir tanzen im 4-Eck" in 1982. The exhibition was about a invisible record by Tödliche Doris. It consisted of two records, released in 83, and when you play them at the same time, you will hear the third one. Françoise Cactus and Brezel Göring stood on two different stages. Each of them played the songs of one record live, and the audience in the middle heard the invisible record in total stereo. The "Weekend"-film and concert was shown again in France.

Do The Bambi 2005-2006

In 2005 STEREO TOTAL released "Do The Bambi", their first album on Munich-based label Disko B. Mixing romanticism, anarchy, happiness and mourning the 19 tracks of the self-recorded album are intimate, intense, amusing, agitating, furious and explosive at the same time. Stereo Total wanted to make something kitschy and fucked-up – and they succeed of course! The album was again released in Europe and America (by Kill Rock Stars) and was followed by several amazing tours and concerts in all parts of West and Eastern Europe, North and South America and – for the first time – China.

Paris-Berlin 2007

In cooperation with Bavarian Broadcasting, Stereo Total produced the radio play "Patty Hearst." 2 songs from the radio play can also be found on the Stereo Total album "Paris – Berlin," released in 2007. "Ich Bin der Stricherjunge," off the same album, became a veritable radio hit and the video (Dir. Sim Gil) won at the 2008 International Short Film Festival Oberhausen and at the MuVi Awards (Best Music Video).

From Spain to Canada 2008-2009

Stereo Total multilingual: the Madrid label Elefant released "NO CONTROLES," a Spanish language record. A purely French language record, "CARTE POSTALE DE MONTREAL," was released on

Dare To Care in Canada including, among their own classics, the Quebec hit "Illegal." Their cover version brought them the same success, and on their tour through Quebec they played the song countless times on radio and television programs.

Françoise Cactus had several exhibitions of her paintings, and in addition her life-sized crocheted doll Wollita has twice awarded the Wollita Art Prize. In the meantime, Brezel Göring was plumbing the extremes of high culture and subculture: on the high end with his electronic improvisations together with the Elbipolis Barock Orchestra and on the subcultural side with releases of the Punk/Electro bands Robotron and Dreipunktbande on his record label "Verboten in Deutschland." They were also touring: Australia and Europe, Chila, Moldavia, Russia, etc. and more unusual for Stereo Total, Gay Pride in Iceland.

Baby Ouh 2010-2011

"BABY OUH" was released in 2010 on Disko B and Kill Rock Stars; the album is glamorous, hysterical and romantic. As always after a release, an extensive, worldwide tour followed. A further highlight of the year: Stereo Total composed the soundtrack for the Japanese pink movie "Underwater Love." A pink movie is a very popular comedic genre in Japan in which the plot is constantly interrupted with explicit sex scenes. Very amusing...! The film did a successful round of the 2011 film festivals. Stereo Total played at film parties and Disko B released the soundtrack on vinyl.

Françoise Cactus und Brezel Göring traveled to Los Angeles twice during Spring and Summer and recorded a new album (Cactus versus Brezel) live onto tape with the producer Gus Seyffert (Black Keys, et al.)

Cactus versus Brezel 2012

"Die Frau in der Musik" is the first Stereo Total release on their new label Staatsakt, issued in the 7" vinyl format. The release of the album "Cactus vs Brezel" follows in June. Yeah, "diese Musik hört sich an!" ("This music sounds!"). The album will be also released by Kill Rock Stars in early 2013.

DISCOGRAPHY STUDIO ALBUMS

OH AH – Peace 95/Little Teddy (1995) / Re-Release Bungalow (1996) / Re-release Kill Rock Stars (2003)

MONOKINI – Bungalow (1997) / Re-release Kill Rock Stars (2003)

JUKE-BOX ALARM – Bungalow (1998) / Re-release Kill Rock Stars (2006)

MY MELODY – Bungalow (1999) / Re-release Kill Rock Stars (2006)

MUSIQUE AUTOMATIQUE –Bungalow/Labels/Virgin (2001) / Kill Rock Stars (2002)

DO THE BAMBI – Disko B / Kill Rock Stars (2005)

DISCOTHEQUE – Disko B – 2006

PARIS/BERLIN – Disko B / Kill Rock Stars (2007)

NO CONTROLES – Elefant (2009)

CARTE POSTALE DE MONTREAL – Dare To Care (2009)

BABY OUH – Disko B / Kill Rock Stars (2010)

CACTUS VS BREZEL – Staatsakt / Kill Rock Stars (2012)

www.stereototal.de