

When one's thoughts drift across the ocean to a place that the locals call Nippon, and the ideas of Nippon and Industrial collide in the brain, one finds a hard spot: "Tetsuo: The Iron Man" (1989), the classic work of art by the legendary director **Shinya Tsukamoto**. The mind then turns to that malevolent, metal, grinding soundtrack, thumping your nerves and unraveling them like so many red-hot steel chips from a machinist's lathe. The soundtrack is the perfect complement to the film. If you manage to find the disc of this movie, you'll find that the man responsible for the soundtrack came from the Tokyo underground. **Chu Ishikawa** has set a new soundtrack standard that few will ever hope to better. **Ishikawa** has written music for all the films of **Tsukamoto**, over many years, with throbbing, pounding, fevered, cataclysmic works. But lifting that curtain of steel chain, one finds a vibrant, innovative scene that reaches beyond what is customarily considered Industrial music and art by most westerners. Sure, some of you have had the pleasure of feeling **Dissecting Table's** sonic attack to the brainpan, but what is it really like in Japan? And what draws such artists as **PIG** to such a cool place?

Zeitlich Vergeltes (or "Timely Revenge"), an alternative metal percussion band with an 18-year-old **Chu Ishikawa** at the helm, was a short-lived explosion of power circa 1985. Chu began his career at the age of 15, when he picked up his first synthesizer; a humble beginning for a gentleman that would later be praised the world over by the film community and fans of the underground music scene, for his provocative, hard-hitting, distinctive sounds in all the **Shinya Tsukamoto** films. **Ishikawa's** *Armageddon-esque* feel has graced a long list of films such as **Tetsuo: The Iron Man**, **Tetsuo: The Body Hammer**, **Tokyo Fist**, **Bullet Ballet**, **Gemini**, the new film **A Snake of June**, and the soundtrack work in the **Takashi Miike**-directed, **Dead or Alive 2: The Birds**. **Tsukamoto's** two **Tetsuo** films feature the ideal pairing of Industrial music with the silver screen. If you haven't yet seen them, do yourself the favor and don't tarry! For the **Tokyo Fist** 1995 soundtrack, **Ishikawa** was asked to put down his array of self-made metal percussive instruments, in the tradition of **Einsturzende Neubauten**, and use synthesizer. This new composition is performed and co-arranged with his new band **Der Eisenrost**, who began working together in 1993, to much success. **Tokyo Fist**, featuring another body-pounding soundtrack by **Ishikawa**, contained enough gory sequences of gushing blood to make **Raging Bull** (1980) seem like a dainty ballet. **Tokyo Fist** is not truly an Industrial film but is highly recommended nonetheless. In 2000, **Ishikawa** was awarded "Best Original Soundtrack" in the International Film Festival of Catalonia, for his solo work on "Gemini," a **Tsukamoto** rendition of an **Edogawa Rampo** story. **Rampo**, born in 1894 in Nabari, Mie is Japan's answer to **Edgar Allan Poe**. Quite a phenomenal combination for a film, but I digress.

Chu Ishikawa:
www.atom.co.jp/classic/UNSOUND/Actual/Sound/UnpoOffice/Artists/Ishikawa/

This leads us to one of Japan's premier, and my personal all-time favorite, undiscovered metal percussion units, **Der Eisenrost**. **Der Eisenrost**, having met at a large music festival in the early nineties, have produced, in sympathetic harmony with machines, some of the finest sounds that the land of the rising sun will ever create. All members of **Der Eisenrost** are well-seasoned musicians. **Chu Ishikawa**, the lead man and core composer, has a rap sheet a mile long. Standing in the harmonic shadow of **Ishikawa** is the percussive tonality and dynamic physical expression of **Shinichi Kawahara**. He is also intimately involved in co-directing and acting in many of the **Shinya Tsukamoto** films. The bassist, **Joe Yabuki**, is one of the most sought-after bassists in the Tokyo underground scene. With his pounding, hard-hitting style, Joe's bass throbs out a profound riff that lends itself well to the band's resonance. Having played over the years in a plethora of progressive bands, his most noteworthy musical exploit was touring America with his former band the **PUGS** for



By Solomon Grundy

: Nippon and the Art of Industrial :



Guilty Connector



Def. Master



Der Eisenrost



Der Eisenrost

Lollapalooza '97. Joe is also currently involved in the **PUGS** current incarnation, **Pomegranate**. **Shinichi Seki**, as lead guitarist and vocalist, also performs metal percussion and composes for the band. He is quite involved in the heavy electro, EBM unit **C.H.C. System** with **Joe** and **Kawahara**. This side project is very well received in the Japanese Indie scene and can be seen headlining at progressive electronic shows. **Chiba** is the newest player to add his years of experience to the band, and has been a noteworthy drummer in the Tokyo Jazz and R&B scene.

Over these many years **Der Eisenrost** has as a band, unfortunately, released only one full-length album, a '93-'94 live recording session & studio mix entitled "Armored Weapon". As mentioned, they've also done work on the **Tokyo Fist**, and most members have assisted in the mix of the **Tetsuo** soundtracks. With an appearance on the now-defunct San Francisco record label **Charnel House's** series "Land of the Rising Noise Vol. 2," the band is now looking outside of Japan to record labels overseas for their next release and for world domination. Their presentation can best be seen on the self-released VHS, live at the famous **La MaMa** club in downtown Tokyo's Shibai district, in 1998.

One of the clubs they frequent is the Shibuya Nest, where they performed once in 2000 and four times in 2001, once with local friends **Def Master**. The biggest show of 2001 for them was **Destruction Chaos Volume 3** with **Mothra**, **Bacteria**, **Guilty Connector**, and **Magmax**, November 18th, at **URGA** in the Shinjuku area of Tokyo. In 2002, though, they only played once, at Shinjuku Marz, on May 6. 2003, however, has picked up for them quite a bit with the opening of the new **Tsukamoto** film **A Snake of June**. They are performing excerpts of the new soundtrack at a live press release in **Shibuya HMV 6F Stage** for the rollout of this much-anticipated new film. On June 24, they will be playing with **Ruins** and **Bacteria** at **Club Shelter** in the Shimokitazawa district of Tokyo.

Der Eisenrost:
<http://www.dereisenrost.com>

Following a more EBM style is **Der Eisenrost's** side project, **C.H.C. System**, that was organized in 1991 with all of the same members except **Ishikawa & Chiba**, and one added member, **YMOT**, who does dub and programming. They have released very few demo CDs but have made up for that in late 2002 with a rare live VHS tape at Shibuya Nest with performance artist **Et in terra pax**, <http://www.path.ne.jp/hbv/eitp/>. This performance, to a packed house, was astonishing and very well-orchestrated, and should be released as a CD but we'll keep our fingers crossed on this one. With three other performances in 2002, one in Shinjuku, March 5th, at **URGA** with friends **SINO**, and another on May 5th, solo, and then on **Svastika Night**, November 17th at Shibuya Nest with friends **Def. Master**. Both **SINO** and long running act **Def. Master** are two bands to keep an eye on, but we will get to them later. For 2003 **C.H.C. System** will once again team up with partners in crime **Def. Master**, Sunday June 15th again, at their favorite haunt, the **Nest** in Shibuya, and it won't be pretty either. There has been a safety-glasses-required warning for this blowout!

C.H.C. System: <http://svastika.tripod.co.jp/>

Next on the bill of suspects in this hardened scene, where the boundaries of noise and Industrial often overlap, is the "Shinto EBM from Hell," **Dissecting Table**. **Dissecting Table** is the exclusive brainchild of **Ichiro Tsuji**, who has terrorized the music scene since 1986, and has produced over a dozen separate works. His newest work, "Groping in the Dark," is the essence of creamy goodness of destruction and human pain and suffering. **Ichiro Tsuji** has produced DT as a long-running project that is in its foundation a propaganda tool that expresses the body energy between life and death,

the ultimate energy and its relationship between conscious and subconscious in the living body. Allegedly the head of his own small underground U.P.D. ("*Ultra Point of Intersection Exist*") label, Tsuji uses DT to produce music because of his fascination in expressing psychic energy, and the relation between humans and sound. Continuing his research in the spectral density of audio power fluctuations in experimental resonance and having exchanged musical information with some of the most serious artists in Japan, like the **Ruins**, **Howling of Himalaya**, **Merzbow**, and **Deliberate Composition**, you may never know what is about to hit you at any turn of an album. Performing infrequently to churn the soup of sonic alchemy for his audience, he never performs the same set twice, making each expression a unique journey, just like each and every one of his recordings.

Dissecting Table: <http://www.dissecting-table.com/>

The advent of the bone-crushing band **Def. Master** in 1989, with lead member **You-Mi**, ex-member of the death-rock band **Rosenkreuz**, took us down another jagged, fun-filled road of industrial metal percussion mayhem. Supported in the early years by guitarist Fujita from **Doom**, a great progressive rock/hardcore/thrash metal band, **Def. Master** established its current line up in 1997 with You-Mi on abrasive vocals & programming, **Watanabe**, aka **Nabe** on guitar, **Hiroki** on bass, **C. Jay** on drums and **Muraya** on keyboard & programming. They have released several notable EPs and three full-length albums, "Destroyer Has God Mind" in '95 and the brutal "Thoughts Distorted" in '96. Above and beyond their frequent shows with partners in crime **C.H.C. System** & **Der Eisenrost**, their guitarist **Nebe** is also actively involved in **Acid Android**, whose recent CD "Faults" was graced by the vocals of **Toni Halliday** from **Curve**.

Def. Master: <http://www.defmaster.com/> or at **Nabe's** personal page: <http://www001.upp.so-net.ne.jp/applicator> :with more **Def. Master** info.

A relative newcomer to this scene is **SINO**, whose brilliant works have drawn stellar reviews in this issue and the last, with an often-danceable guitar electro noise glitch. His driving guitar licks are reminiscent of early **Young Gods** but with a truly distinct style of his own. Starting back in 1997 with **SINO** on guitar & programming along with his cohort **T. Makino** on Keyboard & programming, **SINO** began constructing their own blasphemous waves of industrial sounds at a performance house in Tokyo. Unfortunately, by 1999, the two had split, but then **SINO** re-built the project as a solo act in January of 2000. That same year, two free demos were released. **SINO's** first CD "PROMOTE 00" was distributed only in Japan, but received grand reviews in many international underground magazines and web 'zines. Then, like a phoenix rising from its ashes, he played his first live gig in Tokyo on September 24th, 2001 and then went on to annihilate **T.I.K.** in Toronto with another performance on the 22nd of August 2002, again to rave reviews. And look out, because his new nine-track CD "PROMOTE01+28082002" was released in October 2002, and is being distributed by **SINO** personally, though his own web page. Snap them up quickly before they slip into the nether regions of time and space, and be sure to read the personal appraisal in the **SONIC Reviews** section of this issue by DJBitter.

SINO <http://www1.odn.ne.jp/re-build/sino-e.htm>

Ripping it up in the club scene at places like Tokyo Dark Castle, **hAJ** of **Seij minus aC** is another variant miscreant newcomer. His solo "complex electronic texture synth beat soundscape texture aggro-noise ethereal" act has been recently supported by the likes of Ivan Bullock of **Mystral Tide** in July '02. **hAJ** has exclaimed his pleasure about working with Ivan on four separate occasions, twice in Tokyo and once at the Wave Gotik Treffen in Leipzig, Germany, and again reversing roles by supporting **Mystral Tide** in Tokyo. Personally, I would have loved to be able to indulge in any of these events but perhaps I will have the pleasure in the future. If you get the chance perhaps some of you may be fortunate to see **Seij minus aC** later this year, when he is planning for two possible gigs in Tokyo and another



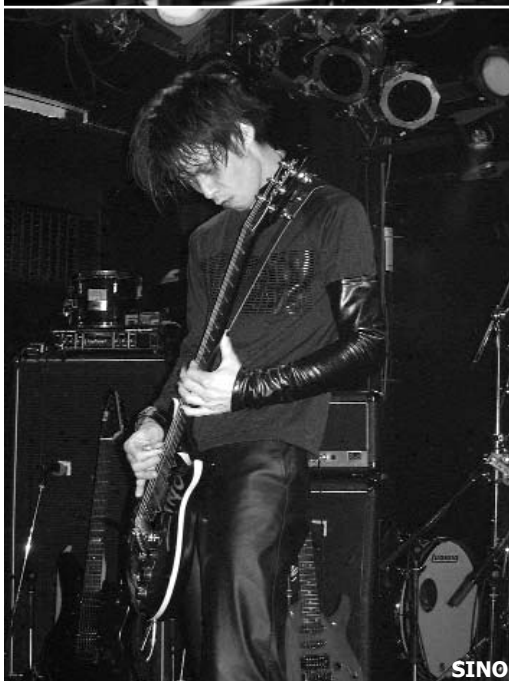
Der Eisenrost



CHC Systems



CHC Systems



SINO



Der Eisenrost

in the far east of Russia. For all of you who are unable to travel to such events you will find it an ostentatious pleasure when you indulge in **hAJ's** new CD **Less Physical Vortex**, a mix that is well described by its title. The name **Seij minus aC** is a metaphor of "a negative scalar dimension within desolate silence" and is for him a blend of "invisible layers of agony, sorrow, fear, destruction, speed, light and their basis". **hAJ** loves to associate his senses in such matters when expressing his thoughts. A true individual, complex on many layers like the waves of resonance he bears unto us all. Meditate on the longing of the human expression and its inner struggle to re-indulge in the oneness of the universe.

hAJ of **Seij minus aC:** <http://sejminusac.net>

A long-time act going back to 1987 with his early "Impregnate" demo tapes, **Hiroshi Hashimoto** of **Contagious Orgasm** has been an ongoing spike of rusty metal in the side of humanity, musically speaking of course, for far too long. The tracks on his recently reviewed "The Cause of the Flow" (see IN # 17) on the infamous Ant-Zen label, his second to last release (ant-zen act131), in 2002, were praised as "very desperate-sounding but seamlessly melded together." **Contagious Orgasm** has got to be one of the most inexhaustible bands in this scene, putting out over thirty fragments of destructive eargasm in their many years of terror. And if that were not enough they just announced that they will also be producing 4 new MCD with the projected title "The Spot of Personal Effects" on Tantric-Harmonies during this year. The first one in this series will be out at the end of spring '03 and its intended title will be "Continuance and Invasion," followed by "Borrowing and Creation," then "Good Life," and ending with ".....Really?" After another phenomenal sweep through Europe, highlighted by the MASCHINENFEST 2001 festival in Germany, they took a brief hiatus before again inflaming the locals at their most frequented haunt in Nagoya @ Tokuzo in November of 2002.

Contagious Orgasm: <http://plaza26.mbn.or.jp/sssm/>

Mentally infiltrated by many years of Animation and Sci Fi films, **Psydoll** (*Psycho-Doll*) from Tokyo would fit nicely in the backdrop of some ominous bar scene in the movie Blade Runner. Rumored to have been constructed entirely of iron, plastic and PVC, they are the newest in Japanese robotic technology, just like in the '91 **Fukui Shoujin** movie **Pinocchio ?964**. Initial gestations occurred back in '98, with **Nekoi** on vocals & keyboard and **Ucchi** on guitar, where they began putting out early demo tapes and playing around Tokyo. Having evolved their AI with the addition of **Uenoyama** on digital percussion, in the summer of '99 they spread a destructive sweet sound by continuing to perform once a month or every other month throughout the Tokyo region. They took the invocations of darkness overseas to Toronto in May of 2001, and then again to the **Beyond the Veil** festival for Easter '03 in the UK, where they had the pleasure of wowing the crowds with such acts as **Diva Destruction**, **Antiworld**, and the very cool **Butterfly Messiah**. To truly understand **Psydoll**, one should acquire the new "A War in a Box" CD and indulge deeply; its pure lack of quiescence is essential. **Psydoll** is hopping to find a label out side of Japan that will help them spread their unique dark android like sounds to the universe. Be sure to go and check out some of the nifty manga that **Nekoi** weaves while listening to some of the MP3's on their web page. If you get this article in a timely manner, be sure to check them out at the Silver Elephant in the Kichijoji district of Tokyo at the end of July with **Cinderella Search**.

Psydoll: <http://www.psydoll.com/>

Friends of **Psydoll** hailing from the Nagoya with their "Industrial rock body beat sound" is **Psycho Lizard**. They recently arranged an event called "Kaz Tattoo Operation Vol. 1" in February '03 in their hometown, and had **Psydoll** down for extra entertainment. Other bands on the event list included **Mangirl**, **Hell:Near**, a horror rock band, and DJs **P.a.n. Legi** aka **Hyakuhachi** from **Psycho Lizard** and **Nu-Hiro**. This sold-out event united musicians and tattoo artists. **Horilchi**,

in particular, tattooed several people while they were enjoying the bands playing loudly on stage. The next event is being planned for October, so make plans now. **Psycho Lizard's** lead vocalist **P.a.n. Legi** has an affinity for **SPK & Swans**, so you know his DJing must be a foot-stomping ear-splitting set; besides that, he is a Gemini. On guitar is **ILL**, who is a Virgo that also likes to read, and **IT** on bass, who is a big fan of **Soft Ballet**, a band that grew out of the remains of **Zeitlich Vergeht**. Following up is **NoiseVox**, & a performance by **Hyakuhachi**, who is wise enough to indulge in the likes of **Sopor Aeternus** and is a Capricorn. Be warned that they plan on releasing their first album this summer.

Psycho Lizard: <http://psyld.tripod.co.jp/top.htm>
 Another one of my new favorites is the musical formation known as **Ordinateur**, whose recent debut first demo CD was "I Will Kill Society," a harsh cataclysmic Industrial beat that left me wanting more! I can't wait to hear the new EP CD "St'pid Pattern," so I can beat people over the head with it when I DJ live. **Takashi Koyamaguchi** of **Ordinateur** is also part of the old-style, **Godflesh**-like band **Longdreamdead**, and is recovering from a recent techno live event that he helped put together on June 8th, 2003, called "Sequence or Die vol.2." His collaborator in **Longdreamdead**, **Okubo**, is off making more destruction for our ears in his other band **Mothra**, a brutal band that sound like early **Swans**. Their CD "The Remains of Life" has a particular live track on it where they are joined by boy genius **Kohel** of **Guilty Connector**. **Guilty Connector**, whose performances are like shards of human skulls being crushed under foot, has released his first album with **Zeni Geva** guitarist **Tabata**, on a French label Even Stilte. **Kohel** is currently looking for a label to release a retrospective album, which contains seven formally released CDR demos. Its title "Mother's Bloated Corpse" will have cover art of his own creation, showing man's destruction and rape of the mother earth.

Ordinateur & Longdreamdea:
<http://www2.plala.or.jp/coldsleep/maineng.html>
Mothra: <http://www007.upp.so-net.ne.jp/mothra/>
Guilty Connector: <http://www.geocities.com/utsu-tapes/>

Here are some other great bands to look out for. **Naked Machine** from Sapporo: formed in '98 with lead man **Aki**, they have a death techno Industrial rock sound, played early in '02 with **C.H.C. System** in Shinjuku at club URGA, and are currently on a hiatus but are looking to reform in the near future. They currently have one CDR out, "Motor Head," with five songs, released in 2000. I found that demo quite to my liking. **Epidemic Cause** from Osaka have been around since 1993, have played outside of Japan on several occasions and have two CD releases: "Far East," recorded in '96, and "Xanthochroia," recorded in 2000. They have a unique Industrial Death Metal sound and played January 24th, 2003, with a local favorite of mine, **K.K. Null**, at his CD release party. With heavy influences from the likes of **Einstürzende Neubauten**, **Godflesh**, **Swans** and **King Crimson**, **Epidemic Cause** will leave a good taste in your mouth. Their members are **Shingo Tomimatsu** on Guitar & Programming, **Akio Sugitani** on Bass, and **Kengo Shimamoto** on vocals. I personally will be looking forward to hearing more from them in the near future.

Naked Machine: <http://www1.ocn.ne.jp/naked/>
Epidemic Cause: <http://www.geocities.co.jp/Broadway-Guitar/1916/>

: The Club Scene :

There was a club, managed by Nabe, called **Paranormal** in the Roppongi section Tokyo. This club used to be the center of the Industrial events since the late '90s, but it is now closed. "Paranoia Night" was an Industrial / heavy rock event, **NIN** was their favorite. "**CyberAgeVooDoo**" or **CAVD** is a more underground Industrial event, they even plays technoise. This club is positively at the top of our recommendation list. **CAVD:** is at <http://cyberage.tripod.co.jp/>

In the Shinjuku district of Tokyo, the leader of the



Psydoll



Psycho Lizards



Psycho Lizards



Psycho Lizards

veteran Goth band **Neurotic Doll** runs a very cool venue called URGA.

URGA: <http://www.urga.net/>
 Club **Tokyo Dark Castle** is also quite a hot spot with DJs, live bands, plenty of "Gothic Lolita" and tattoos and piercings.

Tokyo Dark Castle: http://www3.to/goth_darkwave
 Starting up just last year and run by Maya, **Midnight Mess** plays an assortment of Electro, New Wave, Classic (old school) Gothic, NeoGoth, Glam, NeoGlam, PositivePunk, CyberPunk Alternative, EBM, Electro, Industrial, Cover Versions, and assorted associated Bizarre-Kitsch! It is an attempt to rekindle the fun of 80's alternative clubbing without going back to 1980. All this fun is done in memory of Legendary Gothic Club **Walpurgis**.

Midnight Mess: <http://trax.to/midnightmess>
 Another great hot spot in Tokyo starting in '97 is **Eve of the New Church**, organized by Haruhiko Ash, once a member of punk band **Zolge**, now in **Eve of Destiny**, also with help from Miss Tsukamoto. It plays Gothic, Dark Electro, Industrial and Dark Wave. A great place to see the "Gothic Lolita" style in full regalia. Indulge your senses in the newest decadent Goth Vampire fetish and pagan rituals.

Eve of the New Church:
<http://www.interq.or.jp/tokyo/eve/clubEVE/>

Club Cybernetics is another mix of DJ's + bands like Castle is. The DJ's there are a bit closer to techno than Castle and from what I understand the bands are great. **Def. Master** has been a regular there as well. In fact on May 13th 2003@Shibuya Club ASIA, Noxious Emotion played with Def. Master.

Club Cybernetics: http://shibuya.cool.ne.jp/c_cybernetics/

Asako Honma of **Coldburn** (www.music.ne.jp/%7Ecoldburn/) has a favorite spot that I too quite like, and they always have a large range of bands, so make sure you check the listings before you head out to **2000OV** in Koenji. They have a great sound system, and I have seen several great shows there. **Asako** recently saw **Half Japanese** and **Hijo-kaidan** play.

2000OV: <http://homepage2.nifty.com/20000volt/>
 The famous **La MaMa** club in downtown Tokyo's Shibai district is world-renowned and can be found in many tourist books as the place to see the next hot bands. I have personally seen several very cool shows here like **Angel In Heavy Syrup** and **Hijo-kaidan**. Unfortunately I also once missed one of my all-time favorite punk bands, **G.I.S.M.** I am always looking for cool bands of all varieties at this club.

La MaMa: <http://la.mama.gr.jp/>
 A nice place just for hanging out is **Rock Bar Current** in Shinjuku. www.current-gr.co.jp/rock/ This club has a small dance floor, and sometimes goth events are held here.

: Great Places to Shop for Music :

Best places to shop for CD's are in the Shinjuku district of Tokyo, were you will find some great stores like **GOLD**. <http://www.cd-gold.co.jp/> This is the best place to go for Industrial and Gothic music. Also, a small independent chain store called **Disc Union**, with several shops that are located thought the greater Tokyo area, often carries those hard-to-find albums. **JNR** is the best shop for noise but they do not have a website. (**JNR**, Daikan Plaza A-806, 7-1-7, Nishi-shinjuku, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo, Tel: 03-5330-0718)

There were notable contributions from many individuals & bands, especially **Mr. Seki** of **Der Eisenrost** & **C.H.C. System**, from **Asako Honma** of **Coldburn**, **Nekei** of **Psydoll**, and **hAj** of **Seij minus aC**. For more up-to-date information about the scene in Japan, go to: www.music.ne.jp/%7Ecoldburn/ **Freaky Underground Music** in Japan www.solomongrundy.net look here for up-dates on this article and other musical recourses