

## **MeTaL-O-PHoNe**

**Benjamin Flament > vibraphone**

**Joachim Florent > double bass**

**Elie Duris > drums**

Distortion, feedback, delay. All once the exclusive property of guitarists but no more, and their usage has opened up intriguing possibilities across the instrumental spectrum.

In applying them to the vibraphone, Benjamin Flament has found sound something wild in the heart of an instrument so often typecast as polite and mannered. The bright colours have given way to darker matter, buzzing with overtones and ambiguous pitches, and spiritually connecting the vibes back to its distant relatives like the Javanese gamelan, Tibetan singing bowls and African thumb pianos.

The other two thirds of MeTaL-O-PHoNe have responded accordingly, and bassist Joachim florent and drummer Elie Duris give no quarter in creating a swirling tempest of rhythms and textures that's perfectly in sync with this altered percussive landscape.

[www.collectifcoax.com/metalophone](http://www.collectifcoax.com/metalophone)

[www.myspace.com/metalophone](http://www.myspace.com/metalophone)

**video links:**

[http://liveweb.arte.tv/fr/video/Jazz\\_Migration\\_MeTaL-O-PhoNe/](http://liveweb.arte.tv/fr/video/Jazz_Migration_MeTaL-O-PhoNe/)

[http://www.dailymotion.com/video/xdlhht\\_steve-reich-in-babylone\\_music](http://www.dailymotion.com/video/xdlhht_steve-reich-in-babylone_music)

## MeTal-O-PHoNe at 12 points Festival - May 2011

Irish Times (Laurence Mackin)

The organisers at 12 Points seem to have made a conscious decision to make the middle act the most intriguing. They tend to be the act that on paper sound the oddest, and here lies the greatest potential for fireworks (or, indeed, damp squibs). Happily, Parisian outfit Metal-O-PHoNe (there is a tendency among jazz acts to hyphenate like they are soloing with punctuation) were definitely of the fiery variety

### Total metallers

Mention vibraphones, and people perhaps think of gentle, contemplative music making - not here. Bluesy, swaggering bass lines from Joachim Florent reel around the band like a mean drunk looking to pick a fight, the mettalic edge of the vibraphones punching through, while drums hold the shape down and deliver their own bit of complex, rhythmic darkness. There is enough groove here to run a locomotive on, and Metal-O-PHoNe make music with an intensity and an aggression that is difficult to match. Musicians watching this band immediately want to go home and practise (two members of Ambush Party made no attempt to contain their enthusiasm in the front row); those who don't play, probably want to start.

### Progarchives

MeTal-O-PHoNe's music can be described as: 1. Ambient 2. Jazzy 3. Avant-gardy (New word? Definitely!) 4. Incredible. The fact that this trio can create such a beautiful, mysterious and interesting experience every time I listen to it just increases my appreciation for this. I will go as far as saying this a must for any avant-garde fan, even though this is such unknown music. It really is an amazing gem and I mean every word.

The French trio consists of vibraphonist Benjamin Flament, bassist Joachim Florent (who is also in other incredible avant-jazz trio Jean Louis, which shall be reviewed at time in La Futura), and drummer Elie Duris. I think it is safe to call all of them virtuosos. Flament's vibraphone goes through several effects such as distortion to create a truly literally chilling effect (It literally sounds cold I really can't explain it). He weaves this amazing patterns that creates this aura of incredible awesomness. He's playing adds such an interesting element to the band which makes them wholly unique.

Bassist Joachim Florent is one of the more powerful players (I can name him as one my very few bassist influences along with Hugh Hopper and... Hugh Hopper (RIP Hugh)). He upright bass can be dead on precise, and his bowing action is perfect, eerie and nerve wrecking. His lines are almost groovy while having a completely chaotic feeling.

Elie Duris is an interesting drummer and I mean that in the best way possible. His playing varies from heavy (Again, literally heavy feeling), to this beautiful light jazz drumming which is all over the place and completely in sync at once. One if not the best drummer I have heard from France in a while.

The music has a powerful effect. It is all hazily constructed yet with a corroding feeling. Yeah. The industrial music influence which might exist is strongly felt on this album as there's serious attention is paid to texture. As I've already said twice the texture is so perfectly made that I can literally feel the music and not many anythings can do that. I mean when you listen to "Vision I" transfer to the INCREDIBLE "Rooms" you feel like your stuck in a tubular bell (eh. ah. haha). The tracks here weave together beautifully and all are more or less perfect so to say there's highlights is tough but for the first-time listener I would listen to "Steve Reich in Babylon", as Flament slowly builds this dome of sound which gives me claustrophobia.

I can't explain the effect this album has on me but it's overwhelming almost. It's a challenging piece of work but you'll like it right away if avant your thang. It's such an incredible jewel that should really be a bit more appreciated in this website. So I push all of you to check it out. (Also Jean Louis is a definite check out so go nuts)

### **Metalophone interview for Progarchives**

First of all; when, where and by whom was your band born ? Did any of you, past and present members, play in any other bands before joining up in your band ? Why did you choose that name ?

Benjamin (vibes) & Joachim (bass) started playing together in 2005 and worked together with a couple of drummers (first Anne Pacey then Antoine Brouze in D'jab trio). As their music was evolving they met Elie and decided to call the band metal-o-phone which sounded close to the music we play. A metallophone is a general term describing instruments made of tuned metal bars including vibraphone, glockenspiel but also gamelan.

Which bands were and is your main inspirations ?

Indeed is gamelan music from indonesia a strong influence over our music but we've been listening a lot of different stuff from repetitive music, alternative rock to free jazz. I could say Miles Davis, Steve Reich, Pink Floyd, Fred Frith, Zu, Henry Threadgill among others

Your one and only album so far; MeTaL-O-PHoNe was released back in 2009. Please tell us more about this album.

It's been recorded in late 2009 in a theater transformed in a studio in the town of nevers, france. Mixing was realized in border studio, Bagnolet and mastering at manley mastering in paris a few months later in 2010. It was then released in september 2010. This is the second issue of coax record, a label which gathers several paris based bands playing in the alternativ-jazz-post-rock field.

For those of us unknown with your music; how would you describe your music and which bands would you compare yourself with ?

Very difficult to associate with other bands since vibraphone is a pretty rare instrument in modern music including the jazz field. Our music is a mixture of rhythmic structures and rock influenced riffs with harmonic distortion and gets developed through improvisation and evolution of melodic patterns with a predilection for extatic atmospheres and noisy highlights. Could be somewhere between Reich's music for 18 musicians, Magma and Balinese music

What have you been up to since the release of your album and what is your latest update ? What are your plans for this year and beyond ?

We're all working with other bands. Joachim's main project is Jean Louis, Elie plays in various jazz projects as Paul Lay trio, Benjamin plays in Hasse Poulsen new quartet. However Benjamin & Joachim work on the release of the first cd of their psychedelic bigband called radiation 10. Our plans as a trio for this year is touring (we have maybe 20 upcoming gigs in Europe in 2011). As concerts go on we get to play some new music and perhaps record it sometime.