

TREVOR DUNN Steps Even Further Outside The Box With New Project

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Those who have followed the career of **Trevor Dunn** will know the man is a musical nomad, many would say genius.

His eclectic tastes have led him to bands such as **Mr. Bungle**, **Fantomas**, **Tomahawk**, **Secret Chiefs 3** and **The Melvins**, but with his recent release with new project **Sperm Church** Dunn has managed to outdo even himself in terms of niche music.

Uniting with electronic artist **Sannety**, Dunn released *merdeka atau mati* through his newly formed label **Riverworm Records** on September 3, an album containing elements of abstraction and trap music, battling cultural conditioning with non-traditional tunings, glissandos, percussion, and a max/msp patch.

Trevor joined **HEAVY** earlier in the week to discuss the new project and the eccentricity of their debut release, starting by trying – unsuccessfully – to pronounce the album title.



“It’s funny, a lot of people ask me if they’re pronouncing that right, but it’s Indonesian and I don’t speak it,” Dunn laughed infectiously. “My partner on the record, Sannety, is half Indonesian, so that’s partly where that originates. I play electronic bass, and she’s an electronic musician, and she developed this sequencer – a max/msp – which is a complex drum machine essentially, so it’s kind of like a weird drum and bass duo for lack of a better description. She was definitely influenced by a lot of trap music and hip hop and stuff, and I’ve never played that kind of music per se myself, but I took a lot of her influences and tried to incorporate what I do with electric bass with what she was doing electronically.”



Considering the above outlined projects Dunn has recorded with previously, the fact he says Sperm Church records music he has never played before is somewhat of a surprise.

“It was essentially her influence, but it was something new for me,” he shrugged. “As a bass layer to really sit there and check out trap baselines, there’s some really interesting stuff going on. To be able to take those ideas and twist them into my own weird sensibilities and just try to do something totally different and step outside of the box that I’m used to doing was great. We wanted to improvise but not be regulated by the traditional limitations of improvisation – which there are unfortunately. Free music is rarely free. If someone says ‘oh yeah, there’s gonna be a free improv show’ you almost kind of know what it’s gonna sound like. This cultural formula has developed over the years and that’s kind of unfortunate in a way. It’s like everything... it’s human instinct to trap things into this box and not let it be free (laughs). I don’t know if that’s a human thing or a Western thing but our whole concept was to liberate the sound, essentially.”

In the full interview, Trevor talks us more through the music on the album, his tendency to play in bands that have a niche market, his new label and why he started it, the status of Mr. Bungle, Fantomas and Tomahawk and possible new music, working with **Mike Patton**, some of his other projects and more.