part II

FUTURE

YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN MAGAZINE

ISSUE 4
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a message from the editors from the future....

things are going okay.
we woke up,
we made coffee.
everything is different,
and yet there is still a lot of
work to do.
we shed a lot of tears,
called our friends,
and screamed.

which outcome did you imagine?
VOTE
November 3rd.

you know what we mean. davia & monica

you know what I mean?

co-editors-in-chief
Monica Mouet and Davia Schendel

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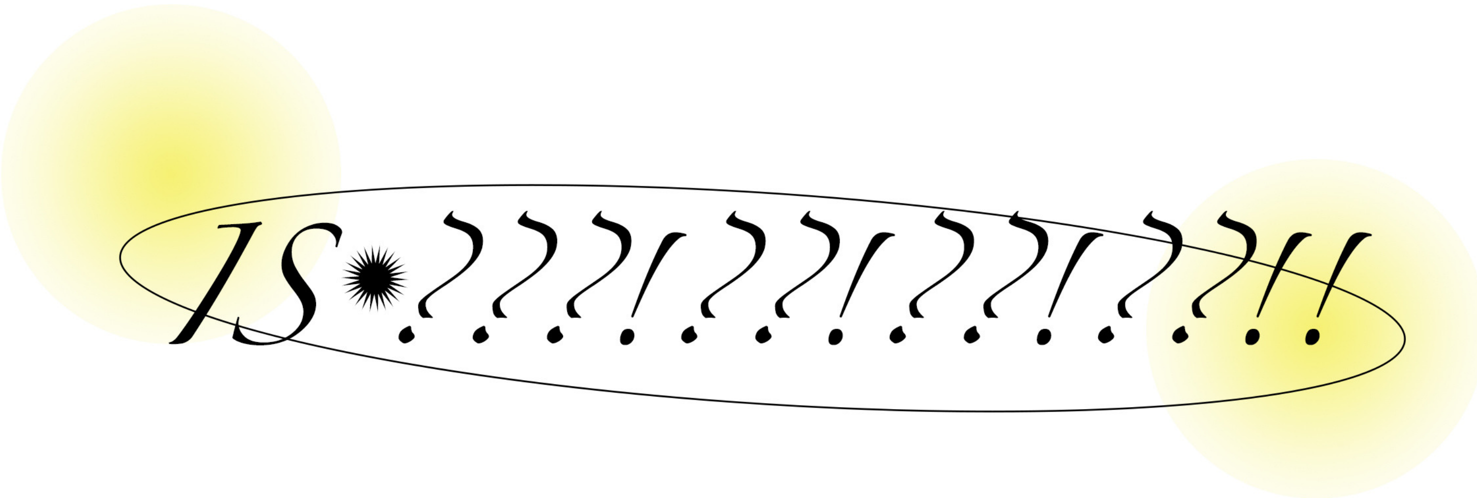
THE FUTURE


IS ???!??!??!?!!

jill galbraith

I am my future
And my future is me
It's hard to believe
That what I was
I am now
And what I am now
Is what I will be
No
I don't need to guess
I know I'll be
A Fucking
Mess
Oh, yes
Blessed by degrees
Too many to see
When the atoms bond
And I echo beyond
The peak of my high
My insides smoldering, scorching dry
Again I'll confess
I am what I was
And what I will be
I am worms
I am dirt
I am germs
I am hurt
Intricacies of ecstasy
Galaxies
Thunder
Reveries
Wonder

The future is a
Mystery
Said not me, ever
Fuck the future
Is more my speed
And while we're at it
Fuck the past
This is what lasts
Your actions now
Not your hopes
Not your dreams
The only facts are your daily routines
What you are doing to fully achieve
Goodness so sweet you can barely believe
You've come this far
I don't know if I have
But here's what I've found
My own, peculiar How-To-Be
Step One
Lay
Your
Body
Flat on the ground
Step Two
Feel the sound
Step Three
Breathe
Deep
Remember
You and me
We are still here
And we are still free

From tape decks to the D.A.W.

Grammy-winning engineer, producer and NYU professor Kevin Killen speaks on the evolution of the recording process and what the future of music making looks like–
in conversation with Davia Schendel.

Kevin in the studio, 1985.

Would you say you came from a musical background?

I wasn't formally trained, I took guitar lessons when I was a teenager. Then when I was sixteen, I bought myself a drum set. With a couple of local friends, we learned how to play a few songs, but we had no aspirations to be in a band, it was just more fun than anything else. I was also taking drum lessons from a local rock drummer, and then I ended being hired by a studio as a "tape-op" , basically an assistant engineer. One day, one of the session drummers who came into the studio on a regular basis- a jazz drummer- began to teach me better technique, such as holding the sticks correctly, and I started to learn how to read [music]. I took lessons from him for about 6 months, maybe once a week and I had to practice, but I was working a good 14-16 hours everyday on sessions and to try to fit in practice and drum lessons did not give me a lot of time for other things, like sleep (laughs). When you're young, you can do without a lot less of that. Watching the session drummers who came into the studio in those days, I realized, if I wanted to pursue a career as a musician, I would really have to immerse myself in that discipline for a good 7 to 10 years. And I thought, well, at best, if I was really diligent and really fortunate, I might get to their level– they were already in their 40s and 50s. The drummers that I had been seeing were already drumming for 20 plus years. And I thought, if I spend that much time in engineering and being a really good engineer, what would that yield? So I kind of decided, maybe my focus should be directed more towards the engineering side. Ultimately, that's what I decided to do. I still have a huge passion for drums, and for anything percussive, and guitar-wise, too. But when you start off as a musician later in your life, it's harder to catch up. And when you're exposed to players at such a high level, especially studio musicians, you realize that they are already masters at their craft.

At what point would you say you started to listen to music like an engineer?
What bands really opened you up to this soundscape profession?

I was listening to music from a very young age, from around 10 years of age. But I'm not sure I really understood what was going on within records? I think maybe when I was around 17 or 18, there was a documentary on the making of a record– an XTC record– that Steve Lillywhite produced. I believe that was the first moment where I thought– "Oh, there's a whole craft behind it!" I think logically, I knew there was, but actually seeing it revealed in a documentary made it even more so. When I started working in a studio, I started to learn to hear that way. Because it's different from when you're listening to your stereo and thinking you know what's going on, to actually being in the studio and seeing how the process unfolds; from the moment of tracking, through the overdubs, through the mixing, through mastering, and then finally, through duplication and replication of the physical product. All those steps are integral to the listener's experience. If anything interferes or diminishes that arc of the development, then the listener won't be able to hear what the artist intended. One could even argue that in the '60s, '70s, and '80s, when most people listened to vinyl, that medium had its own limitations, compared to tape. Regardless, the listener was not hearing the full fidelity of the recording, it was close, but not the same thing. What was the first gig that sort of sealed the deal in terms of what you wanted to do, regards to your profession? The transformative gig? This might sound really coy, but the first day in the studio was the transformative gig (laughs). Because I walked into the studio as a 19 year old, thinking, "Okay, this could be really interesting."

What was the first gig that sort of sealed the deal in terms of what you wanted to do, regards to your profession?

The transformative gig? This might sound really coy, but the first day in the studio was the transformative gig (laughs). Because I walked into the studio as a 19 year old, thinking, "Okay, this could be really interesting." I had only seen the inside of a studio on a couple of occasions when I was kind of looking for a position. The first day that I was hired at Lombard Sound, I went into the control room , and I met the first engineer and the producer and the artist, Mick Hanley. They were doing an overdubs session. It was an Irish folk session– acoustic guitars, frame drums, harmoniums, pianos– really lovely.For me, it was literally like walking up onto the bridge of the Starship Enterprise, like anything was possible. I was just riveted by it– hearing the clarity of instruments coming through the main speakers; the dimmed lights, it was all so cool- I was totally seduced, I instantly knew that this was my path.Obviously, I knew nothing at that point. I guess my development was more like an apprenticeship, because there were no college-accredited courses for this kind of career at that time, one literally learned on the job. If you had a question about something technical, the engineer would go into the tech shop, and pull out a manual and say, "You need to read this chapter." That is how they learned– and then they would then say "Come back with questions." As a student I was interested in science and mathematics, and considered pursuing a career in mechanical engineering or architecture when I was a teenager. Structure and how things worked were things I was curious about anyway. Being handed a book about the signal flow of a console or piece of hardware, although a little bit daunting, once you sat down and started to read it, you started to get a basis of the flow. Then you would ask questions, and everyday you witnessed how it worked. One started to develop a real-world, experiential sense of everything that surrounded you in the studio.

You started working during a really exciting period for music– the conventions that were set up in the late 1970s and early 1980s are still being cited by producers today. And there was a real emphasis on innovation and the sound of the future as well.

There were a lot of things happening simultaneously– sort of towards the end of the '70s when you had the whole punk/new wave explosion, which was very anti-establishment- the next generation were re-writing the rules. The technology was changing– up to that point, maybe you had 16 track or 24 track tape machines, but there was no real automation on the consoles at that point. You were just beginning to see in the early 80s the introduction of the first pieces of digital hardware, either digital reverbs or digital processors. Most studios had a small complement of outboard equipment in the control rooms– everything up till that point was very much "straight wire," the microphone was placed out in the studio in the right location, going through the customized mic preamp in the console, straight to the tape machine, and then just returning to the monitor path on that console, where maybe you would stick on some echo or some reverb. But there weren't that many things you could do– if you look at the history and development of The Beatles at Abbey Road, you see in the 7 or 8 years that they were recording (1962-1970), how they transformed the recording process with just their uncanny curiosity about it. John Lennon was famous for not liking the sound of his own voice, so he would often ask the engineers, either Norman Smith or Geoff Emerick, "What can you do to my voice to make it sound different?" And they would devise things that nowadays we just use as plug ins, but they would actually conceive of those, and they would execute them in a piece of hardware, and then put them in the studio or control room.

There was so much of that going on in the '60s, and then in the '70s that same kind of development was occurring with console design. Instead of discreet consoles, which is where you have all the microphones coming up on one side and then you have a discreet monitor section where you actually listened to everything– you started to see consoles in the late '70s that are now known as "In-line consoles," where the line path and the tape return path are not only interchangeable, but were incorporated into the same channel. That was an unusual design concept, and it made for not only a compact design, but presented an opportunity to increase the number of channels. And then you started to see automation, to see digital effects, drum machines, sequencers and samplers, et cetera.When I first started, you had to be a really good musician to get into the studio, because studio time was so expensive. So you couldn't be a novice in the studio. But very quickly, there was nothing BUT novices in the studio, and sometimes they were pretending to be novices for effect. At the same time, they were asking the engineering staff, "Well, we can't really play, but can you make us play?" Maybe it was partially true, maybe it was not. But engineers and producers started devising all these schemes, "Well, how do you make this band sound like they are more accomplished than they are at that moment in their career? There was this push for technology and sampling and a push to make records even more hyper-real than they were– a drum couldn't sound like a drum, it had to sound like an explosion; every guitar chord had to sound bigger and brighter; every vocal had to sound like

10 voices–it was all about making it bigger and better. At the same time, you had glam bands, rock bands– bands who immersed themselves with all of the latest sequencers and drum machines and some bands who wanted to be more grungy, more visceral, more authentic. It was all going on at the same time– there was mutual admiration and respect amongst all the different genres. You would hear a record, if you liked an artist and the songwriting, you would then really listen to the sound of the record. You would try to figure out, "How did they get that sound? I've never heard that before." You were always trying to emulate and aspire to advance the sound beyond what you just heard.

Which record still makes you ask questions when you listen to it?

Well back when I was just a music lover, as a teenager I was listening to everything– the Beatles, Led Zeppelin; British bands like Status Quo, Roxy Music, Genesis and all the glam bands of the 70s- T. Rex, and [David] Bowie, you listen to those records and go "what is that sound?" When I got into the studio, I listened to everything that came out– ABC, Toto, a lot of stuff that Trevor Horn was doing, with bands like Frankie Goes to Hollywood, or Kate Bush; Ultravox; or bands like U2. There were a lot of things going on– and it wasn't just one genre.

You have an amazing discography– I want to discuss your work on 1989's The Sensual World*, with Kate Bush– a record that I love very much. Your work is extraordinary on this record, so I would love to hear about your process.*

I had first met Kate just briefly when I was working in Dublin– the very first producer that I worked with on my very first day at Lombard Sound was Bill Whelan. He and Kate had established a friendship because Kate's mother was from the Republic of Ireland, from Country Waterford, which is maybe 100 miles south of Dublin. So Kate grew up with an Irish mother and an English father, and so she was always curious about her Irish roots musically. As a young artist she had come to Dublin a couple of times, and Bill was the facilitator for her contact to Irish musicians. Kate had recorded at Windmill Lane Studios and I met her there, and then I re-met her on the [Peter] Gabriel record [1986's *So*] when she added the vocals for "Don't Give Up." Kate travelled down to Peter's private studio outside of Bath to do those vocals. Kate reached out to me as she was finishing *The Sensual World* in 1988, and I was in the US, and she asked if I was going to be in the UK anytime soon– and ironically I was just about to travel to the UK.

I ended up at her studio, just outside of London, and she played me 5 or 6 things from the record, which all sounded fantastic. They had been mixed by Julian Mendelsohn who worked at Sarm Studios with Trevor Horn and whose work I really admired.She wanted an unbiased perspective …

"Well, I can't fault it on the sound, because it is a stunning presentation." But then I paused….

And then she went, "And?"

"Well, if I am being honest, musically it does not feel finished."

And she went, "Thank you! That's exactly how I feel." (laughs)

She was getting pressure from the record company to finish the record, but she felt it wasn't done. So we then agreed to work together on adding some more elements. The record sounded very close to being finished, but she is one of those artists who is unique and has a really clear vision of what she wants for each project. And she never wants to settle for less than that. And I have total respect for any artist who has that vision. Since she had her own studio she was free from the dictates of time and budgeting, so she could experiment– it wasn't like she was going to a commercial studio and burning through a budget like many artists would be. And therefore she wasn't really subject to the same kind of pressure from the record company. From the record company's perspective, they need to schedule a record release, they need to know when it will be finished. It could still take 6 months for everything to go through the whole record company hierarchy, in terms of getting the product made, and shipped, TV and radio promotion, and so on.

Musically, [Kate] felt it wasn't ready and so, I think when I responded the way I did, it only confirmed what she already knew. We ended up starting to work on that record, on and off for close to 6 months. Sometimes she would go back and change lyrics, or add new sections to songs and extend the arrangements, bringing back people like bassist John Gilblin, and Dave Gilmour (of Pink Floyd) to come in and play. Michael Kamen orchestrated a 60 piece string section that we recorded at Abbey Road, which was a fantastic experience. And then we had the three principal singers of the Radio Sofia State Choir, sing on a number of pieces.Kate really liked to work methodically. It was a really great experience, and she is such a deep soul. Having seen her perform on Top of the Pops (BBC Program) the Holy Grail of charts, as a thirteen or fourteen year old….it was amazing. I was reading *Wuthering Heights* in my English class and to hear someone sing about Heathcliff and make it sound cool, was illuminating.

I loved working on that record. I've gone back and listened to it a number of times. That's the one thing– when I finish working on a record that intensely, I tend to not listen to for months or years. Only because it's hard to not hear it as an engineer, or whatever my role was. The records are not perfect things, they are just little aural snapshots in time of the artist's career.

Kate Bush certainly invested in music technology– which is constantly shifting– would you say that the role of an engineer is to constantly keep up or stay ahead of the innovation?

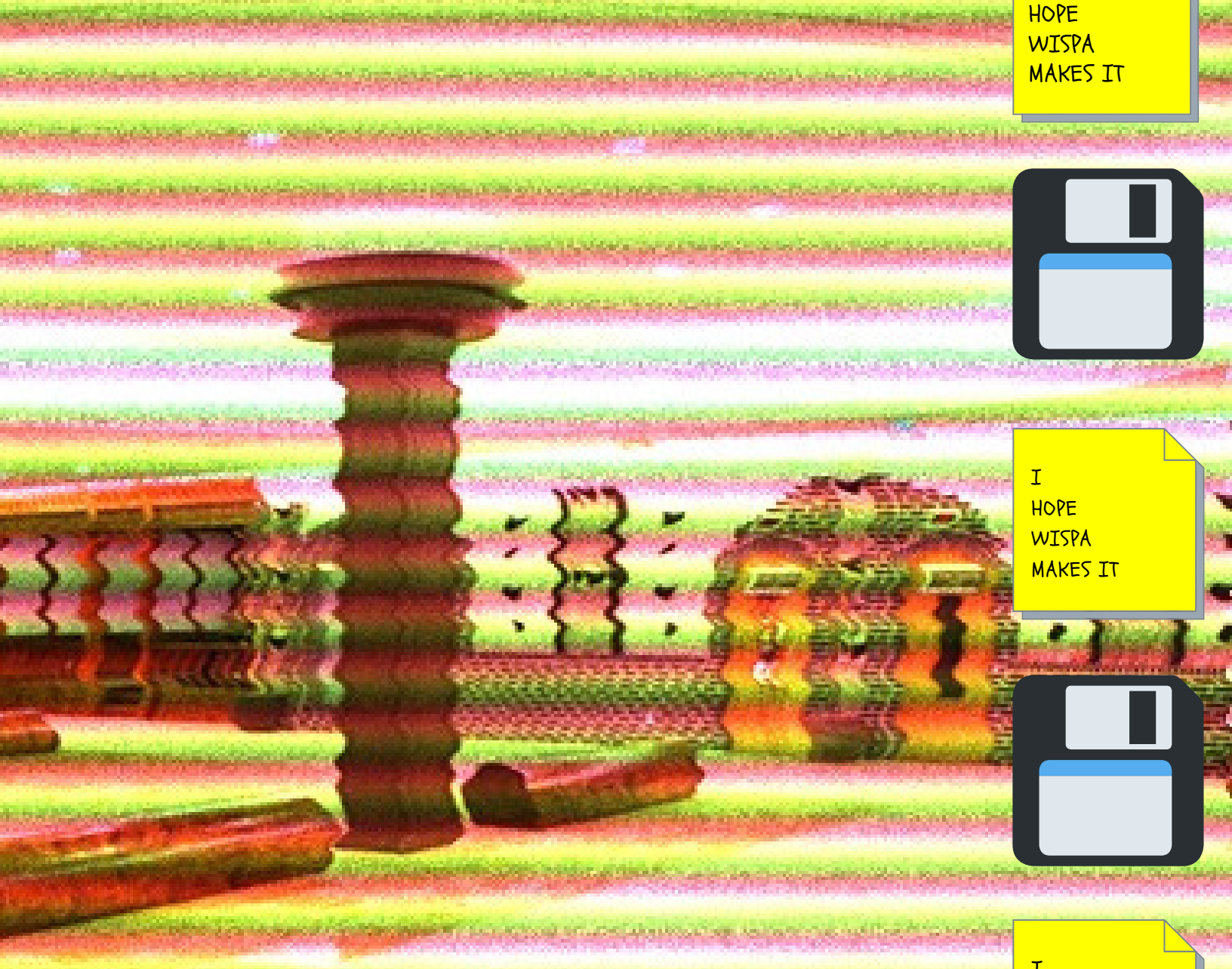
At a minimum, you have to keep up. It's very difficult to keep two steps ahead. You cannot be deterred by the technology. Case in point, with the COVID-19 pandemic, people still want to create and collaborate, so how do we embrace the technology that is available to us? And how do we allow that artistry to be expressed and supported? If we had a pandemic back in the '80s, and all the businesses were shut down, there would be no way for people to make records. But since the advent of the laptop and the digital audio workstation, really anywhere is a studio! There is no need to be in a purpose-built room, it's nice to be in a place that acoustically sounds great, but that does not prevent one from making a great sounding record. That'll be proven time and time again, not just recently, but over the years. If you go back and listen to *Led Zeppelin III* (1970), they recorded that in a manor house in England. It's down to desire and surrounding yourself with people who know what a good recording is and then figuring out the way to get from where you are to where you need to go.

Say someone is starting to make their first album–what advice would give them in terms of innovation and taking risks?

Most importantly when you are first starting out is to be fearless and true to yourself. If you have a musical idea, you have to express it in a way that feels authentic to your artistry. And maybe you have to expect that your expression may not be for the general population, but it is authentic to who you are. And it just depends on what kind of artist you want to be. Look at any artist– where they started out is not where they end up. There may be moments where they twist back to that formative base, but then use that as a jumping off point for someone else– maybe you go off on a tangent. The most interesting artists have taken interesting turns throughout their careers. I think any artist who's starting off– if you're really fearless in the beginning and really authentic to that moment in your development; then I think any audience is going to hear that and they're going to acknowledge it and they're going to be drawn to it. Even if the music is not popular, it's going to feel magnetic. It's seductive from the artist's perspective, because you're seeing the response, and that pushes you to go even further. The technology is not the issue anymore– with a cheap laptop, microphone and interface, you can still make a great sounding record. It's actually so much easier now to create. The barriers to entry into the music business have been completely removed. The record company in some way were gatekeepers– if you managed to create something commercially successful, they'd let you do it again.But now, no one needs the approval of a record company; there is even free DAW software out there– you can express yourself in so many ways now. People are breaking rules, and merging things together. The demo could actually be the master– the initial idea could be THE idea. There is the liberation of creating something for the first time.

Now even more so with the access of technology, do you see the roles of an engineer and artist fusing together even more so? How do you think these roles will evolve in the future?

I think it's hard to be a master of all those skill sets. When I was a young engineer, seeking advice from other producers, I remember Brian Eno and Daniel Lanois, who I worked with on U2's The Unforgettable Fire (1984), telling me "You should focus on becoming a master at one thing." That had been my aspiration always, to be the best recording engineer– and by focusing on that discipline, I became a better mixer, and then a better producer– but I didn't seek it out. So yes, one can do all these things, but not necessarily well at the same time.Now, the technology allows one to dabble in these things, but I just don't know that without those foundational underpinnings you can really understand good engineering and good mixing skills. It's not something that can be taught on YouTube. It just takes years. There are plenty of artists and engineers who are good at getting good balances and mixes. I just don't know that that applies to everybody. It's something that you have to work at for a whole lifetime. Looking forward into the future? There is always going to be collaboration and people fulfilling multiple roles. But I think it's great to allow other people into your project to collaborate, whether they are engineers or producers. For me, the most enjoyable and successful projects have been when there is a myriad of opinions expressed respectfully, ultimately towards the goal of making the record the best at that moment in time. If you came back in a year, you would make it differently. But we can't do that, we can only do it in the moment. And that's all you can do!



MONICA'S FUTURE PLAYLIST

Check out my beloved playlist for the FUTURE on the mag's Youtube! Here are my top 3 tracks out of the 40 in the following page.

Immaterial ~ Oil of Every Pearl's Un-Insides ~ SOPHIE. 2018.
This intro alone sends me into the high heavens...what are we missing when we imagine narratives about our futures? You can dream of situations, ideal or unattractive, and find satisfaction in your conclusions. But SOPHIE draws your attention to the ethereal joy you can find in the unknown, the formless. I can't control what my future holds but I know that the solutions for our troubled planet are bound to liberate people from identities, from the material world (even if the Madonna song is still a jam).

Don't Let Me Be Misunderstood ~ Broadway, Blues, Ballads ~ Nina Simone. 1964.
I'm just a soul who's intentions are good
Oh Lord, please don't let me be misunderstood

Is there anything else to say???

They ~ Finally Woken ~ Jem. 2004.
I have kept this gentle, subversive track close by since my detention days in high school for excessive tardiness. These days this song is all the more relevant to my rebellious urges. This summer, I found myself so moved by the profound activism of the Black Lives Matter movement that I decided to speak at my local council meeting in Santa Ana. Like many towns in the USA, my local government consistently fails to hear the needs of the people, especially when they are bought out by police unions. This song reminds me to keep up the questioning of authority. Questions can be the catalyst of any action.

Not everyone has the privilege of experiencing high romance during a pandemic- mine was a kaleidoscopic vision of surprise poppy fields, pink hair dye stains, and virtual aquarium disco dreams, always dynamically shifting and never fully in focus. She made my heart a Fruit Gusher and took a giant bite- nothing can prepare you for how ecstatic it feels to gush or how raw it feels to ooze... saccharin sour.

She's the only person I've meaningfully touched all year, so my memories of her skin are particularly vivid. I once spent a blissful afternoon painting her leg tattoos with the watercolor palette she gave me. I miss her warmth so fervently that I sometimes imagine how it would feel to trace a line connecting every tattoo on her body, from her left shoulder down to her right calf. This playlist was inspired by her body art- one song for each tattoo, from top to bottom.

I may have collected these songs for the past- to remember the paintbrush and to heal the oozing- but they're becoming more and more for the future. The title- "the rediscovery of soft touches"- was both a reference to her poetry and my hope that our vibrant spring love could last. Now it has evolved into an expression of my queer awakening and an ode to our socially distanced world. After an endless flow of work meetings, yoga classes, and "happy" hours via Zoom, we will one day rediscover touch and the value of close-contact human interaction. As we creep closer towards a cyberpunk dystopian era devoid of true intimacy, we must hold onto the power of touch in connecting all people.

by maridee blue

jellyfish- local natives
medusa in chains- the fratellis
the last living rose- pj harvey
the knife- maggie roggers
shark smile- big teeth
i follow rivers- lykke li
the plague- nakhane
laterns lit- son lux
WHALE- yellow ostrich
bicycle- unknown mortal orchestra
one more robot/sympathy 3000-21-the flaming lips
the man who married a robot/love theme- the 1975

MODERN LOVE

Matchmaking might seem like an ancient profession, only existing in the "before times" when we did not have the convenience of finding a date by tapping a screen. However, over the past 6 months in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, Modern Love Club founder and matchmaker Amy Van Doran has seamlessly combined her interpersonal talents and digital savvy to create a love searching experience that harnesses the convenience of digital dating and the wisdom of connection.
Here are her thoughts, in conversation with Davia Schendel.

How is your profession changing in this ever shifting dating landscape, now even more uncertain due to the COVID-19 pandemic?
When I started matchmaking, it's because I didn't like using computers. I did matchmaking for 12 years on little pieces of paper, that I would organize into binders and sort them into categories, like "men looking for men," etc.
I can work wherever, but I haven't quite figured out how to do this seamlessly. At the beginning of all this, I thought my job was done for. I was like, Okay, I did the matchmaking for 12 years, no one's gonna want to meet anybody, we'll wait it out for the 6 months or however long it's going to go on for....and in the meantime, I'm gonna get really good at basketball. That was my plan. At 34, as a 5'3" white woman, I thought I was going to become an amazing basketball player (laughs).

But instead, people decided to get serious about love. So we're having this moment of, "Everything else is shit," but we're having this sort of love renaissance, which makes me really happy. Last year, in 2019, I was ready to throw in the cards, call it a day– the whole system was failing. People were coming into the gallery with glazed-over eyes, being like "I've been on hundreds of dates and none of them are a second date!" We were dating sort of like in the same way that people would eat McDonald's– you have your plastic cup and your food, and you throw it out at the end; very consumptive and soul crushing. And the dating would work well for some people, and other groups of people –especially anyone who wasn't a cis-gendered white male– would be suffering. And some people would be getting all the matches, and other people would be getting kind of ignored. That was a problem. And the more online dating, the more people had options– they would see that one person online, that "hot chick," or whatever, and they would feel like because they saw her online– like they see that thing in "the store", they felt entitled to have it.
So everyone was going through the same person, nobody's was getting happy, nobody was getting offline– people would just get drunk, have sex and move on to the next thing. I didn't know how to feel about love in this century, I was feeling very badly about it. But then we had MeToo, and then everyone is locked in their houses– they had time to think about their lives. People started getting calls from their ex-boyfriends, being like, "Yo, I thought about that thing...I'm really sorry. Now I'm doing the work."

Do you think people are in a sort of reckoning with their relationships to love?
People being locked in their houses...the trauma of what happened, especially with New Yorkers, is everyone was like, "Wait– this could be the end of the world. What's real, what matters?" And everyone was like..."Oh, love matters." Partnership is really important. "I don't wanna go through quarantine again without a human being that I love and wanna fight for this life on the planet with." Everyone stopped dating like they were at a grocery store where they could just buy unlimited cans of soda.

People started actually actual conversations, because they had to. They started using video dating, which we should've been doing the entire time. Because before you meet someone at a bar, you should be able to know if you can have a conversation with them, and that they can put together a sentence; and that you like their brain and mind before putting yourself in a situation that is kind of hard to get out of. And so people started to have a lot more time for self reflection and they would be having very long phone calls. So a lot of my clients, who were in the category of people that online dating was not serving them– a lot of these women ended up having great matches. Before they met the person they were connecting from a heart and mind place, so all of a sudden, people become less disposable.

So the guys who were dating online were dating because they were interested in actually getting to know someone. It kind of took some of the lower quality selections off the market. I would say most of our clients who continue to date virtually online have gotten together– I would even say that matchmaking and dating from where I'm standing probably works 50% better in a pandemic. And all the matchmakers have been seeing a huge surge of people wanting to hire them. Bumble is up 22%– people want to talk. And now people are having real conversations– they're not like, "Oh, what do you do for a living?" they're like "How do you feel? What's important to you? Is the city where you wanna live, or should we be farming and growing on our own land?" People are having real conversations about race– or people who didn't think that the way they were choosing their mates based on these programmed ideas based off of Disney movies.
They're saying, "Oh is the fact that I've never dated a Black woman– is that racist?" For me, I think the answer is yes. It's programmed conditioning.

How are conversations changing in regards to dating?
People are having real conversations about the future, and the world, and politics. And obviously, everybody is in a super hyper triggered state, but also we're learning communication skills to trigger each other less. It's a journey, and we haven't quite mastered it. From the people who are good and kind and thoughtful, I'm seeing that more from them. Obviously the people who are problematic and challenging are going in the opposite direction, which is kind of how everything in the country is going. The major difference is that video dating is changing everything. People are living all over the place, not just New York, they're kind of de-centralizing their location as well. Say you were my client, and I was like, "I met this guy–he's in Austin, would you mind having a video talk?" Well, this is a great solution because the male to female ratio in New York is 10 to 7 and then 60% of those guys date 10 years younger than them, so when you're 40 it's 10 women to 3 guys. So now we're solving the problem of [the dating ratio] being unbalanced.

Do you have any models you look up to regarding your practice?

I was one of the first matchmakers to work with women as clients. I thought, what if we make a little pocket of the universe where everyone is less problematic? And it could be curated and fun? I didn't have anyone to look up to for that. When I started matchmaking, it was just something I did, it didn't know it was a job. I just wanted to be helpful. Over the years I started to meet other matchmakers, and we have a community. I am certainly unlike anyone else, they probably think I am an alien from outer space! (Laughs). They say, "She's the Bernie Sanders of matchmaking!" since I'm always railing up and saying we need a love revolution. The other thing I was into before matchmaking was durational performance art. As a matchmaker, I am in the act of just keeping myself like a hollow bone or body and I just sit and listen for 54 hours a week (now it's a little slower). I usually sit with my clipboard and interview one person at a time, over 12,000 people in the last 12 years. And I just listen. Think about someone like Marina Ambramovic– or anyone who has done a performance piece that has spanned a very time– sitting in presence is at the root of my practice. This started off as a piece that was just about me connecting people. I was 21 and I had a "Free Love Advice" booth in City Park, and then I went to Central Park, and then on the street in Williamsburg. Then I finally got a chair inside! I tried online dating myself as an anthropological study and turned very judgemental, whereas in real life I am trying to see what is special in people. And I could see how damaging this could be to your neurological systems.

Online dating is a two-dimensional, magazine-flipping experience. Versus real life exchange, where pheromones are being exchanged, right?

The pheromones are the one thing that's missing from matchmaking. I had a friend who used to throw pheromone parties where everybody would bring their stinky shirts and sniff out their mates (laughs). Arranged marriages work too, believe it or not. So there's no right way to do it. Regarding the future of love– love follows economic structures. In the pre-agricultural time period, where everyone was nomadic and roaming around their tribes– everyone was having sex with each other. There was no ownership, no jealousy, and maybe a lady would get impregnated but no one would know who the father was, so the tribe would all help raise the kid together, because it was harder to stay alive. Then we had the agricultural movement, and everyone had plots of lands, and they started owning things. People were trading women in order to inherit property; simultaneously women are viewed as property. Then we got to capitalism and people were like, "Oh we can CHOOSE who we get married to, this is great!" All of a sudden, people are obsessed with choice. And now in the present day, we are creating so much waste. If you don't like someone, you can ghost them, because it was such a low investment anyways. Nothing feels stable– cryptocurrency is a decentralized thing, so if we move towards that...are we all going to be polyamorous? We might not need a division of labor in the household...it's going to require a lot of communication. But also, who knows? Maybe this time, in three years, we'll be trading sea shells. I don't know what the future looks like but I know it is changing very quickly.

What do you see yourself doing in 5 years?

I know that I am on this planet to be helpful– for me, right now, social justice is really important. I think we are at such an extremely important moment for that. This is fucking revolution time! Anything I can do to further these causes is where my future is at. It's a make or break moment. What's been great is that I'm only picking clients that are an extension of my values– so then, we're having people having thoughtful children, being raised in ways that these kids can go on and lead their own revolutions. I want to have beautiful matches that are next-level and will change the world. And I do think that right now the world needs more love. And I think the more love you have, and the more harmony you have with your relationship, the more you will act with compassion towards other beings.

Amy Van Doran is a professional matchmaker at the Modern Love Club.
She has interviewed over 12,000 single people over the last 12 years,
and is happy to have assisted some of the coolest people in the world on their romantic journey.
For fun, Amy enjoys making durational performance art and playing basketball.
"The future is.. love. The future of love is creativity."