

What is the meaning of the project's name – Lacika and the Hookers?

When I started the project back in 2013 I picked my own childhood name - Lacika and added Hookers next to it. Although it was born as a one man project, the name now makes much more sense as I am working together with a group of artists. I am Lacika and they are my Hookers.

How would you define the cultural spectrum of your music? Is it Eastern European / Central European just European or simply international?

I would say it's international. There is a certain type of sadness and melancholy attached to my music, which probably can be felt more by people living in Central and Eastern Europe, because of the cultural and historical background of these regions.

You describe your music as full of Eastern European melancholy... What does this special type of melancholy represent for you? Are there some Eastern European artists who inspired you to make this kind of music?

Central and Eastern Europe had a very different faith in history, compared the West, like Communism, the Ottomans or the Habsburg rule. There was always someone ruling over these regions and this is noticeable in every realm of life and arts. Over the centuries these factors have generated a certain type of melancholic feeling which lured itself into people's lives. Just take a listen to some Hungarian or Slavic folk songs and you will understand what I mean. Back in the days in Budapest I had classical music education and I found these sad folksongs written mainly in a minor key absolutely fascinating. As my biggest influences from the modern Central/Eastern European pop music I could mention Napoleon Boulevard, a Hungarian band from the 80s or Zemfira, a Russian artist.

Your recent video „Low Skies“ was shot in Belarus. What did take you to Belarus? What is your personal connection to this country and how it is shown in your songs?

I got introduced to Belarusian language and culture while studying Russian literature and philology at the university in Budapest and I wrote my thesis about Belarusian-Russian comparative linguistics. Shooting in Minsk with Mario Dzurila, my Hooker-friend is symbolic for me, the location and the video completes the meaning of the song. My personal fight against depression and towards artistic freedom in parallel with the fight of a country against repression and towards democracy.

In the already mentioned video for the song „Low Skies“, there are subtitles in Belarusian. Could it be interpreted as a kind of eyecatcher or aesthetical element in the video or did you intend to reach out Belarusians in this way as well?

We added the subtitles to raise awareness about the decline of the use of Belarusian language. When we visited Minsk I rarely met anyone who spoke the language, people were surprised and intimidated when I started a conversation in Belarusian.

How important is performance, particularly self-staging, for your music?

It is very important. We are currently preparing new live shows, so stay tuned :)

In the video „Art“ such quotes as „too weird and chaotic for my personal taste“, „we appreciate the experimental sound, but...“ appear on a screen. Where do these quotes come from? Is it a kind of self-mockery?

That's one way of looking at it :) Those are actual quotes we got from the music industry when we sent "Art" out to blogs, PR agencies and labels, so they are more reactions, than self-reactions.

What is in your plans for the near future?

Well, I am working on a new record, which will come out next year. A new EP release is on the horizon. Also we are teaming up with some DJs, producers and artists for a new release based on my first album, but featuring new material as well. It will include a live show involving different art disciplines.

Could you share with osTraum readers some of your favourite contemporary songs?

1. *Zola Jesus - Exhumed*
2. *Jenny Hval - Conceptual Romance*
3. *PJ Harvey - Is This Desire?*
4. *Björk - Notget*
5. *Земфира - Похоронила*
6. *Michelle Gurevich - Good Times Don't Carry Over*
7. *Pharmakon - Crawling On Bruised Knees*