HENRIK!
GETS MELLOW!

FLOWFESTIVAL 2019
ANNUAL FLOWFESTIVAL MAGAZINE

THE BEST DOUGH IN TOWN
SWAN/KOISTINEN JOIN FORCES WITH
CARDI B AND TAME IMPALA

OWN PALLETT WITH
HER IN BED
COME AS YOU ARE
THE PRE-PARTY IS ABOUT TO BEGIN
JOIN THE FLOW RIGHT?
YES!

Available now at selected stores and makiaclothing.com
Flow Magazine is the annual, official publication of Flow Festival.

You can also call us Flowmag.

We are made in Kallio, Helsinki.

EDITOR
Tero Kartastenpää

ART DIRECTOR
Utvi Prokofjev

SUB-EDITOR
Aurora Rämö
Marko Vihilo

PRODUCER
Hanna Kaikula

TRANSLATOR
Maria Salervo

CONTRIBUTORS OF TEXT
Markus Hildén
Samuli Knuuti
Tuomas Kokko
Senni Lähde
Emilia Mäenmaa
Noora Nuotio
Veera Nuutinen

CONTRIBUTORS OF IMAGES
Aya Brace
Vita Edvards
Ama Essel
Pauliina Holma
Milena Huhta
Ilija Kaaliala
Birgit Kaadue
Tanja Koljonen
Hayley Lee
Mikko Rikala
Ilkka Saastamoinen
Anna Salmi
Bryan Saragosa
Haliz Yosef

The festival will make a head start at the Finnish National Opera on Wednesday 7th and Thursday 8th of August. Read more about the pre-festival dance piece on page 34.

For more info, go to www.flowfestival.com.

You will also find the sizzling, electronic version of this publication.

Cover
Henrik! aka Janne Ahtiainen was photographed by Bryan Saragosa. Style by Ines Kalliala. The cover story begins on page 22.

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Beam
Bar Flagon
Nordic Ice Company
Pirilän Kukkatalo, Tuusula
Klaus I with its Sweet Suite
Good
Makasi
Nobilius II
Marinski
Cheap Sleep
Sini Saavalä
and Ruttén the Dog

MEGA SALES
Milla Väljus, milla@flowfestival.com

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FLOW FESTIVAL VISUAL IDENTITY
Tsto

FLOW FESTIVAL 2019
The celebration of music, food, art and life takes place in Suvilahti, Helsinki from Friday 9th until Sunday 11th of August 2019. This is the 16th edition Flow Festival.
Yu Chuan, what would you like to see at Flow?

“I look forward to seeing the new event at the Finnish National Opera just before the festival weekend where there are performances, contemporary dance, electronic music and audiovisual art. Last year they had lots of graffiti paintings that I liked at the festival area and also the installations and lights were great.”

What would you like to hear at Flow?

“Theo Parrish because I’ve been quite a fan of him and his record collection but I haven’t seen him performing before. I also think there will be lots of after parties, but the best ones are maybe in the area of club kaiku and post bar.”

What would you like to say to Flow?

“Just that I have enjoyed myself a lot! And also that the after party was cool. There’s probably going to be lots of after parties but the best ones are maybe in the area of club Kaiku and Post Bar.”

What would you like to play at Flow?

“I don’t know yet but if the weather is really good I want to play a proper house lineup, I think. Early house music, maybe a few disco tracks. I am playing early on Saturday so I want to build a chill and groovy set to get people ready for the rest of the day. I want to get the party started.”

Yu Chuan, 20

Go with the font

GO WITH THE FONT

DJ YU CHUAN WANTS TO FEEL HOW THE PARTY GETS STARTED THIS AUGUST AT FLOW

Six decades of a goth

THE CURE, 41, AND ROBERT SMITH, 60, ARE BECOMING MORE INTENSE THAN EVER.

First decade

Safe but still an outsider. This has been the core of The Cure since it’s prehistory. Robert Smith, 60, played his first guitar chords when he was seven. Everybody in the Smiths’ musical family of six played the piano. They moved from Blackpool to south to Crawley. He didn’t fit in completely.

Second decade

Smith was fourteen when he and future members of The Cure formed a band called Obelisk. They would become teenage art punks. Punk only had to be invented first.

Third decade

Creativity burst out on several albums dealing with depression, joy and nihilism. You can either cheer or cry to hits like A Forest, Love Cats and Pictures of You. Red lipstick and an explosive hairdo made Robert Smith an androgynous icon.

Fourth decade

The masterpiece was revealed in May 1989. Disintegration is a holy, warm and tragic compilation of sounds from Lullaby to Lovesong. The Cure was the strangest stadium-filling band at the end of the millennium.

Fifth decade

The beginning of the century was an era of insecurity, but by now, The Cure’s dark rock symphonies had become a source of comfort for listeners across generations. Their latest album, 4:13 Dream, was released in 2008.

Sixth decade

The Cure was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 2019. It inspired them to start the process of finishing their 14th album. If we hear some new songs this year, in the words of Robert Smith, they will be “incredibly intense”.

IN SHORT

IN SHORT

TEXTS: TEO KARTASTEINPÄÄ / MARKO VIITALA
IMAGES: HALIZ YOSEF / TANJA KOLJONEN / VIIVI PESHEF JUV
A Costume Party
FESTIVAL STYLE EXPLAINED BY THOSE WHO DO IT WELL.

The DJ: Katerina Andonov

“You rarely see me without an extra-large record label t-shirt. My dream is to create handmade and 100% recycled merch for my own record label. Nineties rap is my biggest style influence and I love workwear and Air Force I sneakers. However, this year for Flow I might want to wear my long leather coat from Onar Studios, high heels and maybe even a dress. Something sexy. And I always have a bandana scarf with me. It comes in handy in case I want to hide myself in a photo. The only definite ‘no’ in festival style is to buy plastic crap from a fast fashion store just to get something new to wear.”

Dance with Katerina & Linda Lazarov at Flow Sat 20th Aug.

The Rapper: Bizi

“I buy clothes every two weeks. I’m not too influenced by anyone because we easily end up looking not as original as we’d like to think. I always wear the classic Vans sneakers. They go well with everything. Right now, I’m into big pants and small scarves. Last year at Flow, I got a whole plate of nachos all over my brand-new white Tommy Hilfiger hoodie. That was not even when it’s not sunny. The most important thing in festival style is to go all out. It’s the one time you can get away with wearing anything.”

Catch Bizi on stage at Flow Sat 10th Aug.

The Flow Regular: Salma Jama

“Style is art in a sense. Your clothes tell a story whether you like it or not. My style is always laid back, but comfort is the key at festivals. Last year I wore a hijab made with technical material. It was great for all the dancing. Pockets are handy, so maybe consider cargo pants. If you have enough pockets, you might not even need a bag. This year, I might go for a wide legged pant suit with chunky sneakers. I’m obsessed with neon colours. All black is a bit meh for me. And I always wear sunglasses even when it’s not sunny. The most important thing in festival style is to tell a story whether you like it or not. Comfort is the key at festivals. Last year I wore a Nike hijab made with technical material. It was great for all the dancing. Pockets are handy, so maybe consider cargo pants. If you have enough pockets, you might not even need a bag. This year, I might go for a wide legged pant suit with chunky sneakers. I’m obsessed with neon colours. All black is a bit meh for me. And I always wear sunglasses even when it’s not sunny.

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Dance with Katerina & Linda Lazarov at Flow Sat 20th Aug.
Looking for a place to calm down and take it easy in the midst of partying? You might want to pop by at Pink Space – a soothing oasis and spatial installation designed by DJ–artist Taika Mannila and interior architect Fanni Suvila.

Located at Cirko premises, the space will showcase alternative festival program such as stage poetry, performance art and video installations. The space itself will be literally pink – or at least “powdery and soft” as Suvila puts it. Despite its Instagram appeal, the space is designed mainly for breathing, thinking and feeling. Mannila and Suvila describe it as a “spa for feelings”. Pink is not only the prevailing colour of the space but also a state of mind. Brought together last year by mutual friends who noted their common interests, Mannila and Suvila had both been exploring the colour pink from different angles.

Suvila’s final thesis looked at it from a spatial viewpoint and its ability to provoke emotions like no other colour. Mannila in turn had been fascinated by its symbolical transformation. “Qualities associated with pink, like girliness and softness, have been downplayed in everyday life”, Mannila says. Lately, there has been a wave of reclaiming pink in an empowering manner.

Building on this thought, the concept of Pink Space saw daylight for the first time last autumn at Jackie Bar during Helsinki Design Week. This time around at Flow, the duo will take the concept one step further. The program will be curated based on pink values of diversity and showcase a broad spectrum of art forms and themes. The curators stress that “aiming for a lovely experience” doesn’t mean that all of the performances have to be light, glittery or cute.

Performer Niko Hallikainen, artist Katri Tikkanen and collectives Pehmee & P(In)K are creating something special for the venue, to name a few. “Our aim is to create a space that embodies celebration of diversity and where anyone can come as they are. In safe surroundings, like Pink Space, one can deal with difficult issues too.”

In a special Pink Space edition, Katri Tikkanen’s animated video Magical Healing Pony II evokes a magical pony as it visited her in a dream. Low Income Glow is a speech performance by writer Niko Hallikainen. The piece is centered around themes of poverty and sexual desire in the context of a class society. In this raw solo performance Hallikainen mixes his poems together with sensitizing soundscapes.

A participatory healing ritual laced with magic, cathexes and gender euphoria. PINK is the creation of Jenna Jauhiainen, Kasper Kampouli, Pink-187, Rosa Kasara and Schoolboi Cute.
Dough My Goodness!

THREE FLOW RESTAURANTS, WAY, BACCO AND ANDREA, REVEAL THE SECRETS TO MAKING THE PERFECT DOUGH.

Toni Kostian, Way

“When you’re making dough, you must understand the entire process. We don’t use any baker’s yeast in our bread. Just the sourdough starter. I practiced making sourdough bread for years because it just tastes so much better than bread made with commercial yeast. With sourdough, you get a crispy, caramelised crust. The process of making dough can’t be hurried. If the dough needs to rest, you have to let it rest. And you can’t skip any part of the process. We might start making the dough in the evening, continue the following morning and shape it into a loaf. After that, the dough must rest somewhere cool until the next day. You can easily use two or three days making the dough. The bread we sell, for instance, can be proofed for five days.

Kneading is also important. You have to do it enough but not too much. A perfect bread is baked properly. It has the right amount of salt and is made with the right flour. The flour can’t be too clean, it must have enough flavour and contain bran.

When the loaf of bread is ready, it should taste handmade, not like it was created with a push of a button.”

Pasi Ryhänen, Bacco

“Our goal is to make dough that is highly digestible and doesn’t cause stomach problems. That is our principle. We have been doing research on how to create a dough like that for a long time. The idea came from an Italian pizza school whose founder wanted to find out how to make healthier pizza. We studied, on a molecular level, what would make dough more digestible.

I learned the process in Italy. I tasted a lot of different pizzas and doughs. Now, we are using flours that all come from Italy. We make our dough with a mix of six different flours. That way we get the consistency and taste we are looking for. Another important factor is the fermentation process. We proof our dough for 96 hours, sometimes even longer, during which all the sugar in the dough will burn.

Making dough is precise. We hold to our standards to ensure consistent quality. We usually sell hundreds of pizzas in a week. Just getting the right amount of dough ready is quite a process.

We want to make pizza that’s delicious but also healthy.”

Filip Forsberg, Andrea

“Our bread develops its taste when it rests for long periods of time during the baking process. The crust will turn out crispy while inside the bread is soft and fluffy.

We use two different mother dough starters; one is made with wheat and the other with rye. We begin by stirring flour and water together with the starters. Then we let the dough ferment for 24 hours before continuing to make the actual bread dough.

When the dough is ready, we fold it once every hour, at least three times. Then we place the bread loaves in the refrigerator to proof slowly and bake them in the following morning. In addition to the baking process, the ingredients and freshness of the flour affect the taste. We have experimented with different flours from local producers to find the best mix.

It would be nearly impossible to make large batches of bread this way, but the taste is the most important thing for us. That is why we continuously experiment with new recipes. I personally like a crust that is a little dark, but it shouldn’t be burnt of course. Baking bread might look easy, but the skill comes through trial and error.”
Isn’t it strange that when we want to fly some place warm for a week of vacation, we can find out exactly how many tons of carbon dioxide it will take to get us and our luggage into that sun chair, yet it’s almost impossible to find out what the impact of drinking a glass of milk vs. a glass of oat drink has on the planet? It’s double strange considering that the food industry generates nearly twice as many greenhouse gas emissions as all transportation combined — cars, buses, planes, trains, even personal jetpacks.*

So from now on, our products will be labelled with a number that defines the amount of CO₂e they generate, from farm to store, so that you know how they impact the planet before you decide to buy them. That way you can easily compare them to other food products as soon as the entire food industry follows our lead, which they have to do now that we’ve officially and indiscreetly suggested it on the side of all of our European packages.

*The food industry is responsible for 25% of global CO₂e (WWF), while the transportation sector accounts for 14% (IPCC 2014).
WANT TO REST IN PEACE? HELSINKI IS FULL OF PLACES FOR NAPS AND SNORES. LO-FI POP SISTERS, MAUSTETYTÖT, SEMI-PROFESSIONAL SLEEPERS THEMSELVES, TESTED THE LIBRARY, CINEMA AND A LUXURY SUITE FOR CATCHING UP SOME ZZZ’S.

The recently opened Helsinki Central Library Oodi lures masses of visitors, some with screaming children, but on the third floor, there is a perfect place for napping during the quiet afternoon hours. Large pillows and soft seats have been placed near the enormous windows. The etiquette is so informal no one would notice if you happened to snore a bit.

Maustetytöt: “We have a natural talent for sleeping. We sleep all the time. If the sun is shining, you can choose a warm spot for a nap in Oodi.”

Dreaming is bigger than ever.

78-metre Clarion hotel opened in Jätkäsaari three years ago and the elegant boutique hotel, St. George, in the city centre two years after. Flow Festival’s neighbourhood in Suvilahti is also changing. In Södertälje, the old insurance headquarters is being turned into a 199-room hotel. In Hakaniemi, the acclaimed Norwegian architecture office Snøhetta has designed a shining new hotel on the waterfront. In Kallio, HYY Yhtymä’s hub for scientists, offices, restaurants and tourists is rising in 2022.

Open dream: Oodi, Töölönlahdenkatu 4

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Sleep tight, tigers

Future dreams:
When other Nordic countries built impressive hotels, Helsinki was not in the forefront. But don’t lose your sleep over it, the city has since been piled up with beds.
Culture dream: Maxim, Kluuvikatu 1

Sizeable and comfy armchairs, soothing lights and a lot of legroom. Cinemas are perfect places for closing your eyes. Folks have been taking two-hour rests in Kluuvikatu’s cinemas since 1909. The antique decorations of the recently renovated Maxim have been preserved from the original building. Maxim mainly shows art house cinema and offers a chance to enjoy a nightcap with your film.

Maustetytöt: “This is the best place. We really fell asleep for a while. The movie was shit. There’s no shame in falling asleep so you fall asleep.”

Seaside dream: Nikolai II, Eteläranta 7

The motor yacht has been used for various purposes since it was built in Helsinki 1906. It has served as a war-time hospital, a fishing boat and a marine research vehicle. Now, it’s a home base for karaoke parties and maritime sleeping. There are cabin bunk beds where you can sneak in after having a sing-along on the sun deck. You can also rest naked in the wood-heated sauna while watching the busy Market Square.

Maustetytöt: “Cozy. Good place if one can handle being close to another person. Extra points for the calming rocking of the yacht and the seagulls screaming.”

Budget dream: CheapSleep, Sturenkatu 27

While hanging around in the brightly painted communal lounge of the hostel, it almost feels like you’re 18 and travelling in Barcelona or London with no money at all. The atmosphere is international and very affordable. Beds cost around 25 euros a night or less — if you want to get a full experience in a 26-bed dorm. One of the female dorms, room number 206, offers a picturesque view of the surrounding Vallila neighbourhood.

Maustetytöt: “Top class. They provide slippers and all. You can see the pine trees from the window.”

Splendor dream: Marski, Mannerheimintie 10

After 18 months of renovation, hotel Marski is reopening this summer. The hotel was built in 1961 during a boom of Finnish modernism and design. It has been the spot for power suit people and bigger-than-Finnish-every-day-life stars like Jayne Mansfield. The most grandiose suite is on top of three new floors and has a view to Esplanade Park.

Maustetytöt: “It’s hard to rate the experience as we aren’t used to this kind of luxury. The bed is excellent. The bath robes are soft and fluffy.”

“EXTRA POINTS FOR THE SEAGULLS SCREAMING.”

Zzzzzzzzzz...
CREATED IN BARCELONA

FLOW FESTIVAL

MARSKI SUMMER SERIES

MARSKI BY SCANDIC

KESÄKUUSSA
Pe 7.8. Toimistot sääplin:
Marskin Av llo 18–19
La 8.8. Hehutteet nello:
Itäklubi llo 18–23

FLOW VIikonlopun Elokuisia
Pe 9.8. Valmista:
Eteen llo 19–19
La 10.8. Liitos-nousuun:
Brekkuklubi llo 10–13

La 10.8. Piipäät:
Itäklubi llo 19–23
Su 11.8. Yöllä paassia:
Brekkuklubi llo 10–13

Terassi auki myös llo 22 jälkeen. DJ:t julkaistaan myöhemmin. Tiedät mitä tehdä?

Marski by Scandic

Mannerheimintie 10

FLOW FESTIVAL HELSINKI
9.–11.8.2019

Yhteistyössä

BASSO

Marski by Scandic

Marski by Scandic
MELLOW

PUNK ROCKER HENRIK AND DJ SANSIBAR ARE FRESHLY ACQUAINTED BUT READY TO SHARE THEIR KNOWLEDGE OF RHUBARB AND LIFE.

IMAGES
Bryan Saragosa
Ines Kalliafilva/Ines Essel

STYLE / MUAH

Celebration
Henrik!

Henrik! of Sansibar: “When I first met Sansibar I was so high on poppers I didn’t realise what was happening. It was backstage at Tavastia club like ten seconds before my gig was about to start. We didn’t have time to talk too much. During this photoshoot we did talk though, and I was impressed!”

Rhubarb tastes bitter and the ice was hand-cut by Nordic Ice Company.

HENRIK! CURRICULUM VITAE

Ecstatic rapper slash hardcore punk rocker. Formerly known on Soundcloud as Versace Henrik. Got banned after two million plays due to sexually explicit banner image. Specialist in chaos. Will be recording a new album Uusi Testamentti later this year with a live band. It will contain a lot of "euphoria and messing around."

SANSIBAR CURRICULUM VITAE

Dj maestro with an eclectic and mind-bending sound. Released tracks on notable labels like Natural Sciences and Darknet. Eats futuristic techno and Detroit electro for breakfast. Two new ep's coming out: Targeted Individuals and Emo-002.

"We want to create a rock 'n roll orgy!"
Henrik! at Flow Sat 10th Aug
Dj Sansibar at Flow Sat 10th Aug

Location: Sweet Suite of Klaus K & Valio.
For years, it was quiet.

A long time had passed since female rappers became mainstream. At the turn of the 21st century, charts were dominated by Lauryn Hill, the frontwoman of the Fugees, the visionary Missy Elliott and Lil’ Kim, who had harnessed the open sexuality of rap to her advantage.

And then, nothing.

Until 2017, when popular culture was ready for Cardi B. The former stripper was a social media celebrity and a cast member of VH1’s reality series Love and Hip Hop. Belcalis Marlenis Almánzar’s, 26, stage name, Cardi B was inspired by Bacardi rum.

While male rappers carry guns and talk about their gang history, Cardi B raps about surviving the streets from the perspective of a stripper. She used to drug and rob men to earn a living.

Stripping and selling sex were her way of life, a way to survive when options were limited. That’s how she saved up the money for her first mixtape.

At first, Cardi B’s past might seem demeaning, but she uses her experience to create classic hip-hop clichés. She talks openly about money and the lust for power from the point of view of a survivor.

Cardi B isn’t a role model without problems, but her image isn’t solely based on being overly sexual.

She’s different from artists like Lil’ Kim, whose big hits How Many Licks and Magic Stick are great but explicitly heterosexual songs. Thes most prominent goal was to show Lil’ Kim as a woman “in charge.” That leaves little room for being well-liked.

Cardi B paints with a broader brush. She raps about sex but doesn’t let it define her as an artist. Possibly one of her most important messages is that people can have more than one role: “I’m a boss in a skirt, I’m a dog, I’m a flirt.”

What makes a new-generation popstar unique isn’t a specific genre but their manner of expression and presence. From a hip-hop perspective, Cardi B is the manifestation of masculine culture. She accentuates her looks and earthly possessions. But at the same time, she is a girl-next-door, who likes Madonna and gets excited about Lady Gaga answering her tweets.

Cardi B plays by the rules of hip-hop, but her music reaches the world outside of hip-hop’s realm.

After the release of her chart-topping first album, Invasion of Privacy, Cardi B has rapped about bisexuality on Rita Ora’s Girls, collaborated with City Girls on their single Thotiana, stolen the show at the Grammy Awards with her strip-tease-inspired glamorous performance and made a nod towards 1990’s R&B by teaming up with Bruno Mars on two songs.

If anything, Cardi B is versatile. She’s genuinely a 360 degrees popstar, who adapts to the surrounding world and shapes it to fit her brand.

After her first single, Bodak Yellow, was released in June 2017, Cardi B told The Fader magazine that she has to hold her personality back: “I gotta be more of an artist. And to be more of an artist, I gotta be more censored because my personality just overshadows everything.”

Cardi B fluctuates, just like her music, from intensive rants to composed chicness. As a popstar in the late 2010’s, she knows her way around business, how to play the game and even how to create her own rules.
VENUE

OPERA HOUSE
The giant of Töölönlahti, the Finnish National Opera and Ballet, opened for arias 26 years ago. Architects Hyvärinen-Karhunen-Parkkinen designed a controversial building, Oopperatalo. The postmodern house is now even more contemporary than when it was built.

For two nights, Flow will spread to the Almi Hall, specialised in experimental productions. The hall is named after the opera’s longtime director Alfons Almi who struggled to get the first real Opera House to be built in Finland.

CHOREOGRAPHER

WAYNE MCGREGOR
The Resident Choreographer of The Royal Ballet Wayne McGregor has worked with prestigious ballet companies around the world. His touring company of dancers, Company Wayne McGregor will conquer Helsinki with it’s hit piece Autobiography Edits.

The Commander of the Order of the British Empire has used his knowledge of movement when working in film, theatre, opera, fashion, technology and TV – from Harry Potter films to Radiohead’s music videos. McGregor has created musical collaborations with The White Stripes, Jamie xx, Steve Reich and Finnish composer Kaija Saariaho to name a few.

PIECE

AUTOBIOGRAPHY EDITS
"Dancing is a form of physical thinking", Wayne McGregor has said. He combines art and science – genetics, math and dance – to reveal the most intimate facts about himself. For Autobiography Edits his genome was sequenced by scientists and converted to an algorithm that is the backbone of the dance sections. Ten dancers perform a different selection of McGregor’s DNA.

FLOW X OPERA

WED 7TH AND THU 8TH AUG

CHOREOGRAPHER WAYNE MCGREGOR’S HERITAGE.

Oooopera!

MUSICIAN

JLIN
The experimental electronic musician Jlin will perform live music for the DNA choreography. The American producer was associated with footwork, the hyperactive post-house but has later escaped categories. In 2017, Company Wayne McGregor commissioned her to compose the score to Autobiography. According to Pitchfork it is “an accomplished album full of puckish invention, singular production twists, and ambient music.” After the Opera show Jlin brings her brand-new collaboration with the visual artist Theresa Baumgartner to Flow’s The Other Sound on Friday 9th of August.

OPENING ACT

SINJIN HAWKE & ZORA JONES
Once a bright future of cyborgs, next a digital dystopia. The opening act Sinjin Hawke & Zora Jones are known for their work with other pioneers of electronic expression. Hawke produced Kanye West and Zora Jones have worked with the main act Jlin. The duo’s audiovisual project Fractal Fantasy combines sound, image and motion capture technology. Their huge, shapeshifting avatars are projected on the screen, mimicking their every move and gesture.
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Why don’t you people come to my gigs, when I could die at any minute! That’s what Stina Koistinen thought at the age of 24. She was studying music in Helsinki and had just started a band. Only a little earlier, a rare cancerous tumour had been found in her brain. Still, she wanted to make the music without limitations, while she had the time. This was nine years ago.

“They’ll be sorry, when I’m gone, and they didn’t come to my gigs, I thought,” Koistinen, now 33, says and laughs. Standing next to her, Astrid Swan, 37, is smiling. She also has incurable cancer.

“Cancer brought us together.” Their recent co-produced EP is called Swan/Koistinen, and the duo will be performing at Flow together with the Canadian musician Owen Pallett.

Two years ago, the violinist Pekka Kuusisto invited Swan and Koistinen to perform at Our Festival. The singers had known about each other’s illnesses for years but weren’t friends until they met earlier that summer in the queue to the bathroom at Sideways Festival. They went out for coffee, and Swan invited Koistinen to her 35th birthday party.

In their first collaborative concert at Our Festival, they talked about being artists in hospital corridors, performed their solo songs and gave their first performance of Swan/Koistinen material. The songs came together in a short period of time. The compositions and lyrics were written by the two artists together. There was enough material for an album, but Swan and Koistinen wanted to release only four of the songs. Only the most important songs were included, which emphasises their uniqueness.

In addition to piano and electronic sounds, the EP, which has been described as a pop symphony, includes sounds from an MRI machine. The themes of the songs deal with bodily experience, fragility of life and marginalised voices. Illness can be heard in the names of the songs: Diagnosis, Hospital, Symptoms.

Swan and Koistinen want to redefine the concept of an ill woman. Instead of a sad, pathetic character waiting for death, they want to present a strong woman, who enjoys being alive.

“Everyone’s life is fragile. A lot of people live a limited life in some sense, disabled or wounded, but life is valuable nonetheless. You can enjoy it, but also take responsibility for being alive and do something meaningful.” When you talk publicly about cancer, the illness easily defines you. However, music by Swan and Koistinen was created as a result of cancer.

In the winter of 2013, everything changed. Swan found a lump in her breast. She didn’t go to the doctor straight away but waited for four months. The nurse calmed her down, saying there’s no way it’s cancer – after all, Swan was only 31. A few weeks later, a doctor examined the lump and again reassured Swan that it couldn’t be cancer. Just to be sure, Swan was sent for further examinations. After the mammography and biopsies, the doctor had to admit to being wrong.

The cancer was aggressive. Only a month later, Swan had her right breast removed and suffered hair loss from chemotherapy. The rest of her album release tour had to be cancelled. Stina Koistinen had been there at the first gig of the tour. It was a celebration of a comeback album, Astrid 4. It was an album in which the artist was saying goodbye to her youthful dreams of becoming an international popstar.

“I remember seeing Stina in the front row of the gig.” “I knew already then that you were ill,” Koistinen tells Swan. “I told your spouse that if Astrid ever needs someone to talk to, you can always contact me. I never got a message from you, but maybe it was too soon.”

After that gig, the next time Swan performed was six months later, at Flow Festival in August 2014. Performing was different than before; people were crying.

“Since then, Swan’s concerts have been a place, where people can be “truly weak”.”
Koistinen’s illness had begun earlier. She had such bad headaches, that the painkillers and the stretching routine she received from the health care centre weren't enough anymore. Once her face began to go numb, she went to see a neurologist. The cause of Koistinen’s headache turned out to be a tumour in her pineal gland, which caused a disruption in the cerebrospinal fluid circulation.

After an MRI scan, she went straight to brain surgery. It was spring 2010, a Monday. Koistinen thought cancelling her gig on the following Friday would be unnecessary. “I was determined to perform, even with 16 stitches in my head”, Koistinen recalls.

“Well, it turned out we had to cancel the gig.”

After the surgery, the tumour was biopsied, and it was a very rare kind of cancer. The diagnosis was a terrible shock. Luckily, the tumour disappeared with radiation.

Three years later, in 2013, Koistinen’s alternative pop band Color Borlor released their debut album. That same year, the cancer came back, and so did the radiation therapy.

At times, it looked like the treatment had worked and the tumour had shrunk, but then the next scan would reveal an enlarged pineal gland. The treatment was so tough, that sometimes it had to be paused. Still, Koistinen continued making music. “I have actually been quite defiant, just like Astrid. I haven’t really given up my illness any space. Though it wasn’t always very wise, I have toured during my radiation. It was strange; I was super tired, but in a way it held my life together.”

Swan understands what Koistinen means all too well. She thought she was cured, until in the summer of 2017, when she found out that the cancer had spread to her liver, bones and lymph nodes. It was a death sentence.

Swan started chemotherapy again. She couldn’t be in large crowds but my spaghetti-shoulder dresses flowing with my long hair blowing, and I was so busy or doesn’t like the music. The Finns haven’t met Pallett yet, but Pallett has recently shot a new video for his upcoming album which will be released later this year. It will be his third Owen Pallett record – previously he released two albums under the same final Fantasy. At the moment he is also doing orchestral arrangements for a band of his friends. “They gave me 64 minutes of music that I have to score for a full orchestra. That’s really like two or three weeks of work but I try to do it in three days.”

Swan and Koistinen’s music is very moving, very harrowing, very emotional and tense. I think that I don’t think there’s a lot of music out there that really succeeds in creating that sort of tension.”

“I doubt my audience would come to see anyone just because they’re ill. Maybe Astrid’s audience might be different because she’s made an album about her illness”, Koistinen says. “How should I put it nicely”, Swan says. “Come without pity – because pity is awful.”
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Unexpected success stories make rock music interesting. The Australian musician Kevin Parker and Tame Impala prove that succeeding beyond expectations is still possible in the 2010’s, also known as the age of streaming.

When Tame Impala released its first single, “Sundown Syndrome”, in the spring of 2009, few thought that a decade later, Parker’s one-man band project would be the headline in major music festivals. Even back then, psychedelia was the thing, a desire to express consciousness in an altered state but also to expand it through music. On his debut album, Innerspeaker, 2010, Parker felt that fuzzy guitars and 1960’s rock was the thing, a desire to express consciousness in an altered state but also to expand it through music. On his debut album, Innerspeaker, 2010, Parker felt that fuzzy guitars and 1960’s rock influences were the best way to achieve his goal.

Parker’s personal history supported the narrative of a stoner boy from a wealthy family. In various interviews, Parker has explained about how he left his poor mother and moved in with his rich father to enjoy his record collection, to study astronomy, but ditched class whenever possible.

With the success of Innerspeaker, Parker found a hard-working popstar within himself. Tame Impala’s second album, Lonerism, introduced synthesizers and pop melodies, which Parker had shunned before. In Spin magazine, Parker explained he wanted to write pop melodies that would hit the listener like waves, as if Britney Spears was singing in the Flaming Lips.

In his third album, Currents, Parker took an even bigger leap into the world of electronic pop music. Its sound was closer to the likes of Daft Punk – if Daft Punk channelled Fleetwood Mac and the Bee Gees. Parker said that he wanted his music to be played at clubs because he liked the communal setting. When previously Parker sought acceptance in Perth’s psych-rock scene, he was now looking to move into much bigger circles.

“For me, it’s always been a spectrum of how much of my pop love I allow to go into my music”, Parker told The Guardian in 2015. “Early on, when I was making the first album [Innerspeaker], I had my guard up. It has to be ‘this’ amount of alternative. I thought: if it isn’t allowed to have these qualities that people will attribute to mainstream culture. I was shutting that out because I wanted the music to have a particular identity. But over the years, I’ve realised that it’s not about the genre or the demographic. It’s not the scene that makes music naff. If it’s naff, it’s naff. I saw things for their real value.”

The smooth pop melodies and androgynous vocals of Currents made Kevin Parker a chart-topping artist and inspired Rihanna to cover ‘New Person, Same Old Mistakes’ for her 2016 album Anti. Reviews compared Currents to My Bloody Valentine, Wilco and the electronic rebirth of Radiohead, which only showed that Parker had been successful in creating a kaleidoscopic album, which was difficult to define. Listening to its music, at home or live, causes almost physical pleasure.

The album, created in a perfectionist frenzy in Parker’s home studio in three years, came to life on stage, where Tame Impala performs as a band of five musicians.

Tame Impala’s fourth album is to be released in 2019, and Parker has high expectations for it. Lately, Parker has been working with stars like Lady Gaga, and in order to take the Tame Impala shows to a whole new level, Parker is collaborating with Willo Perron, the person behind the concert visuals of various superstars. At the age of 33, Parker doesn’t want to dim his limelight anymore.

“I was in LA a few years ago and for some reason we’d taken mushrooms”, Parker told The Guardian in 2015. “I was coked up as well, and a friend was driving us around LA in this old sedan. He was playing the Bee Gees and it had the most profound emotional effect. I was listening to Staying Alive, a song I’ve heard all my life. At that moment it had this really emotive, melancholy feel to it. The beat felt overwhelmingly strong and, at that moment, it sounded pretty psychedelic. It moved me, and that’s what I always want out of psych music. I want it to transport me.”

That is also what they are going to do at Flow Festival. For a brief moment, the audience will be transported somewhere else.
Nitzer Ebb: Control I'm Here, 1989. At Flow Fri 9th Aug. Rough tune from the late 80's British EBM thugs is filled with tight basslines.

Rough Manner: A perfect festival tune for when you just want to jump up and down, close your eyes and feel the strobe lights on your eyelids. I have no clue who they are but I hope they are scheduled to play late at Flow, ha ha!

Jesse Markin: I'm not a big fan of strobe lights...The things that matter to me in music were not really present here. It might have worked better as an instrumental dance tune, although it didn't make me want to bust a move. I didn't get a clear picture in my head...a flash of Berlin maybe.

Manner: I agree.

Markin: It would be a good soundtrack tune. What is that Al Pacino film where he is solving a murder case at an underground club? Cruising? People are dressed in leather, there's red lights and tension. This would work in it.

Manner: Clubbing montage.


Manner: Pretty merciless!

Markin: Whoa. Yeah. A bit predictable. It bothered me that the song started out the same way it finished.

Manner: It sounded more like a state of mind than a composition.

Markin: Are you even in that state of mind? That jammed?

Manner: Yeah, sometimes. It had that “pscccht, pscccht, pscccht” on every fucking beat. It sounded like you’re being repeatedly slapped in the face and you’re just like “whaa?”

Markin: I would classify this as proper techno. Like why did they even have any lyrics in it?

Manner: Yeah. Although I do understand that if a song has a repeating vocal sample it can create a hypnotic feel at best, especially if it comes out of a massive sound system.

Manner: This kind of hits the same spot as the previous track but…

Markin: But this one was much better.

Manner: Yes, the difference being that this is the type of music I have been digging lately. I could listen to this at home too.

Markin: Yeah, I would definitely listen to this. This song had a base that would be easy to add your own ideas to, and play around with it. At some point it felt a bit too long, though.

Manner: To me this kind of drawn-out and monotonous, yet quite a gentle song felt really good.

Markin: I liked how the song started out, it had a sensitivity to it. If the mood was right, I might even dance to it.

Manner: Yeah.


Manner: Quite dramatic!

Markin: I think this was pretty good. Especially the part with the small drop that shifted the song into a noisier gear. It began to feel like my cup of tea.

Manner: Yes! It had a good twist. I’m always into that sort of effect-laden vocals that create confusion.

Markin: A bit weird, a bit quirky.

Manner: The soundscape brought to mind a few references. Jamie xx’s Gosh for example, so this song was not exactly filled with surprises. Except for the for the drop! It would probably sound even tighter if we could blast it out on a proper soundsystem.

Manner: Yep, those kinds of bass drops feel so nice. Physically speaking too.

Markin: True, it nearly drugged me out a bit. Definitely delivered.


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