

# LISTEN!

MUSIC  
ART  
POETRY  
RANTS

ISSUE #0 FREE



# QUEEN OF ROCK'N'ROLL

Rock'n'roll is a man's, man's world, baby. It needn't be. It shouldn't be. For every talented female artist playing rock'n'roll, you got at least twenty rubbish male artists who are more successful.

To say women are worse at playing rock'n'roll, or are less interested in this genre, is ridiculous. What happens is that girls have less role models to inspire them, besides receiving less encouragement to do it. And that's even before we talk about Sexism, which creeps up in many forms: from the male expectations of what a female artist should be like - think "cute", "acoustic", "quirky" etc. - to the fact a female artist might be signed just because they are "fanciable", therefore reinforcing the notion that being "sexy" is more important than being talented. *Of course* image is important in rock'n'roll, but bands such as The Like are ridiculous, and they exist - and get attention - only because they fulfil

some sort of male fantasies. Their music is awful, and certainly doesn't help the case for women in rock.

That's why **Patti Smith** is so important, today as much as in 1975 when she released her debut album *Horses*. Because she truly rocked in her own terms. She was putting herself up there, onstage, as an artist, just like her male counterparts. It was never about "being a woman", or trying to be sexy, or even worrying about people's perceptions of her - it was about being free, independent, strong, just like guys have always been. She wanted to be a rockstar like Keith Richards, or Bob Dylan. And she managed it. She was instantly iconic, thanks to that first album's cover. She kicked ass, as you can testify on any YouTube footage from the '70s. The Patti Smith Group cover of The Who's *My Generation* puts Oasis to shame, ending in a chaotic feed-

back noise that predated - and no doubt inspired - Sonic Youth.

A published poet before venturing into music, Patti Smith ranks as one of the best lyricists in rock, besides being one of the best and most passionate singers you'll ever hear.

Now in her 60s, Smith stills performs with unparalleled energy. She is the consummate rock star, and should serve as an inspiration for anyone who loves rock'n'roll - whether you were born a girl, or a boy!

## LISTEN!

Gloria (*from Horses*)  
Pissing In A River (*from Radio Ethiopia*)  
Ask The Angels (*from Radio Ethiopia*)  
Rock'n'Roll Nigger (*from Easter*)  
Dancing Barefoot (*from Wave*)  
The Jackson Song (*from Dream of Life*)  
My Generation (*Horses bonus track*)

*Patti Smith's memoir, Just Kids, is out now on paperback. Read it!*



# FERNANDO PESSOA

## THE GREATEST POET YOU NEVER READ...

*I am nothing.  
I shall always be nothing.  
I can only want to be nothing.  
Apart from this, I have in me all  
the dreams in the world.*

**Fernando Pessoa** (1888-1935) was the greatest Portuguese poet of modern times. He remains criminally underappreciated in English speaking countries, due to the relative unpopularity of translated literary works - nevermind of poetry!

But to discover Pessoa is to discover a completely new world, full of existential angst, dreams, despair and some truly fascinating thoughts.

He actually wrote poems under four different names, in completely different styles. According to Pessoa, each of these different authors were not really himself, but fully-fledged individuals with their own personality - he called them "heteronyms" rather than "pseudonyms". For him, these were not "false" names, but simply "other" names, authors who wrote things Pessoa himself could never write. He was, it's fair to say, a bit of a weird individual!

One of Fernando Pessoa's friends was none other than Aleister Crowley, the infamous mystic and occultist who wrote *The Book Of Law*. In 1930, when Crowley visited him in Portugal, Pessoa helped the magus to fake his own suicide, which included a suicide note left at a rock formation called the Mouth

of Hell. Fernando Pessoa went as far as telling the press he'd seen Aleister Crowley's ghost the day after his supposed suicide. Meanwhile, Crowley was in Spain enjoying the media scandal his prank generated.

This was an unlikely, flamboyant moment in Pessoa's life, an author who was very shy and who went unrecognised in his lifetime.

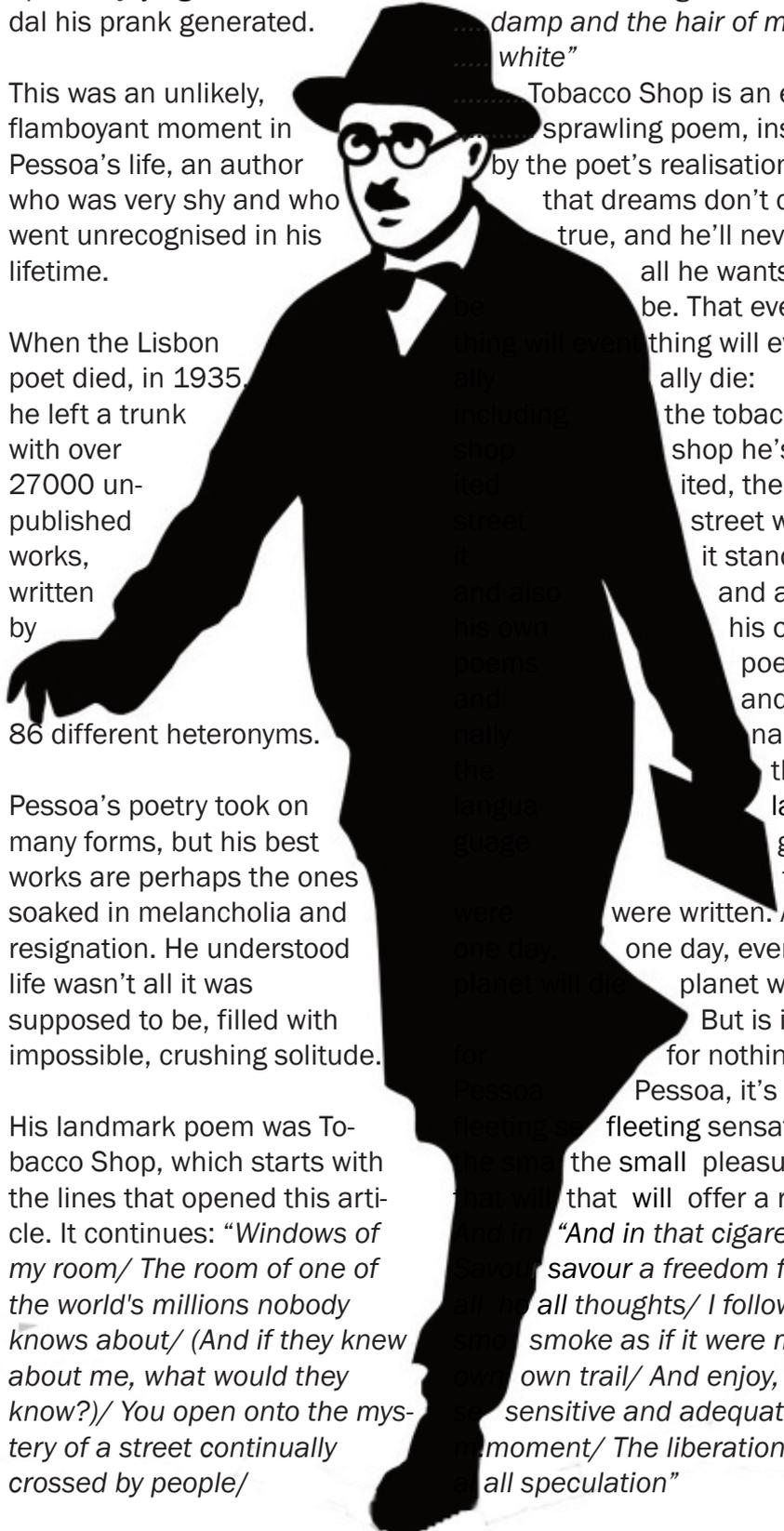
When the Lisbon poet died, in 1935, he left a trunk with over 27000 unpublished works, written by 86 different heteronyms.

Pessoa's poetry took on many forms, but his best works are perhaps the ones soaked in melancholia and resignation. He understood life wasn't all it was supposed to be, filled with impossible, crushing solitude.

His landmark poem was *Tobacco Shop*, which starts with the lines that opened this article. It continues: "*Windows of my room/ The room of one of the world's millions nobody knows about/ (And if they knew about me, what would they know?)/ You open onto the mystery of a street continually crossed by people/*

*A street inaccessible to any thought/ Real, impossibly real, certain, unknowingly certain/ With the mystery of things beneath the stones and beings/ With death making the walls damp and the hair of men white"*

*Tobacco Shop* is an epic, sprawling poem, inspired by the poet's realisation that dreams don't come true, and he'll never be all he wants to be. That everything will eventually die: the tobacco shop he's visited, the street where it stands, and also his own poems and, finally, the language they were written. And one day, even the planet will die. But is it all for nothing? To Pessoa, it's the fleeting sensations, the small pleasures, that will offer a relief: "*And in that cigarette I savour a freedom from all thoughts/ I follow the smoke as if it were my own trail/ And enjoy, for a sensitive and adequate moment/ The liberation from all speculation"*



# LISTEN! REVIEWS, RANTS, PREVIEWS

## TRACEY EMIN: LOVE IS WHAT YOU WANT

This retrospective of one of Britain's foremost artists to emerge in the 90s, now showing at the Hayward Gallery in London, is proof of just how great, and unique, Tracey Emin really is.

Emin's work has often been unfairly overshadowed by the controversies surrounding the artist, early on in her career - namely, appearing drunk on TV and the (in)famous *My Bed* and *Everyone I Have Ever Slept With 1963-1995* artworks.

A good deal of people still thinks of Tracey Emin as just that - a controversy courting pseudo-artist. She's a celeb first, she's "that lady who did that bed thing and was drunk on TV". But the truth is - she's extraordinary.

Room 1 of the exhibition is filled with a selection of her blankets. Though sometimes visually cluttered, they're by no means less artistic for it. On the contrary, what superficially may seem as visual confusion, is, actually, the work of great skill, thought and patience. Each blanket is filled with an array of words, representing perhaps thoughts and feelings of the artist, or things she's heard. The blankets are almost like visual representations of the inner self of the artist...so it's no surprise they look so messy and confusing, after all, who isn't? We're all filled with turmoil...another interesting point, is that uniquely for a visual artwork, the focus is on words and the feelings and thoughts they represent, rather than on what we see in front of us.

And feelings and thoughts seems to be what interests Tracey Emin the most. Her work is totally autobiographical, and to see an exhibition like this, is to truly dwell

deep into her mind, which can be disturbing, or at least uncomfortable, sometimes.

Some of her work, the ones that use memorabilia, are more about Tracey than about art, and aesthetically they left me cold, even though they were about traumatic subjects such as abortion.

But most of the time, she mix aesthetics, emotion, art and her life experiences in a masterful way. Take the Neon artworks, which use a tacky medium commonly used to advertise in shops, red light districts etc., but here used to highlight thoughts and feelings that most of us would bottle up inside and keep to ourselves. Tracey, unlike us, wants to expose herself, her feelings, and have them shining brightly in a dark room.

The sheer scale of this exhibition is overwhelming, and it's very hard to take it all in. There's so much, there's too much... too much rawness, too much bare feelings, too much of her own life. It's not for everybody. You could visit any other exhibition and leave it none the wiser as to who the artist really was, as a person...but with *Love Is What You Want*, you feel as if you spent some time with Tracey Emin, you feel as if you got to know her...or at least more than you did before.

Room 5 shows some of Tracey's more recent works. She's less controversial, more focused, more serene. She seems to have definitely grown as an artist, and here you'll see some of her most beautiful and creative works, such as *White Rose* (from 2007), her most elaborate neon to date.

*Love Is What You Want* is showing at Hayward Gallery, South Bank, London. Until 29th August. Entry £12 / £9 concessions. Don't miss it!

## ENTER THE VOID (DVD)

This film, directed by Gaspar Noé, was one of the best - and least seen - films to hit British screens in 2010. Now on DVD, it's another chance for people to discover one of the most amazing, challenging and unique films of the past few years.

Based on the experiences described in the Tibetan Book Of The Dead, the film follows - for two and a half unrelenting hours - the spirit of an amateur drug dealer who has been shot dead.

It's hard to describe what you'll see: it's a psychedelic journey through life, death and memories, where the camera - ie. the spirit of this person - penetrates into people, drifts in the air high above Tokyo, and zooms inside lightbulbs and through walls, until finally entering into a foetus and being born again.

And, credit to Noé, the film is not confusing at all: through all the manic camera work, visual effects and flashbacks, you manage to pierce together the unfortunate story of this guy, who became a drug dealer and got to be killed in a toilet, and what happened to his family and friends. Gaspar Noé just tells a simple, straight-forward story in a complex, innovative way. Truly one of a kind film-making!

## LISTEN!

*Cool stuff you should listen to*

### Albums:

Cat's Eyes, Cat's Eyes

The Fool, Warpaint

Arabia Mountain, Black Lips

In Love With Oblivion, Crystal Stills

### Songs:

White Elephant, Ladytron

Sleep Rules Everything Around Me,

Wugazi

White Horses, Dirtblonde

CONTACT US: [listenzine@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:listenzine@yahoo.co.uk)  
SITE: <http://listenzine.wordpress.com>