

CONTRASTO interview by Petra from Liberec (Czech Republic) – February 2005

Hallo guys, recently you have arrived from little tour on Czech and Moravia. How are your sensations? How was your playing and are you glad that you are at home yet? Do you have any quaint story from this tour?

Hello Petra!...oh, you have felt pleasant sensations yet... Yes, about two months ago we spent some days playing in Czech and in some other east Europe countries... What shall we say?...after lots of years playing around, it's really incredible to meet new guys/situations/points of view... to have new possibilities to confront different kind of life... to "breathe new lifetime"... and above all to eat your gulash (...ha ha ha...)... that's been a wonderful experience, it's a pity we managed to stay on this tour such a few days. All of us have a good memory of it, we're really satisfied about how we played (after first years ...with two guitars, even if actually Enrico is travelling around South America for a while and our sound has got a bit worse...), about all the people we met during gigs, about great funny atmosphere after playing... and, above all, this is confirmed by the good relationships/friendships with Czech friends we have had after tour....

Contrasto has been playing from a long time. How long exactly? (When did you start to play?). And how were the beginnings of Contrasto and how did you get together? So, just a little history of Contrasto.

Aaaahhh!!...this is the answer that remember us we are old guys...ha ha ha... but so... we've been playing together for quite a long time, around nine years(exactly... since the autumn of 1996), but all of us had old experiences...so, we were born from the ashes of two local bands (Megarissa and Reazione), and we started playing something like Italian old school '80 style attitude... then, during this period, we changed some members and influences too ...as life change inside of us; but coherence, passion and "politic consciousness" are indissolubly the some reasons of the early days... cause all it's simply our way to life... our "different" life choice...

In these years we have released some important stuff (important for all the friends we met...for all the life experiences...) as four 7" with Altro('99), Sin Dios('04), Acao Direta('04), and Alter-azione('00), the first Contrasto 7"('97), a 10" Contrasto ('98), a split 10" with Roid ('99), the first LP('01) and the new LP('05) of Contrasto, and a tape for a croatian label (Twisted Justice) with all the songs of 2002-2004 period with lyrics translated in croatian language... and some other good compilations (...as Rattus tribute('00), Verso la fine-Chiudere Morini('04), C'è chi di indifferenza muore('03)...and more

others... all benefit supports)... then, in last years we turned on 4 European tours, a lot of gigs and collaborations... what we play today is the result of a continue evolution and innumerable daily experiences (and naturally of our great bond of friendship...).

And what about the history of your own? How did it become that you have started to play in a band? Did or are you playing in another bands?

Of course, each of us has his own history... As we told you before, all of us started playing during the adolescence, after the approach to the punk attitude, following a musical passion... but gradually a fusion between sounds and political views became inevitable (reasons of two members change), and in these years the sound has become only a vector to vehicular a background of ideas/positions/awareness/bad conditions... to move our life without compromises in this shitting fuckin' system.

About other bands with Contrasto's members, Stefano played for one year in a screaming chaos band called La Quiete, Enrico with the anarcopunx Anomia, Max and Nicola in the '80hc band Megarissa, and Michele (with us from last march) still plays in La Quiete and Raein... even if Contrasto is the "mother home" for all of us.....

Your stuff are released at AGIPUNK label and MVDS distribution. Did you stay at these label and distribution forever (in the future?). Why just at these two? Is this label/distribution any of you? Could you tell us about it anything more?

We sincerely don't know about the future. Certainly we'll remain forever in the DIY attitude, is the only condition...is our life. Just a clarification: MVDS was our own label/distribution, even if it's more correct to define it a brand...and the first two stuff was totally selfproduced and distributed by ourself; after, we chose to collaborate with Mila/Agipunk because we started spending a lot of our time in other political/libertarian activities so we couldn't succeed in keeping active a larger and larger number of links and trades by our own. Nowadays MVDS is just a benefit distribution, that tries to earn some money to devolve to political prisoners. But naturally first of all Mila/Agipunk is a friend...and not all the splits have been coproduced with him, but directly with splitting bands...

Does exist any limit DYS for you and where?

We consider DIY a lifestyle, our lifestyle, a concept that's not limited to the only musical aspect, but extended to everything a person need in its existence, from the food to a house, from the engagements to the entertainments. So... yes! we believe that in a capitalistic society like the one in which we live, DIY approach comes into collision with a multitude of obstacles... but these limits are the reasons, the "stimulate charge", the point of leaving to fight everyday for not imposed models...for different solutions. The global world we live in doesn't allow individuals to manage by themselves their own lives, on the contrary is inclined to delegate that task to mass control institutions.

Your lyrics are political. Is lyric more important than music for you?

During the show you spoke to people – what are you speaking about? What are you trying to notify to people? Is it important for you to have a contact with the public? Do you think that your music , lyrics and speech between the songs could influence anybody? To start thing about the things around us? Did you get any negative reaction to this. (I mean if anybody was angry or say something bad to you because of speech between songs?)

Of course... all politic lyrics cause for us "politic" mean "sense of daily concrete life", all what happens everyday, all what need a clear position..., we spoke about it before... absolutely lyrics are more important than music in our opinion.... Words are the body of our stuff (and not only) cause in the life of everyday it's natural for each one to meet and exchanging sensations/words/silences/presences... with other persons. In foreign countries it's rather hard to find a clear point of contact with people by means of speeches, because of linguistic barriers, but we try it in any case. In Italy it's normal for us to explain lyrics referring them to actual situations: the words in a song are something static, written in the past, it's essential to give them a semantic link to the present. A lyric is generic, it's a key for the reading of the current happenings.

Seldom happens that some people show scorn about speeches between songs, we don't mind it, it's a really unripe behaviour.

Are you actives in the anarchist movement in Italy in anyway? How is the situation under the politic of Berlusconi in Italy now at all?

I hope we are!...ha ha ha...all in this interview have a sense about it...ha ha ha.... We try the best we can! Naturally Berlusconi's government is more rigid, based on a capillary regime propaganda and a strong central power, but every Italian anarchist remembers as well the shit of the recent past Left power, with its false visages and its intolerance in front of different opinions. All governments in Italy have been a total dispersion of solutions...

What is the housing politic in Italy? Is it easy to find a house/flat forliving for young people?

What about squats movement in your town?

It's really hard for young people to find a cheap place to stay. Prices have dreadfully increased in the last years! Nevertheless the squatting activity is very widespread. In our city, that's just a little one, we've got two politically active squats (Al Confinio squat in Cesena, and Il Casello oasi squat near Cesena); of course it's not the same in all the cities, but we can't complain about it. In the big ones (Turin, Rome, Milan, Florence, etc..) there are squats in tens. What's the best is that in Italy is still possible to resist and keep squats without any legalization.

You are vegan. Do any animal right or eco organisations exist in Cesena?

The two squats we were talking about are really involved in animal rights battles and prisoners support, and in Forlì, a city closer to ours, there's "Equal Rights", a DIY friendly organisation really active about these situations. But above all it's important a personal and individual awareness and position about it... everyone can start only from itself...

And what about the shows? Does anybody organise any orderly festival?

Are many girls actives in your scene?

Some of us live/take part in the management of Al Confinio squat where we organize several shows, besides other cultural and antagonist activities, most of them as benefit for political causes. A lot of bands from all the world played by us in the last years, it's a well-known place for gigs and for meet/drink and eat good vegan food with other guys.

For the time being we organize no orderly festival, but we're programming a really big one for the 27th/28th of May 2005 with great Italian bands and some foreign bands like Sin Dios, Social Chaos and 2 friendly Czech groups (Lycanthrophy and 6mas),...and maybe we could retry it in the next years. We'll see...

About girls, yes! quite a lot are active in our scene. Perhaps not many as the boys, but almost the same number. In Italy you even can find some only-girls populated squats!

Are you pro-life or pro-choice? Why?

Well, we are pro-choice. But about our reasons, it would be better to discuss in a face to face way, with a lot of time to explain, not by a few lines on a paper. That's been a very rough quarrel in Italy, a point of divergences, we'd like to pay more attention about this argument.

Mostly of your records are released as a split with another band. According to what do you choose the bands –if you want to have a split with them?

We intend a split record as a result of a strong affinity, friendship, politic position, ideas developed as years go by, with the bands we meet on a vinyl; an affinity built by means of friendship and collaboration. Instead, in the case of splits with foreign bands, like Sin Dios and Acao Direta, we just try to search for similar political/ideological views... the point of leaving to arrive in a good friendship during future time...as with you Petra, a “friendship split”...; in any case, we choose to contact the bands we hold in high esteem... and after a long active time in anarchist movement...we know a lot of guys/bands/situations/squats than you cannot imagine...ha ha ha...and this is full of lifetime...

What do you do in your free-time, when you just don't play with the band? What about your jobs, study, family? Do your family support you in this what you do?

Ooohhh!... are you a policegirl???...ha ha ha...only a joke...We try to do something interesting for our life...so, some of us organize public initiatives in squats, someone else travels around the world, somebody studies or works, somebody else does “nothing”, just spends time for himself living day by day... One of us, Nicola/guitar, is going to become a daddy in June!!!...good...a natural re-change in Contrasto band... ha ha ha...

Normally our families support us tolerating our values, they try... but we are not so youngs ...so...our life choices.... The real problem is due to the strong state repression: nowadays in Italy is incredibly easy to be in trouble with law for ideological reasons, to be constricted to face a trial, to deal with cops. Of course this kind of situations scares to death parents and relatives. It's normal that a person who loves you is always worried for you.

You released two new 7“split with Sin Dios and with Acao Direta in the last year. What are the other plans of Contrasto?

In a few months the new Contrasto LP should come out. The title will be “Sentenza/Condanna di vuota comparsa” and it will contain 16 new songs. For the rest... we are working in new songs for future

planning stuff...we think about two possible great projects with friendly good bands... the best that could happen to us is a tour in Brazil for autumn 2005, and some split with great friend bands....

Well that's all. Thank you very much for interview and your time. If you want to say anything more there is a space for you...

Thank you very much Petra... for everything! (you know what I mean...), for being interested in Contrasto, for your interview, and above all for the hospitality and the friendship you showed us during the days in Czech and after.... We'd like to say hello to all the friends we meet over there, we wish to see you all as soon as possible.

For all the prisoners, against every form of "jail"... for everyone don't live in this shit imposed model conditions...our screams...our action...

Take care guy... stay active, stay punx!