

Arnold de Boer (Zea, The Ex) takes ten records to a desert island

1 - Neutral Milk Hotel - In The Aeroplane Over The Sea

Hello, here I am, Arnold de Boer, I just landed on a desert island with a record player, ten records, a head filled with memories and a heart full of feelings, but I will meet them later. Now it's time for a brass celebration and an encounter with my new love: the unknown. "What a beautiful face I have found in this place that is circling all around the sun" sings Jeff Mangum. On bare feet I stamp around the beach playing The Fool. Laying down in shallow water, letting the tide slowly bury my head in the salty waves; "Watching spirals of white softly flow over your eyelids and all you did will wait until the point when you let go."

2 - Nina Nastasia - On Leaving

Not sure if I want to stay though. How should I relate to you, an island, sending out birds and lizards to meet me and even a scorpion. I have questions, but it's hard to communicate. Where do you keep your language? And where do you keep your love? Listen to Nina Nastasia. I'm a fan of her music. Let's listen together to her questions, her doubts, her courage to sing what I find hard to say now. Yesterday we climbed the highest tree of the island together: "Months and months, we'd stay up high because all the climbing takes such time and we'd live on the blooms carried in by the breeze."

3 - Lee 'Scratch' Perry - Revolution Dub

I need a carpenter and a doctor and Lee 'Scratch' Perry is both. I'm going to build the treehouse Nina sings about. Every back beat is a hit of my self constructed hammer, every swirl of delay is a pull on my handwoven rope and slow but steady the treehouse is getting ready. I hit my hands, slip from a twig but Perry has the Doctor on the Go. Bush Weed, enough to make the roof rain proof: "Naa na na naa na na na naa. Bush weed corn trash rub-a-day."

4 - Various Artists - Tanzania Instruments (Tanganyika 1950, recordings by Hugh Tracey)

Should I not be able to make musical instruments myself? I should. And I will, because listening to music is nice, good, fun, wonderful and great. But making music is better. And why was I not allowed to bring my guitar? I'm not going to scratch my records and try to make beats and loops with these records here, I'm too careful. But haven't people for ever been making instruments themselves. One of my favourite albums ever is Tanzania Instruments. I have time, I just build a treehouse, so I should be able to build a guitar, a flute and drums too. And I'm going to teach myself how to play all these Tanzania songs. I'll learn the scales and the rhythms. I have time, I'm going to learn how to sing them too.

5 - Various Artists - To Drive Away The Vampires: Balkan Folk Musics, 1930s - 80s

During my walks into the forrest, searching for food, for rocks and wood, I'll play this haunting music from Bulgaria; bagpipe drones with choirs, drum-bands, reeds and brass all working hard to drive away the vampires. The forest is dark and I'm not so brave, but these dance songs help me. The tumble-forward party mood of this fast paced music makes hard work easy. Thank you Ian Nagoski and your Canary Records for making so much beautiful music available again for us all. I would not have left without this superb collection.

6 - Cosmic Voices From Bulgaria - Bulgarian Choral Folk Songs (1,2)

How to cook? For God's sake, couldn't someone just drop a survival guide from an aeroplane? I figured out how to make fire, and even better, how to keep it going. I'm collecting rainwater, I'm digging up roots. Piecemeal I'll get there. The women from the Cosmic Voices From Bulgaria support me. They sound somehow dissonant, and strong, like a vocal Sonic Youth. It will take me ages to exactly figure out what they are doing. But since I've also managed to make paper from leaves, I'm going to write scores. I cook, and we all sing together. I eat while they tell me what happened with 'the mother, the son and the golden maid'.

7 - Thomas de Hartmann - The Music of Gurdjieff de Hartmann

The secularisation of our part of the world has left a hole that can be filled with music, art and poetry. George Ivanovich Gurdjieff was a Greek-Armenian philosopher, mystic, spiritual teacher and composer. Together with Russian composer and pianist Thomas de Hartmann he worked on a wide collection of piano compositions made during his travels through the Middle East and Central Asia. Hymns, meditations, prayers and sacred readings; all instrumentals played on piano. Hard needed suggestions of, and hints to a meaningful life. I ask myself here: What can I know? What can I do? What can I hope? And ... why am I here?

8 - California EAR Unit, UC Berkeley Chamber Chorus & Philip Brett - Morton Feldman: Rothko Chapel, Why Patterns?

I got this record just recently. Morton Feldman wrote beautiful music for Rothko's paintings in the Rothko Chapel in Texas, where his paintings hang in a permanent exhibition. Still a lot to discover for me in these tracks and I decide to play them while watching the sunset, as a soundtrack to the moving images I'm gazing at from the beach. Every day I sit down and move

one meter more to the left from the day before, marking the sand with the imprint of my portable record player. And so I go around the island.

9 - Various Artists - Anthology of Negro Poets

Before I go to sleep in my treehouse I like to read a book. But since I was only allowed to bring records I will play this ear-book of beautiful poetry by six great poets, released in 1954. Langston Hughes, Sterling Brown, Claude McKay, Countee Cullen, Margaret Walker, and Gwendolyn Brooks are reading from their works. And the words, the voice, the sentences, the melodies they make in their poems, is all music to me. This album inspired me to start a new series, together with Frisian poet Tsead Bruinja, a good friend of mine, to record Dutch poets and release the recordings as 'records' on my own Makkum Records label.

10 - Albert Ayler: My Name is Albert Ayler

The first time I heard Albert Ayler was when watching the beautiful documentary Amsterdam Global Village by Johan van der Keuken. There's a scene filmed in the Vondelpark, the big central park not far from my house. It's mid summer early 1990's, the weather is hot, the park is busy with people playing, sunbathing, drinking, laughing. Underneath these very familiar images Van der Keuken plays 'Summertime' by Albert Ayler and it hit me. There are moments when I long back to Amsterdam, to the park and to the people. So I put on Albert Ayler's album and in my mind I travel back to that 'swimming city' I love so much. It won't be just nostalgia or homesickness, it will be a diffuse feeling of undirected despair mixed with a spinning dance on the treetops of infinity.