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**Artificial Memory Trace: Boto [Encantado]**

ini.itu

Open up the insert within *Boto [Encantado]*, the recent Artificial Memory Trace recording by Czechoslovakia-born and Ireland-based sound artist Slavek Kwi, and you'll discover the text shown entirely backwards. Why? Because Kwi wants the listener to hear the recording first minus any pre-conceptions formed by awareness of its sound sources. (No mirror is needed, incidentally, so long as one has computer access, as the text is displayed in right-reading manner at his Artificial Memory Trace site.) In the spirit of the recording, then, one might be advised to refrain from reading further until *after* one has listened to the forty-minute vinyl album (250 copies)—otherwise, read on.

First of all, Boto is another name for the Amazon River Dolphin or Pink Dolphin; secondly, the album's sounds, creature—mostly dolphins, frogs, bats, and insects—and otherwise, were recorded in August 2007 by a canoe-bound Kwi on the river Jauaperi in Brazil and then assembled into their final form in his Ivy Cottage Studio in Ireland during October 2007. Apparently, Kwi has since 2007 assisted Francisco López in his Mamori workshops in the Amazonian forest, and some of the source material for *Boto [Encantado]* understandably stems from that experience.

Side one, "Boto pt1 (black water)," opens with the chatter of dolphins followed by sounds of high-pitched bat squeaks, guttural frog croaks, and nocturnal insects. Kwi performs various manipulations on the material, not just blending them together but also transposing the creatures' sounds up and down octaves, and even works in some nocturnal underwater recordings, too. Regardless of the treatments involved, the effect created is one of a natural setting wherein various species co-exist, each with its own distinguishing range of expression. The thrum of insects forms a backdrop to a scattered array of clicks and croaks, and an occasional non-natural element intrudes, too (an electric-power generator in one instance). Befitting a recording that draws to some degree upon night-time episodes, the mood is more peaceful than violent in tone (a side two rupture the exception), with all of it unfolding in patient manner at an even keel.

In its emphasis on re-constructed environmental sounds and musique concrète techniques, the recording in total fits seamlessly into Kwi's previous output (he's been producing work under the Artificial Memory Trace alias for more than two decades). Though it's collagistic in the nature of its assembly (Kwi's own notes indicate that sounds have been isolated, transposed, re-ordered, and sequenced), it *sounds* largely organic and natural, as if a microphone had been placed along the river's edge for forty minutes to document the sounds of nature and the real-time interactions occurring between its human and non-human species.

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