

Slow Thoughts

Welcome to Slow Thoughts. A free paper of musings. Modern life is strange. Sometimes for better, sometimes for worse. Recently I find myself tired out. My back has been hurting and I haven't been keeping on top of cleaning very well. I don't like seeing the thin layer of dust cover my wooden flooring. It's not a lot but it's a reminder of life's constant small jobs.

I don't want to be a perfectionist though. Sometimes my floor will be a little dusty. That's life after all.

This issue features an interview with Northern Irish musician, Kipper Gillespie (キパー・ギレスピー). Some musings on industrial designer Jean Prouvé and other bits and bobs.

As the name suggests, this paper should be enjoyed slowly.

So, if you can, read this whilst relaxing with a cup of coffee or tea.

- S.T.



Jean Prouvé: Industry meets Design

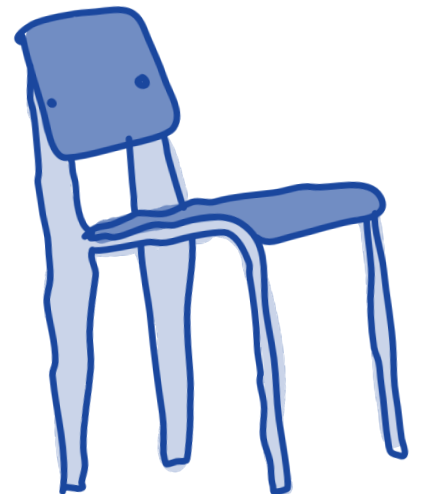
As far as designers who design with utilitarianism in mind, Jean Prouvé must be one of the best. The metal worker turned architect and designer has a signature feel that combines an appreciation for industrial production as well as an understanding of what makes something usable. His work is neither too mechanical nor too organic. For example, the Standard Chair. Large functional rear legs made of sheet metal take on most of the weight whilst thinner tube metal is sufficient for the front. The softly curved wood seat and backrest contrast the industrial feel of the frame.

In my opinion, design is best when it's trying to solve problems functionally. Prouvé's "Demountable House" does just that. Easy to assemble and utilitarian. By mid-century standards, the house is an impressive solution to the need for housing. Purpose-built to provide accommodation to citizens of Lorraine, France after the Second World War. In the 21st century, its practicality is limited, as building techniques and materials have developed drastically. Nevertheless, the idea itself is impressive. The structure is made structurally sound due to a two-pronged metal gate Prouvé called the "axial portal frame" and the entire thing could be built with relative ease by a few people.

Prouvé's designs don't fit into a neat label like minimalism, mid-century, or industrial but instead, sit somewhere in the middle. Perhaps that's what makes them appealing, rather than sit into a perfect category they feel original, the result of a combination of industrial expertise and acute aesthetic detail. Ultimately his designs are very accessible and human focussed. It's perhaps for this reason

that his chairs and tables adorned post offices, schools, and naval ships rather than fancy design offices.

Nowadays, it's nearly impossible to find an original of Prouvé's designs, which were curiously not that popular until decades later, when they became sought after by collectors. But they have been reproduced by Vitra. Albeit, you would have to be living comfortably to afford one.



Talking to Kipper Gillespie



Where are you from?

I am from the North of Ireland, the beautiful Emerald Isle.

Tell us a bit about your latest track.

It started as a bit of a laugh really - poking fun at the London Post-Punk scene. How it can seem exclusively cool to 'outsiders' and how uncool it is in reality. Naturally, my insecurities as an Irish fella in London were expressed too.

Your lyrics are very candid, is that something you aim for when songwriting?

I guess I do yeah. I don't ever sit down and have a good long think about lyrics. More often than never I'll randomly remember a line or a verse from maybe two years prior and it just so happens to fit with what I'm writing at that time.

What are some of your inspirations outside the music world?

Gosh, I don't know. Well, I've got an album coming out and a lot of the songs are me reminiscing and being miserable about the fact that my careless days as a student are over and they will never come back, and how class it was. I don't think any other medium strikes me as sheer inspiration. It's all day-to-day life stuff that gets to me. Typical stuff.

What are three tracks from other artists you recommend?

Hmm,

Country Livin' by Rainn Byrns.

Dollar Days by Jimso Slim.

Old Peel by Aldous Harding.

Any last words?

Dull Days single coming right at ya on May 27th

(you can check out Kipper Gillespie's music on Spotify and Bandcamp)

What you should listen to

Fievel is Glaque

ファイベル・イズ・グラクエ

(USA/France)

I have been listening to Fievel is Glaque recently. They are a band comprised of two main members, Ma Clement (Belgium) and Zach Phillips (USA). It's a jazzy sound but it isn't worried to take from other genres. It might not be popular amongst jazz purists but it feels modern. Recently they toured with Stereolab which is a strong endorsement. Their latest album Flaming Sword is more polished than their earlier work, which had a lo-fi sound. I like

both styles. The lo-fi sound is comfortable but the more polished sound highlights the impressive composition.

Utsugi - Pathetic

(Japan)

Utsugi has recently released 'Pathetic', a track that steps away from her usual guitar-driven sound and towards an electronic one. It's quite a change musically but the core of Utsugi is still there. The lyrics are vulnerable and candid which weaved in between the atmospheric soundtrack is a unique experience. It's fun to hear the difference between the guitar tracks and the electronic ones live so make sure to catch her live if you can.

Maine - Barbary

メーン

(UK)

Floating somewhere between reality and a dreamlike world, Maine's debut album is free-flowing. Not restricting itself by structure or genre, it's a little difficult to pin down its key points. At times it's curiously comforting, and at others, it aims to unsettle the listener. It's dark, but not like a dimly lit back alley, instead like navigating a forest of towering pine trees at night. It's a self-described ambient project but features some vocals and more contained tracks. Worth a listen.

Want to write for Slow Thoughts?

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