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MUSIC THIS WEEK:

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[NXNE explodes](#)

The NXNE festival brings over 400 bands to town June 10, 11 and 12, most of whom have never played Toronto before. We've picked some cool bands from the lineup and organized them by genre, with brief descriptions to guide you along.

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My Week in the Clubs



Wet Dreams (left), Yara Jakymiw and Bogdan Raczynski believe in the music.

SMARTER BEATS NXNE PLUGS IN WITH TWO DAYS OF IDM

BY BENJAMIN BOLES

ALTERED BEATS NXNE SHOWCASE with **GETTER**, **WET DREAMS**, **ANIMAL MONSTER**, **JEREMY MIMNAGH** and **YARA JAKYMIW** with visuals by **STEPHANIE COMILANG** at the El Mocambo upstairs (464 Spadina), Thursday (June 10), 9 pm. \$5, or free with NXNE wristband. www.alteredbeats.com

ALTERED BEATS NXNE SHOWCASE with **BOGDAN RACZYNSKI**, **c64**, **BELLADONNAKILLZ**, **DOMINIK vs THE MEDIKONZ**, **UNABOMBER**, **APATHY**, **SINCERE TRADE** with visuals by **MIXMOTION** at the El Mocambo (upstairs), Friday (June 11), 9 pm. \$5, or free with NXNE wristband. www.alteredbeats.com

I'm in the middle of a chaotic conversation. Aaron Campbell, curator of the Altered Beats showcase, has assembled three of his artists, Yara Jakymiw, Bogdan Raczynski and Peter Venuto, for an interview, and it's full of poetic ideas and passionate discussion about what "live" electronic performance can be. Ask Campbell to describe the differences between his two North By Northeast nights, though, and you still won't have a real answer 15 minutes later.

Eventually, some agreement seems to be reached that if Friday (June 11) could be described as focusing on the hardcore, Thursday (June 10) is more about the softcore, although that's not particularly clear either.

Venuto is peeling a lemon that he took from a bowl in the Now Lounge, where we've gathered, and eating it section by section, periodically interrupting with enthusiastic but surreal proclamations about the other performers.

Jakymiw tends to offer the most coherent comments but keeps getting crowded out of the conversation by Venuto and Campbell's verbose tangents, while Raczynski sits there with an amused smile and occasionally tries to turn the interview around by asking me questions.

Says Jakymiw, "In the past, I've just done the laptop-with-keyboards-and-drum-machine thing, but for this show I'm going to have a live drummer and a guitar player who's not playing typical guitar parts, along with the sampler and effects and everything." Her debut album, *Plant Life*, is a pretty record, serious without being precious or pretentious. There are hints of pop songs here and there, but you tend to notice the gurgling and buzzing electronics before the singing.

Raczynski is the best known of the bunch, in particular for his albums on *Rephlex*, the Aphex Twin's pet label. His music has a spastic sensibility and oscillates unpredictably between delicate beauty and brutal noise. When he's asked about what goes into his laptop performances, the reason his last gig (at the Drake) was performed in the dark becomes apparent.

"I always get aggressive when people get fussy over the live thing. They want to see a band, and they think if you're not recreating the music on the spot it's lesser music.

"I take offence at that, because I could care less if a performer is playing it, just hits 'play' or is tweaking things. If you're there because you're



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going to analyze what I'm using or how well I'm using it, I'd rather you just stayed home. I want people to come for the music, as silly and clichéd as that sounds."

Venuto's work as Wet Dreams is the least electronic, and closer to some kind of mutant synth-heavy psychedelic glam rock.

"It's kind of blurring the lines a bit. There's some pre-recorded material, and I'm going to be playing guitar and singing as well. The real show is these trash-can-lid mandala LED light show things that are audio activated – I'm shooting for a primitive form of synaesthesia." @

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ALSO BY BENJAMIN BOLES:

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