

- At the beginning of my adventure with listening to the heavy music, Oranssi Pazuzu was just an “interesting find”. I remember typing “psychedelic black metal” on Youtube and showing my friends album “Muukalainen Puhuu”, to show that I know some strange things in metal. Some years passed and I grew up to appreciate more courageous sounds, and now “Värähtelijä” is not an „interesting find”, but one of the best albums of 2016 yet. How has Oranssi Pazuzu changed since the release of “Muukalainen Puhuu”?

Jun-His: When we started, we just wanted to make music that would tap into some sinister black metal atmospheres but with more influences from hypnotic repetitive space rock and kraut rock that was closer to our playing style back then. Something that would be aggressive, but so it wouldn't feel forced to us and definitely didn't want it to sound like boring testosterone metal in any way. After that, on each album we have sunken deeper into our world that welcomes any kind of influences but will look at things from the darker side of the psyche. The band is a transforming blob of our collective imagination that reflects our reality and human reality in general. The band is always in a constant change and motion, but we don't want to sound weird or crazy for the sake of it. Its just imagination that doesn't want to stop because of man made boundaries like genres of music for example.

- Speaking about genres maybe isn't the most fascinating thing in the world – but how do you perceive yourselves – black metal band or just the band who

uses forms of expression known from black metal? Or are you just a psychedelic and experimental band?

Ontto: We are influenced by some aspects of black metal, but that is only one part of a bigger picture, and experimentation and psychedelic krautrock hypnotism are as equally important to us as black metal. Our attitude towards genres is pretty much that we take anything that we find interesting, and throw away stuff we don't care about. For us genres are just references that you can use as a tool when you are creating something new. In black metal we are fascinated mostly by the ominous dark atmospheres.

- Do you remember the moment when did you decide that you want to play your own music in your own style? What was first – black metal, psychedelic element or something else?

Jun-His: Like I hinted previously, I think one of the reasons we made the band was to do the kind of band that doesn't have to push itself to a certain corner. Or maybe we kind of have. Hehe. We have concentrated on the darker side of our minds. But music is a good therapist. Perhaps we get some sort of resolution and find peace of mind and start exploring that side. Haha. But yeah, black metal was something we draw a lot of influences on the early stages. And I think its already very hypnotic music, but we wanted to take that side way further.

- Using native language in songs can be a chance to be original and keep all emotions in expression, however it

can still lead to difficulties in reaching broader audience – what was your reason for using your native language in your music?

Ontto: The main reason for me was that it felt more natural to write lyrics in Finnish, because that is more fluent language for me, which means more ways to express things. I think Jun-His could deliver vocals in English just fine too, but probably it's more personal for him too to do it in our native language. Some listeners find it interesting to have a complete freedom of imagination when it comes to what the songs are about. I guess for them it adds a bit of extra to the psychedelic side of the music.

- Can you tell me more about the lyrics on your newest album? What are they about? What were your inspirations during a process of writing?

Ontto: I think each track is lyrically like a vision or mirage and a part of a larger trip. When writing the new material, we recorded a lot of demos with Jun-His screaming this kind of ritualistic vocal on top of everything. Afterwards I just listened to the recordings and translated what he was screaming into a human language. I think this way the lyrics started to mirror many sounds in the music and also the atmosphere of the vocals was instantly something that defined the context of the songs.

- Is there any comprehensive concept or reoccurring theme behind "Värähtelijä" as an album?

Jun-His: The album explores the human psyche and is a

sort of psychologic mirror so to speak. The lyrics are exploring that as well, but the compositions are in some way designed to make you get pulled into a mindset where you can explore some of the darker corners of your mind. But we didn't do a concept for Värähtelijä like we did with Kosmonument for example. The theme is more loose and open to interpretation.

- I think that images that listener will visualize during their listen to "Värähtelijä" are more vibrant than ever before, but also ambiguous and free to interpret. The same composition can lead to thinking about cosmic journey and watching some strange taboo rituals while reaming unseen. What images had you had during composing music for "Värähtelijä"

Jun-His: Glad you feel that. Kind of what I was saying in the previous question. Like you said it can be a journey from the cosmos to microcosmos, from inner to the outer reality. I feel they are the same and my visualization usually concentrate on traveling through that spectrum. I also visualize magical feeling places and absurd situations. Sometimes it can be just shapes turning into other shapes, but I think its a very important meter when judging your own material, will it take you to places inside your brain?

- How do you compose music – is it through improvisation or methodical construction of songs from small pieces which later will come out as something phenomenal?

Ontto: For Värähtelijä we wrote majority of the material

jamming collectively, but afterwards we also put a lot of thought into how the parts should evolve and merge into each other and so on. There are also some parts that had been written beforehand, especially in the more complicated riffs and melodies, but also these parts usually went through the band's "jam filter". I think with everybody jamming together you can bring more unexpected aspects to the music and have a more free flow with things.

- The sound on your newest album is just amazing. It has more natural characteristic – how did you achieve that sound?

Jun-His: We did a lot demo`s in our rehearsal place Wastement and worked on the sound while working with the songs. Then Julius Mauranen took it to the max so to speak. We wanted the sound to be organic, but most of all bold and intensive. We wanted recording and mixing to be part of molding the album into a work of art and not just serve as "lets record the way the band sounds and leave it like that" type of thing. But at the same time, I think this is the closest we've been to getting a sound on an album that resembles very much our current live sound.

- Music of Oranssi Pazuzu is seen to have a connection with cosmic themes, however in your video for "Lahja" (which I believe is your first music video ever) you show different image. Not cosmos, but a symbolism. Not an interstellar journey, but a psychedelic ritual. Why did you choose this aesthetic? And why did you chose to make a music video for "Lahja"?

Ontto: For us the idea of 'space' has become more like a metaphor of the endless human consciousness. The images that the sound evoke are not meant necessarily as a story about adventuring on weird planets or something very sci fi like that. There are spacious sounds in our music, sure, but the themes are more introspective and a bit more abstract.

With the video for Lahja, we wanted to give the director Janiv Oscar a freedom to make his own interpretation of the song. We discussed with him about how we felt about the song and the themes in it, and then left it to him to decide how it should be like visually. Lahja was chosen for the video, because we thought it is a very visual song and we felt it had some fresh and interesting sounds in it. Its great that he didn't make a space video, I don't think 'Lahja' is sci fi at all. I think of it as an ego sacrificial ritual song.

- Again about the music video – maybe it's a bit rude but I wanted to ask if for you the video has only aesthetic value, you know “nice looking video” or has it got some deeper meaning than that?

Ontto: I can only tell you my own interpretation of it, but to me it is about sacrifice and being lost in an unknown dreamworld. The plot is very dreamlike and not rationally logical. The pictures of people drawn under the water represent people losing their identity. They turn into trees and other plants, as they dissolve back into nature, that is also a strong theme in another song on the album, 'Havuluu'. There is some kind of collective of young satanistic elitists with evil intentions. It goes on a

bit like nightmare, and I think the video is overall more about feeling than about "getting it".

- Album cover for "Värähtelijä" is a lot darker than on your previous releases – there is a some distant light, but it seem to be too far away to stay being real. This cover also uses different aesthetic than ever before – why did you choose that?

Jun-His: We felt we have had many great album covers from different artist. But this time instead of a painting, we felt the music needed a photo. A shot or shots from reality that in that precise moment have some magical feel to it. After that its gone and no way of getting it back. This kind of minimalistic approach I think will also give more room for imagination to take over and work with the music to travel deeper inside it.

- It may be a silly question but I spent some time wondering about origin of your band's name. Pazuzu is name of a demon, Oranssi is a colour orange. While second part is quite clear (maybe less in context of your newer releases which don't have this strong black metal vibe), but why orange and not some other colour?

Ontto: Well it's just that we wanted a kind of acid touch to it, like a saturated, strong colour that is very live and open to the world. The idea is that if black metal in a way sounds like black and white film, our musical idea is to vomit some eyeball hurting rainbow colours all over it.

- Your new music seems to be way much more complicated. Is performing it live problematic?

Ontto: Getting the sound right is the most difficult thing I guess. Our music is not very technical, but it takes some thought to get to the proper atmosphere and that's very difficult if equipment or mix is fucked up. Luckily we have a very good live sound engineer, Nikos, who does tons of other practical stuff too. He makes things much easier for us.

- Where did the cosmic motives in your music come from? Even "Muukalainen" from your first album can be interpreted both as a stranger and as an alien.

Jun-His: Since I was three years old, I've been asking my parents pretty philosophical questions about space and the interest has stuck. I'm sure it's the same with the other guys as well. The inspiration that the universe and our complex and very unlikely existence on this rock is huge to me. I think it's so profound that I couldn't find a way to do art without drawing from that. So both inner and outer cosmos are something that is very inspiring to try to describe with your art. While creating the music, you can tap into your primal self and feel that you may understand something from the reality. Being one with everything. But at the same time your ego is screaming in horror: I can't be this insignificant? I like that conflict.

- Have you ever considered the impact that your music has on listener?

Ontto: Yes, we have considered it a lot. If you dive in with an open mind, I hope there is a cathartic experience somewhere to be found. Or you can just let the music guide you and browse different dimensions in your living

room and walk around and see the common things like a book or a lamp in there in a bit different, revealing light. I think its great music for walking in nature, too. In the end, the impact depends a lot on how much the listener is willing to give into the music. Its like a trade, you can reflect yourself through a sonic mirror if you just choose to do so.