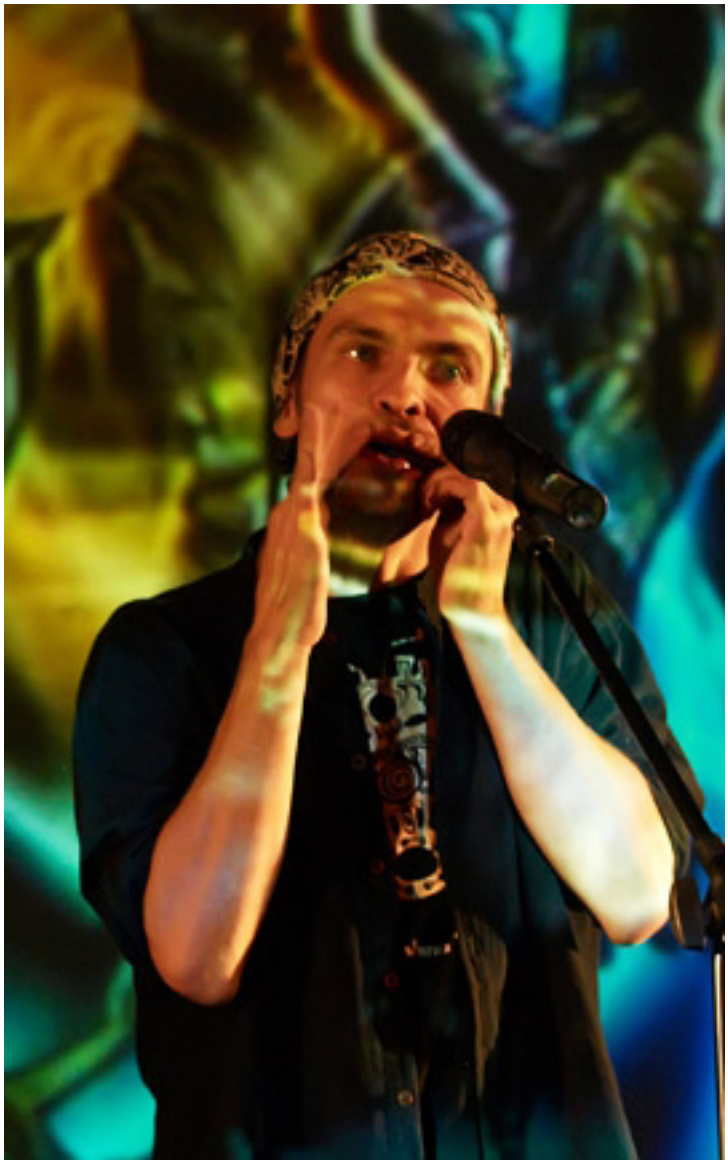

-How did you get involved in the world of traditional / world music?

Due to the process of understanding what the music is.

I started to listen music from the rock-pop stuff (which you nomally listen every day from TV and radio). And then I was lucky enough to meet a couple of guys who was seeking for "another music". By playing together and listening tons of different records, we realized that music is something else from that majority of people (we included) know . It was very hard to find the music of some styles (like world music, traditional ethnic, minimalism, contemporary classical etc.) in that time in Russia. By some advanced methods we managed to find very rare records on tapes. We was addicted to music that time. This experience opens for me the doors to the completely new world of sound. I mastered many important things in that time. One of them is **active, structural audition**
. I suppose that this is the most important skill for musician. Other skills come later from it.
So finally I realize that in fact the music with which we growing up from the childhood is only

used for propaganda purposes and this is only 1% of whole ammount of music existing in the world! After this insight I start to exploring the music of very different cultures. I has interesting sensation about native traditional music in that time: it was very attractive for me and very hard to percept in the same time. I realize that I can t differentiate the structure of any "non-western" music. And I need to work to get skills for listening it! In other site I understood that I want to get "universal low" of music. (I never been satisfied to playing only one particular style for example). So this thrilling jorney is never stopped for me till this moment. Actually I try to create music that include many things from many traditions. Conditionally this style named "world fusion".

-Do you have any formal musical education?

No. I m self taught. It was simply impossible to learn such things in russian province (and I think it still impossible). So I develop my own system of self education. You know, there are two basic methods of music education: written tradition (western) and oral tradition (eastern and folklore). 1st kind never attracted me and 2nd don t exists in Russia anymore, so I invented my own 3rd way: "tape-recorder" tradition. The idea is learning by active structural listening of loads of different music and then trying to reproduce it by yourself as it possible.

-What other artists do you find interesting? What are your influences when playing / writing music? What other musicians do you listen to?

Among basic fusion influences I can mention Jan Garbarek and Ralph Towner/Oregon, (their records from 1975 to 1985), Shakti, Trilok Gurtu. Of course a lot of traditional music from all over the world. In electronic music I think the one only inspiration for me was Steve Shehan (his "Arrows" and "Indigo Dreams"). In my opinion his "sampling magic" is the level higher than other electronic stuff I heard.
From the latest discoveries: I opened very rich world if spanish moden folk music during my travel to Spain month ago. Particullary we was lucky to attend the concert of L'Ham de Foc. They are great artists, very inspirational experience!

-Your music also has a spiritual side. For the people that aren't interested in that side of your act, do you think your musics can stand for its own, being just good music?

Absolutely. I avoid to use the word "spiritual music". There are to much speculation around it. In fact 98% of so called "spiritual music" is simply bad made non-professional stuff.
Anybody who likes my music anyhow receiving the message inside it: "don't copy, don't follow, create your path yourself!". This idea is only "spiritual" thing in my music.

-Can you describe some of the instruments you have created / developed? How did you get the idea to make them?

Again the idea to made them goes from the desire to understand the phenomenon of the sound. It helps to broaden the frames of what we call "music".
Another (and first) reason is absolute absence of real instruments in a place where I from. You simply can't got any instruments in that time. So I have to made it myself. I start to play and learn percussian and winds on self-made stuff. Thus I made the group of special instruments

which I call "junkphones". For example "bannbang" made from beer tins, "pruzhingum" made from tuned springs bounded to the tin-can, "ghost catcher" made from flexible tube, needlaphone is a needle inserted into wooden stick, etc.

I also developed the old guitar replacing its bridge with sitar one. The result was absulutely amazing. I god an instrument which combines the possibilityes of guitar (modulations, chords, comfortable to play) with possibilities of sitar ("talking" sound). It's one of my favorite instruments. I call it "dzuddahord". All this instruments you can listen on my website.

-Some people say that a man who does lots of things is a master in none of them. Do you think that playing so many instruments prevents you from getting the full potential you might get in a single instrument if you just played that one?

Ok, I'm agree:) But in my case I had two possibilities: To be genius player on ghost catcher, which you never heard before in the world and stay absolutely unknown.
Or just to embody the music which I had in my head into real product. I have chosen 2nd way and I m completely happy about it. This way means that you are an independed artist. And to be an independed artist in Russia means that you do ALL by your own. Making instruments, mastering to play on them, record all the parts, being sound engeneer for yourself, create CD and being a graphic designer to make a cover, posters and flyers, make your own website, mastering HTML and flash, making visuals for your show and performing alone with all this stuff. Of course promote yourself and organizing the concerts for yourself.
I'm happy that I was born in Russia. Now I'm TOTALLY independed artist. There are no market for such music in this country, and you can be sure that you will have no record deals, no gigs, no money for studio, no label to release the CD, no musicians to found a group etc. Great survival school!

-You have your own studio. What is your opinion on home studios (recording music using computers?

When in the end of 90 s the age of audio digital editing comes to Russia I was totally exited! Freedom has come at last! For the very cheap price now you can own the technologies that previously was only in the hands of elite. As you can listen from my recordings, I can get a high professional production using only computer, professional boxes and two mics (of course huge collection of instruments).
Another side is compatibility. When I travelling I have my hard drive and soundcard with me. So I can simply plug them in in any computer and continue to work!
Third side is the abilities of digital editing. I've invented my own method of audio editing called "sound microsurgery". I use computer as creative instrument, not just the recorder. For example when I want to use samples, I use only my own. So I record some object, make samples from it then upload it to software sampler and then make the part in Cubase with the pen tool. It's simply impossible when you have limited time in expencive studio or working on analog equipment.

-Looking at your website it is obvious that you make full use of the technology you have avaliable. How can the internet change the way music is done, that albums are recorded?

I can say just the same thing: Internet is freedom! Other channels of information like TV, radio etc. is strictly controlled by Matrix. Internet is still free so far. Streaming media and communities like myspace.com are revolution in information technologies! You can upload your own video or audio in streaming format. You can even broadcast in real time your own TV or radio show! You can connect directly with communities of people you interested in. Nowadays you can do all work by yourself. If you smart enough to make a website and set up the system of CDs and downloads selling, you can do all by your own without any labels. All great contacts that I have I got from internet, for example I meet you, Alberto! Otherwise it couldn't be possible.

I'm studio musician and I work with other musicians through the internet. We can exchange audio files very fast and we can exchange the ideas through the Skype videotelephony in the same time sitting in our own home studios. This is simply awesome!
I hope this freedom will be long enough, because government forces definitely don't like this sutuation and want to control people.

-It seems that when you travel you have to carry around a big quantity of instruments. Is that a problem for travelling?

It's quite problematic in Russia, but in Europe not a big problem. there are very comfortable system of travelling here. Anyway for 10 years I've worked it out :). But then I always have my studio with me!

-You recently visited Spain for the first time for Conspiremus. How was that experience?

I was amazed about great respect with which people in Spain treated to their own native culture. Conspiremus was definitely great experience! I want to express my thanks to organizers of this event for the invitation and my respect for their development of local Spanish music. For me it's unusual because unfortunately in Russia traditional music is dead in fact. I open for myself very reach musical culture of Spain, which I didn't know before. The stereotype about Spain is flamenco music, but there are many unique styles!

-Can you recommend a cd or an artist that you are not involved with?

Well, I want to pay attention to quite unknown music, famous artists don't need promotion:) Steve Shehan "Arrows for example. I recommend this CD to everyone who making electronic music to look on its another side. In direction of folk music: the CDs of very good nordic artists like "Bazar Bla", "Ranarim", Maria Kalaniemi. In world fusion direction: shakuhachi novator John Kaizan Neptune "Steps in Time".

-Last, do you have any funny stories that happened to you while playing, recording, gigging or being on the road?

I have one outstanding recording experience. This is story how I find out that my cat is ethnic vocalist. He was the best singer I ever recorded! Full story you can read here .