

## PRESS RELEASE

### Nathaniel Mann Creates Meat Cleaver Music For Residency Finale

Under Sound and Music's Composer in Residence programme, Nathaniel Mann has spent 18 months Embedded at the Pitt Rivers Museum and OCM. His residence finale performance, "Rough Music", features the world premiere of music written for and performed with custom made tuned meat cleavers, and takes place at OVADA's warehouse space, Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> March 2014. It is part of Audiograft 2014 festival.

Immersed in the unique ethnographic collections of the PRM and with the support of OCM's extraordinary networks of sound artists and musicians, Nathaniel has produced a series of exciting and engaging works during his residency, charting such diverse territory as ancient Chinese Pigeon Whistles, Sonic Visualisers and Central African rainforest soundscapes.

For this special event, which marks the end of his residency, Nathaniel will weave a trail through his Embedded adventures with story and song. The residency culminates in an ensemble performance of his latest project, "Rough Music". Consisting of a set custom made bronze tuned musical meat cleavers, this project seeks to bridge the disparate musical worlds of Work Song, Indonesian Gamelan and the pealing of church bells. In doing so, Mann forges a new music, one strewn with references and resonances, chiming with the diverse traditions reflected in PRM's vast collections of metal work and noise makers.

Nathaniel will be joined by members of the UK's finest avant-folk performance outfit Dead Rat Orchestra.

Jo Ross, Director of OCM, said of Nathaniel's SAM Embedded residency:

*“The collaboration has been surprising, educational and inspiring thanks to the museum's generosity and vision and Nathaniel Mann's particular imagination, wit and infectious commitment. And it's been a fascinating exploration of the interaction between contemporary arts and the culture of our ancestors, which has born some very rich rewards.”*

Dr Noel Lobley, Ethnomusicologist Research Associate, Pitt Rivers Museum, University of Oxford, said of Nathaniel's SAM Embedded residency:

*"Nathaniel Mann is a startling original artist who can find music and sound in any place and any object. During his Embedded Residency at the Pitt Rivers Museum and OCM, Nathaniel has managed to play the entire Museum as a musical instrument. Inviting the Dead Rat Orchestra, one of the finest and most beautiful improvising trios in the world, to make Rough Music is simply inspired. More please."*

Richard Whitelaw, Head of Programmes at Sound and Music said

*“It has been fascinating to follow Nathaniel's work through this residency. Nathan's work offers audiences both remarkable music, and quite new ways to explore the museum's stories. To be there for this performance, together with seeing Dead Rat Orchestra live, promises to be a special evening.”*

## **Rough Music**

Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> March, 8pm

Venue: OVADA, 14a Osney Lane, Oxford, OX1 1NJ

Bookings: [www.ocmevents.org](http://www.ocmevents.org) and 01865 305305

More Info:

[www.nathanielmann.co.uk](http://www.nathanielmann.co.uk)

[www.deadratorchestra.com](http://www.deadratorchestra.com)

[www.audiograft.co.uk](http://www.audiograft.co.uk)

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**ENDS**

**Date of Issue: 14/01/2014**

## **Notes for Editors**

**Nathaniel Mann** is an artist, performer, composer and sound designer. Performing solo and as one third of Dead Rat Orchestra, he draws strongly on folk idioms whilst using unusual objects (including 2x4, ukulele, guitar, phonofiddle and meat cleaver!) and conventional instruments to create unique and playfully experimental music. Nathaniel is currently an artist in residence with OCM and Pitt Rivers Museum. His residency is part of Sound and Music's Embedded programme. [nathanielmann.co.uk](http://nathanielmann.co.uk) <http://pittriversmann.blogspot.co.uk/>

**Dead Rat Orchestra** see themselves as adventurers; adrift in a sea of sound and possibility, plucking textures and melodies to craft their idiosyncratic vision of what music and performance can be. Most often they have steered their ship through the idioms of Folk and Improv, to shout, sing and glisten at audiences from the UK to Mainland Europe, Scandinavia to Canada. 'Acutely haunting and occasionally brutal' their music always attempts to enchant and entrance, be it emotionally or physically. In essence a trio of Nathaniel Mann, Daniel Merrill and Robin Alderton, necessity has sometimes dictated duo performances of any permutation, always imbued with a sense of the missing member. Instruments are constantly swapped. At times they have built sets for the architectural surroundings they find themselves in; coppice woods, abandoned abattoirs or churches - at others they step away from the stage, to sing a cappella amongst the audience.

Their first album 'proper' – The Guga Hunters of Ness, was released in 2012 by Critical Heights, and was composed as the soundtrack to the elegant, sometimes harsh film of the same name made by Mike Day for the BBC, documenting the fading tradition of the annual Gannet Hunt off the Western Isles of Scotland. DRO drew from the traditional music of the region to create something unique and fitting for the film. They have collaborated closely with Eric Chenaux, Baby Dee and C Joynes, toured extensively with Godspeed You Black Emperor and shared stages and adventures with many other fine performers along the way. To celebrate 10 years of playing together, Antigen Records have recently re-released a selection of live recordings by the band.

**Rough Music** is a term that in past was used to describe percussive music made by Butchers. They used their cleavers to make 'rough music' at weddings, political protests and to punish unfaithful husbands and wives in their local communities. During his research, Nathaniel found Hogarth engravings that feature butchers with meat cleavers alongside drummers and even a reference to satirical musical performance in the 1700s for which cleavers were specially cast from bell metal.

**Embedded** is a Sound and Music composer and creative artist development programme <http://www.soundandmusic.org/projects/embedded>. Sound and Music is the national agency for new music. The Embedded residency programme is supported by the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation.

**Pitt Rivers Museum** cares for the University of Oxford's collection of anthropology and world archaeology. The Reel to Real project (2012-13), funded by the Esmée Fairbairn Collections Fund, set out to make available for the widest use, both in and beyond the museum space itself, the important sound collections of the Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford University's Museum of Anthropology and World Archaeology [web.prm.ox.ac.uk/reel2real](http://web.prm.ox.ac.uk/reel2real) <http://pittrivers-sound.blogspot.co.uk>.

The Pitt Rivers Museum holds one of the world's finest collections of ethnographic and archaeological objects from across the globe. It was founded in 1884 when General Pitt Rivers, an influential figure in the development of archaeology and evolutionary anthropology, gave his collection to the University of Oxford. The General's founding gift contained more than 18,000 objects but there are now over half a million. In addition to objects the collection includes extensive photographic and sound archives, which contain early records of great importance. The Museum continues to collect through donations, bequests, special purchases and through its staff and students, in the course of their fieldwork.

The Museum offers an extensive program of exhibitions and events for all ages throughout the year, further details can be found on our website: [www.prm.ox.ac.uk](http://www.prm.ox.ac.uk) Free admission

**OCM** is a unique producer that works to develop and present the highest quality and most innovative new music and sound-based live events, to engage diverse local and national audiences with its work, and to deepen understanding and appreciation of musical cultures from within the UK and worldwide. Its raison d'être is to bring music, artists and audiences together in ways that encourage and create memorable and meaningful experiences for all.

Alongside OCM's regular concert programme in Oxford, the organisation commissions and produces new work. Past commissions and projects include *Power Plant*, (which went on to become an international hit with Producer Simon Chatterton), award winning sound artist Robert Jarvis's *Echolocation* (a sound installation for a choir of bats), and *Music from the Genome* (the world premiere of Michael Zev Gordon's award winning 'Allele' based on cutting edge research into the human genome, performed at the UK's national synchrotron facility Diamond Light Source <http://www.musicfromthegenome.org.uk/>). Ray Lee's *Ethometric Museum* was premiered at Oxford's Museum of the History of Science and has since been performed across the UK and Europe. Ray Lee won a 2012 British Composer Award in Sonic Art for *Ethometric Museum* <http://www.ocmevents.org/ocm/events/Ethometricmuseum>. OCM's contribution to the Cultural Olympiad was to co-produce Mira Calix's *Nothing Is Set In Stone*, which was premiered at Fairlop Waters in June 2012 and was part of Secrets, presented by the Mayor of London and London 2012 Festival <http://www.nothingissetinstone.info/>. In 2014 OCM co-produced and toured Audible Forces, which was co-commissioned by Without Walls and Brighton Festival. Nathaniel Mann is Sound and Music Embedded artist with OCM and the Pitt Rivers Museum in an 18 month residency ending in March 2013 <http://pittriversmann.blogspot.co.uk/>

[www.ocmevents.org](http://www.ocmevents.org) t. 01865 488369 f. 01865 484952

**Audiograft** is an annual festival of Contemporary Experimental Music and Sound Art curated by the Sonic Art Research Unit (SARU) at Oxford Brookes University. The festival aims to engage the widest possible audience from Oxford and beyond with the challenging contemporary practices that are the focus of the Research Unit. Artists featured by Audiograft include Ray Lee, Max Eastley, Trevor Wishart, Rhodri Davies, Cremaster, James Saunders, Jos Zwaanenberg, Lee Patterson, Anvil & Stirrup, Rob Curgenvin, Automated Noise Ensemble, Sarah Hughes, Jason Kahn, Stephen Cornford, Ben Gwilliam, Patrick Farmer, [rout], Paul Dibley, Exquisite Corpse, Paul Whitty, David Prior, and many more. <http://www.audiograft.com/>

**For more information, print quality images and interviews contact:**  
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