develops and manufactures analogue modular synthesizer since eight years in Lisboa/Portugal/Europe. The main and responsible person is Kazike aka Gerd Peun who started to develop synthesizers already in the 70ths. Please read the full story here:
www.cluboftheknobs.com/history.html
The synthesizer is hand-made, with hand-selected parts and a cabinet from real wood. Eventhough Kazike had started as the successor of the legendary "MOOG" synthesizer, his range of new developed modules has exceeded the former by far. By this it makes the synthesizer playable and usuable for musicians, composers, film music composers, sound researchers, students, schools and everybody who wants to dive into the universe of sound. It is NOT considered as a "retro" development but as an analogue synthesizer, made with recent technology by following the truly analogue concept. This is TRUE SOUND. The products can be seen at **www.cluboftheknobs.com**

NEW DEVELOPMENTS AT MUSIC FAIR FRANKFURT 2011

New system:
MODEL 15: a transportable system memorizing the legendary one...

New modules:
C 951 Arpeggiator with **C 951A Arpeggiator Router**
C 911P Voltage Controlled Polyphonic Envelope Generator
C 907A Fixed Filter Bank.

At our booth you will be able to see:

the **MODEL 15**
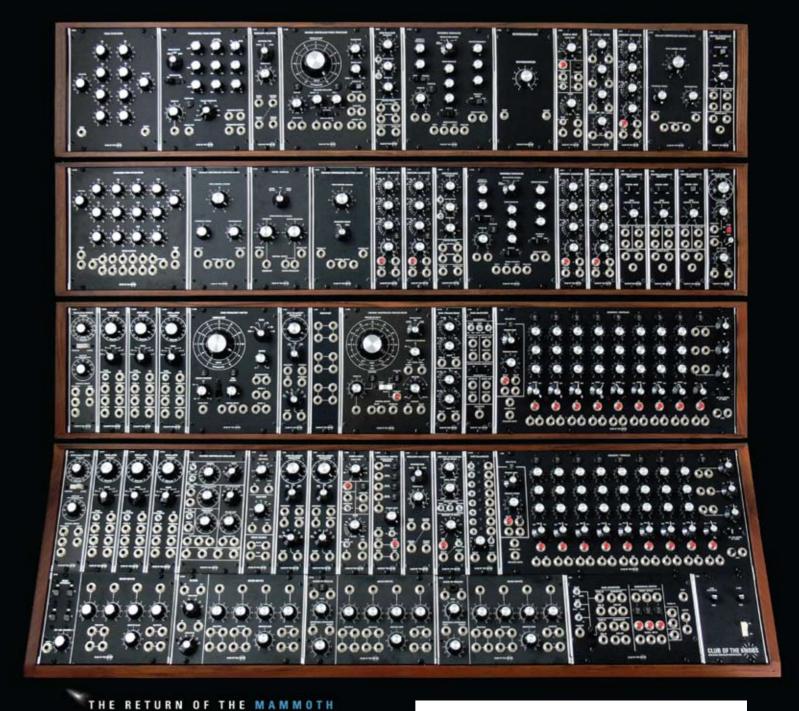
the **SYSTEM 55**

the transportable **System 3P**

the **polyphonic keyboard 5-octaves**

the **polyphonic keyboard 4-octaves**

Additionals

please visit us in hall 5.1 booth D99

you won't regret...

THE RETURN OF THE MAMMOTH
CLUB OF THE KNOBS

+ + MODULAR ANALOGUE SYNTHESIZER + + 2011 AD

PRESS RELEASE

MUSIC FAIR FRANKFURT 2011

HALL 5.1 D99

CLUB OF THE KNOBS — ANALOGUE MODULAR SYNTHESIZER

Interview with KAZIKE

Q: Kazike, since more than eight years you are developing analog sound synthesizers. What has happened during those eight years?

Kazike: Well, as you know, I alread started in the 70ths to construct a synthesizer, and I *did* make a system.
Of course, after almost a 20 years' break, I had to get back into this world, so maybe in the beginning I invented some circuits which I had already developed, twice. But after a year or so, I was again completely connected so to say, and this process of wanting something and finding solutions for its realisation, started again revealing itself to me in all its funny facets.

Q: What do you mean by funny facets?

Kazike: I guess every researcher would answer you the same: once you are *with* (or *within*?? (smiling)) the principle, you receive also. It is not that you are just thinking of what you want to create next. But the universe of the principle, I am dealing with, the principle of sound, sound creation, also sometimes *offers* you insights - you encounter new connections, possibilities or ideas which couldn't just derive from simple, logical thought.

Q: So then, how does your working day looks like?

Kazike: What can I say... I am living in the "South" - with all its qualities one knows: bright light, wide sight, ocean air, life on the street, and, specificly in Portugal, an originary beauty in design, architecture and way of life. At least in the region where I am living or spending my time.

So all these factors naturally influence my work, too. Maybe I am wrong but I think that it is difficult to create ugly things if you appreciate your environment.

Q: Does this mean your synthesizer looks as it looks because it was created in the South?

Kazike: (laughing) Not exactly! The appearance, the design of the synth follows first its function. I have said this several times and it is true: when you look at one module, you should immediately understand what each knob is standing for and what is the function of the particular module - by the size of the knobs, their different scales, their position on the panel etc.

If you see a full synthesizer, you should be able to hear it even when it is unplugged...

Q: Has anything changed since your first decision to start constructing a synth again - during the last years?

Kazike: When I started, my main purpose was to build a machine for myself. One reason certainly was that I, personally, cannot get enough satisfaction from digitally created sound, noise, or music at all. I also had to realize that by now, after more than 40, 50 years of the first analogue, voltage controlled synthesizer, there was still no system available which would correspond to my early fascination for the sound and appearance of those machines. I don't want to say that other developments aren't fine, I am simply talking about myself and my taste, my vision. This concerns the totality: the format, the design, the parts used as the quality of the knobs, jacks etc. upto the the technics, the wooden case is made with, and certainly means the logic and the concept of how the whole system is set up. So, well, I had to start myself...

Q: Are you satisfied by now?

Kazike: Hm... (smiling)... I am very satisfied with the physical result, yes. I don't want to sound conceited, but all persons who were ever able to really listen to the sound - may them be professionals or not - were at least astonished if not overwhelmed by its clearness, power, warmth and, as I am often told, uniqueness. Through the haptic and visual quality, a kind of lust is created which has produced already some very passionate users. For me this synthesizer is more than a sound creator, it is an fascinating interface to the universe of sound itself.

So what I am not too satisfied with is that I still don't have time enough for my synth and me because there are still too many tasks to perform.

Q: But which kind of persons are interested in such a huge system which is - as you have told me - in fact unlimited in its size? And, I mean, sorry, but who can afford such a thing?

Kazike: First of all, we are not talking about any mainstream or industrial product which would be available in a pack of thousands or even hundreds. At least not by now - but who knows which wealthy passionate fan one day appears to buy the whole manufactory in order to produce a large quantity and make more people happy! (smiling)

Ok, I am sure that in fact everybody, every human being, could be interested in such a synthesizer because, as I already said, it deals with something very basic, very elemental, fundamental of life itself - which is the principle of sound. This means it is actually not limited for musicians or composers, not at all, it is as well fascinating for sound researchers and also private users who want to play with this universe - I use to say, it is a toy for adults (and kids anyway) and I am a manufacturer of toys! (laughing)

Q: And who can afford it?

Kazike: The good thing is that the system can start as small and is expandable ad infinitum... I am offering a small transportable system for musicians but also a basic system for schools or young people who want to learn about sound. In fact, even if later they decided to work digitally - because it has its advantage to work digitally as we know: transportability, storage functions, other ways of usage - I am sure that these who understand and have experienced analog sound synthesis, will be much more careful about their later sound productions than those who start from the beginning by obeying the dictate of software programmers or, better, starting with simulation instead of creation.

Q: But you are avoiding the digital?

Kazike: Come on! I love my computer ... sometimes...(smiling) and I used to work for more than 20 years with video, with digital video as well. Our close neigbour is André Gonçalvez who builds digital modules, and often we are exchanging thoughts when we meet in the small restaurant near by. It is as we use to say regarding the analog and the digital: it is not a problem, it is just something else! Actually, I also use the help of some digital functions...

Q: In which terms?

Kazike: Of course, not at all for any sound creation - this is truly analog, all else would be ridiculous. But there are some interesting phenomens which happen if you control the modules by software for functions such as randomness or rhythms, speed - so the way, impulses are triggered. For the Music Fair Frankfurt 2011, I am showing four Arpeggiators additionally controlled by an Arpeggiator Router - which makes the bundle to a kind of four-voices-sequencer, so to say. It even has a temporary store-function which can be a very helpful tool for live musicians.

Beside this, I have also developed a pentaphonic keyboard, a Ratchet Sequencer and the Gate Sequencer, modules which help to "play" the synthesizer if people want to create melodies, sequences. The programming of the software is done by Georg Mahr - it interests me a lot to know more of programming myself but for now it is impossible for me to learn this, too.

So those four modules which have a bit of software implemented, are meant to be tools for playing the synthesizer. There are some people who rememember very well the beginning of synthesizers in the music scene with bands such as Tangerine Dream, Kraftwerk or even Pink Floyd and would love to replay their themes. So with such modules the'll come much closer to their dream. However, you can also create very different things if you use them in a more unusual way - but this everybody has to find out himself!

Q: Do you have any specific plans for the future concerning your developments?

Kazike: Until now, we have more or less 40 different modules for our synthesizer system and they are covering most if not all needs, analogue sound synthesis might have. I still have a few very special ideas in my mind but I am not sure when or whether I will realize them. The thing is that some people in this world wide net seem to think that a manufactory or better research project as ours has to publish new developments all the time otherwise they believe that the whole product is not "up-to-date". Of course, this is nonsense - because once one sub-principle of the general principle of sound was properly "caught", as we say, in the function of an electric circuit, there is nothing more to invent - and, since we are truly analog, voltage controlled, nothing is to be awaited of any future technological development of new parts or whatsoever. Anyway, I came to the conclusion that many of the people who write in an "user forum" are displaying themselves and often even don't own what they are writing about. Because these who *do* own, are busy with using their stuff (smiling).

I am not the type to create variations of modules just because some fellows who don't understand the concept, are asking for any news. The same happens with the hysteria in dealing with numbers. There are physical and logical limits for things, a human being cannot handle more than a specific quantity of options in one module - it simply doesn't make sense, it is rather disturbing and narrows the quality.
If one really understands the concept of modular synthesizers, one will easily grap that through the unlimited possibilities for connectivity between the modules as well as the quantity of them, a range for variation is implicated which is only limited by your own time and phantasy. So, let's see - the number of people who are a bit tired of digital sound simulations, is increasing, naturally, I feel, and ok, here we are to offer something different, simply complete different, I underline, not better or traditional, more advanced or "retro" - no, obviously engineered with the recent state-of-the-art technology - but analog, that's the fact.

Q: So if you slow down your inventing energies - what will you do with your surplus time? Going to the beach?

Kazike: (smiling)... yeah, would be great to have more time for this. The thing is that our synthesizer is a handmade product and it needs the personal touch, control and adjustments which cannot be done by anonymous persons. Its secret lies not in the assembly of all parts but, sorry to say, in the totality, the whole, specificly in the setting up, building the relations between the single modules, maybe it is like sculpturing its final sound, its unique voice which each model seems to have...

Q: What are your expectations for the Music Fair in Frankfurt?

Kazike: For us it is the publication of our complete systems in its final, perfect state. Our main modules' test person, Axel Jungkunst, will be there with us and has prepared real surprises in demonstrating the functions of some modules, specially the arpeggiators. We are also exhibiting some news such as the legendary "Model 15" with the original C907A Fixed Filter Bank and a C911P Voltage Controlled Polyphonic Envelope Generator...

So... "vai ser uma festa" as the Portuguese say, it will be a festival - for the eyes, the ears, the hands and all persons who are interested in analogue sound creation.

Lisboa, March 2011