

**Pursuing Phantoms II: Gate to the Underworld**  
**Pursuing Phantoms III: At the Doorstep, Looking Out**  
**(Sublamental Records, 2022)**

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This music is like ethnographic work. It chronicles almost three years of living in a pandemic. Some of it is dark and brooding, some of it loose and open-hearted. Pursuing phantoms happens in both ways.

The two records are like twins that deserve their independence. They were conceived in the same situation and subsequently coalesced into different assemblies according to mood. They exist separately as works but belong in conversation with each other and gain from their juxtaposition. They belong to the same adventure.

Each piece charts its own waters. Although conceived and created from the experience of isolation, what was learned in the process is that isolation in a pandemic produces uncanny commonality. From this standpoint, each piece is also a mapping of the commons. Isolation breeds plurality. In solitude we imagine interrelation. A wonderful group of musician friends in different parts of the globe generously contributed to the realization of this music. The Sublamental family is growing.

## Pursuing Phantoms II: Gate to the Underworld

### 1 – *Dark trio for the wounded*

Trio for piano, viola, and synthesizer, composed in May 2020 in response to anti-black violence in America.

Viola: Jens Fruse

### 2 – *Calling on demons who listen*

A clarinet improvisation, recorded through corrugated tubing around midnight out in Riverside Park and brutally processed. Overdubbed bassoon and cello are improvised with sole instruction to think from the standpoint of breath. A NY Covid piece.

Bassoon arpeggios: Dominique M.

Cello: Constantine Price

### 3 – *Sleeping with the stones*

The musicality of dreaming out loud with windows open to the morning breeze. Recorded in Galaxidi, September 2021.

### 4 – *Deep symptom (for violin, viola, and debasement)*

Based on the improvised self-undoing assertion: *Δεν υπάρχει. Δεν το έχεις. Αποκλείεται. Μη νομίζεις.* (“It doesn’t exist. You don’t have it. It’s impossible. Don’t believe it”)

Violin: Titika Dafnomili

Viola: Jens Fruse

### 5 – *Dinner Conversation with locusts*

Based on a recorded dinner conversation in New York before the pandemic, which was sampled, digitized, and subsequently scored for several instruments. First composition under lockdown during the heavy days of the NYC massacre in April 2020. A symphonic feedback piece that gives voice to the nightmare.

Guitars and feedback: Masking Tapeworm

Bass: King Kong of Korinth

Cello: Constant Price

Bassoon: Dominique M.  
Synths, clarinet: Count G

### 6 – *Panic attack ballet*

Ballet written for piano, flute, and synthesizer. Written in New York in 2018, while Count G was working on *Music for Street Rumor*. It reflects the frantic conditions of those incessant traveling days. It's likely undanceable.

Flute: Rupert von Nutwood

### 7 – *Spectral panthers steal your soul*

Giving a jazz quartet the opportunity to play atonal music. Based on a simple two-note call on the piano, with fretless bass and flute as lead instruments. Surrounding noise and home percussion sounds added in the studio.

Drums: Moutro Monstrum  
Bass: King Kong of Korinth  
Flute: Rupert von Nutwood  
Piano, synths: Count G

### 8 – *Falling off the steel towers*

A circuitous composition that entertains the idea of falling to no end as the experience of modern life. Initially, two synthesizer improvisations, recorded in the underground caverns of Leros island, were brought head-to-head. From the collision, several pieces were excised. Tapes were then sent out for guitar and rusty horn interventions and returned to the caverns for the clarinet parts.

Guitar: Masking Tapeworm  
Muted Trumpet: Igo Sigma

### 9 – *A drain pipe for a flute* (I. *Listen Mayakovsky* II. *Vladimir takes his horn* III. *Nothing is certain* IV. *What about you?* V. *Nocturne for disgrace*)

An expansive electro-acoustic suite of *musique concrète*, industrial punk, turntablism, free horn improvisation, and tape loop manipulation in 5 episodes. Based on twisting voice samples from a trio of famous Vladimirs: Lenin's "Address to the Third Communist International"; Mayakovsky's poems "Listen" and "What About You?"; and Beckett's Vladimir desperately waiting for Godot. Except for Episode I, which was recorded live at

MT's home, Count G sent tapes to friends with instructions for structured improvisation. A musical call to arms against the confusion of ideas. Dedicated to the failure of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Doldrums and percussion: Moutro Monstrum  
Bass instincts: King Kong of Korinth  
Baritone sax spurts: Rupert Von Nutwood  
Suspended trumpets: Igo Sigma  
Guitar glitches and feedback: Masking Tapeworm  
Mallets and drones: Hive Silk  
Clarinet, piano, and all other sounds: Count G

10 – *Today we look outside*

A reiteration of the opening trio in light of greater darkness. Recorded with mind to how the violence continues. Originally dedicated to the dead. But today we choose to look outside.

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Count G: piano, clarinet, keyboards, voices, tapes, and all other sounds not noted above

Compositions and production by Count G  
Mixed and mastered in The Boys Room, Riverside Studios, New York, December 2021  
Cover photo: Stathis Gourgouris  
Design: Atticas Graphics

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## Pursuing Phantoms III: At the Doorstep, Looking Out

### 1 – *Autumn frills*

A sunny piece, built around a 15-second sample from a Miles Davis solo in “Autumn Leaves” live with the legendary Quintet in 1965. Testament to autumn as an optimistic, not melancholic, season.

Cello: Constant Price

Percussion: Moutro Monstrum

### 2 – *Looking for love in a haystack*

Island summer night improvisation on an impromptu theme devised by Hive Silk. Outrageous use of bass as a wood-and-strings soundbox by Kong and deliciously drunk vibes by Hive. And some piano doodling. Home recording, one take.

Contrabass/wooden bucket: King Kong of Korinth

Vibraphone: Hive Silk

Piano, brush cymbals: Count G

### 3 – *Fugitive windmills tilting in the distance*

A jazz session in remote Covid conditions, this piece is emblematic of the whole project. Counting on his friendship with MT’s band, Count G proposed a basic rhythm platform and then passed it around for layered improvisation.

Brush drums: Moutro Monstrum

Acoustic bass: King Kong of Korinth

Electric piano, tape-echo: Count G

Muted trumpet, trombone frills: Igo Sigma

Baritone sax: Rupert von Nutwood

Vibes: Hive Silk

### 4 – *Veronica’s Harlem*

The outcome of a beautiful night in Harlem, pre-Covid, with Count G fooling around on the piano and Veronica trying out different voices. Enhanced and expanded in isolation—plus, Jens’ and Titika’s remote ingenuity.

Vocals: Veronica Black

Violin: Titika Dafnomili

Viola: Jens Fruse

5 – *Canvas horns, like goat's thorns*

This piece was pulled out of a pile of extant tapes from Notnef Greco's second album. Somehow, it escaped the ravages of water unscathed. A moment of epiphany while pursuing phantoms.

Electric guitar: Deviant Fond

6 – *The Tsung Tan Clan goes surfing*

Based on Hive's inspired marimba experiment in July 2020. Subsequent additions and tape manipulations in the Boys Room. Voice samples of Iva Bittová and Jeanne Lee. How the summer turns to autumn.

Hive Silk: marimba and percussion

7 – *Bluepoint in stone horizon*

Island summer night, again. Same improvising trio, this time with acoustic guitar and Rocksichord. Home recording, party night.

8 – *Music for brass tacks*

A monumental composition to pull through given the remote logistics. It took the longest to bring to a satisfactory realization. Extensive enhancement in the studio, taking advantage of the endless stash of field recordings and old tapes, plus improvised sampler use of Art Zoyd.

Drums: Moutro Monstrum

Contrabass: King Kong of Korinth

Guitar and tapes: Masking Tapeworm

Bassoon: Dominique M.

Trombone: Igo Sigma

Baritone sax: Rupert von Nutwood

9 – *Not getting off this cosmology train*

Although MT decided to disband, the desire to continue playing together was undiminished. This piece is MT's reciprocal gesture to Count G for joining them on the epic "Silk

Hypothesis” in *MT II*. Same use of the fabulous SynThorn to stage a dialogue with the distorted guitars. Back in the studio the Count added two embellishments with the sampler as a live instrument: playing samples of Nadah El Shazly’s voice from her concert in Brooklyn (October 2018) and adding to the guitar craze by playing samples of Deviant Fond’s Fuzz Factory guitar improvisation from June of the same year.

Drums: Moutro Monstrum  
Bass: King Kong of Korinth  
Guitars: Masking Tapeworm

### 10 – *Hesitant melancholy*

Contemplative ambivalence in a hazy morning. Keyboard improvisation, scored for guitar, organ, and winds. Imagine it as a sort of choral piece.

Bassoon, oboe: Dominique M.  
Mute trumpet: Igo Sigma  
Guitars: Masking Tapeworm

### 11 – *Swimming upstream in midtown*

Reminiscing about New York next to the Aegean. Third and most fervent of the island summer trio encounters. This time, the trio coalesced over an already recorded improvisation on nylon guitar. More wood box thumping for percussion purposes. Home recording, happy feelings.

### 12 – *Elongated secrets (“We cut trees to make theaters”)*

A drone piece with bassoon solo and a poem. The solo was hummed into tape and turned over to Dominique’s trust to actualize. The poem was improvised late one night in Galaxidi (October 2018) out in the empty hills over the dunes, surrounded by stones and stars. Cell phone recording.

Bassoon: Dominique M.  
Trumpet: Igo Sigma  
Vibes: Hive Silk

*I’m outside in a theater.*

*Surrounded by bushes  
of myrtle and thyme*

*A huge tree trunk  
cut almost to the root*

*It must have reached to the sky*

*Who cut it?*

*We cut trees to make theaters*

*That's because we love stones*

*They reflect better in the light  
of many moons*

*I am elsewhere*

*Learning to listen to silence*

*Difficult lesson*

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Count G: piano, clarinet, keyboards, voices, tapes, and all other sounds not noted above

Compositions by Count G, except:

# 2, 7, 11 by Silk/Kong/G

# 4 by Black/G

# 6 by Silk/G

Produced, mixed, and mastered by Count G in The Boys Room, New York, December 2021

Cover photo: Stathis Gourgouris

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