

# The Sancho Plan: Rock 'n' Roll for the 21st Century

## Background

If Jamaica's sound pioneer King Tubby worked with Germany's abstract animator, filmmaker and painter Oskar Fischinger and Japan's video game designer Tetsuya Mizuguchi, they might conceive of The Sancho Plan.

A mix of musicians, animators, designers and computer programmers, The Sancho Plan present audiences with an unforgettable, interactive entertainment experience. Immersive, surreal and emotionally moving, this rock 'n' roll band for the 21st Century invites its viewers on a journey, taking them through a dystopian alternate reality of parallel animated worlds that reside somewhere between 'Fantasia' and 'The Animatrix'.

With Oskar Fischinger, Len Lye, Wassily Kandinsky, Salvador Dali, Terry Gilliam, Tim Burton, Tetsuya Mizuguchi, Toshio Iwai, Kruder and Dorfmeister and King Tubby as inspiration, The Sancho Plan's creators have produced a fused representation of animation, music, sound, gaming, technology and live performance to create real-time audiovisual experiences for modern audiences.

"We see ourselves as part of a rich tradition of exploring the combination of distinct art forms to create a single work - in Wagner's words the 'Gesamtkunstwerk' or the 'total work of art'... fusing different media and genres into new forms of creative expression and transcending the boundaries between art and pop culture." *Ed Cookson, founder*

The Sancho Plan's creative mission is to:

- Focus on the live environment – delivering entertainment through physical, skilful and carefully choreographed performance
- Explore real-time interaction between music, video and live performance and its potential for narrative and storytelling
- Use cutting-edge technology – but integrate it in such a way that the complexity of the machinery is almost invisible to the audience

The Sancho Plan performed their first live gig at the prestigious National Film Theatre in London in Summer 2005, and have since been appearing at festivals throughout Europe. They have exhibited at Ars Electronica (in Austria), performed at Martyn Ware's Future of Sound tour, The Big Chill and Bloom festivals (in Britain), were commissioned to design a custom presentation for the Umbro European Championship VIP event (in Paris) and were introduced to American audiences at Burning Man 2006.

## How The Sancho Plan Magic Happens

Current works use a range of electronic drum pads to simultaneously trigger sounds and control a cast of animated characters and virtual performers on an evolving musical journey through The Sancho Plan universe, where you'll find: Singing Baritone Snakes, Cartoon Kodo Drummers, Performing Robots and Ball-Shooting Storks.

Center-stage, classically trained percussionists and drummers (one recently named "BBC Young Musician of the Year") orchestrate sounds and direct the movements of the on-screen characters. Intended to be a narrative story, as much as a musical and visual performance, the audience connects

with the adventures of the animated characters as well as grooving to a great show.

The Sancho Plan's striking, audio and visual experiences are made possible through a refined synthesis of tightly integrated:

- Sound design and music production
- Flash, stop-frame and 3D animation
- A custom-coded real-time control system that captures the performances of accomplished percussionists and musicians or input from the general public

## The Sancho Plan's Spacequatica

New works have become increasingly ambitious in conception, realization and performance. In 2007, The Sancho Plan produced a new work for the Future Of Sound – a UK tour of innovative artists organized by music legend and pioneer Martyn Ware, founder of The Human League and Heaven 17.

Spacequatica is a 12-minute travelogue that immerses the viewer in an experiential 3D audiovisual journey in an imaginary underwater world. The piece was developed especially to capitalise on Martyn Ware's unique 3D audioscape facility – an immersive, multi-speaker, surround sound audio system.

Visually and sonically, the performance takes the viewer on a journey deep into a musical ocean. Viewers discover an underwater world where schools of small exotic creatures perform, much like xylophones are played. Pulled further, they find that deeper waters are populated by dark robotic sharks. Deeper still, and in the world's pitch black depths, all that can be seen and heard are rare, self-illuminating species, occasionally blinking in the darkness.

## The Future for The Sancho Plan

The Sancho Plan looks towards development of its live performance potential – delivering audience experiences that involve a variety of vocalists, rap artists, dancers and choreographers, lighting, set and costume designers. We see:

- Deeper, immersive environments, performed as theatrical stage shows
- A full live band of customized instruments controlling the visuals
- Wireless technologies that allow performers to move freely
- Audience interaction
- Futuristic stage costumes turning performers into a live, human light and vision show

Investment will allow The Sancho Plan to create sophisticated experiences for international audiences that have commercial potential. With goals of...

- Presenting new, real-time applications for technology
- Showing audiences something they have never seen before
- And putting on a damn good show!

...The Sancho Plan has the ingredients for a recipe of commercial entertainment success.

# The Sancho Plan: Artist Biographies

## ED COOKSON

After studying Human Sciences at Oxford University Ed entered the computer games industry where for five years he honed his audio, visual and production skills making award-winning games and earning a BAFTA nomination for his audio work. He worked as a junior artist, level designer, Lead Artist, Head of Sound & Music and finally as a producer before leaving the industry in 2002 to explore his own video, music and interactive projects. Ed has since presented the work of his audiovisual collective, The Sancho Plan, at numerous festivals and clubs including broadcast on both satellite and terrestrial television. The Sancho Plan were nominated for Diesel-U-Music's best VJ award 2003 and their collaboration with designers Tokyo Plastic won the People's Choice award at the Sundance online film festival 2004. Ed has also created a BBC-commissioned stop-motion children's animation, Summerton Mill, the first series of which began broadcast in September 2005.

## ADAM HOYLE

Adam is a game designer, musician and computer programmer who works extensively in the arts and has worked collaboratively with a wide range of artists from different disciplines. As a key member of seminal 90s interactive art collective audioRom, he began creating interactive music systems, both online and within gallery and club spaces. During his career, he has earned two British Academy awards (one for audioRom's enhanced CD "shiftControl" and the other for "Antarctic Waves", a collaboration with Braunarts and the British Antarctic Survey), additionally he has a D&AD silver pencil for "Caffeine Society" with Mario Cavalli. Until recently, Adam was also a Head Technologist at the BBC, and as a freelancer, he has a reputation for producing original online and offline projects for clients such as British Airways, Vodafone, British Heart Foundation, Tate (Modern & Britain), Culture Online and Nesta.

## LEWIS SYKES

Lewis is a veteran bass player of the underground dub-dance scene of the 90s, having performed with acts such as Emperor Sly, Original Hi-Fi, Somatik, Pfink and Radical Dance Faction. He was also a partner in the respected underground dance label Zip Dog Records. An experienced interactive and graphic designer (now a partner in the creative media agency, Chillifish), musician, music-technologist and experimental film enthusiast, Lewis honed his interests in mixed media through an MA in Hypermedia Studies in 2000. Through his more recent creative collaborations – The iRialists, Dublab All Stars and now The Sancho Plan – Lewis continues to focus and refine his fusion of music, visualisation and technology. Lewis currently coordinates Cybersalon, artists in residence at the Science Museum's Dana Centre and organisers of Cyber-sonica, London's international festival of music, sound, art and technology. He is a qualified Youth & Community Arts worker with many years experience of running art and music projects for young people and an experienced FE and HE lecturer in graphic design and new media.

## DARRYN FARRUGIA

Darryn is considered to be one of Australia's top drummers. As a teacher, he has released several top-selling drum videos, and as a performer, he has played behind some of the biggest names in music including: Tom Jones, Joe Cocker, Bonnie Raitt, B.B. King and Rolf Harris. He has also performed regularly in Australia at the Ultimate Drummer's Weekend, Zildjian Day and The Australian Drummers Festival. Voted best Australian drummer on television 1995 in the 'Skinfull' readers poll, Darryn has been profiled in 'Sonics' magazine, "Zildjian Time International" 'Premier Rebound' and has had front cover features in 'Drumscene' and 'Skinfull'.

## JOEL FARLAND

Joel, also an Australian native, is a versatile player, active in styles ranging from jazz, rock, latin and classical. Joel began his percussion studies at age 10 in Sydney, later attending the Sydney Conservatorium of Music High School. At 16 he began studies with former Zappa drummer Chad Wackerman. Joel was the first percussionist to reach to finals of the 2004 2MBS FM Sydney Young Performer Award, which involved two live radio recitals. In 2004, he moved to London, to become an ABRSM International Scholar at the Royal College of Music. Whilst there, he has worked with luminaries such as John Wilson, Stan Sulzman, Bernhard Haitink and Mark-Anthony Turnage. Last year saw Joel receive his first commission – from one of Australia's top composers, Matthew Hindson. Joel has been a featured soloist at the London BFI film festival; for Duo Vertigo (Holland's premier percussion duo), and performed with the New Perspectives Ensemble at the Royal College of Music, and for the Sydney Youth Orchestra.

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