



Herman Brood & His Wild Romance „Live At Rockpalast 1978 + 1990“



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ROCK'N ROLL JUNKIE
The rise and fall of a Dutch icon: Herman Brood

1946-2001

Ten years ago, in July 2001, the Dutch musician, painter and media personality Herman Brood put an end to his life



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by jumping from the roof of the Amsterdam Hilton Hotel. To many, his suicide was the most significant event in the history of Dutch pop music of the 20th century.

Ten years without Brood, but he still lives on: His music, an impressive art collection and, last but not least, the story of his life, have made him immortal. Herman Brood (1946-2001) was an "enfant terrible" and a cultural figure whose suicide only strengthened his controversial status. According to his friends, he could not cope with his failure to kick his drug and alcohol habit. Herman was called "the Netherlands' greatest and only rock'n'roll star." Later in life he became also a well-known painter. He set up his atelier in Amsterdam, and it became his second home.

Herman Brood was born on November 5, 1946 in Zwolle in the eastern part of Holland. In 1959 the Dutch 'icon to be' got his first piano lessons. In school he was rather slow. He was more into playing the piano at his father's abandoned factory building. The young Herman Brood went to the art academy in Arnhem in 1964 where he started his first band, The Moans. During their numerous gigs for American military in Western Germany, a soldier offered him speed (amphetamine). This was the moment when Brood knew: This is it. It was the beginning of an addiction that never stopped.

In 1967, Brood switched from The Moans to Cuby and the Blizzards. "It was the best I could get into," Brood said some years later in an interview. "It was the first time in my life I was on record." In this period, Brood had a short relationship from which his son Marcel was born in 1968. Then his record company found out about his drug addiction and he was kicked out of the band. A hard blow for his career and a rough time followed. Burglaries and drug dealing earned him several terms in prison.

Crucial Encounter

In 1976, Brood's career took a turn, when he met Koos van Dijk, the owner of a bar in Winschoten near the city of Groningen. Koos van Dijk invited the artist to perform at his bar, and it was a great success. Subsequently, van Dijk became Brood's manager, and in the same year Brood started his own group, Herman Brood & his Wild Romance. In 1977, the band released their first album, Street. They are still best known for their second album, Shpritsz, a pun on the German word for syringe from 1978. This album contained their first Dutch hit single, "Saturday Night".

Brood's outspoken statements in the press about sex and drug use brought him into the Dutch public arena even more than his music. He was romantically involved with the German singer Nina Hagen, with whom he appeared in the 1979 film "Cha-Cha". He is also reputed to be the subject of her song "Herrmann hieß er" (Herrmann was his name), a song about a drug addict, from the 1979 Unbehagen album. Brood relished the media attention and became the most famous user of hard drugs in the Netherlands. "It is quite common for an artist to use drugs, but not for him to tell everybody. I admit that I was afraid that my popularity could make people start using drugs," he once said in an interview. In the summer of 1979, Brood managed to enter the American market, where he toured as a support act for The Kinks, The Cars and Foreigner. A re-recorded version of "Saturday Night" peaked at number 18 in the



Billboard Hot 100, they had a national break-out and even made it into the Hawaiian Top Ten, but the big break Brood had hoped for didn't happen.

Bad Times

When Brood returned to the Netherlands in October 1979, his band had already begun to fall apart, and soon his popularity went downhill. Brood continued to record throughout the 1980's and had a few hits, but he spent more and more time on his art.

At the end of the 1980's he made a comeback of sorts. He toured Germany with a renewed Wild Romance. In 1990, he won the BV pop award, one of the highest Dutch awards for popular music, and recorded the album Freeze with Clarence Clemons of the E Street Band and Tejano accordion player Flaco Jiménez.

The Painter

After his career in music, Brood turned to painting and became a well-known character in Amsterdam's art circles. His work is best described as pop-art, often very colorful and graffiti-inspired screen prints, and he achieved some commercial success and notoriety by, for instance, creating murals in various public spaces in and around Amsterdam. He continuously remained in the public eye, by appearing in the media and cooperating with biographical movies such as 1994's "Rock & Roll Junkie".

Brood mainly worked on huge canvasses with intense colors. He was influenced by the tradition of the Cobra movement. He was color-blind and therefore often chose primary colors. "Most of the time Herman used acryl, aerosol and stencils for his artworks. Sometimes even syringes without needles which he would use for contours," Van Dijk relates. In many of the artworks, Brood staged himself. Often he added letters or plasters to his pieces. His signature 'brood' often takes an important part in his artworks.

Despite the bright colors, some of the paintings have a somewhat sad or heavy emanation. "'Home Alone' is a painting about a situation Herman wanted to avoid," Van Dijk says. "You see an old man with a gaunt face, sitting on a couch next to a floor lamp. Alone." Next to his large scale portraits of a number of famous musicians, such as Elvis Presley, Lou Reed, John Lee Hooper and the Rolling Stones, Brood also transformed famous paintings into current style. "One good example is the 'Aardappeleters' (The Potato Eaters) by Vincent van Gogh. Herman painted the modern version which actually takes place at a casino table."

Brood also used beer coasters for sketches or invitations. "If you were a lucky girl, you had gotten yourself a handwritten invitation to Broods atelier, sex included". The exhibition at the Amsterdam Art Hotel also features a number of personal belongings of Herman Brood, like one of his little pocketbooks, records, shows, a motorbike and notepads. One of those notes says: "Natural amorousness is fleeting, but this one day or half a minute nobody can take away from you."



The End

In 2001, depressed by the failure of his drug rehabilitation program and facing serious medical problems because of his prolonged drug use, he committed suicide on July 11 by jumping from the roof of the Amsterdam Hilton Hotel at the age of 54. On his body, people found a letter saying that he was fed up with life. "Grab the opportunity and make a nice party out of this," Brood had written further. "Maybe I will see you again." The autopsy showed that his body had been totally destroyed by alcohol and drugs. He had planned the scenario for his suicide already a while before and talked about it to Koos van Dijk, "He wanted to jump," Koos related, "either from the roof of the Okura hotel or from the Hilton. I advised him the Hilton because it was closer to his home. He burst out laughing."

And Koos van Dijk recalls: "I never thought he would do it, Herman didn't want to die. When we look at his art, he is still alive." If you had asked him about his three best friends, he would probably have answered: 'Number one is alcohol, because I can rely on it. Number two is Speed, because I can rely on it. And number three maybe is my dog Iggy, because I can rely on him.' If you would have asked him who he loved, he would have answered: 'Myself, Lola (his daughter) and Iggy.' You can see these feelings expressed in Brood's painting 'Van God Los', Now on exhibit for at least two years at the Amsterdam Art Hotel."

The Goodbye

Extensively covered by the national media, his cremation took place five days later. Before the cremation, Brood's casket was driven from the Hilton hotel to Paradiso. The streets were lined with thousands of spectators; some people said it felt like a beloved monarch had died. Koos van Dijk and family organized a commemorative concert for Herman with performances by well-known Dutch musicians such as Candy Dulfer and Jules Deelder.

Soon after his suicide, Brood's version of My Way spent three weeks as number one in the Dutch singles charts; the market value of his art work also increased greatly. A characteristic note is that Brood's paintings were often targeted by vandals during his life, while after his death they were stolen for their value. His popularity was verified by the fact that his name turned out to be the strongest brand of the year 2001.

A Tribute from Bono

When U2 performed in the Netherlands three weeks after Brood's suicide, they paid tribute to him at each of the three shows. They dedicated an acoustic version of Duke Ellington's "Jump for Joy" to him, a song they had never performed at any other time of their career. At the third show in Arnhem they also dedicated their own "Gone" to him and had his version of "My Way" played over the PA as outro music. In the middle of the show Bono delivered an emotional eulogy to Brood before the band performed "In a Little While".



Life after Brood

In 2007, the film "Wild Romance" premiered in the Netherlands, a movie about the artist's life. To honor this movie, Brood's entire atelier was transferred to the Groninger Museum during the time of the premiere. The exhibition was called "Cha-Cha. The Phenomenon of Herman Brood" and showed the workshop of the artist, the place where Brood created his paintings, composed music, wrote song texts, slept and allowed free range to his unconventional lifestyle.

Brood continues to inspire other artists: the album Bluefinger by Black Francis (aka Frank Black, singer of the Pixies) is based on the life and works of Brood.

Black Francis began working on a rock opera about the life of Brood. The first performance of "The Rise and the Fall of Herman Brood," with Matt Kelly portraying Brood, took place on November 12, 2010, in Houston, Texas.

Now, Koos van Dijk would like to thank very much Manfred Schuetz from MIG Music as well as WDR Rockpalast for this totally wonderful Double CD and recording that they released. It is a great start and an energy boost to give it to the fans in memory of Herman Brood.

Koos van Dijk: "In former times we did many recordings in so-called mobile studios. We have been able to recover a lot of material which has never been released before. Furthermore we want to bring back three records, which have been not been available for about 22 years."

BROOD4ever!

Koos Van Dijk, December 2011

Tracklisting:

CD 1:

Westfalahalle, Dortmund, 1978

HIT (1:40)

PULLIN' IT ALL OUT (2:01)

TOO SLOW (2:43)

STREET (2:15)

STILL BELIEVE (2:56)

ROCK 'N' ROLL JUNKIE (2:35)

LOST (3:16)

WAITING FOR MY MAN (2:39)

BACK IN YOUR LOVE (1:42)

SATURDAY NIGHT (2:47)



DOREEN (1:39)
DOIN' IT (2:29)
DOPE SUCKS/HOT TALK (4:00)
TURN IT ON (2:27)
ONE MORE DOSE (3:32)
SPEEDO (0:39)
PHONY (3:01)
POP (2:18)
TRUE FINE MAMA (1:21)
PRISONERS (1:17)
SKID ROW (1:36)
NEVER ENOUGH (2:26)
LAST MILE (2:46)
CAN'T STAND IT (2:53)

CD 2:

Live Music Hall, Köln 1990.
BLUE ICE MOON (2:56)
WILL YOU STILL LOVE ME TOMORROW (2:47)
IT AIN'T THE GUN (4:56)
CRACKIN' UP (4:03)
IT'S YOU (3:11)
HOME (2:42)
BEEFIN' IT UP (4:09)
DOPE SUCKS (2:06)
THE TALKIN' (3:10)
DA DO RUN RUN (2:30)
CRIPPLE WITHOUT YOU (3:05)
ROCK 'N' ROLL JUNKIE(2:41)
WHAT BECOMES OF THE BROKEN HEARTED (3:20)
HEATWAVE (2:53)
CUT ME LOOSE (3:23)
SOMETHING ELSE (2:34)
LEGAL IN AMSTERDAM (3:55)
HIT (3:14)