



Hans-A-Plast Hans-A-Plast

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CD / LP / digital



The year is 2014: a sharp cry leaps out of my laptop's speakers. »Ace!« the young punk girl yells into the microphone, »Let's get this disco started.« She's wearing leather trousers with back to front braces as she sings about hot boys with similar dress sense. The band play fast, their sound is clear, curt, and catchy. What is this and where did it come from? Hans-A-Plast is what it is, straight out of Hanover. Thanks to the internet, I can take it all in, right here, right now. It's love at first listen.

The year is 1978, fifteen years before I was born. 56 years earlier, the first self-adhesive plasters went on sale in Germany.

A gang of four: two young women, two young men — Bettina, Renate, Jens and Micha — form a group and name themselves after the aforementioned plasters (Hansaplast). Before long, their fans are sticking plasters on their leather jackets. Meanwhile, Bettina, is on the lookout for someone to sing lead vocals so she can concentrate on the drums in the band instead. Back from a school exchange trip to the United States, where she learned how to anaesthetise boredom with whiskey, LSD and Patti Smith, Annette's vocal talents are in the service of a girls' choir when they find her. In the two years since her USA sojourn, she has jobbed her way through Amsterdam and London as the sound of punk grows louder. She sees Elvis Costello, Ian Dury, and UB40 at the Vortex, but it's the Slits and Poly Styrene with her X-Ray Spex who trigger an epiphany. Now she knows what she wants to do, or more precisely, what she has to do. Whilst in London, a teacher from Braunschweig implores Annette to return home to complete her studies and take her Abitur. Shadowed by the fear of nuclear war and a new generation of the Red Army Faction, Annette never actually completes her exams at the IGS Braunschweig school, but she does start her first band there: Slime (not the Slime that went on to greater fame) mix original songs with Sex Pistols covers. Annette takes »Man of Stone« (one of their own) with her when she joins Hans-A-Plast, the band she meets in November 1978 at the first No Fun Festival, where Hans-A-Plast and Slime play together. Bettina asks Annette if she would like to sing for them — yes, she would. Fast forward to the rehearsal bunker as Bettina hands Annette the lyrics to three songs: »Lederhosentyp«, »Rock 'n' Roll Freitag« and »Hau ab du stinkst«. The creative spark ignites and the 3 songs soon become 13.

A few festivals follow, including the January 1979 event »Into The Future« at the Hamburg Markthalle. In September of the same year, the band record their eponymous debut album in just 4 days, at the Toncooperative studio in Hanover, ably assisted by Rainer in his first encounter with punk. Emulating her idol Poly Styrene, Annette adds a wonderfully off-key alto saxophone to the mix: tracks like »Für 'ne Frau« fizz with charisma and chutzpah, flying in the face of "good girl" expectations, just as one might expect. Annette, Bettina and Renate are soon to be found gracing the cover of Sounds magazine with the headline: »Frauen machen Musik« — shock, horror!

Toncooperative also provides a label base for the band, releasing »Hans-A-Plast« on the studio's Lava imprint. One thousand copies represented the break-even point, but the album sold ten times that before the year was out. Although bigger labels came knocking, the group chose to set up their own record company under the name of No Fun. They packed and shipped most of the albums themselves: »Klebe Tütchen, klebe Tütchen...«

The 2nd edition of the No Fun Festival attracts a crowd of 2,000, even without the Kondensators, Blitzkrieg or die Fucks, who decline on account of Hans-A-Plast having become too successful for their liking. No time to mope around, however, everything is happening so fast. Rockpalast record a legendary gig in 1980 for a television broadcast. When I listen to it 34 years later, it will change my life.

— Max »Drangsal« Gruber

Tracklist

01. Rock'n Roll Freitag
02. Lederhosentyp
03. Für 'ne Frau
04. Monopoly
05. Teenage Traum
06. Rank Xerox
07. Es brennt
08. Starfighter
09. Polizeiknüppel
10. Man Of Stone
11. Amerikaner
12. Hau ab du stinkst
13. O, O, O

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