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THE RUSSIANS ARE COMING  
РУССКИЕ ИДУТ



WELCOME  
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PIERRE  
BOULEZ

CAGE  
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PHOTOS BY STINGRAY AND JUDY ANN (EXCEPT WHERE NOTED)

# SOVIET



Sergey Kuryokhin, Pop Mechanics' "ring leader."

# BEAT

BY BILLIEBILL

With many thanks to the Gerlovins and Joanna Stringray.

ROCK IN ALL CIVILIZATIONS has been turbulent. Soviet rock, like anywhere rock, began as the music of the young, the untamed, wild youth. Until recently, the "official" attitude towards rock and roll was: One does not study this music at the Conservatory, therefore, it does not exist.

For the Soviets, jazz, in its earlier stages was also feared—but jazz became respectable music. In the 1970's something important happened in the musical foot- notes of Russian history—jazz and rock collided. Jazz, luring the avant-gardist, and rock, attracting that wild youth. The collision between these two musical forces created a provocative intellectual explosion, a new Soviet movement dubbed Pop Mechanics.

Pop Mechanics is an assemblage numbering thirty-plus: bands, musicians, artists, designers, and performers simultaneously creating all aspects of art on one stage. Their appearances, impromptu. Their audiences, instantaneous, and they themselves, "unofficial." Pop Mechanics, the "new futurists," who work with the hope of revolutionizing their society are the result of their solid Russian culture and intellect.

Vladimir Maiakovsky is, in spirit, the most unifying influence for each member of Pop Mechanics. Born in 1883 in the Georgian village of Bagdad, Maiakovsky was the most powerful polemic poet of the futurist movement. He was in fact the element that electrified the futurists. He remained an avant gardist until his suicide, or perhaps, elimination in 1930. Today he stands as a hero and inspiration for Pop Mechanics.

Begun in 1908, the futurist movement was led by artists, writers, musicians, and philosophers



Afrika of Pop Mechanics



Timur and Afrika of Pop Mechanics



Timur and Afrika kneeling in front of Afrika's wall painting



Grysha of Strange Games

Mechanics. The "ring leader" of Pop Mechanics, thirty-four year old Sergey Kuryokhin, is considered the principle pianist of the

ЗВУКИ МЯ



PHOTO BY DANIEL LAINE

PHOTO BY DANIEL LAINE COURTESY OF ACTUEL MAGAZINE

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Strange Game (left to right): Alexey, Grysha and Vitya



Kino (left to right): Gustav, Yuri, Victor and Sasha

Starr, author of *Red and Hot: The Fate of Jazz in the Soviet Union*. Kuryokhin has inherited the discipline characteristic of the Soviet style and is an incredibly accomplished pianist. Along with his naturally theatrical personality, he has brought his conservatory training to Pop Mechanics, and has become a cultural gypsy of our time.

Afrika, the mystic member of Pop Mechanics, proclaims that Marie Siniakova, confidant to many early futurists, has passed on to him the cultural testament of the Maiakovskian movement, just before her death nearly two years ago. Siniakova was born in the Ukraine at the turn of the 19th century, one of five sisters considered to have been the most beauti-

ful women of their time. Marie, an artist, illustrated several futurist publications.

The bands of Pop Mechanics are considered "unofficial" and are therefore unauthorized by the Soviet government. They are unable to sell their music in stores, forbidden to accept money for their performances, and are not permitted to record on the govern-

ment-owned label, Melodya. As a result of these restrictions, the bands have devised an underground musical network to publish themselves. Each group records its music onto two-track reel-to-reel, or cassette recorders. The cassettes or reels are then passed on by hand, re-recorded, and effectively circulated to their followers across the U.S.S.R. These "unofficial" bands have become far more popular than the "official" ones.

American singer/songwriter, Joanna Stingray, may well be considered the messenger for the Pop Mechanics. After two years and eight visits to the U.S.S.R., Stingray has collected and successfully smuggled the music of her Soviet counterparts out of the country. Her newly released album titled *RED WAVE* (available from Stingray Productions, 9000 West Sunset Blvd., #405, Los Angeles, CA 90069) on Big Time (America) Records is a double L.P. featuring four of the most popular bands from the U.S.S.R. who are creating an "unofficial" stir. The bands spotlighted on *RED WAVE* are Kino, Aquarium, Alisa, and Strange Games. Each member of the four bands is a participant of the Pop Mechanics.

What Maiakovskiy, Siniakova, and Pop Mechanics have in common is that they all love (or have loved) their country, its culture and its intellect. Although the members of Pop Mechanics desperately long to experience other cultures, they are secure in believing that it is their own culture that cultivates their purpose in life.

In the best tradition of the futurists, Pop Mechanics challenges life, art, and music. Let's hope it's more than just a trend.

Billiebill is a composer and musician from the Ozarks, whose musical influences range from Vivaldi to Little Richard. She has an obscure interest in futurism.

## ЯДЕРНЫЙ ВЗРЫВ