

The very first SoG gig I showed up at the Lift and set up my wine glasses with contact mics and shit fx pedals. There were maybe 20 people there (I think - it was 20 years ago!), I was on first, then Clarence Palmer, I remember them being really great, loads of space and quiet bits which I find is rare in free improv. Top of the bill was Malevich, Tony and Nick's duo which was the reason they started the 'Gravity (to get gigs, they played at every one of the first ones). Tony doing electronic things and Nick ranting and raving over the top, both of them wearing suits. The other thing I remember was that it was when I first met Henry Collins, who revealed to me that he was a sculpture student at Brighton Uni and making music using hoovers, and we started jamming together shortly after that.

There are so many amazing memories of great gigs, laughter and we even survived lockdown and not being able to put on shows. But there was also the Battle of Brighton Live at Riki Tikis. Quite why Brighton Live thought that the pre-Honey Club crowd would enjoy an early evening set of experimental music while they sank pints of Stella and practiced chat up lines is beyond me. We showed up and plugged in, and it got ugly fairly quickly, there was definitely some heckling during my set, then Nick and Tony's gear broke down and then Steve minimal impact played and people were moving and I think the manager came over and 'had a word'. Tony rang Lee Rashamon and got him to get down to the bar in a cab and play some beats and melodies, which as Tony says 'quite frankly was what the whole gig should have been like if we had thought it through.' I left during Steve's set I'm ashamed to say. It was a shame - it would have been great to take what we do to a wider audience.

Anyway who cares what a bunch of hooligans think! One of my best memories is when we were asked to curate a session at Brighton Dome and I got to play on stage at the Studio Bar with Gus Garside as The Static Memories along with Henry, Minimal Impact, Noteherder and McCloud and TR Agency (plus ace visuals by Bartosz Dylewski). There were a couple of hundred people in the audience and we had a proper rider and everything!

Being involved in SoG is one of the things I'm most proud of in my life, thanks to everyone who's been involved, especially Nick 'n' Tony, Chris Cook and Geoff. Now go and drink heavily at the bar...

*Dan Powell / 2021*