

THE IMPOSSIBLE MUSIC SESSIONS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

29 January 2010

contact Austin Dacey

+1 (276) 614-7100

info@impossiblemusic.org

ILLEGAL ROCK FROM TEHRAN, BY WAY OF BROOKLYN

New series features the artists who cannot appear and the music they are not free to make

New York (29 January 2010) – A unique new project called The Impossible Music Sessions connects censored artists from around the world with artists in New York who learn and perform their music live at a Brooklyn performance and art space.

In the first of the Sessions, on 3 March 2010, the Brooklyn-based group Cruel Black Dove will play a tribute to the music of the illegal Iranian band The Plastic Wave, who will appear remotely from Tehran.

The Plastic Wave write songs in English and feature a female vocalist, in defiance of the government's ban on solo singing by women. Their singer Maral and principal songwriter Saeid Nadjafi spent time in prison in 2008 for participating in an unauthorized outdoor concert. In 2009, the band was accepted to the SXSW music festival in Austin, Texas but were denied travel visas.

Although their self-produced recordings are circulated widely in the Iranian musical underground and among ex-patriot communities worldwide, The Plastic Wave cannot perform live.

Session organizers connected them to Cruel Black Dove because of similar vocal styles, aesthetic, and shared inspiration in atmospheric, brooding electronic rock. The Brooklyn quartet, who have released two recordings of their original music, *Full Powers* in 2008 and *The Myth And The Sum* in 2010, have been described as "full to the brim with infectious sound and fury."

The two groups, communicating via Skype and email, became fans of each others' work. Cruel Black Dove are now rehearsing a set of The Plastic Wave's music for the March showcase, which will include a conversation with the Iranian trio in a private location in Tehran.

"Very simply, I really liked the songs. . . . I thought they should be heard," commented Anastasia Dimou, Cruel Black Dove's lead singer, explaining her involvement in the project. "These artists are our equals, who just happened to be born on the wrong soil for expression, and turned into criminals for it. I can't imagine not being able to do what I do."

Nadjafi welcomed the collaboration, saying, "It really gave me positive energy to continue composing. Iranian underground bands have no chance to perform legally and promote their music, so finding audiences is very difficult." Maral told *The Guardian* in January 2009, "For some people, music is a hobby, but I have to find a way to do it. It's my life."

The first Impossible Music Session will be held on 3 March (Music Freedom Day), 7 p.m. at Littlefield, 622 Degraw Street, in the Gowanus neighborhood of Brooklyn. It will be followed by release party for *Listen to the Banned*, a compilation of censored music produced by Freemuse: The World Forum on Music and Censorship, a sponsor of the Sessions. For more information, more at www.impossiblemusic.org.

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Maral and Saeid of The Plastic Wave



Cruel Black Dove