

# How high can music take you?

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Weekend Edition staff

If the other bands that Daniel Lapp is involved in are a build up of his talents, each focussing on one aspect of his musical personality, Lappelectro is the venue where he can explore all the different facets of his musicality. And it is the explosion — that hasn't yet happened.

"When we were at WOMAD, no one had heard of us. So we started playing to about 50 people," recalls Daniel Lapp of their 2001 appearance at the Seattle music festival. "By the end we were playing for 3,000 people."

WOMAD is brought up a couple of times over the course of the interview. Rick May, who plays bass for Lappelectro, was also

in the performance and both Lapp and May recall WOMAD as a highlight in their lives — so far. Lapp is no stranger to the stage nationally and internationally and May has played behind Michael Jackson and Rickie Lee Jones, among others.

"There were people in the trees, rocking out everywhere," says May, grinning because there were less people watching the main stage performance at WOMAD that day.

Lapp jumps in. "When they called us back for the encore I was floating going on stage. Lappelectro is all improvisation, but somehow I knew exactly what I was going to play. I had an inspired

feeling. We were here," Lapp raises his hand above his head extending his arm its full length, marking the energy's height. "And we were going to take it over the top. But when I went to play — I had no sound."

Lapp doesn't know how or why he wasn't able to blow the collective mind of the day. He only knows it's left him hanging — searching for the heights he almost reached.

It is interesting too that Lappelectro hasn't played live since then. Instead the group, which also includes Danuel Tate on keyboards and Ryan Stewart on drums, headed in to the studio, coming out with *Closer Than They Appear*. Lapp, who plays horns, strings, guitar and sings vocals for the group, envisions Lappelectro heading to Europe and Australia. He has also booked a circuit of

festivals for the group.

The band members are ready for anything. In fact they have to be. The whole concept of their music depends on everyone being open to where the layers of sound want to take them. And Lappelectro gives them each the musical opportunity where they can do no wrong. The only requirement Lapp insists on is emotional depth.

Lappelectro fuses experimental elements from jazz, folk and electronica with the unifying goal of bridging their sound mixes from loop based DJ culture with live improvisation.

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— Danuel Tate



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Lappelectro will play live in Victoria Dec. 26 for the first time since a memorable performance at WOMAD in Seattle last year

## *How high*

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The three local band members (Stewart lives in Vancouver) were gathered weeks before their performance working on recording a library of sounds for their shows. The material the group layers into the songs for their live shows comes from acoustic instruments. What those notes end up sounding like in performance is up to the musical instincts of the group. "This is craft work — we've now passed the year 2000 and we're allowed to deal with music differently," says Tate, adding that Lapp consistently pulls the group away from traditional music, even in tempo. "I get to approach keyboards in a way that is different from any other setting."

Although Stewart was a late arrival to the band, only joining the process when they were recording for the CD, he has proven to be exactly the backbone the group needed. "He learned how to reproduce the programmed beats of the last 10 years or so on his drum kit," says Lapp. "So you get the sound of the modern drum and bass, but live."

All Lappelectro needs now is a second chance at that coursing energy, floating WOMAD moment.

"I don't know how long it will take, but I'm going to the next level. I want to find out what that was. I want to find out where we were heading that day," says Lapp.

Lappelectro is playing in Victoria at the Lucky Bar Dec. 26 at 8 p.m. For more information call 382-5825.