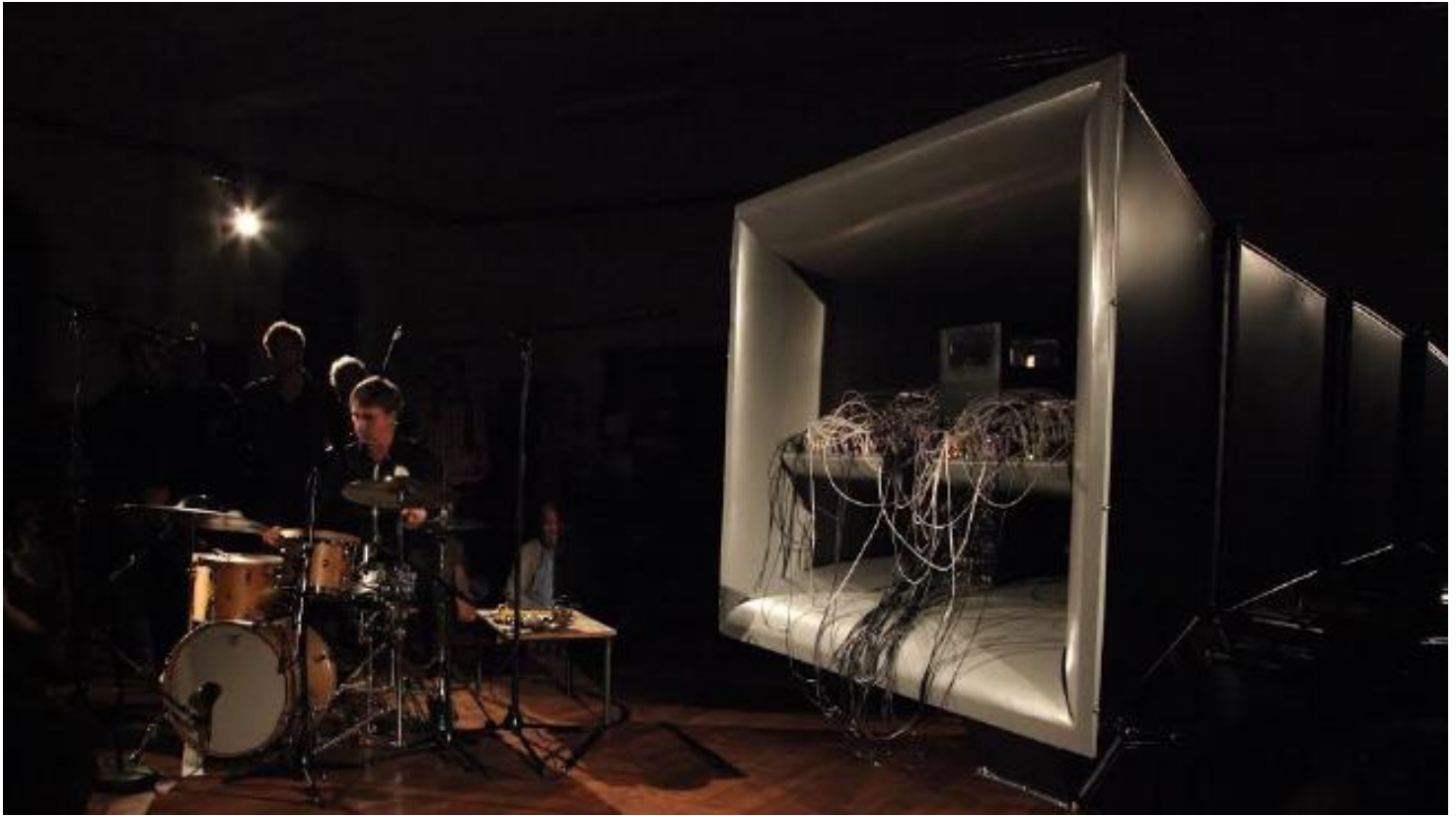


THE AUSTRALIAN

Guy Ben-Ary unveils cellF music machine in Sydney



Guy Ben-Ary's bizarre music machine.

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Anyone keen on exploring new genres in music might want to pop into the National Art School in Sydney next weekend, where the world's leading exponents (possibly the only exponents) of biotechnology rock will be getting their neurons on and letting their wires down in a collaboration with a handful of top Aussie musos. CellF, as the project is called, is the brainchild, for the want of a better term, of Guy Ben-Ary, a researcher and artist at the University of Western Australia who has a string of titles attached to his name longer than this column. Los Angeles-born Ben-Ary likes to bend the rules of what we know conventionally as music, not least by using his own skin cells as the basis for his tunes. The project is the work of a team of artists and scientists and it operates like this. Ben-Ary transforms his skin cells into what he calls an external brain that is linked to a series of analogue modular synthesisers. This machine responds to the sounds made by real musicians to create music of its own. CellF, which has been in conception for four years, has its premiere at the art school next Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Among those taking part are Chris Abrahams from the Necks and Claire Edwardes and Jason Noble of Ensemble Offspring. One can't

help feeling there is a home-made music to be made from this idea, where the machine

neip feeling there is a horror movie to be made from this idea, where the machine breaks free, having taken on the characteristics of its owner, and roams the streets blasting Vangelis, Soft Cell and the Human League at terrified passers-by.

Country stalwart Troy Cassar-Daley has trodden a more conventional musical path than cellF in his lengthy career, but the Aussie star is diverting into unknown territory with his latest project. The Brisbane-based singer, who several years ago thought throat surgery might bring an end to his performing days, will publish his autobiography, *Things I Carry Around*, in August. The book, co-written with author Tom Gilling, will document Cassar-Daley's journey from his birth in Sydney, through his youth in Grafton, growing up with his Aboriginal mother, and his teenage years as a young performer, when his stints at the Tamworth Country Music Festival set him on his way. To coincide with the memoir there is also a new album with the same title to come in August, featuring new material also inspired by his life story.

As featured in Review last weekend, Peter Garrett has well and truly rekindled his music career, with a new solo album in July and a Midnight Oil reunion next year, but he's still lending his voice to causes he considers worthy. This week Garrett added his support to the growing number of musicians, artists and other celebrities who are protesting against the redevelopment of Bondi Pavilion in Sydney. Waverley Council has a \$38 million plan to privatise and rebuild part of the Pavilion site, which for many years has housed music and art programs for children and adults in the community. "This has been a great public asset," the singer said in a recorded statement, "a great public location where people can come and learn about music, where community events can be held and where everyone can come in and access this really important facility."

spindoc@theaustralian.com.au