

WIRED

THE WIRE ADVENTURES IN MODERN MUSIC
WWW.THEWIRE.CO.UK ISSUE 257 JULY 2005 £3.80



ELLIOT PERKINS
EURODAC EXPRESS
PUBLIC RECORD CD

MOVEMENT FOR AIRPORTS
PUBLIC RECORD CD

ULTRA-RED
PLAY KANAK ATTAK
PUBLIC RECORD CD

WR
BORDER SOUNDS
PUBLIC RECORD CD
BY KEN HOLLINGS

Sound, as Ultra-red have observed, is a promiscuous entity; rather than present itself as an uninterrupted continuum in the same way that sight does, it gives the very active illusion of being able to cross boundaries and traverse space. Techno's ability to define itself geographically is one clear aspect of this phenomenon. With their Public Record label, Ultra-red have taken this illusory shift in territoriality a stage further by locating it digitally in space, which is to say nowhere at all.

Log on to the Public Record site at www.publicrecord.org and move yourself out onto the Creative Commons, a deracinated extension of the continuing struggle against increasingly aggressive digital rights management that is still far from resolving itself. In keeping with traditional notions of the commons as a collective resource open to all users, this more utilitarian approach to the useful development of copyrighted material quickly shades over into issues of national identity and the boundaries to the self. Not surprisingly, much of the archive material available as free downloads from Ultra-red and their associates deals with issues of border control, migrant workers and political refugees. Just as more of the planet is turning to desert, so a greater percentage of its population

is finding itself in transit, without recognised papers or personal identity. The authorities in New York, for example, have still no clear idea of how many migrant workers perished during the destruction of the Twin Towers on 11 September 2001, as there was no official record of their presence.

The promiscuity of sound captures these moments of transition and disappearance with the greatest agility. *Movement For Airports* offers a bustling series of remixes of a joint anti-racist action carried out by Ultra-red and Kanak Attak at Frankfurt Airport in 2001, a complete recording of which can also be found on Ultra-red's *Play Kanak Attak*. WR's *Border Sounds* is a persuasive montage of field recordings and interviews with cops and officials along national boundaries running from Italy and Slovenia all the way through to Poland and Germany. Created in collaboration with photographer Shahidul Alam from the DIRK Project in Bangladesh, who work with migrants in the Indian subcontinent, *Eurodac Express* by Elliot Perkins includes recordings sourced from the Chittagong shipyards, deportation centres throughout the European mainland and the back streets of Oldham. In each case the handling of sounds and voices is deft and the mastering sensitive to their overall effect, so download some of these today and give your iPod something to think about.