

Playwright Yury Klavdiyev Plays Rock

By [John Freedman](#)

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The cover of playwright Yury Klavdiev's first album, "On the Fringes of an Industrial Zone," was designed by his band member Mikhail Lyozin.

I have had numerous occasions over the last ten months to tell or write about how Yury Klavdiyev was greeted like a rock star last May at Towson University near Baltimore. Klavdiyev was there with fellow Tolyatti playwright Vyacheslav Durnenkov to attend performances of their plays and take part in public discussions about them.

When Klavdiyev and Durnenkov were first introduced to a hall crammed to the rafters with students, the place exploded in cheers, whistles, shouts and stomping feet. The blast of heat coming down on those of us standing on stage next to the two writers was astonishing. Klavdiyev's hard-hitting plays, fashioned innovatively on elements drawn from Japanese anime, martial arts films and Tarantino shoot-em-ups, had clearly reached those young Americans.

What none of us knew at the time was that Klavdiyev was already working on his rock chops.

I heard about that in September at the Lyubimovka playwriting festival where Klavdiyev was often seen chatting with his main musical collaborator Mikhail Lyozin. Yury said they were working on something in the studio, but that none of it was quite ready yet for public consumption.

That, apparently, has changed. Throughout March, Klavdiyev has been uploading to the Internet album after album of new musical compositions – three albums in three weeks. And those albums have been accompanied by several impressive videos.

The [video](#) of the song "The Theory of Games" rattles and clangs to backwards-running news reel images from Soviet times, while "[Alongside](#)" employs a shrieking, droning guitar riff and percussive beat that nearly drowns out Klavdiyev's tough, low, rumbling vocals.

The albums have already grabbed a good deal of attention from Klavdiyev's colleagues and fans.

A YouTube viewer named HrobolovDima, who watched "Alongside," wrote, "Marvelous film. Interesting recordings. I like your work."

The internet journal [nthWord](#), which has published Klavdiyev in the past, informed friends on their Facebook page in early March that Klavdiyev's "new album 'On the Fringes of an Industrial Zone' dropped yesterday. And it's free to download online. Check it out and give a listen to the hypnotic and haunting 'Gravitation'."

The Generous Company in Baltimore, which produced the English-language premiere of Klavdiyev's play "I Am the Machine Gunner" last year, urged Facebook friends to check out "Klavdiyev's new album! It's available for download and is a blend of 'shoegaze and noise rock.' Fantastic!"

The group's definitions of itself, by way of the tags it provides on the page offering downloads of "On the Fringes of an Industrial Zone," are undeniably intriguing. Here is a selection of the epithets: "lo-fi," "psychedelic," "post-punk," "shoegazing," "noise," "experimental," "dirty sound," "intuitive improvisation," "poetry" and "harsh noise."

All three albums are available for free download on the net.

"[On the Fringes of an Industrial Zone](#)" consists of nine tracks featuring the work of four musicians. "[Algebra and Geometry](#)" offers five tracks recorded by the same basic group. Album number three, "[The Greatest Danger](#)," also consists of five tracks.

In all cases, the vocals and lyrics are handled by Klavdiyev, while Lyozin proves himself a versatile one-man band and studio hand, playing guitars, keyboards, noises and sounds, while also handling the recording, mastering and even the creation of the first album's cover.

I am hearing rumors that Valery Fokin recently asked Klavdiyev to create a modern dramatization of an old Nikolai Gogol story for future production at the Alexandrinsky Theater in St. Petersburg. I wonder if it occurred to him to commission the man and his group to write dirty sound musical accompaniment for the piece as well.

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