

# MONA MUR

## IN CONVERSATION

A film by Dietmar Post



Photo courtesy of Ilse Ruppert



## SYNOPSIS

Mona Mur was born in Hamburg and became a leading figure in the German underground scene of the early 1980s.

Her career has traversed many musical territories, from post-punk/industrial to electronica, from piano-based punk ballads to hard, experimental guitar music, all with her own signature style. She has collaborated with En Esch (KMFDM), FM Einheit, Mark Chung and Alexander Hacke (Einstürzende Neubauten), Nikko Weidemann (Moka Efti), Dieter Meier (Yello), J.J. Burnel and Dave Greenfield (Stranglers), music producer Ralf Goldkind, filmmakers Monika Treut, Elfi Mikesch and Fatih Akin, photographer Ilse Ruppert, as well as the Warsaw Philharmonic Orchestra.

Mona Mur is also a composer and sound artist for films and computer games.

The re-release of her early albums provides a good opportunity to revisit her previous oeuvre. Mona Mur answers questions from filmmaker Dietmar Post in a bare studio with a screen showing photos, film and music video excerpts from throughout her career, resulting in a rich portrait of a musician who has followed her own vision and overcome resistance.

## CREDITS AND DATA

Germany, 2024, 87 Min

A play loud! Film

Directed by: Dietmar Post

Produced by: Lucía Palacios & Dietmar Post

Camera & Set Design: Ede Müller (Zabriskey Film)

Editing: Karl-W. Huelsenbeck & Gertrudis Handschk

Sound Mix: Lorenz Fischer

Color Corrections: Franz Thienel

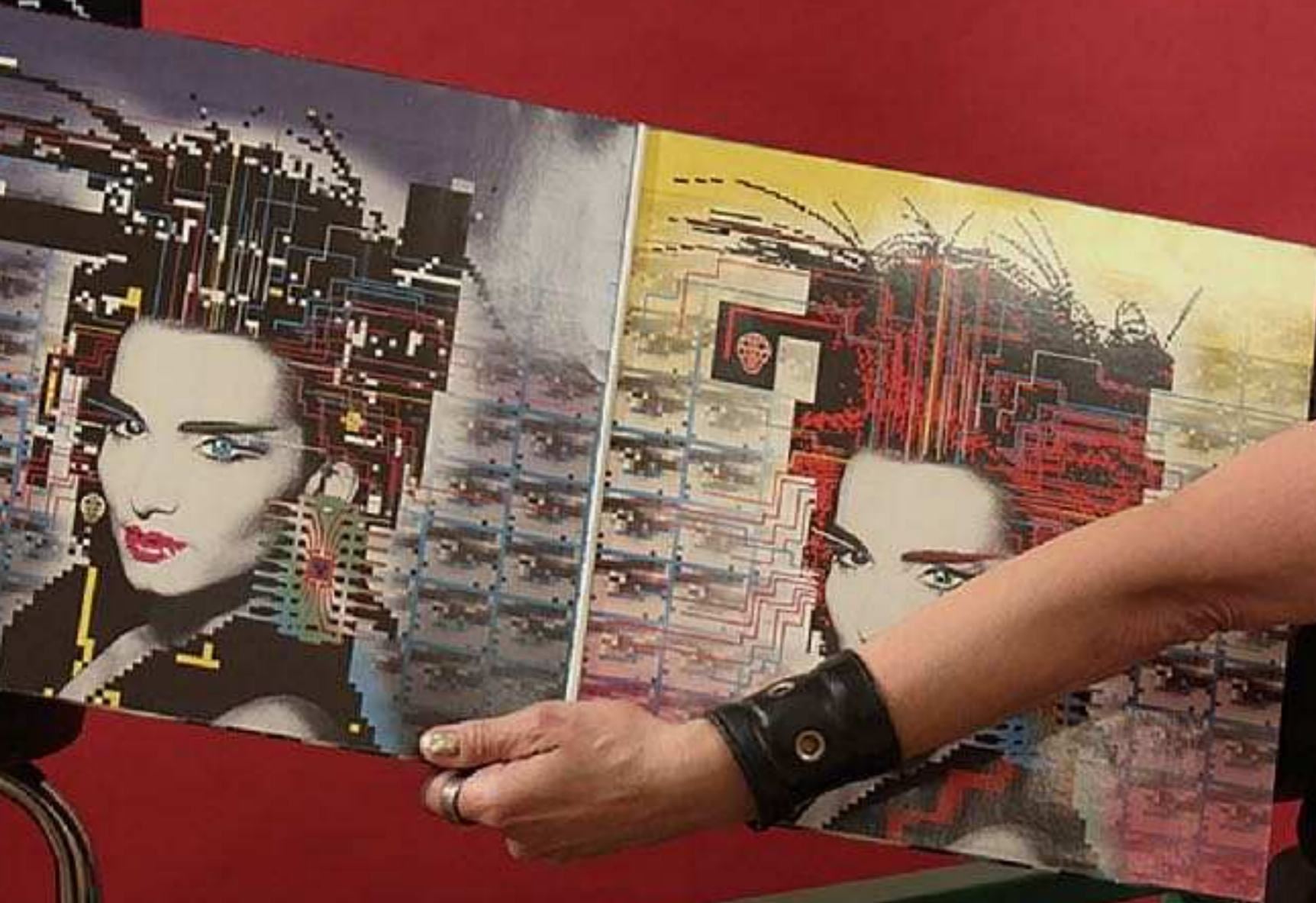
Music Publishing: Freibank, play loud! publishing

Photographs by: Fritz Brinckmann, Petra Gall, Fred George, Lucie Jansch, Biel Moreno, Jan Riephoff, Sebastian Rohde, Ilse Ruppert, Klaus Thumser and Miron Zownir

Musik: Mona Mur, Die Mieter, Mona Mur & En Esch, Flucht nach vorn

*"Mona Mur in Conversation is so fascinating because it is multifaceted: it is about Mona Mur as a fearless woman in the male-dominated music business, but it is also a gallop through recent pop music history. It shows the many faces of Mona Mur, how she adapted and kept evolving her own creative style."*

Filmmaker Monika Treut





*'The Audience Award 2024 goes to the film Mona Mur in Conversation by Dietmar Post. The 87-minute film traces the biography of the Hamburg-born artist's work to date, the stages of self-determined creativity that began in West Germany's early 80s post-punk scene. A cleverly constructed set-up combines speaking in front of the camera, off-camera questions and illustrative visual and audio material to create a captivating narrative of a life lived according to her own ideas without concessions – presented in a dry, straightforward, self-conscious and eloquent manner by a great artist to be (re)discovered. The fact that the film, completed only two days before its screening, received an award from the audience in its protagonist's hometown the day after its world premiere, can only be described as an amazing feat.'*

*Unerhört Music Film Festival*

Mona Mur's artistic career is so interesting, that the Berlin label play loud! wanted not only to re-release her music on vinyl and digital, but also to present her videos, photographs and unreleased recordings as a film. A virtual jukebox was set up in a studio, so that Mona Mur and filmmaker Dietmar Post could watch and discuss stages in her musical journey. During the in-depth conversation, Mona Mur was able to comment on her career from a very personal perspective.

The documentary approach is based on inspiration and situations. It is a type of 'active recollection' led by both Dietmar Post's questions and the prepared jukebox of material. Its subject is the many faces of Mona Mur as a musician, composer and producer.

Dietmar Post and Lucía Palacios have spent years honing their principle of the controlled artistic space, or narrative laboratory.

'We watch the protagonists thinking aloud in front of the camera,' said reviewers of their film *Donna Summer: Hot Stuff*.

That is the process they applied in *Mona Mur in Conversation*. Rather than presenting neat conclusions, the film lays bare the process of narration, showing (like Heinrich von Kleist's *l'idee vient en parlant*) how thinking is refined through speech.

### **The filmmakers**

Post and Palacios began making films in New York's underground scene of the mid 90s with short fiction films that have been shown worldwide, including at Rotterdam Film Festival and many new underground festivals. They also made their first documentaries in the USA, including *Reverend Billy & The Church of Stop Shopping* and *Monks: The Transatlantic Feedback*. Both films were promoted by the Chicago Underground Film Festival. Albert Maysles, the pioneer of Direct Cinema, said of *Reverend Billy*: 'Which TV station would be brave enough to show this film?'

The jury for the Grimme Award, the German TV Oscar, wrote of *Monks: The Transatlantic Feedback*: 'It is not just the small, obscure things that make the film great. Not only the cult capital, the cool details about a footnote in pop history, but instead their talent for taking the story of five G.I.s stranded in Germany and their brief excursion into the bottom of the charts and turning it into a parable about the liberating energy of an era.(...) Post and Palacios have made them resonate again. Unlike the Monks' fabulous utopian noise, the documentary is full of nuances.'

Richard Kostelanetz, an expert on John Cage, compared the film to Eberhard Fechner's film about the Comedian Harmonists, which tells the history of the band from six different perspectives. Fechner himself chose the subtitle 'Six Lives'.

In the above mentioned early films by Palacios and Post they combined the idea of 'active recollection' with a multi-perspective narrative form. Two other films demonstrate their interesting way of encouraging subjects to engage with archive material and statements by others. The 'virtual jukebox' was used as a stylistic device in their music documentary *German Pop & Circumstance*, which was nominated for a Grimme Award in 2016.

Christian Bartels wrote in EPD Medien:

'It not only tells the story of recent German history through pop, but develops current lines of discourse.

Its discursive openness and clear line of argument is remarkable on television, where programmes like to answer questions and avoid those they can't answer. It is a very layered film, created from broad research, which presents clear arguments, shows developments and asks intelligent questions. It gives few answers, which increases its effect. Anyone who's watched it, will be talking about it for a long time.'

In the historical film *Franco on Trial: The Spanish Nuremberg?*, which took eight years to make and was released in 2018, the filmmakers again used inserts to discuss files, documents and archives directly with individuals. This generated discussion and contradictions, as well as a kaleidoscope of different perspectives on history. The literary scholar Manuel P. Muñoz compares their work with those of the Spanish writer Rafael Chirbes, whose novels often depict history from several perspectives.

With *Mona Mur in Conversation*, Post and Palacios return to their underground roots by making the film entirely alone, without film funding or a TV channel. The film has been supported by Unerhört Music Documentary Film Festival (Hamburg), Soundwatch Music Documentary Film Festival (Berlin) and Schwules Museum (Berlin) and the various artists who made it possible to use photos, videos and archive material.









## Mona Mur on play loud!

play loud! has released and reissued several Mona Mur records in recent years. [Click here for more info](#)

The 'play loud! (live) music & word series' focuses on archival and documentary projects. [Click here for more info](#)



(LP)



(CD)

*Includes Jeszcze Polska EP (1982)*



(CD)



(LP, CD)



(LP)



(LP)



(DL)



(DL)



(DL)



---

## Links

---



[Film Site](#)

The IMDb logo, consisting of the letters 'IMDb' in a white, bold, sans-serif font inside a black circle.

**IMDb**

[IMDb Film Page](#)

A white letter 'M' icon inside a black circle.

**M**

[Mona Mur Site](#)

A white lowercase letter 'f' icon inside a black circle.

**f**

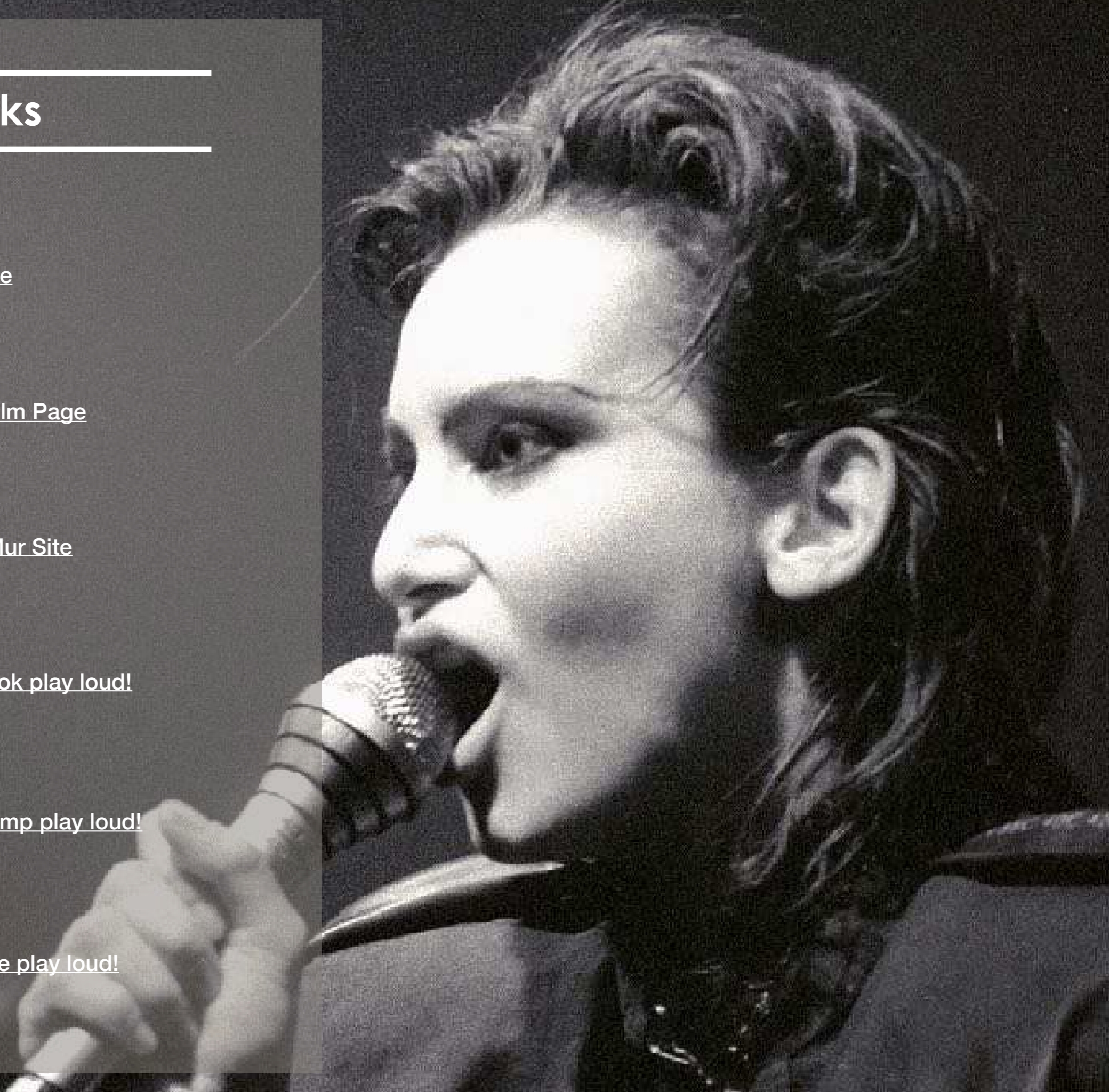
[Facebook play loud!](#)



[Bandcamp play loud!](#)



[YouTube play loud!](#)







play loud! productions  
Niemannstr. 6, 10245 Berlin  
Telefon 030 297 793 15  
[info@playloud.org](mailto:info@playloud.org)  
[www.playloud.org](http://www.playloud.org)

Supported by



For more press material visit  
<https://playloud.org/monamur/mona-mur-in-conversation>