

# News

## 'MAdM' Puts the 'OOOM' in Experience

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Moore College of Art & Design in Philadelphia, the nation's one and only women's fine art college. The institution's atmosphere makes her miss her time spent studying photography at Concordia University in Montreal. While at Concordia, Auf der Maur was asked to join the internationally popular band Hole. It was an opportunity that she had turned down at first.

"It was a one in a million situation. I thought about how many people get to make it as a musician," recalls Auf der Maur, 38, adding, "I never thought I'd have a career in music."

She calls her first bass guitar her magic carpet ride into the world of music. After five years with Hole plus a world tour playing bass with Smashing Pumpkins, Auf der Maur went solo. Her multimedia project is all her.

"OOOM," like all of Auf der Maur's art, has been tied to a recurring concept: masculinity and femininity.

"Duality, or the 'other' side, has been a recurring theme in my thoughts and work for as long as I can remember," she recounts, "as a twelve year old contemplating infinity on the other side of the night sky, or in art school contemplating the female perspective and the 'other.'"

Duality is an ever-evolving inspiration for Auf der Maur, and the use of multimedia has expanded it. "OOOM" began with the songwriting, which she describes as a hunt for the inner theme of the project. She then incorporated her experience with

visual art. There is a graphic novel, illustrated by Jack Forbes, as well as the film directed by Tony Stone.

Auf der Maur has an interest in Vikings that stems from their sophisticated societies, worship of an Earth goddess, and ability to navigate the sea by charting the stars. She recruited director Stone after seeing his Viking film "Severed Ways: The Norse Discovery of America."

"I was invited to watch a rough cut," she says. "My friend knew that all he had to say was, 'Vikings and heavy metal' to get me anywhere."

The solar-powered production of "OOOM" was filmed on Stone's 25-acre childhood stomping grounds in southern Vermont. The land his father bought in anticipation of the Apocalypse four decades ago became the setting for the epic short film. The off-the-grid territory provided Auf der Maur and Stone the freedom to crash cars and bring to life the films bleeding trees, which are symbolic of nature's beating heart.

At first, Auf der Maur's didn't realize that her early studies in visual art would impact the film. When the curator of the Montreal Museum of Fine Art called the film a contemporary response to the Victorian painting movement, the pieces fell into place. The film was chosen to be included in an exhibition of J.W. Waterhouse paintings. Auf der Maur's graduate project in color photography was a translation of the artist's work. The Viking sequence and the witch in "OOOM" were both inspired by Waterhouse.

Aside from Waterhouse, Auf der Maur is a longtime fan of Danzig, whose frontman appears on the album.

"He [Glenn Danzig] became my inner warrior totem, offering the shy redhead girl some strength...for years and years I wished to meet him. But he is a man of mystery, and untouchable in many ways," says Auf der Maur.

She wrote the song "Father's Grave," a duet, with him in mind. Writing and recording the song became an "exorcise" of her own experience. Auf der Maur lost her father over a decade ago. Her warrior totem, Danzig, became her healing gravedigger.

"The duality of the duet represents the duality within most of my work - there's a healing

gravedigger, and a girl in mourning in us all. The fair maiden and [the] mystical warrior live in each and every one of us."

When asked if she spends more time in her heart or her mind, Auf der Maur says things have changed. She'd spent most of her life in a full-time daydream before becoming an independent artist a few years ago. Now, she is her own manager, travel agent, budget reviewer and secretary. She credits "OOOM" for her transformation into a well-rounded grown up.

Auf der Maur says her heart was always pounding front and center, like her beloved Fender basses and eight-stringed Greco bass. Now, it is in a safe place, making room to balance with her mind.

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