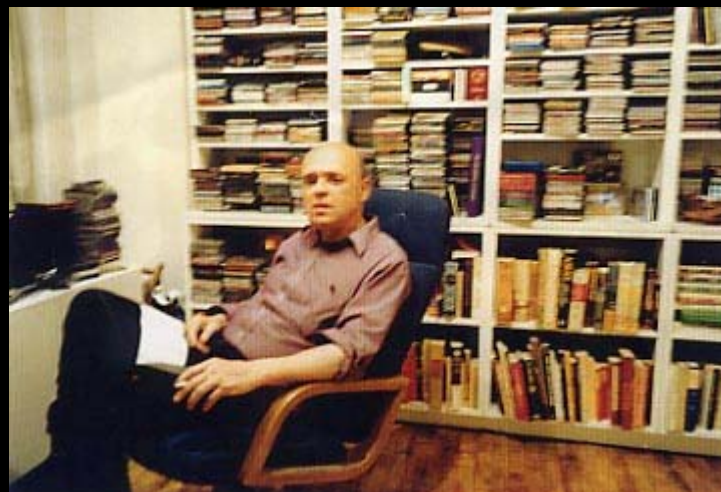


Perfect Sound Forever

online music magazine presents...

Robert Quine



Quine relaxing in his New York loft

by Brian Eno

Robert Quine was one of my first friends in New York. We met in about 1979, not long after he'd left the Voidoids and not long after I'd had one of my regular losses of faith in much of the work I'd been doing until that point.

Our friendship clicked and resolved itself around the following: a love of wandering round New York and eating in obscure oriental restaurants; a feeling for music that was 'at the edge of music'; a conviction that Nabokov was the greatest writer of the twentieth century, and a shared sense of humour. For, despite Robert's daunting appearance, he was actually very funny and as sweet and good-hearted a person as you could imagine. And paranoid too, I should mention: he lived in a flat on St Mark's Place which had more defences on the door than The Bank of England. But then he did have a huge collection of beautiful electric guitars - a collection which, along with his records and books, left an increasingly narrow path between the Fort Knox door and what he laughingly described as 'the kitchen' - an unused single-plate electric cooker sitting on a table.

I don't think I ever visited Quine without him digging out some obscure doo-wop song or old jazz record and getting me to listen to a genius piece of guitar playing by some long-forgotten craftsman. He was a sort of archaeologist of popular music, deeply knowledgeable and with a phenomenal memory for detail.

In the Daily Telegraph obituary about Robert, the writer stated that Robert's experience working on my 'Nerve Net' album had stimulated his interest in Ambient Music. In fact, Quine was instrumental in the development of Ambient Music - during my stay in New York it was he who encouraged me in the unfamiliar new music I was doing there - which became 'On Land'. Without his interest, I'm not sure I would have ever finished and released that record.

July 2004

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