

## Shantel // SHANTOLOGY – 30 years of club guerilla

### LIVE

Shantel & Bucovina Club Orkestar  
**SHANTOLOGY 30 years of club guerilla TOUR 2017**  
[www.bucovina.de](http://www.bucovina.de) – [www.facebook.com/ShantelBucovinaClub](http://www.facebook.com/ShantelBucovinaClub)

### DJ SESSION

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### short version

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Now, on the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Club Guerilla, Shantel is opening a new chapter on his never-ending tour under the heading: „Shantology // 30 Years of Club Guerilla”. For that fest (on 6.10.2017) an elaborate 4-LP, 2-CD box plus opulent booklet with texts and images outlining Shantel’s career will be launched. The albums will be full of unpublished newly recorded and ‘well hung’ material that will impressively highlight the timeless hit quality of his music. A review? No, more a retrospective look forward. This disco partisan likes things exciting, and is always good for surprises.

### long version

Shantel’s unique career began in the 1980s. Wasn’t there something back then? That music people liked to hear at themed parties ...? No, something totally different! Here, the 1980s are a cipher for all that was possible at that point in time. Punk had swept away the fug of glam rock – which had become increasingly meaningless – along with its stereotypes, and in doing so it freed people’s minds. That breath of fresh air continued to prevail in the early 1980s, before the commercial sell-out of the DIY ideals stopped it, pop became synthetic and the MTV culture took over. Shantel was one of those who didn’t want to play along in that game. Active in the underground of Frankfurt am Main, Germany’s omphalos, he ran an illegal underground club in what is today the

ultra-hip railway station district. Everything was possible musically in that club and a lot of experimenting was done. The scene who met there was international and colourful: art students, bohemians, long-term academics, young musicians, immigrants, gays and lesbians and stranded freaks from all over the world. Located on the third floor of a late 19<sup>th</sup> century building, the club, with its eclectic approach, attracted masses of adventurous night-owls and club-goers, like light attract moths. The rush to get in was so great that the queue often stretched along to the next block of buildings, despite the fact that the district in question is at the top of Germany's crime statistics. Shantel's motto was: "Forwards, in all directions. Let's experiment and demonstrate." There was a demo in Germany's demo-capital every Saturday. Sounds of resistance and diversity resounded from the loudspeaker van: roots, dub-reggae and Arab pop. Dub reggae was a musical style Shantel was to influence greatly, as he did Brazilian music, oriental and Arab pop. But we are not in the business of counting styles here. The important thing is what the reception of the most varied musical genres meant for Shantel. He realised that whenever a new style appeared, sooner or later it became static and boring. Let's take techno as an example - scarcely anyone today knows that Frankfurt am Main was the birthplace of its German variant. But techno was also only Shantel's thing to a certain extent. So, why not do it yourself, start something new, again and again and again. As of 1986, Shantel was to be seen on stage with a Greek-Turkish underground project who played the Greek outlaw blues Rembetiko, which was mega-in at the time, for the Greek-Turkish communities throughout Germany, and Shantel provided the necessary beats. In his railway-station district club, Lissania Essay, he worked the turntables, mixing rhythms and sound fragments from the sampler. A mix of North Africa, Brazil, Jamaica, electro beats, trip hop and jazz. A song, a structure, a rhythm would grab the dancers so effectively that they would raise their arms and let out screams of delight. Which provided the incentive to prolong that moment and really make the Lissania Spaceship take off. And it has not landed yet! For to this very day, there is not a concert nor a DJ session that is not inspired by the feeling of giving everything, of blending in with the audience and evoking bliss on their faces. Scarcely anyone understands the dance floor as well as Shantel, and finds just the right response, intuitively, be it with his Bucovina Club Orkestar or on his own as a DJ.

The Lissania and later the Bucovina Club provided some of those very rare occasions when different scenes and age groups met. What linked them was curiosity and a willingness to abandon themselves to unheard-of sounds. And for Shantel it was important to bring new ideas, something crazy and unknown to this fossilized city through music – ideas, visions, from Paris, Thessaloniki, Tel Aviv, Istanbul. In brief, Shantel and the scene that formed around him, was cosmopolitan and keen on exchange. He was soon in demand worldwide as one of the German pioneers of so-called freestyle clubbing. He has played beside MC Solaar, Kruder & Dorfmeister, Gilles Pevertson, Massive Attack, Björk and Howie B. But was that enough for him? At some point he realised that that scene was about to become fossilized or run dry. At a K7 Label Night in the New York Limelight Club he rattled the loudspeakers with the frenetic brass band music played at south-eastern European weddings. This confused the people on the dancefloor. But Shantel wouldn't be Shantel if he didn't try to rescue the situation. So he played the record again from the beginning and gradually the party-goers accepted that this was what was being served, so they went along with it. The final result was a stampede onto the dancefloor.

Shantel decided go on a long journey into his own family history, which took him to Bucovina, the border territory between Ukraine and Romania. There he found the music

that was slumbering deep in his DNA and began experimenting with it. He went into a studio with the big names in that genre with whom he wished to realise his vision of a contemporary pan-European sound. The municipal theatre in Frankfurt, the Schauspielhaus, provided a stage for this new sound, which spread around the world like wildfire. That Frankfurt of all places turned out to be the perfect playground for his Bucovina Club is really no wonder, for that hotspot on the Main was, and has been for many decades, the Republic's multinational metropolis. Intercultural living and working, with all the breaches, faults and difficulties that involves, has long since been the defining feature of everyday life here. But Shantel did not settle for that either, and wanted to clear up the great misunderstanding that he was the "King of Balkan Pop". As he explained in an interview with the BBC on the occasion of the presentation of the BBC World Music Awards, that is not what he wanted: "I don't care too much about this Balkan music and all the hype. I'm mainly interested in realizing my potential as a musician, an artist. Which is why I'm keen on many sounds, not just that of the Balkans."

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