ly settled here, she balanced her overground work with an underground show at Radio 100, called *Meeting Point*, where she could play lesser-known, more adventurous recordings. It was a busy time, and musicians from the orchestra—and from all around the world, too—were regulars in her studios.

Two years ago, it all came to a crashing halt. Financial pressures and a lack of leadership at Radio Netherlands led to the wholesale cutting of the institution's core musical offerings, and Dreier was let go. Also, in the same season, the Dutch National Radio Frequency Policy came into effect, and Radio 100 was forced off the air. (It's now back as a web broadcaster, under the new name of dfm radio.)

Fast forward to last summer; as the rain poured down outside, I visited the old Radio 100 studios to find out what Dreier's been up to lately. On the thick, concrete door leading inside rests a heavy, steel beam, a remnant of resistance against police raids. You have to climb a flimsy-looking ladder to get to the recording booth, and the equipment there is old. Some of the recording heads are filthy, and the studio's in bad need of more microphones.

When Ruth walks in, she notices the bin full of beer cans, 'Someone had fun last night,' she quips. She curses a few pieces of rusty equipment, 'Goddamn it, these pots are filthy.' Then, she pulls out her music for the day. And nothing else matters.

You might imagine that losing the Concertgebouw broadcasts—which she started and developed over 10 years until there were eight million listeners—and then having the government steal the radio waves from all underground stations would put a crack in the strongest of backbones, but Ruth still stands tall. She continues to do her show on dfm, keeping her ears open for any new sounds that must be heard. If you walk around town with her, you'll find local musicians, orchestral or other, calling out her name, with a smile and a wave. She may not have the big jobs anymore, but it's clear that the people who know what they're doing still have great respect for her.

Every week on *Meeting Point* Ruth creates a completely different sound space, playing tracks that equip even the most experienced listener with virgin ears. The day I was there, she found the strange mix of warm weather and sticky rain a bit uncomfortable, and countered it with a show full of calming, ambient music. In the beginning, there was a recording from the '70s by Brian Eno and guitarist Robert Fripp that breathes and swells over 18 minutes, and takes great comfort in going nowhere. Later, a piece by composer Robert Ashley, which includes a walking bass line that's almost inaudible, but in time creeps forward into the mix and into your mind. And every week is different, but always just as entrancing.

Her radio show has been described as 'interstitial,' that is, existing in the space between known genres, and crossing borders with ease. But I would take that further and say that she herself is interstitial. She has handled top managerial positions at big radio stations, and at the same time maintained friendships with the cutting edge underground musicians who share her roots in new music.

'I spend the week [leading up to each show] just listening, not necessarily to music, but to everything around me,' she explains. 'I'm always trying to gather the right combination of material to make a map, with music that makes that map come to life. Then, [I] take your ears out for a walk.'

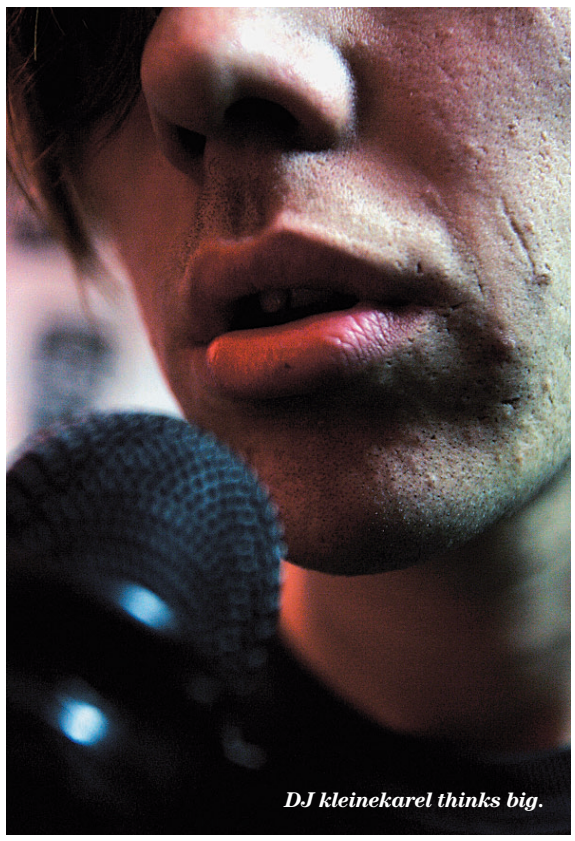
However, as good as her show is, it just doesn't have the audience it deserves. Most web radio does not yet draw the same support as its airwave-based forefather. But that, coupled with the lack of a real position, doesn't seem to stop Ruth from growing and expanding.

'It wasn't until Radio 100 that I really learned to be more intimate on air, as if I have a close friend, a good listener, right in front of me. I think of a radio show as a physical space, and so I'm always trying to invite the audience into that space. I just like to open the door and let the listeners walk in.' And that door is open every Sunday afternoon, so those of you with working ears should walk on over.

Currently, Ruth has been stretching her ears beyond music, and is building an interest in the people whom she considers great listeners, and thus, great speakers. She recently hosted writer David Sedaris for a live event sponsored by American Book Center, and former US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright for a Democrats Abroad public seminar. Last month, she hosted a whole gang of eastern European musicians in Felix Meritis to help promote understanding between different regions.

But meanwhile, her roots stay firmly in new music, and her passion lies clearly in radio. Any ideas for the future? 'Right now,' she says, 'I'm busy with re-mapping the creative landscape that lured me here in the first place. As for the future, whatever it holds, I'm sure that I'm in the right place to meet it.'

Listen to Ruth Dreier's show Meeting Point *Sundays from 14.30 to 16.00 at www.dfm.nu.*



DJ kleinekarel thinks big.

William Levy, the Doctor of Doo-wop

William Levy has been involved in radio for over 40 years, and he takes it very seriously as an art form. He's written extensively on the subject, and it has remained one of the major passions of his long life.

'I'm a radio artist,' says Levy, 'and radio is, by definition, "on the air." To require a licence for me to be on the air is like requiring that a painter have a licence to use his paints.'

Levy goes on to talk about the overbearing communist era in Romania. 'You know, for a time, they actually required that all writers have a licence to own a typewriter.'

According to Levy, free radio here was one of those fuzzy, non-legal items, like soft drugs and prostitution. '[This government] has always preferred to find a place for the things they don't like. They want to avoid social unrest because that's bad for business.'

So, when the government changed its mind, and started to enforce the legality of free radio, Levy was as shocked as everyone else.

'Back then, Radio 100 had really developed into a university,' he explains. 'Each one of those DJs became a professor for the kind of programming they were doing, not only because they were so well-versed in it, but also because they had developed an international network. When the government destroyed Radio 100, it was like destroying a university.'

He doesn't expect Radio 100 to return, but he hopes that Patapoe will continue. 'It's a station where the listener knows he can hear a great industrial programme one hour, African music the next and then a good news show.'

Not to mention, some super doo-wop.

Listen to Levy's Dr Doo-Wop: Bawds of Euphony *Sundays at 17.00 on Radio Patapoe, 88.3FM.*

Bart of 'Wreck this Mess', the sonic quirk master

'Years ago, when Patapoe was at the Silo, sometimes the door would be locked and you'd have to go find some grumpy squatter to help get you in. Then your show started late, and there was no turntable 'cause one of the DJs decided to take it to a gig, but you worked around it. You put up with a lot [as a pirate radio DJ], but it's worth it.'

For the past 20 years, Bart (who prefers not to use his last name) has been putting up with plenty in non-commercial radio, and there's no stopping him now. He got his start in 1986 at listener-supported WFMU in New York, and then had a show for a few years in Paris at the anarchist station Radio Libertaire. In 1996, he returned to his native Amsterdam to broadcast on both Patapoe and Radio 100.

'The great thing about those two stations,' Bart explains, 'is that they really help define what Amsterdam is all about. Patapoe is a really loose, punk station, with no control, and Radio 100 was a bit more structured. Listeners could rely on certain shows being on at certain times. But both [stations] pretty much let the DJs do whatever they wanted.'

Once Bart, like so many others, felt that freedom, no pay cheque from a corporate-owned station could replace it.

'I remember one day, sitting on a train back in Jersey,' begins one of the many stories he'll share over fresh coffee and soya milk. 'I met this DJ from a big commercial station. After a while, I suddenly realised, all this guy does on his show is talk. The music was pre-selected, one guy was cueing it up, and another was mixing. He didn't even write his own scripts. He was just a voice.'

Typically, free radio DJs do everything. Aside from their voices, they also use their minds—and, sometimes, all of their appendages—to control the equipment. Most importantly, they have full say over the show's content. In fact, if you define a voice as someone's unique, personal expression of their own feelings, thoughts and sentiments, then perhaps the free radio DJs are the only ones using their voices properly. (Although, many of them don't like to talk much on their shows.)

'I think doing that show in Paris [in 1991] was when I got really comfortable with the idea of not talking much on the air,' laughs Bart, whose French is good enough to get by but, apparently, far from fluent.

A typical show for Bart could involve an hour of sounds (or in one case, silence), then maybe a few words from him about it, followed by another long stretch of sound. A soft saxophone will float by, some contemporary yodelling will fade in, and then the innocent giggling of his five-year-old daughter appears, washed in reverb, over a recording of old propaganda about the 'horrors of marijuana.'

Listen to Bart's Wreck this Mess *Mondays at 17.00 on Radio Patapoe, 88.3FM.*

DJ kleinekarel, the young hunter

At 17, the young man now known as DJ kleinekarel ran away from his Belgian home, for his own reasons, and he's been living in and out of A'dam's squat scene ever since. Now 25, he's been doing a mostly indie rock show at Patapoe for the past two years, and is one of the station's younger, budding DJs. He's very active there, puts in a lot of time on equipment maintenance, and is one of the few who helps keep the place clean. When he talks about Patapoe, his eyes light up with enthusiasm and his voice is focused.

'We could make Patapoe really something. Just a couple weeks ago, some guy called, really friendly, excited, asking, "What is this?" So, there are people listening. You just never know who's out there.'

kleinekarel's show is called *De Eeuwige Jachtvelden*; he got the name from American Indian folklore, which says, when they die, they go to the eternal hunting grounds. 'I guess, for me, that would be in the record shops. You're always hunting for new stuff.'

He plays mostly bands from the '80s, occasionally mixes in some free jazz, and is very happy that Patapoe lets him spin whatever he wants. 'With commercial radio,' says kleinekarel, 'you have to make two million people happy in the morning. That's something different, and it's not what we do.'

It's clear that Patapoe's pride is increasing and more plans are underway. A lot of the guys there, including kleinekarel are excited about the new idea of throwing regular parties every two months or so, to present radio art and forums, drink lots of beer and establish a stronger presence for the station. Keep your eyes on *Amsterdam Weekly's* Shortlist—as soon as the first Patapoe party gets announced, we'll tell you.

Listen to De Eeuwige Jachtvelden *Sundays at 18.00 on 88.3FM and see http://freeteam.nl/patapoe.*