

Comps: Final Documentation

Free the Robots Website

April 1st, 2009

Aoi Yamaguchi

DAI 527: Digital Media 3

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website project proposal

theme

music
_client: "free the robots"

intent

I aim to create a website for a music band called "Free the Robots" with HTML & CSS coding, introducing this talented local music group that is yet unknown in the popular music scene. This band still does not own its official website, so I will gather information from among the limited online sources and materials.

audience

This site's audience will be music listeners, especially those who are dedicated to underground hip hop music, jazz, electronica, instrumental, psychedelic music, and brokenbeats. Younger people who love pop culture, fashion, graffiti, subculture magazine, and artists would be the target as well because this band has a lot of connections to the pop culture scene. Target demographic will be 18 - 35, both men and women.

contents

1. home
 2. gig dates
 3. discography
 4. blog
 5. gallery
 6. shop
 7. links
 8. contact
-
-

Communication Brief

February 11th, 2009

Project Summary:

I am going to create a website for a music group called "Free the Robots" in order to introduce the band's background and activities. Free the Robots is a group of music producers based in Santa Ana. They produce original music tracks that combines the samples from various records, recorded instrumental sounds and beat machines, which will appeal to the music listeners who are dedicated to Jazz, underground Hip Hop, House, Electronica and instrumental music. According to my research, although they have been touring many places for the live concerts and have worked with popular musicians, they do not own their official website and their name is not known yet in the popular music scene. I have limited resources about the band: they have a blog site, myspace, and their EP can be downloaded from iTunes. The primary goal of my project is to gather all the links and information about this band and put them on a single website, so that audiences can have easy access for these scattered sites. The secondary goal is to enhance the image of this band by re-designing graphics including their logos, T-shirts, and the site itself. The long-term goal would be to spread the word about this group and increase their popularity.

Audience Profile:

The target audience is the music listeners or producers who love Jazz, underground Hip Hop, House, Electronica, brokenbeats, and psychedelic music. The target demographics is 18-35, both men and women, especially younger people who like pop culture, graffiti, music events, fashion, artists, and anyone who are craving for the new sounds to get inspirations from. Also, people who are into social internet community such as myspace, facebook, flickr, or blogs might be good target as well because this band often updates new information primarily on myspace and their blog.

On the new site, users will be able to send the band e-mails via the contact section, to buy t-shirts on the shop section, and download their music from the direct link to iTunes. The ideal persona of the audience will be, for example, Kevin, 24 years old: he works at the clothing store down at Lower Haight in San Francisco. He has been listened to old Jazz, Blues and brokenbeats. He used to be a big fan of Pink Floyd, Beastie Boys, Run DMC, and John Coltrane. He often hangs out at the clubs on weekends where a lot of DJs spin the mixture of classic Jazz and house, neo-soul, and contemporary Jazzy Hip Hop. He prefer to buy records rather than downloading mp3 tracks from iTunes and limewire. He loves to read books as well: one of his favorite book is "1984", written by George Orwell. He believes that our future will be controlled by an intelligence that the government owns and human's life is under the threat.

DAI527 Content Scope Outline

[Free the Robots] Website Content

1. Gig Dates
2. Biography
3. Discography
4. Blog
5. Gallery
6. Shop
7. Links
- 8 Contact

Biography:

Chris Alfaro is Free the Robots. The genre-defying artist pulls together heavy doses of traditional jazz, Hip-Hop, psychedelic sounds, Indian spice, progressive melodies, obscure samples and devastating drums into a rich pot of sound. His techniques create harmony between genres with the blending obscure samples with analog and digital compositions. Based out of Santa Ana, CA, Free The Robots started as a side project by Alfaro in 2003 while also playing with different bands, producing MC's, and DJing full time. Having worked with so many different styles of music, Free the Robots brought everything together under one roof, allowing further exploration through sampling. To go along with the samples, Alfaro adds other sounds with controllers, and live instruments (keys, guitar, turntables) to keep the blend of sampling and original composition balanced. Free the Robots has reached a worldwide audience since its humble beginnings and found its place among the top artists in this genre. Since the development of Alfaro's live show, Free the Robots has shared the stage with the likes of Prefuse 73, Afrika Bambaataa, Flying Lotus, and Devotchka. (cited from *M-Audio* http://www.m-audio.com/artists/en_us/FreetheRobots.html)

豊かな想像力と意外性と驚きに満ちたトリック、そしてセンス溢れるネタ使い。
アナログ専門店では話題沸騰、ジャジー・ブレイク界期待の新星、日本デビュー。

カリフォルニア州サンタ・アナで活動するFree The Robotsことクリス・アルファロ。ディプロやプレフューズ73らと共演、フライング・ロータス、デイデラス、ノーバディらを擁するLAの人気パーティ、ロウ・エンド・セオリーでもフィーチャーされる注目のビートメーカーだ。本作は、彼がこれまでアナログでリリースしたシングルやEPから選りすぐった楽曲をコンパイルしたもの。Free The Robotsを一躍有名にした必殺ピアノ・ジャズ・ブレイク・チューン「Jazzhole」や、フリー・ソウル〜アプレミディ・シリーズで知られる音楽プロデューサー、橋本徹氏監修選曲コンピ『メロウ・ビーツ』第3弾にも収録された「Session 2」を含め、木琴やマリンバをフィーチャーしたラウンジ・トラ

Perception/ Tone/ Guidelines:

I want the target audiences to be able to get to know with the band, and recognize their quality of music. It will be achieved simply by having contents on the website such as music downloading, sample streaming, discography, biography, tour dates etc.

The website and company should be perceived as the representation of the future music: fusional, intergalactic, stylish, fresh, jazzy, slick, groovy would be the adjective to describe the image of the band and the website. In order to achieve that, the visual design should have elements that represent the popular culture, and vivid and bright color scheme.

Communication Strategy:

The measurement will be based on its accessibility, usability, enough coverage of information, and the level of entertainment. I will try to do my best to achieve these elements. I will show the completed site to people who work in the music field and ask them if they become interested in Free the Robots.

Competitive Positioning:

Mixed-genre music is popular now; there are a lot of bands, group of beat producers and DJs such as Stones Throw Records, Giles Peterson, Jazzanova, Sound Providers, Strange Fruit Projects etc - so I should be careful not to resemble the design of the site with those popular groups. What differentiate my site from the others would be the way to represent how their sound is blending elements of multi-genre music and culture.

Their sound is really relaxing, atmospheric, and groovy and at the same time catchy, so once you'll listen to their music, you'll remember at least one of them if you are fond of this type of music. Because they do not own their official website, it is hard to have a firm grasp of them and keep track of them; I will challenge to change that.

Targeted Message:

Nostalgic, but futuristic.

ック、エレピ・ループを使用したスペーシー・トラック、DJシャドウを彷彿とさせるドラム・ブレイクスなど、ジャジー・ブレイクに留まらない様々なカラーの楽曲を収録。初CD化音源を多数含む、最高の日本デビュー作に仕上がった。FREE THE ROBOTS Free the Robotsのプレイは、まるで綱渡り芸のようだ。あらゆるトラックにおいて、ブレイクビーツ、サイケデリア、ヒップ・ホップ、エレクトロニックを調和させ、素晴らしい芸当を見せてくれる。それが、まるで何でもないことのように。

Turntable Lab

スウィングでありファンクであり恍惚的。プログレやボリウッド、プレ・バップ・ジャズ・フリークの旗を振ることも恐れていない。

OC Weekly

「Free The Robotsのプレイは、まるで綱渡り芸のようだ。あらゆるトラックにおいて、ブレイクビーツ、サイケデリア、ヒップホップ、エレクトロニックを調和させ、素晴らしい芸当を見せてくれる。それがまるで何でもないことのように」 ~ Turntable Lab

「スウィングでありファンクであり恍惚的。プログレやボリウッド、プレ・バップ・ジャズ・フリークの旗を振ることも恐れていない」 ~ OC Weekly

このように各方面から大絶賛されているFree The RobotsことChris Alfaro。彼はDiploやPrefuse 73、Flying Lotus、Afrika Bambaataa、Daedelus、Nobody、Boom Bip、Gaslamp Killer、Nosaj Thingらと共演したこともある注目のプロデューサー。

ミュンヘンのレーベル、Jazzy & Milkのコンピレーションに収録されたピアノ・ジャズ・ブレイク「Jazz Hole」で注目を集め、07年には『Free The Robots EP』を自主リリース。ジャズ・ブレイクだけに留まらない幅広い想像力とネタ使いを披露し異例のヒットを記録。

一部のマニアの間だけで知られていた彼ですが、ようやく広く知られる絶好のチャンスとなるCDがようやくリリースされます。『Free The Robots』にはEPや7インチでリリースしてきたトラックを独自にコンパイル。

サイケデリアを表現したプログレ・トラック「Diary」、インド音楽をサンプリングしたオリエンタルな「Yoga Fire」、マイルスばりの黒いジャズ・セッション・ナンバー「Session 2」など、およそ想像できぬ自由度の高い世界観を持った天才！日本独占リリースです！！

Discography:

1. Free the Robots EP

FREE THE ROBOTS Track List

- 01 Listen to the Future
- 02 Diary
- 03 Jazzhole
- 04 Yoga Fire
- 05 Lonely Traveler
- 06 Session 2
- 07 Wake up or Die (feat. the Gaslamp Killer)
- 08 War Games
- 09 Unknown
- 10 Ghana
- 11 Times Like This (feat. Phil Nisco)

(available on iTunes)

Gig Dates:

Feb 21 2009	9:00P	FMLY Presents: Intricate Machines, [Post-foetus], Free the Robots, Daedelus! (all ages)	Los Angeles, California
Feb 27 2009	10:00P	Sound tribe Sector 9 After party w/ FTR, the Gaslamp Killer & Nosaj Thing	San Francisco, California
Mar 5 2009	9:00P	Dakota Lounge w/ Elliot Lipp, Free the Robots, Lazy Brow & Paperplate	Santa Monica, California
Mar 6 2009	9:00P	DJ Set @ Limelight (GET BUSY w/ Ernest Gonzales & Jester)	San Antonio, Texas
Mar 9 2009	9:00P	Elliot Lipp & Michna (feat. Raw Paw) @ The Crosby	Santa Ana, California
Apr 11 2009	9:00P	Live @ The Logan Square Auditorium	Chicago, Illinois
May 1 2009	9:00P	The Crown Room (FRESH)	Portland, Oregon
May 9 2009	9:30P	Cervantes Masterpiece Ballroom w/ Random Rab & Free the Robots	Denver, Colorado

Links:

YouTube "Jazzhole"

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4T9r9_8Pd2s

Blog:

<http://robotfreedom.blogspot.com/>

M-Audio

http://www.m-audio.com/artists/en_us/FreetheRobots.html

Myspace

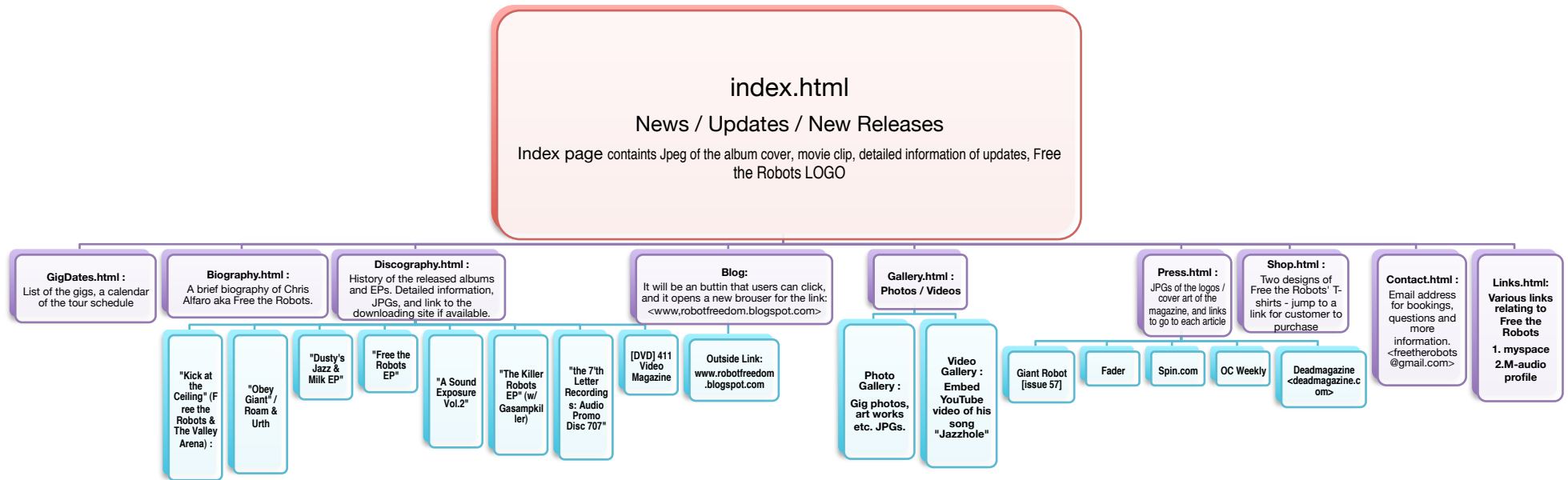
www.myspace.com/freetherobots

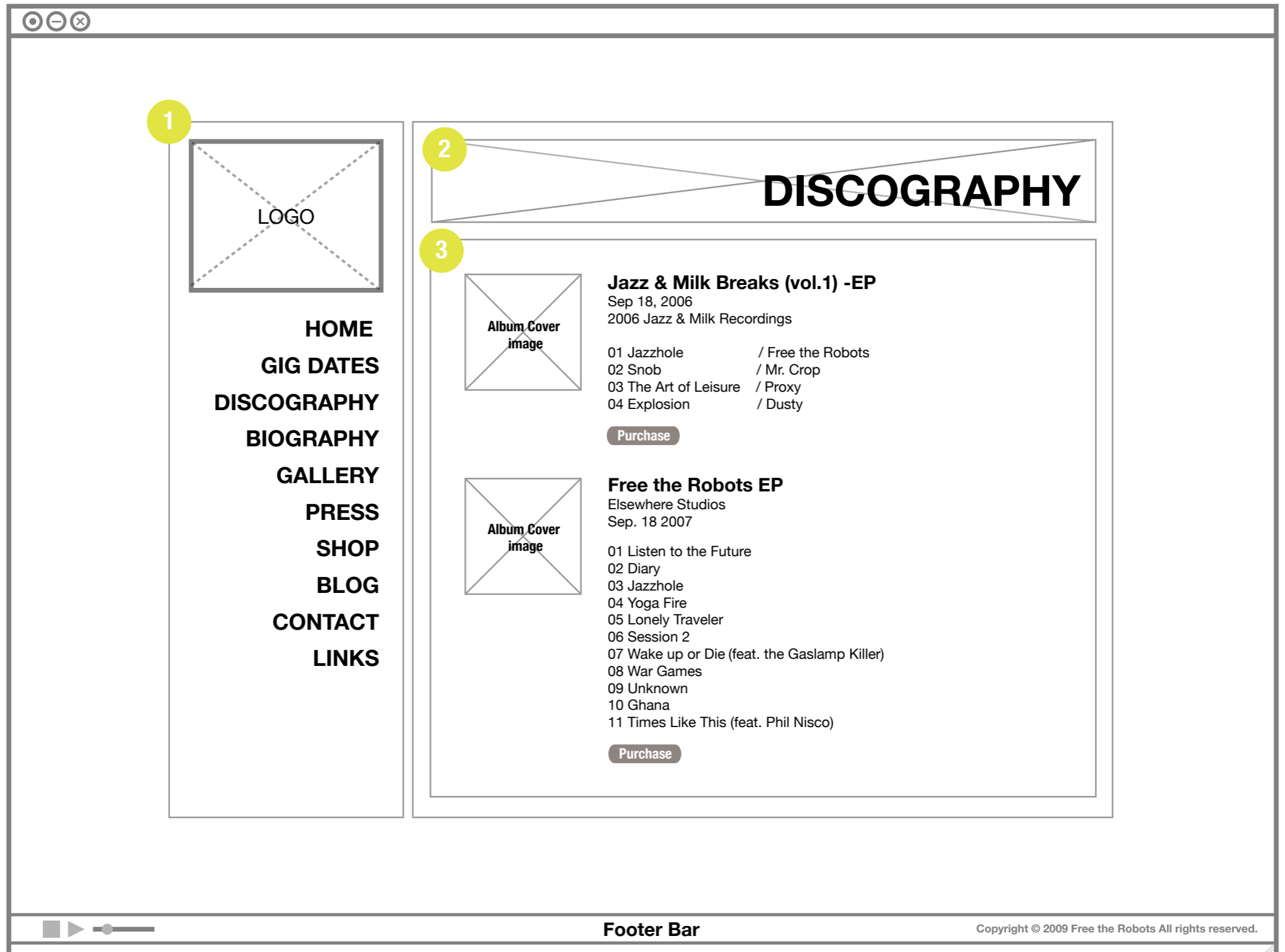
Contact:

For booking contact

freetherobots@gmail.com

Aoi Yamaguchi
 DAI 527 Digital Media 3
Structure Diagram
 Client: **Free the Robots**
 Genre: **Music**





1 Menu Column

2 Title Bar

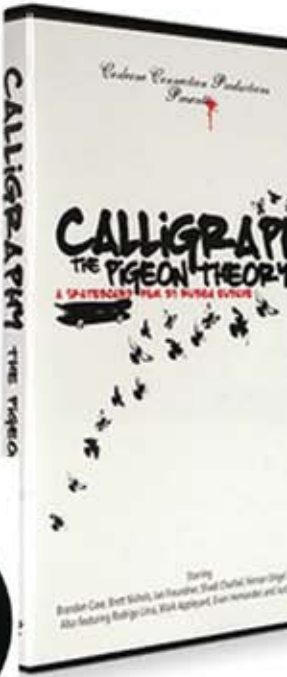
contains cropped image that matches the theme of the page and the page title

3 Contents

* These three elements stays at the center even as the proportion of the window changes



FREE THE ROBOTS



A SOUND EXPOSURE VOL.2

2LP/CD
Out June 13

Digital Release
Out Now!

1



FREE THE ROBOTS



OC WEEKLY



ANDROID COUPLE



MUG SHOT

XNDL

- AUDIO88
- KOOL KEITH
- FREE THE ROBOTS
- PROJECT MOONCIRCLE
- AESOP ROCK
- BOOM BIP
- ANCIENT MITH, DEMUNE
- & OTEM RELLIK



FREE THE ROBOTS

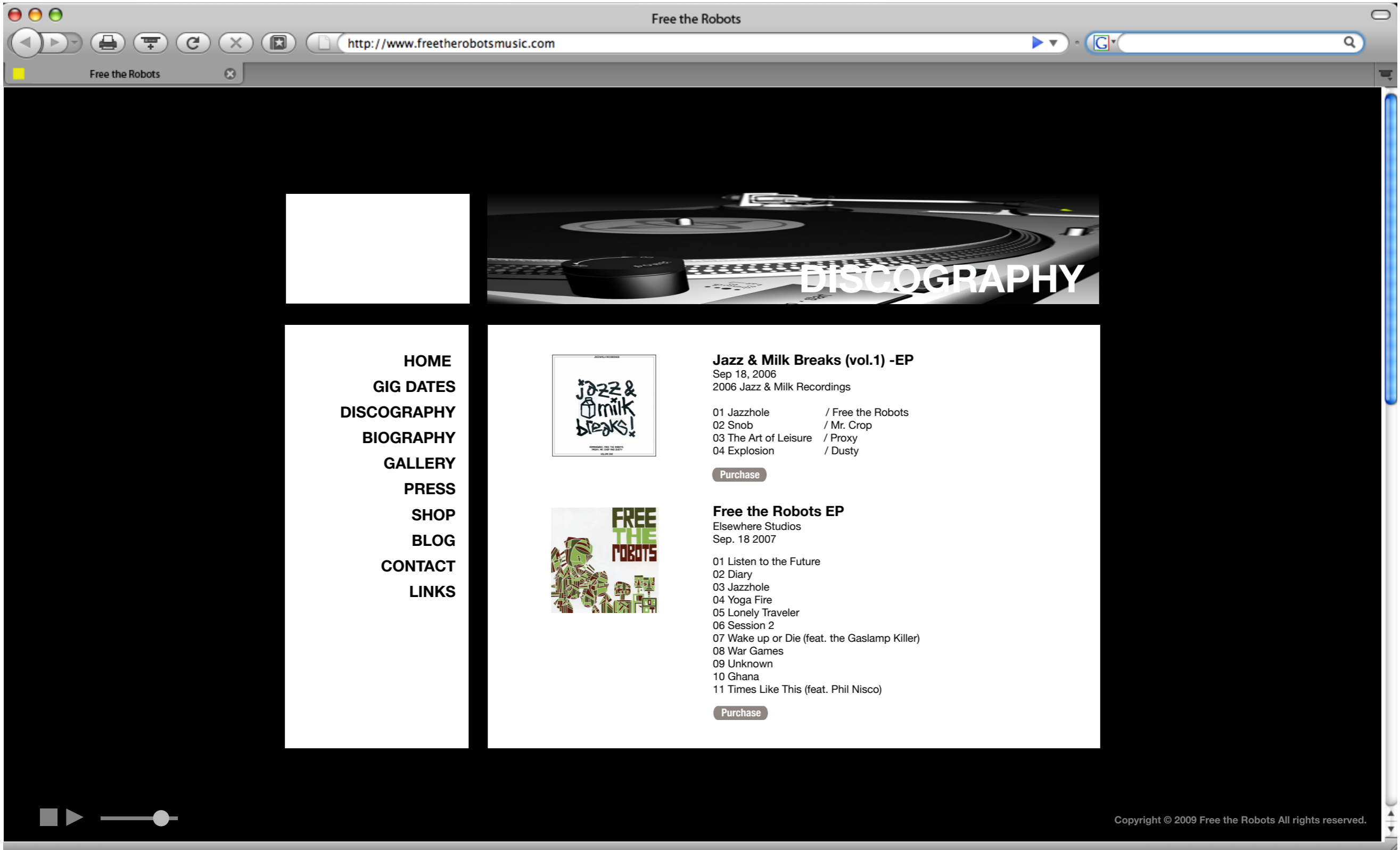
Street Robot

Issue 57



SLUMDOG STARS
 AARON YOO
 MAYA SOETORO-NG
 FREE THE ROBOTS
 THE GOOD, THE BAD,
 AND THE WEIRD

STREET ART + OBAMA



DISCOGRAPHY

- HOME
- GIG DATES
- DISCOGRAPHY
- BIOGRAPHY
- GALLERY
- PRESS
- SHOP
- BLOG
- CONTACT
- LINKS



Jazz & Milk Breaks (vol.1) -EP

Sep 18, 2006
2006 Jazz & Milk Recordings

- 01 Jazzhole / Free the Robots
- 02 Snob / Mr. Crop
- 03 The Art of Leisure / Proxy
- 04 Explosion / Dusty

Purchase

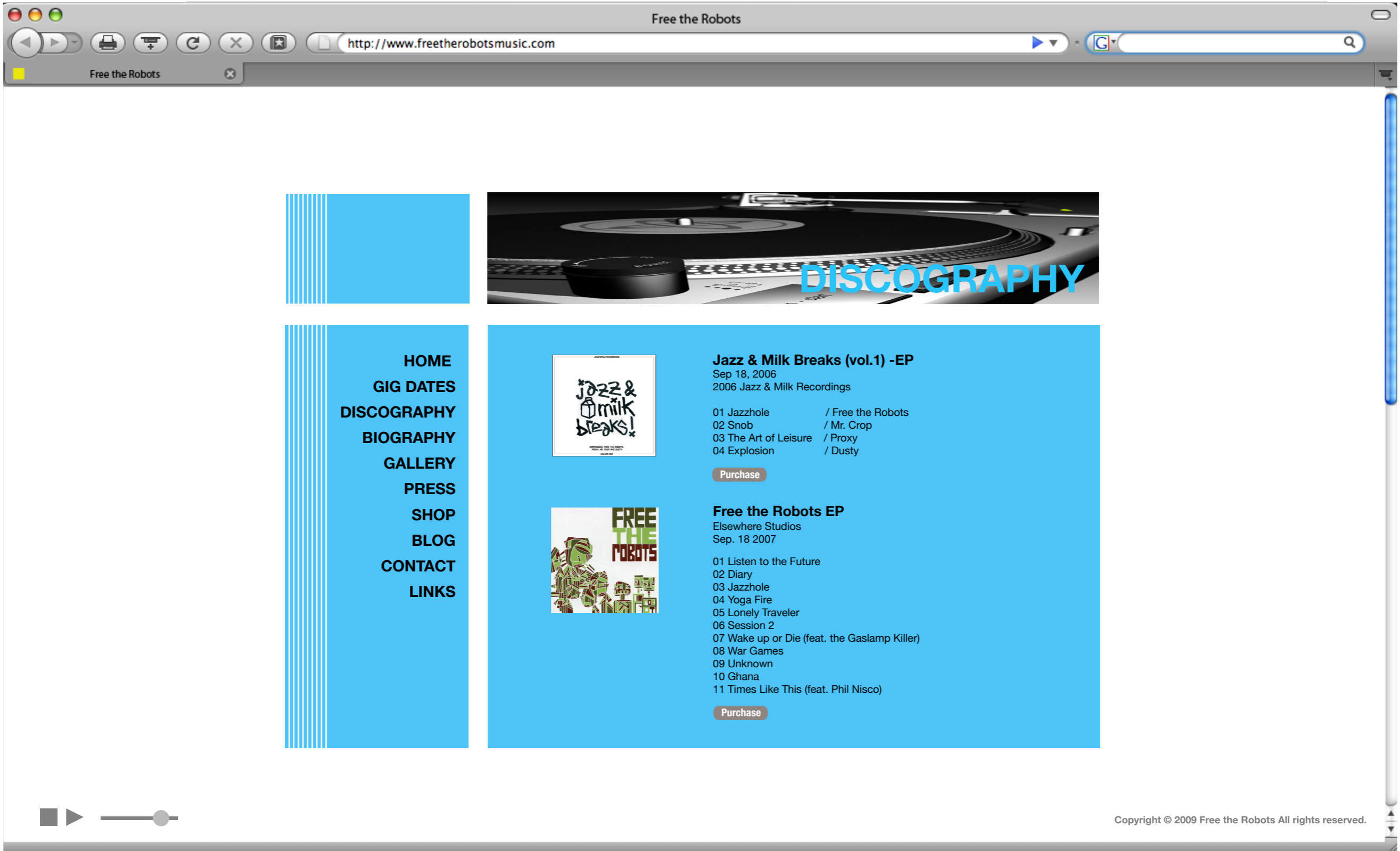


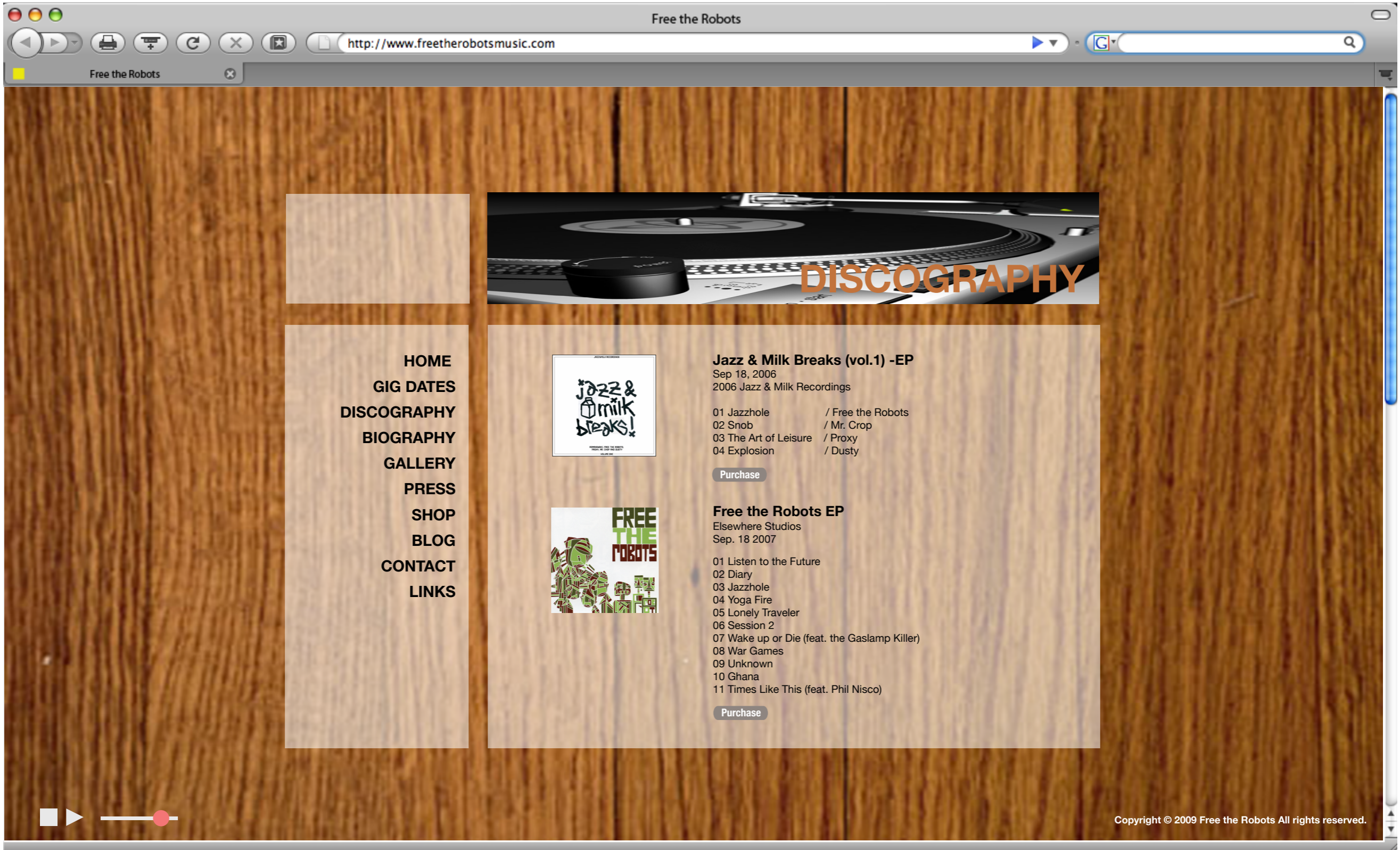
Free the Robots EP

Elsewhere Studios
Sep. 18 2007

- 01 Listen to the Future
- 02 Diary
- 03 Jazzhole
- 04 Yoga Fire
- 05 Lonely Traveler
- 06 Session 2
- 07 Wake up or Die (feat. the Gaslamp Killer)
- 08 War Games
- 09 Unknown
- 10 Ghana
- 11 Times Like This (feat. Phil Nisco)

Purchase





Comps: Final Surface Design

Free the Robots Website

March 11, 2009

AoiYamaguchi

DAI 527 Digital Media 3

V1: Home & Sub Pages

For this design, I included the robot's graphic image as background that was taken from one of the Free the Robots' cover art of EP. The theme is "robot music": Free the Robot himself calls his music as "robot music". By the choice of the fonts, images and colors, I tried to present the robotic, digital feeling through the design.

1_Home
2_Discography
3_Shop



FREE THE ROBOTS

News & Updates

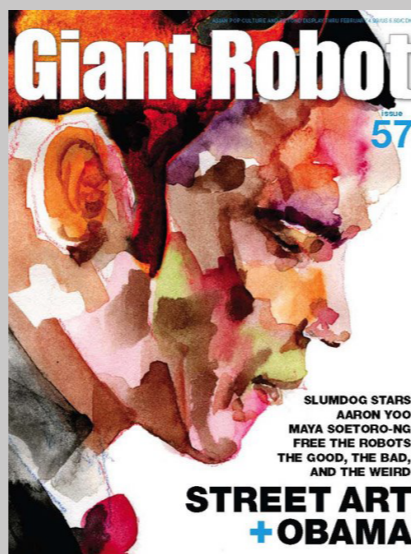


- HOME
- GIG DATES
- DISCOGRAPHY
- BIOGRAPHY
- GALLERY
- PRESS
- SHOP
- BLOG
- CONTACT
- LINKS

Check me out also on:



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Free the Robots' interview on Giant Robot magazine

-issue 57
Feb. XX. 2009

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FREE THE ROBOTS

Discography



- HOME
- GIG DATES
- DISCOGRAPHY
- BIOGRAPHY
- GALLERY
- PRESS
- SHOP
- BLOG
- CONTACT
- LINKS

EP & COMPILATION



Jazz & Milk Breaks (vol.1) -EP

Sep 18, 2006
2006 Jazz & Milk Recordings

- 01 Jazzhole / Free the Robots
- 02 Snob / Mr. Crop
- 03 The Art of Leisure / Proxy
- 04 Explosion / Dusty

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Free the Robots EP

Elsewhere Studios
Sep. 18 2007

- 01 Listen to the Future
- 02 Diary
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- 04 Yoga Fire
- 05 Lonely Traveler
- 06 Session 2
- 07 Wake up or Die (feat. the Gaslamp Killer)
- 08 War Games
- 09 Unknown
- 10 Ghana
- 11 Times Like This (feat. Phil Nisco)

[Purchase](#)



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FREE THE ROBOTS

Shop



- HOME
- GIG DATES
- DISCOGRAPHY
- BIOGRAPHY
- GALLERY
- PRESS
- SHOP
- BLOG
- CONTACT
- LINKS



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T-SHIRTS

Turntable lab original design series



"Beats" (Pink)
\$15
size: XS/S/M/L

Purchase



Back



"Beats" (Yellow)
\$15
size: XS/S/M/L

Purchase



Back



"Beats" (Blue)
\$15
size: XS/S/M/L

Purchase



Back

More..

V2: Home & Sub Pages

I was looking through all the Free the Robots' promotional materials and vinyls, and I noticed that his color scheme is calmer and warmer. I revised the whole image of design this time, by using brown color as the main color. The former design was too visually loud and it was hard to focus on the website's contents. I changed the font to Rockwell in order to give viewer more organic and solid feeling, instead of manmade, mechanical, robotic feeling. This matches better to the sounding of his music.

1_Home
2_Discography
3_Shop



FREE THE ROBOTS

News & Updates

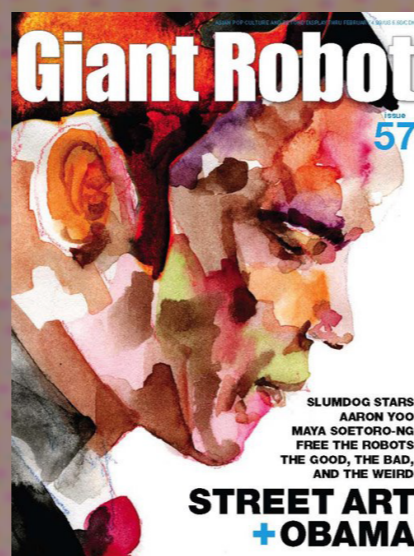
[News](#)
[GigDates](#)
[Discography](#)
[Biography](#)
[Gallery](#)
[Press](#)
[Shop](#)
[Blog](#)
[Contact](#)

Check me out also on:

OCWEEKLY

SPIN.COM

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Free the Robots' interview on Giant Robot magazine

-issue 57
Feb. XX. 2009

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FREE THE ROBOTS

Discography

[News](#)
[GigDates](#)
[Discography](#)
[Biography](#)
[Gallery](#)
[Press](#)
[Shop](#)
[Blog](#)
[Contact](#)



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EP & Compilation



Jazz & Milk Breaks (vol.1) -EP

Sep 18, 2006

2006 Jazz & Milk Recordings

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------|
| 01 Jazzhole | / Free the Robots |
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| 03 The Art of Leisure | / Proxy |
| 04 Explosion | / Dusty |

[Purchase](#)



Free the Robots EP

Elsewhere Studios

Sep. 18 2007

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[Purchase](#)



FREE THE ROBOTS

Shop

- News
- GigDates
- Discography
- Biography
- Gallery
- Press
- Shop
- Blog
- Contact



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T-SHIRTS

Turntable lab original design series



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Back



"Beats" (Yellow)
\$15
size: XS/S/M/L

Purchase



Back



"Beats" (Blue)
\$15
size: XS/S/M/L

Purchase



Back

More..

V3: Home & Sub Pages

Free the Robots (Chris Alfaro) makes music for Obey brand, which is the famous graffiti artist Shephard Fairey. Chris is also the owner of a restaurant / event venue called “The Crosby”. Inspired by the art work by Obey and the webdesign of The Crosby’s homepage, I came up with the idea of using parchment pattern as a background image. I kept the choice of font, but changed the font colors based on visibility.

- 1_Home (News & Updates)**
- 2_Discography**
- 3_Shop**



FREE THE ROBOTS

Free the Robots EP: Now available on iTunes! Go to the iTunes store and listen to tracks!

News & Updates

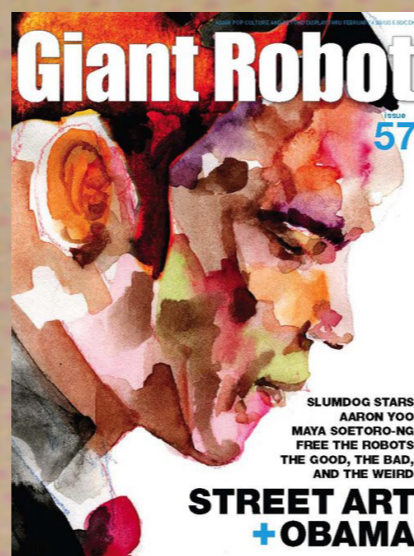
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[Gallery](#)
[Press](#)
[Shop](#)
[Blog](#)
[Contact](#)

Check me out also on:

OCWEEKLY

SPIN.COM

Vestibulum vulputate dui id justo facilisis pharetra. Quisque eleifend, lacus quis condimentum imperdiet, mauris nibh eleifend ligula, quis egestas est lorem in diam. Donec dignissim tempus mi. Aenean elit. Praesent tempor erat ac augue.



Free the Robots' interview on Giant Robot magazine

-issue 57
Feb. XX. 2009

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FREE THE ROBOTS

Free thr Robots EP: Now available on iTunes! Go to the iTunes store and listen to tracks!

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T-SHIRTS

Turntable lab original design series



"Beats" (Pink)
\$15
size: XS/S/M/L

Purchase



Back



"Beats" (Yellow)
\$15
size: XS/S/M/L

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Discography

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EP & Compilation



Jazz & Milk Breaks (vol.1) -EP

Sep 18, 2006

2006 Jazz & Milk Recordings

- 01 Jazzhole / Free the Robots
- 02 Snob / Mr. Crop
- 03 The Art of Leisure / Proxy
- 04 Explosion / Dusty

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Free the Robots EP

Elsewhere Studios

Sep. 18 2007

- 01 Listen to the Future
- 02 Diary
- 03 Jazzhole
- 04 Yoga Fire
- 05 Lonely Traveler
- 06 Session 2
- 07 Wake up or Die (feat. the Gaslamp Killer)
- 08 War Games
- 09 Unknown
- 10 Ghana
- 11 Times Like This (feat. Phil Nisco)

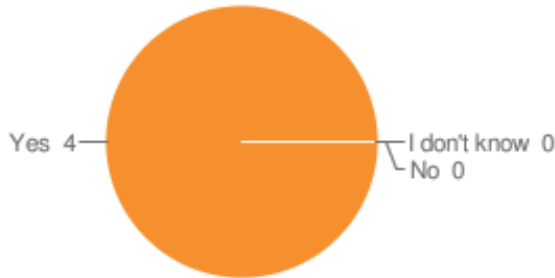
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User Feedback

4 [responses](#)

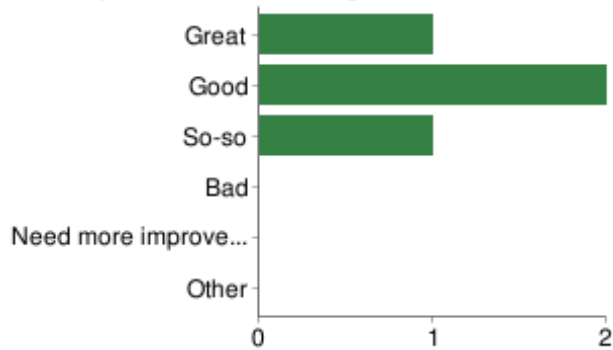
Summary [See complete responses](#)

Do you like this website overall?



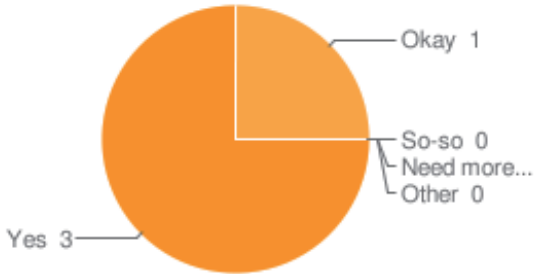
Yes	4	100%
I don't know	0	0%
No	0	0%

What do you think about the design of the website?



Great	1	25%
Good	2	50%
So-so	1	25%
Bad	0	0%
Need more improvement	0	0%
Other	0	0%

Was it easy to find the information that you were looking for?



Yes	3	75%
Okay	1	25%
So-so	0	0%
Need more improvement	0	0%
Other	0	0%

Feedback Summary & Comments

Timestamp	Do you like this website overall?	What do you think about the design of the website?	Was it easy to find the information that you were looking for?	Tell me if you have any suggestion to make this site better.
4/1/2009 18:34:28	Yes	Great	Yes	Maybe a larger font for people with sensitive eyes??
4/1/2009 19:39:27	Yes	So-so	Yes	It took a while to clear up all the images on the page. Maybe you can do something about that?
4/1/2009 20:24:28	Yes	Good	Yes	Back button on the discography page?
4/1/2009 20:25:03	Yes	Good	Okay	＊ サイトのタイトルがちょっと上すぎるかな～と思いました。Free the Robotsのロゴが上すぎて切れてるの見えるのですが、幻覚でしょうか？あと、そのロゴとバーナーにホットスポット付けて、クリックするとhomeページとかに戻れる機能があったら良いと思います。Gallery 以外の写真をクリックして拡大出来るようになったら良いかもしれません。フォントサイズもちょっと小さいかもしれません。

＊ **Translation:** I thought that the title is placed too upper part of the browser... is it because I'm not looking it right? It'll be good if you put hotspot on the logo and banner that takes you back to home. It may be better if you can view other pictures larger on click not only the pictures on gallery section. Font sizes may be too small.

My Thoughts

Users point out the right things about my website design. I also think that I should have made fonts larger. As for the image sizes, I was careful about the sizing, but there may be some pictures that are too large and that is why it takes time to show and clear up. I can fix the image size quickly on photoshop; I will be more careful about the image sizes in the future. I feel relieved about the positive feedback on the overall impression of the website. The last feedback that is written in Japanese suggests many components that I can improve; it is the most crucial thing to put link on the logo that takes you back to the home page. I need to study more on website structure by reviewing good examples!

Final Thesis / Self-evaluation

_I have completed the production of Free the Robots' website. For the production process, I began to gather as much information as possible, and then categorize them into several sections. However, I began to find more detailed information about him as I design the visual elements. Although Free the Robots is considered as underground musician, he has a lot of materials that he'd produced, such as vinyls, CDs, EPs, T-shirts, magazine interviews, tour experiences, and collaborations with other artists. From this experience, I have learned that I have to make enough research and make a perfect content outline before I move on to the surface design. Creating the hierarchy of the information is important because it determines the skeleton of the site. I explored all of his materials online, and got inspiration for the surface design.

_The difficult part was to design a site structure that would be easier for the users to go through and find the information that they are looking for. I made changes many times and revised the page structure and the content structure until I found the best way to construct it. There are a lot of parts that I could fix if I had more time; put the "back" button on each page to go back to the previous page especially on the discography section, make the Thickbox feature work for the smooth view of pictures on the gallery section, embed the music player for the quick sound reference etc. Also, I could have design the visual element of the website more colorful and sharp by the use of geometric shapes to indicate his style of music: "electronica." This time, I designed the site based on brown color as a key color. This choice of color made the impression of the site "organic" rather than "robotic" or "electronic."

_I learned a lot from this project. Originally I didn't have much knowledge about how to use Dreamweaver. Through this project I was able to learn how to use Dreamweaver itself, and how the websites work by trying various functions that Dreamweaver provides. I need deeper exploration on CSS and HTML in order to design websites quicker and more functional. I'd like to learn more about how to import flash / photoshop into Dreamweaver for the future use.



Free the Robots Website: Final Documentation