

# MEXICAN RADIO



## FACT SHEET

### KEY INFORMATION

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| <b>Band name:</b> | Mexican Radio   |
| <b>Formed:</b>    | 2017 in Berlin, Germany   |
| <b>Albums:</b>    | Mexican Radio LP (23 March, 2018)<br>Destruction / Reconstruction LP (20 September, 2019)   |
| <b>Videos:</b>    | Night of the Nihilist (23 August, 2019)   |
| <b>Singles:</b>   | Kirchner in the Mountains (9 August, 2019)<br>Night of the Nihilist (23 August, 2019)<br>Yukio Mishima Suicide (6 September, 2019)<br>Pretty Out There (20 September, 2019) |
| <b>Personnel:</b> | Nathaniel Fregoso (vocals, keys, effects)<br>Dyan Valdés (vocals, keys)<br>Hannes Neupert (vocals, drums)   |

### Bio:

Mexican Radio is a synth punk three-piece with high-energy songs inspired by bands like Cabaret Voltaire, DAF and Stereo Total. They wear brightly-colored uniforms at all times, and their live shows come across like psychotic radio broadcasts from another planet -a relentless onslaught of

sinister yet danceable grooves. They also host a monthly radio show called The Mexican Radio Radio Show.

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

*answered by Dyan*

### ***How did you meet and form the band?***

Nathaniel and I moved over to Germany from California with our old band [The Blood Arm](#) in 2011. Hannes, originally from Berlin, was playing with his band [The Mokkers](#) and we all met through the White Trash / 8mm rock scene around 2016.

Nathaniel and Hannes are obsessed with [The Fall](#). They formed a German-language Fall cover band (Der Sturz, German for "The Fall") and roped me into playing keys with them. It was mostly just for fun, but we played a few wild shows.

The guitarist and bass player of Der Sturz had other projects on the go, so after a couple of months they decided to move on. Hannes, Nathaniel and I looked at each other and asked, can we keep going? And what would it be like if we wrote our own songs? We had learned so much from playing The Fall's unique brand of intensely repetitive music with powerful vocals and bizarre lyrics - what would happen if we took that inspiration and tried making something of our own?

And so, out of the ashes of Der Sturz, Mexican Radio was born.

### ***Where does the band name come from?***

"[Mexican Radio](#)" is a song by 1980s new-wave band [Wall of Voodoo](#). In recording the song, the band randomly sampled Spanish-language radio in Los Angeles. Nathaniel's father, [Teddy Fregoso](#) was a famous Spanish-language radio personality at the time, and they happened to pick up the signal from his radio show. You can hear his voice at a few key moments throughout the song. For that reason, Nathaniel had always felt a connection with the song. When we were brainstorming names for the band, it came up - immediately, it clicked. It felt like the sort of music they were playing in the 1980s was a sort of ancestor to the sound we were developing, and on top of that, we thought if they could take Nathaniel's father's voice, we could have the name! We even sample bits of the song in the live show.

### ***What is “synth punk?”***

When the guitarist and bass player left our German-language Fall cover band, we immediately knew we wanted to leave the line-up as it was - no stringed instruments. For us, guitars were a chain to the past, not a path to the future.

What originally seemed to be a limitation (two members leaving) quickly revealed itself to be a strength. We almost immediately decided that our brand of music would be punk in style, yet driven by synthesizers and keyboard effects. The name we came up with for this type of music was “synth punk,” and we resolved to strictly limit ourselves to a synthesizer and drums line-up.

### ***What is the idea behind the band?***

We found that by limiting our line-up to synthesizers and drums, it was easier to develop a clear vision of the band. What else could we limit? What other unusual corners could we paint ourselves into? Less is more.

We also developed a synth punk ideology which turned our limitations into strengths. No money for an expensive digital studio? No problem - synth punks only record to tape in analogue studios. Can't afford to record for weeks on end? That's fine - synth punks record everything live with no overdubs, so we can record an album in a weekend. We've all played (and continue to play) in other bands as well, so we knew how to make “studio” recordings with loads of layers and perfectly edited tracks. But because we didn't have the time or the money for that, it wasn't an option for Mexican Radio. As a result, we turned out these incredibly energetic live recordings that are bursting with energy, about to go off the rails at any time. We didn't have time to do hundreds of takes, so the recordings truly captured a moment in time - which we realized as we were recording, was exactly what we wanted.

### ***Why do you wear uniforms?***

The uniforms were a natural development of our “rules-based” philosophy. We wanted to make sure we appeared as a unit at all times, not as disparate members of a band trying to stand out. There is no Nathaniel, Hannes or Dyan of Mexican Radio, there is only Mexican Radio.

We wear uniforms to every rehearsal and band meeting. We have separate uniforms for sound checks and shows. There is a winter uniform with hoodies and leather jackets, and a summer uniform with shorts and red caps. The current stage uniform is a red worker's coverall which was modified by Hannes' mother Christiane - a large white lightning bolt (our insignia) across the back with a smaller one on the left side of the chest. The lightning bolt represents a radio wave (our music), which is broadcast through us to our audience.

***You have a lot of songs about books, writers and artists. Could you tell us about where your lyrics come from?***

As we were writing our second album *Destruction / Reconstruction*, we realized that a lot of the lyrics Nathaniel was writing took their inspiration from literature, art and history. For years in The Blood Arm, Nathaniel wrote about very personal experiences. Now I think he is looking to make connections between his own experiences and those of the authors and artists he loves - this record has songs about [Leo Tolstoy](#), [Ivan Turgenev](#), [Fyodor Dostoyevsky](#), [Roberto Bolaño](#), [William S. Burroughs](#), [Yukio Mishima](#), [Ernst Kirchner](#), [Zelda](#) and [F. Scott Fitzgerald](#), among others.

It's an entirely different way to engage with a work of art - even if it was made decades or even centuries ago in a completely different part of the world, can something visceral be pulled out of it that I can relate to my own life? Is there something about a disastrously failed coup attempt in Japan in the 1970s, or the assassination of a tsar in the 1880s that can somehow connect to our reality now? Are the lives and works of these artists timeless? The songs tell the stories. I think it's quite an interesting lyrical challenge that Nathaniel has set himself, bringing these stories into a 2019 context, and one that I think he has succeeded at.

***Tell us about [The Mexican Radio Radio Show](#).***

Like most bands, we started out as music fans and have been going to shows together for years. We decided to create a radio show that focuses on the music we love - synth punk, post punk, Neue Deutsche Welle and New Wave - featuring interviews with similarly-minded musicians on tour in Germany. The show allows us to focus and speak about what makes these genres great and also leaves us with something creative to share with our audience.

The radio show has very quickly become one of my favorite things to do - we put a lot of effort into curating the playlists and researching the band, and we've been incredibly

fortunate to score interviews with some excellent artists! So far, we have featured interviews with [David Nance](#), [Ian Svenonius](#), [Ezra Furman](#), [The KVB](#), [Sally Dige](#), [Franz Ferdinand](#), [Alex Cameron](#), [Le Villejuif Underground](#), [DJ Psycho Jones](#), [Die Goldenen Zitronen](#), [Prada Meinhoff](#), [IDLES](#), [We Are Scientists](#), [Viagra Boys](#), [Death Valley Girls](#), [Surfbort](#), [Amyl and the Sniffers](#)...

You can hear the archive on our [Soundcloud](#) page.

### ***What can we expect from seeing you play live?***

Our live shows are like a psychotic radio broadcast. I am the hostess, taking the audience on a dark journey into Mexican Radio World. We play in uniform (red coveralls with white lightning bolts emblazoned on them) until the uniforms are drenched in sweat. There are no pauses in the show. Our goal every night is to whip the audience into a frenzy.

### ***What is next for the band?***

Our second album *Destruction / Reconstruction* comes out on 20 September, 2019, and will be preceded by staggered single releases of the tracks Kirchner in the Mountains (9 August), Night of the Nihilist (official single, accompanied by video 23 August), Yukio Mishima Suicide (6 September) and Pretty Out There (20 September).

After the record comes out, we'll be promoting it live on tour, both here in Germany and elsewhere in Europe/UK.