

WIRE

Records Of The Year
+ musicians' and
writers' reflections

Rewind



Ultra-red

Blok 70
PUBLIC RECORD CD

Various

Blok 70 Translations
PUBLIC RECORD CD

During the summer of 2004 Dont Rhine from the LA based activists Ultra-red joined composer Elliot Perkins and members of the Transit Migration Yugoslavian research team to investigate the lives of migrant workers in Belgrade. This led them to the 1000 Roses Motel, a UN refugee camp on the city limits, and on to the bustling economic community of Blok 70, where Chinese migrants have established a distribution and retailing centre. With over 300 shops crammed together on its two storeys, Blok 70 is a place of voices and exchanges. Ultra-red record the environment, capturing everything from the roar of air traffic overhead to the sweeping of floors at the end of the working day, then editing them into commanding audio collages. The electromagnetic disturbance generated by the translators' cell phones becomes an urgent rhythmic code, and the voices of asylum seekers being interviewed are transformed into despairing echoes over austere digital bud rhythms. Through their Public Record site, Ultra-red have now made all of this material available as a free download, together with a selection of remixes by the likes of Octex, Oticon and Uniplex. A work of subtlety and strength, and generosity of spirit and intensity of purpose, the *Blok 70* project makes just about everything else on this page seem like Styrofoam. □ KEN HOLLINGS



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