

Indie Rock Takes the Stage at Avant Music Fest

By [Jonathan Earle](#)

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British Sea Power headlines the Avant Festival on Friday with their “sublime, subtly inventive guitar rock.”

Indie rock lovers rejoice: The Avant Festival, which has attracted The Horrors, Deerhoof and other big-name bands in years past, is set to take over the ArtPlay complex this Friday through Sunday, filling the air with the sounds of British Sea Power, Asobi Seksu, Chinawoman and other cutting-edge bands and DJs from around the world.

British Sea Power, a band known for quirky sensibilities and arena-level hooks a la Arcade Fire, will kick off the festivities on Friday evening. Once named best live group in Britain by Time Out, the English veterans have been on tour since late March to promote their new full-length album, “Valhalla Dancehall,” which The Independent described as “a silver sea of the kind of sublime, subtly inventive guitar rock which raises the hackles, spreads goose pimples, elevates you out of yourself.”

On Saturday and Sunday, ensembles will perform simultaneously on three stages — two

outdoors and one indoors — including an outdoor “Desktop Robotix Tent” devoted entirely to electronica and featuring appearances by DJ Volodya Baskov, Ambidextrois and Nseven.

Saturday’s performances begin on the Open Stage with Russian “dramatic-rockers” Dramatika, followed by headliners Asobi Seksu, a New York-based dream pop ensemble that peddles gushing, heavily processed ballads with a strong shoe-gazing influence.

Seksu’s Yuki Chikudate sings in both English and Japanese, and the crashing guitars and droning beats are a firm indie boys’ favorite. Afterward, the party will continue into the night with Bobby Blesk and DJs Kelman and Pasha Sam on the AvantClub Stage.

Sunday sees Belarussian rockers Cassiopeya and Petlya Pristrasiya — literally “Noose of Passion” — and the minimalist, vocal-driven Ukrainian group ...I Drug Moi Gruzovik. At 8:30 p.m., Berlin-based headliner Chinawoman takes the stage with her lush tracks that draw on — in her own words — classical European ballads, sentimental melodrama, eurobeats, sultry mysticism and one-woman rantings.

Chinawoman, who grew up in Canada, scored an unlikely YouTube hit in 2009 with “Russian Ballerina,” which featured amateur footage of a dance instructor — presumably her Odessa-born ballerina mother — demonstrating the pirouette to a group of eager students. She takes a similar tack in the video to “Lovers are Strangers,” which shows elderly couples slow dancing at what looks like a quintessentially Russian family gathering.

Tickets purchased at the door for one day cost 1,000 rubles, while a three-day pass costs 2,000 rubles.

Avant Music Festival runs Friday to Sunday. 5/10 Nizhnyaya Syromyatnicheskaya Ulitsa, Bldg. 7. Metro Kurskaya. Tel. 221-2239, www.avantmusic.ru.

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