



Schweizer Radio
und Fernsehen

Holidays from Suicide. A fantastic journey with Iggy Pop

By Birgit Kempker and Anatol Atonal

Starring Iggy Pop, Birgit Kempker, Anatol Atonal

Technics:	Anatol Atonal and Basil Kneubühler
Music and sound design:	Anatol Atonal
Dramaturgy and editing:	Johannes Mayr
Translation in English:	Christopher Findlay
Production:	SRF 2020
Length:	51'15

Synopsis

Death. Letting go. Disappearance. These are the topics at the centre of the audio play by Birgit Kempker and Anatol Atonal. "Holidays from Suicide" does not follow a linear storyline, but is constructed like a music album that includes songs, interludes, and inserted texts. Birgit Kempker speaks and sings about her fear of dying, about final thoughts on the deathbed, or about how to best cross over "beyond" – wherever or whatever this "beyond" may be.

By her side is Iggy Pop, the last undead of pop music, a man who has died many deaths already. It is no accident that he was the model for the central character in the graphic novel "The Crow", a superhero risen from the dead. And more recently, the real Iggy Pop himself appeared as a zombie, on screen, in Jim Jarmusch's motion picture "The Dead Don't Die".

Iggy Pop is also present in "Holidays from Suicide". We can hear his real voice in direct quotes – sometimes tender, sometimes screaming, sometimes sober, sometimes intoxicated. Birgit Kempker and Anatol Atonal sampled his voice from countless interviews, films, and songs and integrated it into their audio play.

"You are the girl I never was", Birgit Kempker says once about Iggy Pop. However, Iggy Pop is more than a projection screen for her, he is a teacher who prepares her for death. He is her scout on the deathbed. And he is her partner in a very personal audio play.

BIRGIT

Hello hello, hello

Ok let's go

How do you know it's time for me to go, I ask you

You were not present at my conception

How do you know who was present then, I ask

How do I take the soul out of this mouth, I ask

IGGY

Precisely doing nothing

BIRGIT

Take the soul from the other side of the mouth, they say

There's my human swimming away, I cannot reach the mouth

Then the navel, check the navel for the soil where it is dying

Even if you are staying in the house, if you are dying in the field

You must go to the field to die if the soil of the field is resting in your navel

From the beginning, the soil of your final destination is resting in your navel

IGGY

You know, and when she gets into that shit anyway

BIRGIT

I sprinkled your navel with some of the soil where you'll die

IGGY

I tell you, when I hit about 53 or 54 I start my after life

I know it is real

I don't know if there is another one, you know, so

IGGY/BIRGIT

I am going away smiling

I am going away smiling

I am going away smiling

IGGY

Will you still love me

IGGY/BIRGIT

I am going away smiling

BIRGIT

Ok, that's it

IGGY

Shut the fuck up for a while, is a kind of a back off

BIRGIT

You are the poison in the ink. Join me. Be with me. Watch with me through the night. The tunnels, demons, grimaces, the fear, the joy, let's rise through the lid of the cranium

IGGY

I'm gonna break into your heart. I'm gonna crawl under your skin
I'm gonna break into your heart. And follow, till I get under your skin

BIRGIT

Skin. The dog is a god to the doorway.
I lost all love I possibly could have, dogs of perception, straying
Sleep, sleep, sleep, go to sleep
Loving machine, constructed love
Blue blue blue, shitty your shoe, empathy
Sleep, sleep, sleep, go to sleep
Licking my wounds, singing, cracks in my skin, scars on my belly, empty and naked

IGGY

I tried everything
I tried listening to it nude

BIRGIT

Survivors, like a skinned ghost

IGGY

I became on sound, I wanted it to sound: wow
I think, things happen in their time, so, like John Cage, I thought

BIRGIT

Blue blue blue shitty your shoe

IGGY

Louder... Yeah, it's off... we all run with the dog, but that's alright
C'est un plaisir pour moi.

BIRGIT

Crawl into my name
We are the same
I am nothing but my name
We are the same
We are the mirror
That is you
Crawl into my name
Be the beastly letters
Free them we are the same
I'm nothing but my name
I'm nothing but my breath.
Oh. I didn't know that
I am nothing but my breath

I thought we'd practice first
We are nothing but the breath

BIRGIT
I carry everything.
Shut up, says the future, are you ready?
How did you prepare?
Don't be distant

IGGY
Bleed, you know
It doesn't mean anything except what you feel

BIRGIT
Take your leave, you eyes and knees and feet and limbs, from one another

IGGY
Put your finger on the wound and press down hard

BIRGIT
Are you ready? How do I take the soul out of this mouth?

IGGY
Bleed. Get the right phrase, make sure the point got across, not so much running on and on and on

BIRGIT: Take the soul from the other side of the mouth

IGGY
Open up and bleed, bleed, bleed, bleed. This represents my inflamed soul, these are little devils whispering

BIRGIT
Don't be distant
I am the house of loneliness, says the body
I am the house of darkness, says the body
Me too, hee-haw, I am your donkey, says the body
I carry everything
Shut up
Take your leave, you eyes, from one another, don't be distant

IGGY
You want me to touch your soul, dammit?

BIRGIT
I am the house of the worms, says the body

IGGY
I want to touch your soul, what do you want?

BIRGIT

I am your donkey, says the body, I carry everything
You are the poison in the ink, join me, be with me, watch with me through the night, the
tunnels, demons, grimaces, the fear, the joy
Let's rise through the lid of the cranium

Spirit

In the train you died. Do you remember that?

BIRGIT

That's right.
Hear this naked, Iggy
Ink of God
Night's accomplice
Ink of God
Old golden ink is rushing through my blood and I through the ink with you
Gold in the mouth, I am drowning
Thank you for renewal
My life-essence

IGGY

Iggy, you call me Iggy

BIRGIT

Iggy, king of the dogs, I am your dog
King of the dogs, I am your dog
I cannot say more, king of the dogs, shit, I cannot say more
Tons and tons and tons and tons
Shit, holy shit
Savage guardian at the star gate
You are the girl I never was
Jump, jump, jump
Lick the ciel {sky}
Between your eyes control and delusion, you are the girl I never was
Jump jump jump.

Ashes to ashes, ashes to ashes, ashes to ashes
Iguana, shit them out
Some giant fir trees

Spirit

Fire

BIRGIT

Let's rise up from the skull

Spirit

Fire

BIRGIT

Some giant fir trees

Let's rise up from the skull

I will say it in German, I will say it in English

I won't say it and then again, I will, ride the devil, I am your dog

Je suis {I am} your hound, Iggy, my dog, my god dog

Fuck them, can you hear my barking? Society

Ride the devil, scratch the wound with the tongue

We take off, we are free, let's evaporate, let's rise

Spirit

Fire

BIRGIT

Like smoke

Spirit

Fire, the planes goes fire

BIRGIT

In the cycle. My fire. We are free

Spirit

Yes. But look up. Don't be afraid. Let go of the earth. Understand? You don't belong here.

Yes. Look up. Ask for help. Upwards. And go towards the light.

BIRGIT

Free. Let's rise through the lid of the cranium, free

All

You are the cactus in the desert

The glittering splinter in my skull

Between the eyes control and delusion, savage guardian at the star gate

You are the girl I never was

I cannot say more, I cannot say more.

Hear this naked, Iggy: the girl, I never was, is you.

Spirit

I can hear you, yes

BIRGIT

I will say it in German. I will say it in English. I won't say it, and then again, I will.

Let's evaporate. Let us rise, we the smoke, from everybody's skullhole

We dance the ink, we take off, we are free.

BIRGIT

Open up and bleed. Into the happy hunting ground

Stay green. stay close. your whispering goes into my dead ears

Stay close, your whispering goes.

Am I dead enough? Is dying over?

Be my scout
No o life, no o pain, no o wind blo ows

IGGY
It's almost totally alive

BIRGIT
In the deathbed, call me by my name, cry for me in the dark black fork, forlorn forever,
dusty corners, filled with jinns, lost in the bardo. I will never be cursed because you.

When I am stuck deep and dead in the black forest, bogged down in final ink, I will never
be cursed because you.

IGGY:
I wanna go.

BIRGIT
In my shroud and not breathing and wanting to breathe and not understanding that I am
dead, the cord ripped, to my fleshy shell, and no one answers when I rise.
Answer me, answer me, Iggy

IGGY
Moving on right now? Is it fixed now?

BIRGIT
Iggy my scout, call the legions
Call Munkar and Nadir to my deathbed, quick
Tell the washer of corpses: not so fast with the camphor and salt
The separation from the spirit injures the body.

IGGY
I want to go. Moving on right now? Is it fixed now?

BIRGIT
Put fragrant herbs into the shroud
Don't be distant, don't be distant
You are my scout, my flying fox, my secret hound through the in-between world, in
between the grimaces, you don't give a fuck about the fear during the journey, you are the
break that cuts through my death, pray for me at the thresholds

IGGY
I wanna go to the beach.

BIRGIT
Is it already? Ok.
I guard my stone
Rock-hard alone
And pore over existence
Oh it is all alone, my hedgehog existence

However will I come into my existence?
I am fed up, brooding on what it's all about

IGGY
Yes?

BIRGIT
The skin all grey already

IGGY
A Little of me in there

BIRGIT
My Atman mousey-queasy

IGGY
Let's go

BIRGIT
I'll kick off with a mighty bang now

IGGY
Let's go

BIRGIT
And jump out the window

IGGY
Let's go

BIRGIT
onto a mouse

IGGY
Hey, I am out

BIRGIT
its mousey life

IGGY
Yeah

BIRGIT
expired in blood

IGGY
all right

BIRGIT
I will stop brooding

IGGY
the end of all the crap

BIRGIT
Thank you little mouse

IGGY
I'm sitting alone, singing the blues, let's go boys

BIRGIT
I once was caught
By a dear little mouse
which then was dead instantly, but being dead is necessary now.

IGGY
I have a plan
Trust me

BIRGIT
Put me in a box, my bones, my silver, my gold, I am empty
Put me in a box, my bones, my gold, my silver, my fear, my ears, my face
Put me in a box, I am empty, I am your dog, I am your saviour, I am empty, I am your dog,
I am your fear
Put me in a box, I am your saviour, put me, I am your dog, in a box, my bones, I am empty
Put me in a box, put me in a box, I am angry, bones, bones in the face, I am your dog
Put me in a holy box, silver, gold, bones, I am empty
Shiny ashes, silver, gold, I am your present in a box, I am empty

IGGY/BIRGIT
Put me in a box
I am empty

IGGY
That's about how wild I get baby, that's it

BIRGIT
Run run run little me
Brittle branches stick out of my dry heart
Brittle branches puncture my eyes
Brittle branches poke my ears, fall into the well
I jump in after them
At the bottom I am drinking it all up with my thirst, and rise back into my body out of the well
When I die from my skull I will breathe myself home, but now I am dreaming insanelly of
naked life inside you
I tear you up, before I croak I grasp your ugly face, tear out your eyes, I bite your heart,
and your bladder, wake up to me, I am awake

BIRGIT

Exhaled, last breath, it is done, I am done, c'est comme ça, je sais que tu sais, for ever vivid, blooming angels, bright in the in-between state, blind me with clear light, c'est comme ça, tatagata, je sais que tu sais, tatagata, c'est comme ça, we are the monsters on our journey, run run run, soul, tu sais? These demons are we, in the mirror, c'est comme ça.

IGGY

I have a feeling, something is about to happen here, yeah, let's go

BIRGIT/ANATOLATONAL

Run run run hunt with the hounds

IGGY

Let's go

BIRGIT/ANATOLATONAL

Run run run satan and god

IGGY

Yes

BIRGIT

I am the angel, the devil, again
God, stop, I am so lonely, I am alone

IGGY

Sad song. That makes me happy, you know

BIRGIT

I am so lonely, I am alone.
I am my only body at home.

IGGY

It happens when you get older
Each place I go, only the lonely go, if it is any good it is usually because I am miserable in some way

BIRGIT

I am so lonely, I am alone. I am my only body at home
I am so lonely, I am alone. I am my only body at home
Golden fish god
I am the angel, I am the devil {, I am the devil}
Aatman, golden fish, god
Knight of the night, with the left hoof
Cut a path clearly to where humans smell good
It is nice to be dead with you honey
Do not miss this passage

Run run run, hunt with the hounds
Run with the hares
Satan and God, you serve good

Mix for me the stuff that will transport me, that will turn me over
Steeds, ships, tunnels, rivers, ride through storm and wind
Because I am falling through you, my passage destination
Tar sticks to my hand, I am crawling through the street
And sinking into my path, downward the holy dogs are pulling
heavily at my heels into the glowing mud
I throw my black baggage into you,
wash the shit clean for me, potent washing machine
Knight of the End, hear me in the in-between state,
Knight of the Night, ride me, hell is on my heels
I am crawling through the street, it's burning hot.

BIRGIT

Slow motion
Oh, cut the fire break on the black journey
Throw my ashes on the threshold of the confused place, am I in deception mode
Cut the fire break on the black journey of my death
Flamboyant...
Am I in deception mode, in the meat-safe
Iggy, could you be the scythe, please

Distorted perception on the deathbed, as if my dead legs were swinging
celebrating the death-rattle-coughing-kraken-phenomenon
my cerebral breaks
and when I am dead, not into any freeze compartment
Kill those who do so with your fiery sword

IGGY

I was pretty terrified, so, it is very nice

BIRGIT

Softly lure my spirit through the tricks and traps of the apparition
Distorted perception on the deathbed, and when I am dead, not into any freeze
compartment
Softly lure my spirit through the tricks and traps of the apparition into cosmic awareness

IGGY

What is this thing...called love...I got to go...called love
you're gonna miss me
Jim?

BIRGIT

Death party
The party is over, this is the death party, chérie, the mortuary house
Warrior, you don't know where the flowers stand?

You will see them from below,
Demons grimaces we fear und and hold each other's paws and stumble into the light or
the thicket in between
When we meet, I won't be dead, and neither will you

When I am dead, we will meet, on the road,
On our way, in a corner, we are stuck
when we will meet, I am not dead

IGGY
We can get it for you cheap

Easy, kill me, get the cash, disappear forever,
Or do I have to kill you?

BIRGIT
I dance what I want
I am the holy donkey, out comes money, jump, jump, jump

IGGY
Give me money

BIRGIT
Give me love
Give me water
Give me bread
Give me home
Give me give me give me money, jump
Hot hot money, jump, jump, hunt, hunt, give me security
Give me diamonds, give me gold and silver
Give me freedom,
Give me, give me
Money, money, money
Give me happiness

IGGY
Money don't buy everything it's true
We will never be able to afford the rights

BIRGIT
Foolish dreams
Foolish dreams
Cheapy me, inside me
Kingdom of my foolish reverie

IGGY
What do you get?
Hero, this heroic situation never should have been allowed, it is a complex world

BIRGIT

Come out there, hear the horses?
Come out there, lazy dream, come out there
Far away from me, lazy I for me, foolish me
Want to be going, want to stay,
Want to be blowing, fading away
Want to be guilty, tender and soft
Want to be holy, big and mighty
Foolish bees hum in my base, knocking at my bones
Foolish steps walk the deads
Rattle from the inside the bars of the skeleton
Come out of there, where are you, want to be out, want to eat you, want to shit you out
Come out there, do you hear me?

I am out, entering me

IGGY

Each place I go

BIRGIT

I swear I was never there

IGGY

Et si tu n'existais pas, tu es mort, pourquoi j'existerais, it's a beautiful song

BIRGIT

Run run run run

IGGY

You are now face to face with eternity
Fundamentally you are already dead

BIRGIT

Ink of God

Old golden ink, rush through my blood and me through the ink with you, I am drowning
No story, no baby, no food, no heart. I am empty, oh baby, cry for me
When I'm gone, three days then read me the deathbook and put some honey
On my crown,

IGGY

No, no no no

BIRGIT

No story, no baby, no food, no heart. I am empty, oh baby, cry for me

IGGY

Yeah no, no, I'm not

BIRGIT: I am your dog

IGGY
I have done well for myself

BIRGIT
I am your dog

IGGY
Hey baby

BIRGIT
I am your dog, je suis your hound, Iggy

IGGY
Iggy, call me Iggy

BIRGIT
Spring me out, Iggy
Do you hear my barking?
Jump jump jump
Savage guardian at the star gate, you are the girl I never was
You are the cactus in the desert, the glittering splinter inside my skull
Between the eyes, control and delusion
Ashes to ashes, shit them out, my gold, my ink, my blood, in the cycle, my fire
we are free, we are free, we are free

IGGY
No, no no no

BIRGIT
Arabian sleighs float through instinct and slide. Fall. Jump. stop. again. Hope. God.
Caravan. Thick crests of meat, thin legs, the ostrich slides the blues in the desert and loses
its weight.

ANATOL ATONAL
Ok ok ok, now that was a little

BIRGIT
Arabian sleighs float through instinct.

In between black fir trees, you are the girl I never was, you are me and I am you, I am your
hair, your baby shampoo, I am your eyes, blue blue blue, you are the medium to the other
side, you are the girl I never was. German angst rots because of that, read me my heart,
put on the dancing leg.

BIRGIT

I need somebody, my guardian gold between the giant fir trees, my spirit underneath myself with a shield embraces me, tall, gnarly and velvety, soft girls' hair, airy knight, roar, my right inner arm twitches electrically, twitches, I recognize you in the stagefog, stagefog, spotlight, you spit into the camera, the three of us, Inca, Iggy, and me, the Inca treasure, the Inca animal, as liquid we flow into the workshop, into the bubbling, where hammer and anvil forge wings for us, the hall cheers.

I am your shirt. Satan and God I serve assembled inside you
I am your iron shirt, your fiery shield, you are my man
I am your shirt
The wound, the pain, the knife, the trimmer
I am your inner wild iron shirt

BIRGIT

I wanna be your shirt
Never again lost in the shirt, in the jungle, among people, animals
Never to be cold again, in society, never again no comme il faut
I wanna be your shirt
You judged me a thousand times, on stage, at home, in interviews, on radio, and made me cry, you know me wrong

You cursed me down, me, the curtain between you and what is alive
You name me whore, slave of society, killer of life
I wanna be your shirt, you know
Listen to this nude, ay ay ay, blond container
Open my reserve

You judged me a thousand times and made me cry, on stage, at home
You know me wrong, you cursed me down
You tear me, rip me off to pieces
Dismember me, scatter me on the floor, spear me on spikey fences,
Abandon me in hotels, throw me away, out of the window of your fancy car
Walls are broken, words are spoken, hearts are open, onions make you cry
This stinky me, your shirt, yes, loves you unconditionally

See: you look beautiful in me
And when I protected you from cold or sun, or stretching grips or greedy gazes, you deny
my, name me enemy, foreign force
Agent of society, tricky spy, vaporising your personality
Darling Iggy, see: last ritual, last breath, then shirt, better before
Some training, some exercise, get used to last tenderness,
Get used to me, I will comfort thee, I hold you tight
So you might never feel lost again,
Dogs stop breathing, drinking, barking, don't touch their bowls and die

IGGY

I am alone. I am alone

BIRGIT

Seven regrets on the deathbed

Let seven dogs onto my deathbed, yowling and howling

Seven regrets, I am mourning for myself

Seven times I was not there

I wail and do not want to die, because I was not there when it mattered

I want to make mistakes, like you, Iggy, then there will be one dog less on my deathbed

Six regrets on the deathbed, I am mourning for myself

Six times I was not there and I capture them dancing on my deathbed, all, completely,

I dance the six things I still want to do on my deathbed

One more thing...

Ready for life, the messenger seeks me no longer

No longer seeks me under water, seeks me no longer under water

The angel of death reaches for my mouth and reaches close to my mouth

to take from him the soul

Six regrets on the deathbed,

I am mourning for myself six times, I was not there, and catch her dancing on my

deathbed, all completely,

I dance the six things I still want to do there on my deathbed

Ready for life

END