

TRAUMTON Records

Grunewaldstr. 9 D-13597 Berlin Germany

030 331 93 50
info@traumton.de
www.traumton.de



indigo cd 973572
upc 705304458426
jazz/world

Release March 22, 2013

Christian Zehnder /Gregor Hilbe OLOID

Christian Zehnder:

vocals, overtone singing, organ mouthpipes,
bandoneon

Gregor Hilbe:

percussion, cello, organ mouthpipes , bowed
glass, electronics

OLOID - Two cosmopolitan musicians define their personal roots-avant-garde

The oloid is a geometric structure with unique characteristics. Conceived in 1929 by the sculptor and mechanical engineer Paul Schatz, this object exhibits amazing features. The oloid can, for example, aerate water with oxygen using a lot less energy than conventional procedures. This virtually universal talent to merge elements is, however, only part of the reason this object fascinates Christian Zehnder and Gregor Hilbe. "Through careful study of this sculpture we started to regard time and space differently," vocal-artist Christian Zehnder explains, "with the aim to dissolve time completely." A bit more straightforward, drummer Gregor Hilbe seconds, "the physical behavior of the oloid has strongly influenced our grooves. For example, the polyrhythmics in the piece of the same name, in which 5/8, 7/8 and 3/4 meters happen simultaneously, this superimposition does not seem complex but rather relaxed to the listener."

Another defining element of the album are the traditional wooden mouth-organs. Christian Zehnder had this idea, because he liked "the analogy to the voice, to breathing and rhythm – the essential components of all human music." While developing this project together, Zehnder and Hilbe defined the scales these large whistles play on the CD as well as on

stage. Each musician blows six of them and this exhausting lung-performance posed quite an unfamiliar challenge to the in no way powerless drummer. The breathing and blowing technique naturally causes fluctuations in pitch, that are in this case wanted by Zehnder and Hilbe. "The tender, flexible tuning resembles tribal music", Hilbe says pleased and Zehnder adds with a glance to his musical past: "in the duo Stimmhorn we already wanted to break down the strictly tempered tuning. Now we can continue with that idea more consequently."

In the conjointly developed compositions and arrangements the artists were less concerned with creating a song or with improvisations, but more focused on structures and magical moments. While previous albums of Christian Zehnder demonstrated musical openness and cosmopolitan mind-set, he perceives Oloid as more consequent and personal than ever. "I could use the essence of my voice more clearly, without making specific acknowledgments to traditions", he thus describes his definitive dissociation from all standards. This also means "a return to that, what is truly moving to me."

If intended, one can find esthetic references to minimal music in the pieces on Oloid, but Zehnder's and Hilbe's motifs (just like those of the minimalists) are rooted in a much older world. Essentially they are traditions of the shamans, who put themselves or their listeners in a trance with their repetitive sounds, to heal with their music or to offer a path into spiritual parallel-universes. The two Swiss musicians have each had experiences themselves of this nature. The percussionist Hilbe once played with shamans in Korea and with the contemporary afro-beat-wizard Tony Allen in Paris. Zehnder has worked with the folk-band Hun Huur Tu from the steppe of Tuva and with the Sufi-modernist Mercan Dede; lastly he encountered the cult and vocal expressiveness of Brazilian Yanomami-indians as a soloist in the opera "Amazonas". On Oloid Zehnder, for the most part, leaves behind the alpine yodelers. Form and harmony are dissolved, spectacular vocal escapades occasionally tend toward global overtone singing, without falling into archaic rituals of pygmies or Asian monks.

Oloid is by no means only about original natural sounds. The urban modern day spirit is present. Gregor Hilbe has demonstrated his fine sense for electronic sounds and programming with the pathbreaking band Tango Crash, as well as in his part as a musician and co-producer for the Jazz Bigband Graz. In the piece "Yanomuota", for example, Hilbe abstracts imaginary jungle-sounds into buzzing, crackling and sizzling. In addition to the drum set the versatile drummer plays a variety of percussion instruments, including registers melodically rich in overtones.

On Oloid Christian Zehnder and Gregor Hilbe worked together for the first time. Their conceptually well-thought-out, yet very lively production combines traditions of various eras and transcends them into the present. In this way the magical Oloid joins roots with avant-garde music to a singular experience