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MELT TRIO Stroy

Peter Meyer: guitar

Bernhard Meyer: bass

Moritz Baumgärtner: drums

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“The Melt Trio plays and writes music so full of life, that you can’t get enough of it.”
Jazzpodium, Thorsten Hingst, 11/2013

“We have rarely experienced an electric guitar trio so fresh and so rich in space and sound.”
Jazzzeitung, Stefan Pieper, 11/2013

MELT TRIO live bei ARTE tracks: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oFozQyQSf3I>

MELT TRIO - Meyer|Baumgärtner|Meyer - Stroy

The third album of the Melt Trio appears atmospheric and exciting at once. Bernhard and Peter Meyer and Moritz Baumgärtner have further polished their unique style and exhibit an even stronger creative drive. Their combination of acoustic and electronic sounds seems subtler than ever; specific influences of jazz and modern classical music, as well as post- and prog-rock are only hinted at most, because the music just sounds like Melt Trio. It has always been one of the band’s trademarks, to merge composed and improvised passages in a way that they can hardly be differentiated. Conventional structures like the succession of the main theme and solo abstractions have long been dissolved. And whoever is looking for fret board magic for its own sake has to look elsewhere.

Through the many concerts together over the last years, Meyer, Meyer and Baumgärtner have grown together to a unit, almost to a musical organism. From their great palette of ways of expression they unerringly and pointedly chose the right tone colors at the right time. Collaborations with Jan Bang, Tony Malaby, John Hollenbeck, Jim Black or Theo Bleckmann have further matured the three personalities. All this can be heard on *Stroy*. “When I was writing the pieces for the album I already had the upcoming concerts in mind,” Bernhard Meyer explains, “especially the energy, spontaneity and openness that develop on stage.” Quieter moments live from the nuances and the finely intertwined parts that continuously intensify and grow more acute or at other times are interspersed with abrupt expressions flashing up. The dynamics are wide, but seldom happen suddenly; instead they slowly swell up and down again. The individual pieces and the complete album are reminiscent of a meandering river, at times contemplative, at other times whirled by rapids. And during the course of the record the band seems to be moving upstream towards the river’s source.

Instead of striving for spectacular excitement, the Melt Trio creates meditative as well as nearly ecstatic moods. Arcs of suspense develop because the music is always moving forward within the composition, as opposed to the very common turning in circles. Improvisations and solos are not successively fired individual actions. They much rather come and go almost unperceived, grow suddenly from sound and context, serve as substantial bridges that continue telling the musical story. With the goal in mind of arriving somewhere else and not landing at the starting point again. The poetry that is inherent in this music finds its analogy in the album’s title. The band already gave their previous record a suggestive name:

Hymnolia. The playful art-word Stroy isn't coincidentally evocative of "story". Moreover - and more importantly - to Melt it associatively means the opposite of "destroy". It is their motivation to build sounds and atmospheres instead of brutally demolishing structures.

The three musicians' pronounced awareness for sound has a history. In the past years they have developed their musical signatures more and more finely, particularly in other constellations. As one of the few in his trade, Bernhard Meyer plucks a semi-acoustic bass, on which he sometimes plays a double-role as the grounding bassist and rhythm guitarist and lays down the base for ample improvisations. His gravitational field holds together the events at all times. Peter Meyer sometimes transfers the aesthetic of acoustic pickings to the electric guitar, creates individual harmonic changes, switches between smart complexity and emotional depth. Both Meyers pointedly know how to handle effects and loop stations and elegantly unite the warm timbre of wood with purposefully applied digital technology. As a drummer Moritz Baumgärtner has developed a unique and immediately identifiable expression. His playing is characterized by tonal quality, use of unusual materials (various tins, metal, a megaphone, ect.) and boosts of energy that can break out with the lavish power of a volcanic eruption. Baumgärtner has always been swinging back and forth between styles: he acts as the masterful backbone for the *Lisbeth Quartett*, Johanna Borchert, the electro-punk-band *Frittenbude* and from 2010 to 2014 also for the crazy rock-circus Bonaparte, just to name a few. "Earlier we were mainly inspired by the things we listened to", Baumgärtner summarizes the development from his point of view, "and today we draw inspiration from our own experiences. It is even clearer to us, in which moment we use certain gestures and sounds. We peel off more and more and can see the core."

The Meyer-brothers have been playing together since their teens, for a long time as a guitar trio with changing drummers, "because there simply weren't any saxophone or piano players in our village whom we could have worked with." That is one and a half decades ago now. In 2010, right after studying at the Jazz Institute Berlin (with John Hollenbeck and Kurt Rosenwinkel respectively) the Meyers joined with Baumgärtner (who also studied with Hollenbeck). "Back then Moritz played completely differently than me," Peter Meyer remembers, "he was very active in the free scene and therefore above all highly energetic, whereas I was more into full, warm sounds at the time." Also rocks hitting together create sparks that can ignite a fire. Today the trio rubs together softer and somewhat harder wood instead. The Meyers' distinctive, trans-genre compositions are indeed elaborate, but deliberately leave room for additional ideas, which develop while playing together. Many textures emerge intuitively and don't have to be spoken about nor written down. And although drummer Baumgärtner is the only one of the three who doesn't write any pieces, he contributes a tremendous amount of ideas. Often he quickens himself and the Meyers to even more courageous journeys. "We have sorted our ingredients more clearly and can therefore take greater risks while playing," Baumgärtner describes the balance between the cleverly devised and the free passages, "the new recordings are more subtle on the one hand, but still have much more drive."

Stroy is concluded by the only piece with a German name, which is *Heiliger Dankgesang* [Holy Song of Thanksgiving]. It is based on a piece for string quartet by Beethoven (op. 15, 3. Satz), the idea coming from Peter Meyer. However, his comparatively opulently swelling guitar sounds and a few squeaking cymbals and bells much rather suggest a certain connection to the epics of the Icelandic Pink Floyd-descendent Sigur Rós. It is certainly not presumptuous to claim, that no other current German Band sounds like the Melt Trio. The ease with which Meyer, Meyer and Baumgärtner change between clear contours and openly widening forms, wonderfully rich melody and sound, interesting harmonies and rhythmic finesse, is pathbreaking in the European music landscape.

Links:

<http://www.melttrio.com> // http://www.traumton.de/neu/records/index_stroy.html

Melt Trio live:

	25.11.2016	IND-Kolkata	
	27.11.2016	IND-Pune	
19.08.2016	DE-Poggenhagen,	30.11.2016	IND-Mumbai
18.10.2016	DE-Bremen, Römer	02.12.2016	IND-Delhi
19.10.2016	DE-Hamburg, Golem - fat jazz	04.12.2016	IND-Hyderabad
22.10.2016	DE-Dithmarschen, jazzcoast	07.12.2016	IND-Chennai
25.10.2016	DE-Bayreuth, Glashaus	10.12.2016	IND-Trivandrum
26.10.2016	DE-München, Unterfahrt	14.12.2016	LKA-Colombo
28.10.2016	DE-Augsburg, Grandhotel Cosmopolis		
29.10.2016	DE-Detmold/Bad Meinberg, Red Horn District	18.01.2017	DE-Hamburg, Birdland
30.10.2016	DE-Aachen, Dumont	19.01.2017	DE-Flensburg, Orpheus Theater
31.10.2016	DE-Köln, Heimathirsch	20.01.2017	DE-Lübeck, CVJM
		21.01.2017	DE-Kiel, Kulturforum
03.11.2016	DE-Leipzig, Telegraf		
04.11.2016	DE-Dresden, Kukulida	03.02.2017	DE-Ulm, Kradhalle tbc
05.11.2016	DE-Berlin, West Germany	11.02.2017	DE-Altenburg, Jazzklub
18.11.2016	PAK-Lahore	13.02.2017	DE-Freiburg, White Rabbit
20.11.2016	PAK-Karachi	15.02.2017	DE-Frankfurt, Fabrik
23.11.2016	BGD-Dhaka		tbc