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Sebastian Sternal Home

Sebastian Sternal: piano
Larry Grenadier: bass
Jonas Burgwinkel: drums

SEBASTIAN STERNAL - Home

It was a distinct artistic idea that prompted Sebastian Sternal to lure the internationally celebrated Larry Grenadier from New York to Cologne. After Sternal's two ECHO-Award-winning, large-scale productions under the name Sternal Symphonic Society, the virtuoso pianist, composer and arranger wanted to play in "classical" trio instrumentation again. "After the orchestral, late Romantically inspired timbre of the Society, I had an album in mind, that exhibits a more rhythmic and physical attitude," Sternal summarizes the idea in a sentence and adds: "It is about melodies, the energy in music and about swing; of course in a modern aesthetic, not necessarily in the traditional sense."

Sternal's artistic reflections quickly led him to Larry Grenadier. The 51-year-old American from San Francisco initially studied English literature at Stanford, then settled in New York via Boston as a jazz musician in the mid 1990s and is a renowned specialist for trio formations. Since 1995 Grenadier played in Brad Mehldau's trio and since 1997 with the trio of Pat Metheny. Furthermore he was active with the band Fly with Mark Turner and Jeff Ballard, with Larry Goldings and the legendary Paul Motian, played in a production by Charles Lloyd, in the studio and live with John Scofield and many many others. "I have heard Grenadier so often, that I already had an emotional connection to him even before our first exchange," Sternal laughs. "His sound and his perception of groove exactly match my ideal."

For the drums only his longtime companion Jonas Burgwinkel came into question for Sternal. Aside from the fact that both are perfectly attuned to each other, the also ECHO-Award-winning drummer distinguishes himself through a recognizable own style and exceptionally variable thinking. Burgwinkel's talent for sound detail, infectious grooves and complex densification is an enormous gain for any ensemble.

Doubtlessly the prominent transatlantic trio primarily comes alive through the individual quality that characterizes Sternal's ingenious compositions. Besides the arcs of suspense inherent in these, the interplay and dynamic of the band are also captivating. No matter if flowing or erratic, with nuances or rhythmic verve, the music has profile. Sternal, Grenadier and Burgwinkel show character, are audibly enjoying themselves and thereby please both mind and soul of their listeners.

Web: <http://www.sebastiansternal.com>