



FREIES GERÖLL
NILS WOGRAM JOE SACHSE DUO
nwog 47
EAN 0 042706597606
Release Date: 23 SEP 2022



© Ulla C. Binder

NILS WOGRAM JOE SACHSE DUO - FREIES GERÖLL

How is it possible that all of this seems so natural, friendly, joyful and rousing ...? Probably only because two elective affinities have met here. Two musicians who grew up in completely different social environments, two fundamentally different characters, and yet two who intuitively understand each other, who admire each other, and who play together with a looseness as if it were the most natural thing in the world. Helmut "Joe" Sachse, almost a quarter of a century older than Nils Wogram, grew up in the GDR and had to blaze his own trail to jazz against all the odds – from dance and rock music to free playing and on to his own distinctive language on the instrument. Nils Wogram has grown up in an established jazz scene and made his own mark both as an instrumentalist and with a whole series of bands that have worked together over the long term. What fascinates Joe about Nils is his versatility: "He can play anything." And Nils raves about Joe Sachse's self-sufficient musicality: "Very rare, very precious."

The two first met many years ago at the jazz festival in Clusone, Italy. Nils Wogram played there in a duo with pianist Simon Nabatov, while Joe performed in a duo with fellow guitarist Uwe Kropinski. At that time, they were already attracted to each other's music, but an occasion was needed for the spark to ignite. This came about when Thomas Brückner, organizer of the Campus Jazz series at Leipzig's

media campus Villa Ida, gave Joe Sachse carte blanche for a concert in 2012 and the latter wanted an encounter with Nils Wogram. They started brilliantly, played mostly free, were recorded and released a CD of the concert, Free and Tremendous (jazzwerkstatt). Since then, Nils and Joe have repeatedly come together and given concerts.

Finally, they wanted to go into the studio together and record pieces, which then worked out in November 2021 in Bremen. The two had three days in total to work on the music and the sound in a relaxed atmosphere, and two more to record. The legendary Studio Nord in Bremen, where the musicians could also stay, provided the appropriate setting. Both had brought written pieces – mainly for this occasion and already with the special nature of the duo in mind. The result is music that jumps off the paper and finds its own way as it tightly intertwines composed and spontaneous playing: precision and freedom in furious cooperation. Something like this only succeeds because both have invested so much in their playing that they can manage the most refined things effortlessly. Both Nils Wogram and Helmut “Joe” Sachse say in unison that they feel comfortable in the flow of playing together. One notices this in the warmth of the sound, in the ease with which they find common ground, in the correspondences – be it in rapid unisoni, in the with and against each other of melodic lines, in the sovereign gait through the chords and in the course over intricate rhythms. In the end, everything seems very simple, unstrained, leaving intellectual considerations behind, joyful in the best sense of the word, affectionate towards each other and the listeners.

The musical languages find common ground and the instruments a common sound. It is surely no coincidence that Joe Sachse has always enjoyed playing with trombonists, for example in the quartet Doppelmoppel or in duos with Conny Bauer, Johannes Bauer or Albert Mangelsdorff. And also Nils – of whom one can certainly say that he also has something of a Mangelsdorff gene, despite all his self-determination – plays in a duo with Conny Bauer. So there are numerous cross connections. Not in terms of style, but in terms of a musical compass, Joe Sachse follows his spiritual mentor John McLaughlin, who once said that a musical fusion can only be convincing if it is internalized. In this way Joe Sachse has succeeded in integrating jazz and rock, Coltrane and Hendrix, Spanish and American, acoustic and electric, harmony-oriented and free playing. None of this can be isolated today. Moreover, Joe Sachse is something of a one-man band with his own rhythm section. The way he uses his feet percussively proves to be just as complex as when he plays the strings, tapping his right foot on the guitar case as on a bass drum and his left one as on a hi-hat, both picked up by a microphone. Indeed, he has been doing this pragmatically as well as independently, his ingenuity far ahead of today’s high-tech. As Nils Wogram says, “A unique specimen.”

More important than technical details is this duo’s fine sense of dynamics and dramaturgy. Nils Wogram has repeatedly emphasized how strongly he comes from the jazz tradition, despite the ways in which jazz has expanded its form of expression. This can be felt, sometimes more strongly, sometimes more sublimely, in all his groups and impromptu formations. In the dialogue with Joe Sachse, the basic swinging gesture is immanent, as is the blues feeling in a very broad sense. This duo and its groove resemble a stroke of luck, which almost inevitably brings us back to the elective affinity of the two. For all their differences – Joe is more of a self-doubter with the treasure trove of Karl Kraus quotes in his pocket, and Nils more intrepidly progressive – the two resemble each other, also in their sense of family, their love for their wives and in the purity of their musical actions. “Whoever ventures on stage as a couple,” wrote the unforgettable Michael Naura, “delivers not only music, but also their psychogram. The social aspect within a jazz ensemble emerges particularly sharply in a duo. With a bit of pathos: in a duo, a person shows himself as if under a magnifying glass. Among musicians, it’s true: play in a duo and I’ll tell you who you are.”

NWOG RECORDS // LABEL- & PRODUKTMANAGEMENT & CONTACT: IMKE MACHURA // MGMT@NWOG-RECORDS.COM