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#### Listening tips

- [ 1 ] Engeltanz
- [ 2 ] Goldregenstraße
- [ 6 ] Want-Away
- [ 12 ] Traumwunsch

Release September 9, 2011

## Meyer | Baumgärtner | Meyer

### Melt

**Peter Meyer:** guitar  
**Bernhard Meyer:** bass  
**Moritz Baumgärtner:** drums

#### Live:

31.10.11 Berlin, B Flat

tbc

## Meyer | Baumgärtner | Meyer - Melt

How often does it happen that music sounds so new, as if we'd never heard anything comparable to it? That it unnervingly stimulates us, leaving more questions behind than answers? In the past two decades, the world of jazz and rock has presented us with innumerable guitar trios from Nirvana to the latest Bill Frisell Trio. Yet Meyer - Baumgärtner - Meyer's first joint album "Melt" does not begin where other guitar trios leave off, instead they start from scratch, as if this was their very first guitar-bass-drums band. M-B-M are not the latest thing or the next trend, they are creating their very own urban worlds of sound. And any namedropping here would lead to nowhere.

The guitar player, Peter Meyer, the bass player, Bernhard Meyer, and the drummer Moritz Baumgärtner are no strangers to the Berlin jazz scene. The Meyer brothers always performed as a unit, whether it was in the Lea W. Frey Trio or in the MSV Brecht band. Baumgärtner, on the other hand, belongs to one of the most active figures in the Berlin improvisational composition scene featuring Johannes Lauer, Marc Muelbauer and Daniel Glatzel. The Meyers have gathered extensive experience in guitar trios, whereas this is a completely new experience for Baumgärtner. However, for all three parties, this is a departure into the unknown.

So what makes this trio so special? What do M - B - M have that other guitar trios don't have? What makes them beyond all comparison? Over the years of playing together, the Meyer brothers have acquired a symbiotic density of expression, making it almost impossible to separate the compositional and improvisational aggregate states, or even to hear the individual sources of sound. It's almost impossible for Baumgärtner to simply keep up. He doesn't pretend to be the third brother, but sets different accents, letting himself speed up or fall behind the music, finding interferences and overlapping, drawing closer to the duo within the trio and then distancing himself again from them. In each of the

songs, the angles and sides of their joint triangle are incessantly being adjusted. “Only the smallest portion of these worlds of sound come from jazz”, explains Moritz Baumgärtner. “We apply indie rock and electronic music that has a distinct consciousness of the world of sounds to improvisation.”

Baumgärtner and both the Meyers have not been making music together in this form for all that long. At first, mutual interest led to several performances in which free playing was combined with a marked interest in a form off the beaten path of jazz. At one of these gigs, the until then loosely associated trio drew the attention of the sound engineers Christian Farcher and Victor Meding. From the start, their enthusiasm was so great that they invited the threesome to record an album in Stockholm. Suddenly the band had to make their prior improvisational and compositional experience audible to the whole world. Apart from the familiar material, new pieces were created whereby in most cases clear moods set the improvisational dynamic. Improvisation is hereby never an end in itself. On the contrary, it is logical anticipation and continuation of the composition, moving from an initial starting point towards a clearly defined point. The consequence with which the band hangs on to this principle boils down to a composed blurring in the improvisation.

This is how the trio works with different densities. Some of them are reminiscent of Suprematist paintings in the style of Malewitsch and El Lissitzky, in which the painters appear to let clear, geometric forms run imperceptibly towards or away from each other, thereby causing either turbulence or relaxation. The three musicians densify their independent, individual statements into a common story in a similar way. “I’ve known the brothers for a long time and was always fascinated by their joint sound cloud”, Baumgärtner says of this process. “They are both amplified electrically and work with reverb and loops. It’s not simple for a drummer to acoustically enter this world. This creative challenge allows me to play things that I don’t hear in other instrumentations. I’m reminded of shifting forms, like a kaleidoscope for example. Things that fit together, but constantly remain in motion.

The instrumental functions are exactly divided between the three band members, yet when listened to, the band reveals itself as a unit of three subjective voices in an equal exchange and not so much a combination of guitar, bass and drums. Especially Baumgärtner’s playing is unbelievably melodic. He’s possibly one of the best drumming guitar players in Europe. “I enjoy using grooves”, he admits, “but I have a melodic voice, that I need to lend expression to. Unfortunately, I don’t play a melodic instrument, but I can also describe motions with the drums. In return, in some of the pieces the Meyers depart from the melodies or transform the melodies into sounds. This approach is a link between us. Melodies are lines for improvisations that can also sound without notes.”

M – B – M don’t necessarily make it easy on the listener. They take him into an urban jungle in which he must consciously fight for his listening experience. “Melt” is not suitable as background music. This music needs to be listened to intensely and as often as possible. The depth effect is amazing. Innumerable details reveal themselves in microstructures, perhaps after the tenth round of listening. As a result, the CD grows on you continuously. The band’s threefold astonishment at their own sound creation carries over effortlessly to the listener. The three musicians keep the context open on purpose, so that each question evokes a new question, but the answer remains elusive.

“Melt” is a convincing alternative to iTunes’s philosophy, according to which every musical message must be revealed within the first 30 seconds. Here the entire piece is always the message and together the nine messages on the CD produce a story. “Melt” is one of the few musical adventures that begin exactly now at this moment and moves consistently in only one direction: towards the future.

**Links:**

<http://www.meyer-music.de>

<http://www.traumton.de/label/releases/?id=208&lang=de&what=info>