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Uli Geissendoerfer - BIOGRAPHY

Pianist and composer, Uli Geissendoerfer, originally from Munich, is a versatile and remarkable musician exploring rhythms and melodies across many styles of music, with a special emphasis on **World Jazz** and **improvisation**. He worked with among others **Tito, Puente, William Cepeda** (awarded a Grammy nomination), **Groove Collective, Giovanni Hidalgo, Blood Sweat & Tears, Leslie Uggams, Cirque du Soleil, Kofo the Wonderman, Ute Lemper** and many more.

His current projects include, **Colors a World Jazz Quintet**, with their debut CD featuring **Pascale Elia**, the **Beregovsky Project**, a duo with fabulous **Klezmer** violin virtuoso **Alicia Svigals** and **Bangalore Breakdown** an **Indian World Jazz** project featuring **Premik Russell Tubbs**. **Premik** and **Uli** also just recorded a Duo CD **Passport** due out at the end of the year.

His first two albums, **The Extension** and **Transformation 9/11**, were released on the **Caramella d'Oro** label. **The Extension** features some of New York's finest Latin Jazz artists and **Transformation 9/11** is a highly emotional, completely improvised piano solo CD dealing with events of **September 11**.

As a **film composer**, Uli composed together with **Emmy nominated composer Steve Sandberg** the critically acclaimed short film, **Climbing Miss Sophie**, winner of the NYU film festival 2002, and was invited to the **Sundance Film Festival** and **Cannes Film Festival** among other prestigious festivals worldwide. **Bill Plympton's** new cartoon **Idiots and Angels** features three works of his and **Nicole Renaud**. He was awarded best sound design at the **48 hour film festival** earlier this year and one of his and **Nicole's** songs, **Red**, made it to the short list for the **Oscars**.

Currently Uli resides in Las Vegas where he is teaching at the **University of Las Vegas** and is working on single handedly reviving the **Jazz Scene**. He started a **Jazz Club**, instituted a lecture series at the University and promotes his and other creative endeavors.

Uli Geissendoerfer – Reviews

A former editor often cautioned me about getting too excited over a release. I wonder if artists like Geissendoerfer become passionate when working on a new project? Music in general and jazz in particular are steeped in passion not arbitrary and archaic stylistic guidelines that would impose absurd self limitations on the artist. Virtually flawless and groundbreaking in many respects. A perfect reason why I get excited about a review and why the word "former" appears before word "editor."

Brent Black, Critical Jazz

Geissendoerfer scales inordinate musical heights to the date's climactic end. He appropriates the lever of creativity, and the fulcrum of deep understanding, to elevate and intensify the richness and authenticity of (Turkish) with invaluable help from special guests violinist, Valeri Glava and Dafer Tawil - oud, doumbek, tambourine, to transform inspiration from Paganini's op.24 into a spirited, stirring, energetic Turkish romp. From this creative apogee, he and the quintet contemplate the arresting spirituality, and sprawling serenity of (Where) "...nothing else needed to be done".

CJ Bond, JazzMusic

Colors [the album] is pretty upbeat affair, with some cool improvisation layered over the Latin rhythms that reference Sergio Mendez. Colors [the band] are: Uli Geissendoerfer - piano/rhodes/synth/percussion, Pascale Elia - vocals, Charles McNeal - saxes, Derek Johns - basses, Ryan Rose - drums/percussion, plus guest musicians: Valeri Glava - violin, Michito Sanchez - percussion, and David Tawil - oud/doumbek/tamberine. Ms Elia's vocals are a highlight - commanding and sensual, full of intimate detail on the lyrics. The eleven tracks are: Intro, 3-41, Honey Pie, Tango, Intro To Soulful, Soulful, Lily (Have You Seen But A Bright Lily Grow, Norwegian Wood, Song (For Maya), Turkish, Where. Colors are an impressive band and Colors is an impressive album - Uli Geissendoerfer is an intriguing composer, utilizing a rich palette of sounds and his arrangements bring out the best in the musicians around him. He isn't that shabby on the various keyboards, either. If you like your music with a world vibe and some musical depth to it I point you in the direction of Uli Geissendoerfer and Colors. This an album I will heartily recommend as being well worth seeking out.

John M. Peters, The Borderland

Pianist and composer Uli Geissendoerfer's special form of atmospheric jazz reminds me of some of the more adventurous early Windham Hill releases from the '80s. With an occasional percussional or vocal exclamation to shake up the instrumentation, which consists of piano, synth, Rhodes, saxophone, bass, and drums, Geissendoerfer's polished, and at times even breezy, jazz percolates along with well-polished verve and sly sideways energy. If modern, yet accessible jazz is your thing, you should hear Uli Geissendoerfer.

Steven Stone, Audiophile

Having worked with everyone from Tito Puente to Ute Lemper, he's got enough proper brand names on the side of his keyboards to grab our attention right there. A wonderfully crazy musical collage, I'll bet you didn't know instrumental music mixed with para nature sounds could be loaded with so much whimsy. Certainly not for moldy figs, this is highly creative music that was made for offbeat summer days when you enjoy the party in your head more than any other.

Chris Spector, Midwest Record

Midway into the second track we are convinced that composer and pianist Uli Geissendoerfer is quite a talent. That is no surprise when reading his resume and past associations. He mixes Latin, soul, pop and world jazz on Colors. Vocalist Pascale Elia and Charles McNeal (sax) take lead roles and shine throughout the set, especially on "Honey Pie" the first of two McCartney/Lennon covers. McNeal's funky "Intro to Soulful" is spot on before Uli works the organ and piano on "Soulful". While the program touches many genres, it is all easy to embrace and a winning effort.

D. Oscar Grooms, O's Place Jazz Magazine

Young piano extraordinaire Uli Geissendoerfer, who studied with Chucho Valdes in Cuba, has recorded a solo debut titled The Extension includes a superb trombone interchange between William Cepeda and Luis Bonilla on the title track. Uli is a truly gifted pianist with a big future ahead of him.

LATIN BEAT

Atemlose Akkord-Kaskaden, perlende Läufe, Latin-schwangere Phrasen - der Münchner und Wahl-New-Yorker Pianist Uli Geissendoerfer setzt sein Publikum einem Wechselbad der Gefühle aus. Die stilistische Bandbreite reicht vom Sog brasilianischer Lebenslust über berührende Gospel-Interpretationen bis zum verjazzten Schuhplattler.

Bühler Jazztival

Featured Artist: Uli Geissendoerfer

CD Title: The Extension

Review: It is good to discover great new talent, and please allow me to introduce you to the jazz sounds of pianist/synthesist/composer, Uli Geissendoerfer in THE EXTENSION. This is a long, enjoyable adventure in contemporary jazz with 8 selections. ...Uli Geissendoerfer is a versatile, remarkable pianist\ ...and performs one of the finest versions of "Nobody Knows" to come along in a long time. ..THE EXTENSION is a winner. Uli Geissendoerfer is a flawless pianist, blessed with a great style and the ability to share jazz music moods with an audience.

Reviewed by: Lee Prosser

Bridging the Gap is sparked by Uli Geissendoerfer's dazzling keyboard, producing and arranging skills and ... Just as Larry Young's modernist take on the B-3 helped define the forward-looking thrust of Lifetime, so does Geissendoerfer's unique approach to the instrument he affectionately refers to as "The Beast" underscore this trio's probing yet groove-conscious nature.

Bill Milkoswki - a regular contributor to Jazz Times and Jazziz magazines. He is also the author of "JACO: The Extraordinary And Tragic Life of Jaco Pastorius" (Backbeat Books)

With Grammy nominee Uli Geissendoerfer on piano, jazz composer Mark Lambert on guitar, Gregory M Jones (an original faculty member of New York's Bass Collective) on bass and co-producer Todd Turkisher on drums, the musical accompaniment was formidable.

Arna Eyers-White

Saturday September 20

State Theatre, September 25 Sidney,AU

Ute Lemper

The quartet of Uli Geissendoerfer (piano), Mark Lambert (guitar), Gregory Jones (bass) and Todd Turkisher (drums) occupied a no man's land between rock and jazz, emerging more like a tiny orchestra, the meticulously arranged parts played with precision

Her Majesty's Theatre Sidney – Australia

Geissendoerfer bajo su propio sello, incluye un magnífico intercambio musical entre los trombonistas William Cepeda y Luis Bonilla en el corte que le da nombre al album. Uli realmente es un virtuoso poseedor de un gran futuro.... "

"The Extension", el disco del pianista Uli

What a coincidence! Listening to your CD as I opened my mail. Your music is totally burning, each tune has an emotion to it. Totally musical. Congratulations on capturing the true meaning of what music is supposed to do: Inspire, instill emotions, excite, etc.,etc.,etc.! I'll be listening again and again. Thanks for kindly giving me a copy. Hope to see and hear you soon, Best regards,
Steve Bleifuss

Jazz Podium Juli/August 2004

CD-Rezension: Uli Geissendoerfer "The Extension"

Latinjazz-Freunde sollen die Ohren aufmachen: Mit dem Munchener, in den USA lebenden Uli Geissendoerfer betritt ein vielversprechender Tastenkünstler die internationale Bühne, wengleich dies nicht seine erste CD ist und er mit Posaunist William Cepeda, als Filmkomponist von "Climbing Miss Sophie" oder als Stammpianist bei Ute Lemper die Bretter der Welt schon kennt.

Geissendoerfer hat Klassik sowie Jazz u. a. bei Chucho Valdés studiert. Er verfügt über virtuose Schnellspielfähigkeiten, die er ebenso gestalterisch wie improvisatorisch einzusetzen weiss. Von acht Sütcken sind sieben Eigenkompositionen, alle selbst arrangiert und von herausragender Qualität. Die Mitspieler (vom Trio bis zum Nonett, u. a. mit Cepeda) erhalten intensive Möglichkeiten zur Improvisation, die dicht und flott ineinander verwoben sind. Sein Pianostil erinnert mehr am Michel Camilo als an Valdés, die Harmonien und rhythmischen Grundmuster entstammen mehr der Sprache des Jazz, in die sich die Latinelemente nahtlos integrieren. Nebst der lebhaften Nummern kann Geissendoerfer auch Balladen gefhlvoll gestalten wie "Wedding song" und kombiniert berührende Ausdrucksstärke mit komplex vertrackter Pianistik in "Nobody knows". "The Extension" ist auch für reine Pianojazz-Freunde ein gewinnendes Erlebnis.

Matthias Weiller

CD-Rezension

Man glaubt es kaum: Hier sitzt einer hinter dem Fgcl, dessen Herkunft zunächst eher eine gewisse Kühle des Temperaments erwarten lässt. Uli Geissendoerfer stammt aus Deutschland und hat ein Album hingelegt, das die Latte im Latin-Fach verdammt hoch hängt. Seit 1987 lebt er in den USA und hat sich dort einen Namen als Sideman für Leute wie Kenny Wheeler, Slide Hampton, Lew Soloff und Gary Burton gemacht. Seine Latin-Lektion hat er sich vor allem bei Chucho Valdés in Kuba geholt. Credits, die erklären, warum "The Extension" leicht mithalten kann in der Liga heutiger afrokaribischer Tastenmeister. Vom explosiven Nonett über das lyrische Quartett bis zum Uptempo-Trio hat der Münchner US-Musiker verschiedene Besetzungen für diese Produktion um sich geschart und sieben Titel eingespielt, die neben der genretypischen Virtuosität auch die Komposition und das Arrangement in den Vordergrund stellen. Geissendoerfer beherrscht auf den Tasten das komplette Repertoire: Ihm gehen virtuose Unisono-Läufe genauso von den Fingern wie komplexe Latin-Phrasen und halsbrecherische Akkordkaskaden. Auch wenn das stellenweise stark nach Michel Camilo klingt, ist der Mann aus Bayern, der auch schon für Ute Lemper den Pianisten gegeben hat, vom Kopisten weit entfernt. Den Beweis gibt's noch einmal am Schluss: Ein sechsminütiger Soloausflug über den Gospelsong "Nobody Knows (the Trouble I've Seen)" zeigt, dass hier einer kreativ mit Akkorden und Harmonien umgehen kann. (ms)

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