



CHRISTIAN LILLINGER's GRUND – C O R

RELEASE DAY: 19th JANUARY 2018 PLAIST (SOULDFOOD)



Dr. Oliver Schwerdt (musicologist and cultural expert) writes about the album **C O R**:

That's very fine music. Every movement is tasteful, and everything is cooked up on the drums. Razor-sharp. It wasn't mentioned at the presentation of the SWR jazz prize, but Lillinger's genius has a Zappa-like brass section at its command. Just the vibraphone alone! It's no secret that the doubling of instruments really has an effect. It's the sound of the 70s infinitely condensed. Those two saxophonists –with each phrase another one takes centre stage.

Lillinger's **GRUND** combines the tonal sophistication of a contemporary ensemble with the playing enthusiasm of a jazz band. A real sensation of musical pleasure wins through on those intimate sections, such as the duets and trios; the strings of Robert Landfermann and Jonas Westergaard playing with Achim Kaufmann.

Lillinger's drums are astounding, with the piano almost exhausting in some passages. And the sheer speed of the keys on the second piece (Hiatus). I'm reminded of what Alexander Schubert once produced for Lillinger on the album AURORA ARONA.

The third piece (Welt am Draht) begins with a keyboard sound. I was surprised to hear that Kaufmann plays a Fender Rhodes with a Ring Modulator on this record, as well as the grand piano. Lillinger allows all of the unhurried evenness he can generate from his caressed cymbals to climax here, while at the same time, Christopher Dell feeds himself into this penetrating soundscape.

The fourth track (Kubus) sounds like Zappa again –but in Berlin. Of particular note: the appearance of overlapping structures and crossed tone sequences from the piano and vibraphone in a ludicrous tempo and in a peculiar sound synthesis. It's exciting to hear on **C O R** –and especially on the opening track (Cor)-how Lillinger increasingly focuses on a sound. It's a sound long indebted to the new Berlin jazz, and it lends his music some of the old excitement of fusion.

Delius's saxophone playing on "Narrat" is truly captivating, especially his glissandi and that rough embouchure which lends his saxophone the impetus of a trumpet. It's wonderful how Kaufmann accompanies it all with full chords and poetic rhythms. And all this over the unerring and earthy grooves of the rhythm section!

An extraordinary band. Even as that thought pops into my mind, I can hear the snare cooking it all up again. The wide variety of music meets my expectations of a good album. You're in the middle of a piece when suddenly your ear gets absorbed by something slower. Sounds appear, but so isolated –tangibly like the way they adorn newly composed music. It's a choir in a vast stellar orbit. Lillinger's jazz has composed something new. Thank you. Creative. Can a reverb effect artistically endure across the time it takes to be activated during mixing? That's anyone's guess.

Christian Lillinger on his compositions:

01 Cor| (Latin: heart)

Begins with a five bar 5/4 saxophone and vibraphone loop over which the two basses play the theme. In the second section, alto saxophone and vibraphone take on a new theme. Quickly alternating and revolving solos are performed within the grid of this pattern. Finished up with a drum/bass outro.

02 Hiatus(Latin: opening, gap, chasm)

Begins with a trio improvisation on two basses and piano. The drums enter later and introduce a consolidated base –the saxophones come in on top of this to form a background choir. Reminiscent of Xenaki's work (Eonta).

03 Welt am Draht (Lnch)

This is all about different layers which open up different spaces and depths of field. Stroked cymbals with bass bows on drums; vibraphone with a bass bow; bowed basses; E-Bows inside the piano; the Fender Rhodes with effects –they're all used here. It's about tension and time. Inspired by the movie "Welt am Draht" (1973) by Rainer Werner Fassbinder and the mystical atmosphere David Lynch creates in his films (just referenced here as "Lnch").

04 Kubus (cube, mountain in Antarctica)

Begins with a quaver-based unison theme, extending from flow to breakdown. Lines that were in unison become faster, while others become slower etc. Reminiscent of the composer Conlon Nancarrow. Time is gathered up, the game is hyped-up and manipulated.

05 Carotis (carotid artery)

Begins with a flowing pulse, then starts throbbing with Robert Landfermann's bass runs. Tobias Delius slowly peels off an understated solo on top. In the second section, the vibraphone, Rhodes and piano weave a dense layer together. The improvisational weaving shifts and upsets everything. Memories of the composer Conlon Nancarrow are awakened. Carotis ends with a crossfade on the theme

06 Dralau (it's an impresssion of a place where it could go)

It's a theme in AA BB AA BB AA BB form. Over this part the horns act like MCs. Theme A is written in 21/16 time, and B is divided into 5/6/6/5. On top of this, the vibraphone and bass play a melody that rhythmically shifts, getting faster and slower depending on the beat. Rapidly circulating solos and connections are happening here. In a collective improvisation, several actions occur simultaneously across a large field. As a demarcation to the next piece, the ending is deliberately cut rough

07 Narrat (marrative, storytelling)

A rubato theme that moves into a triplet-based 7er groove with a tenor solo by Tobias Delius riding on top. In the second section, the reprise begins split, scratched, and slowed down, with a vast breadth weaved through it. At the end, a dense cloud forms holding a chorus in a similar mood. The thundering climax rends itself apart.

08 Plastik (only on CD and digital)

A conceptual and collective improvisation. Textures and contrasts are hammered out here. It's a reference to plastic (plasticity). The sound behind the sound is improvised. An acoustic plastic forms to generate tonal depth and multi-dimensionality.

09 Katrin (dedicated to my wife)

Realtime composing. A duo of vibraphone and percussion with virtuosic communication –it's all worked out and formulated polyphonically. Here we have several beats running across each other in micro-timing.

Line Up:

Christian Lillinger – Drums, Composing
Pierre Borel – Saxophone
Tobias Delius – Saxophone, Clarinet
Achim Kaufmann – Piano, Fender Rhodes
Christopher Dell – Vibraphone
Robert Landfermann – Bass
Jonas Westergaard – Bass

Track List:

Side A:

- 01. Cor**
- 02. Hiatus**
- 03. Welt Am Draht (Lnch)**
- 04. Kubus**

Side B:

- 05. Carotis**
- 06. Dralau**
- 07. Narrat**
- 08. Plastik (only on CD and digital)**
- 09. Katrin**

The album is released on PLAIST (SOULFOOD) and available as vinyl, CD and digitally

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