



Artist:	VOLKER MEITZ
Title:	NINE DUOS
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During his 30-year career, Berlin based keyboarder Volker Meitz has increasingly been expanding his work from the popular into the experimental realm - from being musical director and producer of **Sonar Kollektiv Orchester** to Eric Schaefer's **The Shredz** (who debutet by catapulting parts of Richard Wagner's work into the dub-jazz-krautrock orbit) and the free-improvisational band **Projekt Schwedt** to curating and organizing the **Berlin Solo Impro** music festival.

This album consists of duos with **renowned Berlin greats\*\*** from **jazz** and **contemporary music**, extensively exploring areas between **tonal**, **atonal** and **noise**. The highly diverse contributions of the duo partners are juxtaposed with one continuous synthesiser part by Meitz in which he performs a **metamorphosis** from **melodious rhythms** to completely **amorphous noise** and back again within 42 minutes. Meitz skilfully picks up the other performers according to their respective styles, whereupon they unpack their individual sound palettes and deliver their musical statements, sometimes merging, sometimes counteracting, before moving on to the next duo – partly in slow transitions, partly as in dream-like, rapid image cuts.

On the album, Volker Meitz exclusively plays a **special synthesizer**, the architecture of which offers great sonic flexibility - namely the flagship model **C15** from the high-end manufacturer **Nonlinear Labs**, whose CEO Stephan Schmitt is also the founder of well-known music software company Native Instruments. *"I had the C15 in my studio for a while and was impressed by its possibilities,"* says Meitz. *"I just started jamming, exploring the vast array of sound parameters, and recorded everything. The result certainly had potential, but something was missing..."* - Instead of simply overdubbing another track himself, he expanded the project by bringing in other musicians: *"I divided the piece into nine sections, assigned their different sound characteristics to the musical personalities of some esteemed colleagues and then asked them to improvise on one of the sections. We tried to create the impression of equal interaction instead of the others just reacting to my playing."* It's fair to say that - with the use of minimal post-production – they have achieved this goal, as the musicians' contributions not only complement Meitz' part, but add a whole new dimension to it.

It all starts with **Taiko Saito** on vibraphone, who weaves melodic and pad-like textures with Meitz, occasionally bursting out with fast runs. Guitarist **Kalle Kalima** takes over, initially floating along in an almost singing fashion, then picking up speed via the keyboard chord changes, ending up in a charming crash landing. Vocal acrobat **Almut Kühne** begins intimately, soon emancipating herself from the shimmering, brittle synth pads to become a robust, syllable-swinging counterpart, while Meitz is building up menacing, wobbling basses, before both suddenly break up the soundscape into small fragments and Kühne disappears using sighs. A cloud of electro-acoustic bubbles follows, through which drummer **Eric Schaefer** pierces with great dynamics, allowing himself to be briefly captured by Meitz in a dubstep-like intermezzo, only to immediately pedal free again, while the latter glides back and forth between bitonal layers of naïve major triads using filter chirps. Enter **Lucy Railton**, who initially sets her diverse cello sounds as an antithesis to the keyboard part, but after an artistic pause, swings into its level, whereupon both employ sounds rubbing against each other, striving towards the halfway point of the album.

Meitz rolls out the next chapter, sometimes resonantly, sometimes crumbly morphing between granular extremes; by means of extremely versatile playing, saxophonist **Silke Eberhard** opens a dialogue in which she first skilfully follows suit in a counterpoint fashion, finally setting herself apart embarking on soloistic endeavours. By this time,

the soundscape has completely turned into noise, and **Susanne Fröhlich** emerges from the shimmering, humming keyboard pad, playing her mighty double bass recorder, bundling the diffuse, threatening atmosphere into subtle forms and phrases. Suddenly, there's a glistening, bright synth sound, Fröhlich switches to the soprano recorder using sharp breaths, and it seems as if two snarling monsters are facing each other. Just before a fight breaks out, trombone player **Matthias Müller** enters the scene with radiant tones, keeping Meitz in check, as it were; soon both are mutually jumping back and forth between noise and tonal sounds, using a wide variety of articulations, building up to a climax, then fading away diffusely. A pentatonic, glassy-sounding motif rings out as if in a reprise, and **Kent Evans** begins his monologue in a calm but firm voice; this being the single semantic contribution to the album, a concrete conclusion seems near – before which, almost literally at the last minute, Meitz' playing causes the atmosphere to briefly slip into the psychedelic, questioning the seemingly harmonious meaning of the words, yet quickly regaining composure and leading towards the end with almost reconciling, melodic-repetitive phrases.



### Tracklisting

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|----|---------------------|--|
| 1. | Oborozuki           | <b>Taiko Saito</b> - vibraphone        |
| 2. | Kalan Paluu         | <b>Kalle Kalima</b> - guitar           |
| 3. | My Heart Ringing    | <b>Almut Kühne</b> - vocals            |
| 4. | Staggered           | <b>Eric Schaefer</b> - drums           |
| 5. | Emulsion Mist       | <b>Lucy Railton</b> - violoncello      |
| 6. | Orbitalfransen      | <b>Silke Eberhard</b> - alto saxophone |
| 7. | Beware Of...        | <b>Susanne Fröhlich</b> - recorders    |
| 8. | Heart And Soul      | <b>Matthias Müller</b> - trombone      |
| 9. | Guanajuato At Night | <b>Kent Evans</b> – vocals & lyrics    |

**Volker Meitz** exclusively plays the *Nonlinear Labs C15* synthesizer  
Recorded and produced by Volker Meitz © 2024 TITE

**Taiko Saito** - member of Trickster Orchestra, Potsalotsa XL, Koko, Berlin Mallet Group, Trio SAN. Studied classical marimba in Tokyo and jazz vibraphone in Berlin. Berlin Jazz Prize 2023, German Jazz Prize 2024.

**Kalle Kalima** - Own bands Klima Kalima, Kuu, Johnny Lamarama; worked with Tomasz Stanko, Greg Cohen, Simon Stockhausen, Christian Lillinger, Jim Black, Ensemble Resonanz. New German Jazz Award 2008.

**Almut Kühne** – Performs jazz and contemporary music, solo and in various ensembles, working with Dresdner Kammerchor, Ensemble Neue Musik Berlin, Johanna Borchert, Stefan Schultze, Tilo Weber and many others.

**Eric Schaefer** - Own projects HAYASHI, The Shredz, Kyoto Mon Amour, played with Michael Wollny Trio, Joachim Kühn; compositions for orchestras and chamber music ensembles; five-time Echo Jazz award winner.

**Lucy Railton** - Composer & performer of classical & new music, various solo recordings, worked with Kit Downes, Peter Zinovieff, Michiko Ogawa, curator of Kammerklang Series, London Contemporary Music Festival

**Silke Eberhard** - own trio, ensembles Potsa Lotsa; worked with Aki Takase, Günter Baby Sommer, Ulrich Gumpert, Hannes Zerbe, Henry Theadgill. German Jazz Award 2023, Jazz Award Berlin 2020

**Susanne Fröhlich** - interpreter of early, classical and new music. Worked with Quartet New Generation, Ari Benjamin Myers, Ensemble Adapter and many more; PhD in technical development of the Helder tenor recorder.

**Matthias Müller** - performer & composer of contemporary and improvised music, various solo, duo and trio projects, played with Splitter Orchester, John Butcher, Tobias Delius, Nate Wooley, Axel Dörner, Olaf Rupp.

**Kent Evans** - Poet, spoken word artist, author of several books, singer/guitarist with bands Epic Fail and Dust Industry. \*\* The only one of the duo partners not living in Berlin, but in Mexico and the USA.

[www.volkermeitz.de](http://www.volkermeitz.de)

[www.troubleintheeast-records.com](http://www.troubleintheeast-records.com)

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