

Linernotes:

Tip of the Tongue

Double bass player and composer Manfred Bründl has embarked on the trail of a German musician who made jazz history yet has still been forgotten: Peter Trunk. From the late 1950s until his death in 1973, Peter Trunk was one of the young musicians who set the tone in the international jazz scene. His playing on the bass and (rarely) the cello was characterized by melodic and rhythmic precision and enormous creativity. As a bass player, he wasn't simply a "sideman", but an equal among equals. According to the pianist, writer and music journalist Michael Naura, "the great bass players – I'm thinking of Jimmy Blanton, Ray Brown, Scott LaFaro, and Peter Trunk – were and are not so much soloists, but integrating figures, who convey a feeling of security." (1)

Nowadays Peter Trunk – who, in 1978 was called "the best German bass player of his time" by Joachim Ernst Berendt (2) – has almost been forgotten. He played with Stan Getz, Albert Mangelsdorff, Benny Bailey, Klaus Doldinger, Attila Zoller and Manfred Schoof, amongst others, and can be heard on a wide range of recordings, some of them groundbreaking. We search in vain for Peter Trunk in most contemporary jazz encyclopaedias, and the albums he was significantly involved in can only be found with difficulty as collectors' items. In times of rapid cuts between scenes, of the daily search for superstars and of the brutal reduction of language, long term memory has been made redundant and has to give way to brief effects. There is apparently not enough memory in our cultural consciousness for the enduring musical work of Peter Trunk.

Manfred Bründl counters this tendency with the art of tracing. He carried out research in archives, met colleagues and contemporary witnesses and thereby developed his own musical view of the artist. "What fascinates me about Peter Trunk" says Manfred Bründl, "is, among other things, his openness coupled with a child-like inquisitiveness, his technical precision on the instrument, the rich nuances of his tonal sound, his immensely delicate articulation and phrasing, which in their variety and palette of colors remind you of Henri Matisse and his rhythmical pictures full of musicality, his powerful and energetic playing, performed with an attack which is unique; his perceptive, highly reactive ability to interact always bears his very own signature."

Peter Trunk developed musically in the uncompromising abstraction of the 60s and the jazz rock fusion of the 70s, when more works were written for the bass than ever before and it became accepted as a melody-leading instrument for the first time. Peter Trunk left his indelible low-sounding mark; you only need to know how to find it and want to do so. Manfred Bründl wanted to. "Tip of the Tongue" is the musical result of studying Peter Trunk. "Tip of the Tongue" is a phenomenon that we all know: something is on the tip of our tongue, but we can't articulate it. Language skids between association and cognitive connections, our thoughts lack the

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appropriate sound. We seem to have forgotten it. Only reflection can retrieve what is hidden and restore it to the present.

With Rainer Böhm (piano), Jonas Burgwinkel (drums) and Hugo Read (alto saxophone), Manfred Bründl rediscovers Peter Trunk's musical world for us and places it in the contemporary context of his own musical creations. Fragments of original themes and improvisations by Peter Trunk can be found in the nine compositions and create a symbiotic relationship with free current mental pictures. In "Sincerely S.T. (for Stella)", for example, we hear a measured piece with an abstract interlude over a distinctive bass riff. The composition, which is dedicated to Peter Trunk's wife, alludes to Trunk's only album under his own name, "Sincerely P.T." (3). Manfred Bründl has taken the piece "Line" off Peter Trunk's album and revived the basic idea of the original melody. And that's how the whole album should be understood: as a statement against the a-historical rapid pace of our allegedly modern world of media, which strives to forget its origins. "Tip of the Tongue" is a powerful album, which works magnificently without explanations, because it is built on a foundation, we all feel on our tongues.

Peter Cronemeyer (translation by Jens Hirschberg)

(1) Michael Naura: Jazz-Toccata – Ansichten und Attacken. Rowohlt, Reinbek bei Hamburg 1991

(2) Joachim Ernst Berendt: In Memoriam Peter Trunk, in Joachim Ernst Berendt: Ein Fenster aus Jazz – Essays, Portraits, Reflexionen. Fischer TB Verlag, Frankfurt a. M. 1978, p. 159-162

(3) Peter Trunk Sincerely P. T. (1973, with Joe Nay, Curt Cress, dr, Sigi Schwab, git, Jasper van't Hof p, Manfred Schoof, Shake Keane tp, Jiggs Whigham tb) Spiegelei / aamok 28578-3 – Germany – 1973 – LP/12"/33RPM

LINERNOTES (Deutsch):**Peter Trunk (* 17. Mai 1936 Frankfurt / Main; † 31. Dezember 1973 /New York)**

Der Kontrabassist und Komponist Manfred Bründl hat sich auf Spurensuche eines deutschen Musikers begeben, der Jazzgeschichte geschrieben hat und dennoch in Vergessenheit geriet: Peter Trunk. Peter Trunk war von den späten 1950er Jahren bis zu seinem Tod 1973 einer der tonangebenden jungen Musiker in der internationalen Jazzszene. Sein Spiel auf dem Bass und (selten) auf dem Cello zeichnete sich durch melodische und rhythmische Präzision und große Kreativität aus. Er war als Kontrabassist nicht der „Sideman“, sondern Gleicher unter Gleichen. Der Pianist, Publizist und Musikredakteur Michael Naura schreibt: „Die großen Bassisten – ich denke da an Jimmy Blanton, Ray Brown, Scott LaFaro und Peter Trunk – waren und sind in erster Linie weniger Solisten, als integrierende Figuren, die Gefühle der Geborgenheit vermitteln.“ (1)

Heute ist der von Joachim Ernst Berendt 1978 (2) noch als „bester deutscher Bassist seiner Zeit“ genannte Peter Trunk fast vergessen. Er, der mit u.a. Stan Getz, Albert Mangelsdorff, Klaus Doldinger, Benny Bailey, Attila Zoller und Manfred Schoof spielte und auf zahlreichen, zum Teil wegweisenden Aufnahmen zu hören ist: Diesen Peter Trunk sucht man in den aktuellen Jazz-Lexika oft vergebens und die Alben, auf denen er maßgeblich mitgespielt hat, sind nur noch als Sammler-Stücke mühsam zu finden. In Zeiten von schnellen Schnitten, der täglichen Suche nach dem Superstar und der brutalen Reduzierung von Sprache, ist das Langzeitgedächtnis arbeitslos geworden und muss dem kurzen Effekt weichen. Für das nachhaltige musikalische Werk von Peter Trunk gibt es offensichtlich nicht mehr genügend Speicherplatz im kulturellen Bewusstsein.

Dieser Tendenz setzt Manfred Bründl die Kunst des Nachspürens entgegen. Er recherchierte in Archiven, traf Kollegen und Zeitzeugen und entwickelte im Laufe der Recherche seine eigene musikalische Sicht auf den Musiker. „An Peter Trunk“ sagt Manfred Bründl, „fasziniert mich u.a. seine Offenheit verbunden mit kindlicher Neugier an allem Neuen, seine instrumental-technische Präzision, die nuancenreiche Klangkultur, seine unendlich filigrane Artikulation und Phrasierung, die in ihrer Vielfalt und Farbpalette an Henri Matisse und seine rhythmischen Bilder voller Musikalität erinnern, sein druckvolles und energetisches Spiel, versehen mit einem Attack, der einzigartig ist, seine einfühlsame, hochreaktive Interaktionsfähigkeit, die jederzeit seine ureigene Handschrift erkennen lässt.“

Peter Trunk hat sich in der in der kompromisslosen Abstraktion der 1960er und in der Jazz-Rock-Fusion der 1970er musikalisch entwickelt. Eine Zeit, in der mehr Werke für den Bass geschrieben wurden als je zuvor und der Bass erstmals als Melodie führendes Soloinstrument fungierte und akzeptiert wurde. Peter Trunk hat seine tieftönenden Spuren bis heute hinterlassen. Man muss sie nur zu finden wissen und es wollen. Manfred Bründl wollte. „Tip Of The Tongue“ nennt er das musikalische Ergebnis seiner Beschäftigung mit Peter Trunk. „Tip Of

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„The Tongue“, ein Phänomen, das wir alle kennen: Es liegt uns auf der Zunge, aber allein sind wir unfähig es zu artikulieren. Die Sprache kommt ins Schleudern zwischen Assoziationen und kognitiven Verknüpfungen, es fehlt der Ton zum Gedanken, wir haben ihn vergessen. Erst das Nach-Denken kann Verborgenes wieder in das gegenwärtige Denken holen.

Gemeinsam mit Rainer Böhm (Klavier), Jonas Burgwinkel (Schlagzeug) und Hugo Read (Altsaxofon) hilft uns Manfred Bründl bei der Wiederentdeckung der musikalischen Welt Peter Trunks und stellt sie in den aktuellen Kontext seines musikalischen Schaffens. Fragmente von Originalthemen und Improvisationen Trunks finden sich in den elf Kompositionen wieder und gehen eine Symbiose mit freien gegenwärtigen Gedankenbildern ein. Im Werk „Sincerely S.T. (for Stella)“ zum Beispiel hören wir ein getragenes Stück mit einem abstrakten Zwischenspiel über einem markanten Bass-Riff. Die Peter Trunks Frau gewidmete Komposition bezieht sich auf Trunks einzige Platte unter eigenem Namen, „Sincerely P.T.“ (3). In dieser Komposition hat Manfred Bründl das Stück "Line" aus Peter Trunks Album aufgegriffen und die Grundidee der Originalmelodie wiederbelebt. Und so ist das gesamte Album zu verstehen als eines gegen die ahistorische Schnelllebigkeit einer angeblich modernen Medienwelt, die ihren Entstehungsprozess zu vergessen sucht. „Tip of the Tongue“ ist ein kraftvolles Album, das ohne Erklärungen prächtig funktioniert, weil es eine Basis hat, die wir alle auf der Zunge spüren.

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Further information: www.manfredbruendl.de and www.laika-records.com

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This album is dedicated to

Stella Banks, whose life was irrevocably intertwined with Peter Trunk's. Their artistically-creative relationship and moving story lent great inspiration to this music.

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Patrick Pittelli, March 2010

Dear Manfred,

Peter Trunk was my brother-in-law. He was killed in an auto accident on New Years Eve 1973. As we were on our way to dinner my car was struck by a drunk driver. Peter was killed as well as my cousin's wife. We were all hospitalized. My sister Stella was a jazz singer and performed, often times with Peter, throughout Europe. She used the name Stella Banks. Stella never got over her Peters death and had a long history of drug abuse subsequent to the accident. She just couldn't face life without him. Her body succumbed to rheumatoid arthritis and lupus and she spent the last fifteen years in excruciating pain and begging for it to be over so she could be with Peter once again. On Christmas Day 2008 she finally got her wish when she succumbed to a cardiac arrest after suffering a stroke 10 days prior. As a result of the stroke, her memory of Peter was barely there and because of it she seemed to be in great spirits, laughing and telling jokes when I visited her in the hospital just three days before her passing. She was not in the pain that she had been experiencing for the past fifteen years. Which tells me that so much of her pain and disease was a result of losing the greatest love of her life.

I can tell you that when they were together they were amazing as a couple. So much in love and so much respect for one another. He was understanding and affectionate towards everyone in life. He was always excited about life and what thrills it brings. He was talented beyond belief.

Stella's wish was to be cremated and her ashes buried with him in his grave. She got her wish. So once again they are together. And I am sure that as he holds her in his arms as he often did, he is telling her how much he loves her and this time they will be together for all eternity.

Thank you

Patrick