

# Everything merges

## **Saxophonist Jim Snidero and guitarist Kurt Rosenwinkel at Ella & Louis in Mannheim**

Another summit meeting in the Mannheim jazz club Ella & Louis: saxophonist Jim Snidero and guitarist Kurt Rosenwinkel are masters of their craft, and both have a particularly individual style.

"I wrote this track for Kurt because I just wanted something that would really get him going," Jim Snidero told the audience. "Far Far Away" is the name of the title track of the joint album that he and Rosenwinkel released last year. And at Ella & Louis, too, Kurt really let loose.

Not only here, but actually all the time. Before you know it, a tidal wave of tones rolls over the audience. But they are much more than just fast scales, they are resolved harmonies, colorful chords played one after the other at an insane tempo. One is inevitably reminded of John Coltrane's "Sheets of Sounds". This is how the critic Ira Gittler described the extremely dense harmonic tone sequences that Coltrane developed. As a listener, one is completely flabbergasted by the extremely fast-flowing lines and the seemingly seamless tones.

In relevant internet music forums, guitarists tirelessly discuss how Rosenwinkel manages his unique sound. It is clear that he removes the percussive attack of the guitar tones with electronic help. "I have a certain aesthetic of sound in mind. It's something that I hear inside and try to convey to the outside," said Rosenwinkel in an earlier RHEINPFALZ interview. At Ella & Louis, the audience was enraptured by his playing.

The contrast between Rosenwinkel's playing and Jim Snidero's style is interesting. The saxophonist, who is twelve years his senior, plays much more relaxed and clearer. While with Rosenwinkel the tones become a sound surface, Snidero articulates and phrases in such a way, that every single note has its place in the course of the lines. It also sounds modern in terms of harmonics, but in a different way. His tone is also very clear and defined. Several times the saxophone and guitar play parallel themes, and it's amazing how the soft guitar tone nestles almost seamlessly with the sax. This creates a new and unusual timbre. And because Rosenwinkel's tones lack the percussive attack, the impression of merging is so extreme.

Rick Hollander on drums has an enormous inner tension in his playing. He gives a lot of energy to the pieces. That doesn't mean that he plays a lot, but that he accentuates very clearly, which can also be seen in his sweeping, fast movements. Even with a ballad

and with felt mallets, he remains very present and keeps the tension. For many years, Snidero's European quartet, to which Rosenwinkel has been a guest, has also included Martin Zenker on bass and Pietro Lussu on piano. These two musicians also bring their personal style. Together this results in a very coherent sound and groove.

Rosenwinkel was born in Philadelphia in 1970 and attended the High School for Creative and Performing Arts there. He then began studying at the renowned Berklee College, a training ground for the best jazz musicians. After two years he left college without a degree, but apparently with impressive skills: vibraphonist Gary Burton, then the head of the jazz school, took him on big tours. After that he moved to New York and played with various jazz greats.

Jim Snidero, born in 1958 and raised in Camp Springs, Maryland, USA, played in well-known big bands early on, including Frank Sinatra and the Mingus Big Band. Later he worked as a sideman for many international jazz greats. He collaborated with bassist Dave Holland and drummer Jack DeJohnette, and has placed in the critics' and readers' prizes of the renowned "Downbeat" jazz magazine. The current album with Rosenwinkel was also rated with five stars.