



Till Brönner
Dieter Ilg
Nightfall

Some musical constellations are so obvious that the question arises why they hadn't become reality long ago. And when they finally do see the light of day, they appear so familiar to us as if we'd known them for ages. One of these constellations is the duo formed by the Berlin trumpeter Till Brönner and the Freiburg bass player Dieter Ilg. They are, in the full sense, soul-mates, no matter how threadbare the term might sound. They often seek to do the very same thing on their antithetical instruments, even if they express it in quite different ways. As a result, they fit each other to a tee. This osmosis is now plain to hear on their joint début album, *Nightfall*.

In recent years some people have been able to savour the privilege of hearing the Brönner-Ilg duo live. Both musicians have long numbered among the major protagonists of German and European jazz. Brönner has recorded albums in a very wide range of formations, worked as a producer for artists as varied as film diva Hildegard Knef and baritone Thomas Quasthoff, plunged into spontaneous live performances with free jazzers such as Baby Sommer and Christian Lillinger and played in the White House at the invitation of Barack Obama. In the 1990s Ilg discovered German folk song for jazz, supported musicians such as Randy Brecker, Charlie Mariano or Nguyen Le with his sonorous, thoughtful but always uncommonly open-minded delivery, and played in the legendary quintet with Albert Mangelsdorff and Wolfgang Dauner. When Ilg and Brönner happen to meet, they bring together not only a chapter of jazz history and lots of jazz stories, but a good part of the future.

For all their personal fame, these two never strike the attitude of two superstars at a summit meeting. They're simply two musicians who have a lot to say to each other. That's why they took their time before entering the studio, and why they take their time when playing. A good story needs time to unfold and breathe. It wants to be spelled out and filled with life. But it also wants to be heard. Brönner and Ilg don't rush from one musical climax to another, but let their stories come as they will. The most important thing is what they have to say and how they say it. Instead of melody line and accompaniment, they prefer a balanced dialogue on an equal footing at every moment. The nature of their instruments ensures that Brönner's part is perhaps a bit more lithe and pliant, and Ilg's a bit more forceful. But every tone has weight and stands for itself, a mirror reflection of its counterpart.

The choice of pieces is sufficient proof that the musicians did not want to pin themselves down to a fixed classification or pigeonhole. If jazz was ever an expression of individual liberty, then this independence is manifest here, devoid of myths, in their approach to the material and their spontaneous treatment of it. Anything can be done if you only want to do it, and Brönner and Ilg certainly do. Songs by Leonard Cohen, the Beatles and Britney Spears, pieces by Jerome Kern, Johnny Green and Ornette Coleman, compositions by Johann Sebastian Bach and Melchior Vulpius, even a few creations of their own: the range of intentions and influences on display is almost unparalleled. In each song the two men find inventive new angles and perspectives. There aren't any solos in the classical jazz sense. As in any good

conversation that unfolds naturally, the lines of argument fall now on one side, now on the other. The flow of thoughts is completely free. It's pressed here into a narrow riverbed only to expand a moment later into a broad delta.

On *Nightfall*, Brönner and Ilg open up limitless realms of association for the listener. They make it easy for their recipients to enter the dialogue. Depending on the time of day or year, the songs cast completely different shadows. There's no "just-the-two-of-us" mood that so often turns jazz duos into affairs for so-called aficionados. *Nightfall* is exactly what it is, and nothing else. Dyed-in-the-wool jazz fans will see themselves reflected in the light-heartedness of this interchange no less than young pop listeners who may never have come into contact with a jazz album.

Nightfall is many things at once. It's a *début* album and, at the same time, the fruit of a long and intensive collaboration between two great storytellers. It's at once a consummation, a stocktaking and a promise for the future. It's a resolute dismissal of entrenched prejudices and a passionate affirmation of the freedom and miracle of jazz. The organic blend of willful abandon and understatement celebrated on this album is anything but run-of-the-mill. Not least of all, the album is a refreshing counterfoil in the age of perfectionism. It projects the cathartic discovery that no matter how much one has achieved in life, it's always worth starting from scratch, over and over again. And if proof is needed, here it is!

Nightfall will be released internationally on January 26, 2018.

1	A Thousand Kisses Deep Leonard Cohen / Sharon Robinson	4:40
2	The Fifth of Beethoven Ornette Coleman	4:51
3	Nightfall Till Brönner / Dieter Ilg	3:19
4	Nobody Else But Me Jerome Kern / Oscar Hammerstein II	5:46
5	Air Johann Sebastian Bach	6:10
6	Scream & Shout will.i.am / Jef Martens / Jean Baptiste	3:23
7	Wetterstein Till Brönner / Dieter Ilg	2:56
8	Eleanor Rigby John Lennon / Paul McCartney	3:23
9	Peng! Peng! Till Brönner / Dieter Ilg	3:34
10	Body and Soul Johnny Green	5:10
11	Ach bleib mit deiner Gnade Melchior Vulpius	6:49

Till Brönner *trumpet & flugelhorn*

Dieter Ilg *bass*

All tracks arranged by Till Brönner & Dieter Ilg

Woman on cover: Lisa Tomaschewsky / Actress & Model