



„Going Home“ Arne Jansen & Stephan Braun

A scent of childhood. A parent's comforting lullaby. The first kiss. How wonderful it would be if we could preserve these magical impressions from our younger days indefinitely! Not in the form of a fading snapshot, but in their full emotional essence. Impressions that "explode into the heart", as the Dire Straits song "Romeo & Juliet" puts it.

A goal that is probably still being feverishly pursued by neuro-scientists in Silicon Valley is one that guitarist Arne Jansen and cellist Stephan Bruan have already achieved with their album "Going Home": to allow listeners to directly experience the magic of the first time. When you were just feelings, without preconceptions. Like Arne Jansen, back in the mid-1980s, when a holiday in Denmark started on a bitterly disappointing note.

Instead of the "The Three Investigators" audiobook he had hoped for, his father bought a strange music cassette from a flea market. It was the "Love Over Gold" album by Dire Straits, with its epic opener "Telegraph Road". For Jansen, then just eight or nine years old, the experience was almost as electrifying as the forked lightning on the cover. He remembers then listening over and over again to this initially so begrudged cassette.

A chance encounter with long-term consequences: "The song "Telegraph Road" is the reason I started playing the guitar", says Jansen. Which was extremely lucky for the national music scene. "We haven't had a jazz guitarist with the format of Berlin-based Arne Jansen in Germany for decades. Perhaps never at all", was the verdict of the magazine Jazzthetik, for example, regarding Jansen's boundary-breaking skills on his instrument, which have already gained him two "ECHO Jazz" prizes for the albums "The Sleep of Reason – Ode to Goya" and "Nine Firmaments".

Now, "Going Home" represents the most personal work of the guitarist, whom we also know as trumpeter Nils Wülker's congenial guitar partner. Jansen takes his listeners along on a journey to the roots of his passion for music. And allows them

to feel, with every nuanced note, what Dire Straits and their guitarist Mark Knopfler once meant to him and to sense the finely interwoven spiritual impressions they left on him. Somewhat surprisingly, Jansen's long-term friend and musical associate Stephan Braun, a cellist and bassist, turned out to be the perfect duet partner for these original chamber-jazz-rock interpretations of the songs of his youth.

Because Braun is a one-man orchestra. Thanks to an additional lower string on the cello and to his unusual percussive playing techniques and remarkable improvisational skills, he is able to assume the role of an entire band (if you want to see this in action, you should definitely check out Braun's breathtaking live versions of "Somewhere Over the Rainbow" with the renowned US singer Melody Gardot, on YouTube).

One thing is sure: on "Going Home", the best-known songs of the most successful British rock group of the 1980s can be heard as never before. In some cases, the million-selling hits are difficult to recognise at first, or hardly at all, which allows you to rediscover them in a completely new way – as with "Money for Nothing", which is reborn as a waltz with a certain desert-rock twang, or with the incredibly relaxed and dance-like "Sultans of Swing", or the almost club-psychedelic rooted "Calling Elvis".

In addition to Jansen's solo performance of the title piece, with its delicate chord-melody poetry, the quiet duo reading of the worldwide hit "Brothers in Arms" proves to be particularly evocative. Jansen, who lives on the outskirts of Berlin, feels a special connection to "Brothers in Arms" – in 2012, he played this song with his trio at a concert during the Koktebel Jazz Festival in Crimea, which was still Ukrainian at the time. "This was a truly moving moment that was followed by scenes of real bonding and brotherhood," says the guitarist. "It makes you realise: Mark Knopfler manages to write songs that conceal deeper truths and cause something to resonate in people all over the world."

Jansen explains, with a smile, that he used to feel a little ashamed to own up to his jazz colleagues about his youthful musical crush, because Dire Straits were thought of as rather uncool, not only in jazz circles, and to have a fanbase of tousled English teachers. After listening exclusively to Miles Davis and Mark Knopfler during a holiday trip, however, something became clear to the guitarist: his two heroes Miles and Mark have more in common than you might think. Above all, with regard to their ability to tell a deeply personal story using very few notes.

"Someone is really revealing something about themselves, here," explains Jansen. "This is exactly what interests me now – that the listener comes to understand what the music means to you. And that is what this album is all about: singing on the instrument."

The great Pat Metheny once advised Arne Jansen: "Find out what you really love. And that's what you should be working on." "Going Home" embodies this idea in the best possible way. With music that is entirely in tune with itself, that awakens old memories and creates new ones. It feels like coming home.