



# Nils Wogram & Nostalgia

## **Sturm & Drang**

nWog CD 003 – EAN: 7640138444456 /

The 38-year-old trombonist, composer and producer Nils Wogram is one of the most proactive jazz musicians of the German lingua, without exaggerating. Although the musician, living in both Cologne and Zurich, also teaches on the side at the jazz school in Lucerne, Switzerland, his real home, his musical home turf where he likes to live out his life, is and remains the stage. Circa four months a year, Nils Wogram is on tour, which has not stopped him from releasing a truly imposing number of albums. Since his debut “New York Conversations” from 1994, more than two dozen long players have more than impressed jazz circles – this creative output is simply exceptional. All the while his trio Nostalgia is only one of four ensembles Nils Wogram currently leads, among which are the renowned Root 70 and a septet made out of Berlin musicians.

***Sturm und Drang* is the third album with Nostalgia, to which the Hammond organist Florian Ross and the drummer/percussionist Degan Terzi belong, the former based in Cologne. The three musicians overcome space and time with the playfulness of a well-rehearsed team. Every movement brings forth a creative flight of sparks. For the new album the trio resolved to make its way into the wide ring of club music as an acoustic jazz band. Dance tracks rooted in jazz with an intellectual touch.**

“For this I have used known grooves and partially changed them rhythmically without taking away their own character,” says Nils Wogram, who composed eight of the ten pieces. The album title *Sturm und Drang* has been chosen carefully; the German edition of Wikipedia defines this historical concept as the “foundation for overcoming the constraints of reason and for unchaining exuberance, the imagination and the power of the mind as a new poetic attitude.” Nostalgia could hardly better describe their intentions.

The ten tracks on *Sturm und Drang* alternate between dance floor and chill-out zone, between a DJ underground jazz set and blue lounge, between urban grooves and an atmospheric tonal biotope. On the one hand, the three musicians act enormously loose and freethinking, on the other on an artistically high level and with great discipline. Recorded in Wolfgang Stach’s Cologne Maarweg Studio, all of the tracks are highly dynamic. The opener, “Funky Neighborhood” forms a brilliant ice breaker, which kidnaps us into the groove world of Nostalgia, in which the Hammond is in flames, the drums replace the bass straight away and the trombone goes into every tempi, every pitch. At times Wogram sounds like a trumpet, at others like a didgeridoo. On the ten-minute “Fundamentals,” Wogram’s trombone tone approaches a musical birthday gift for mother, even a very strong Miles Davis, this jazz deity of melancholy. In elegiac moments, such as on “Country Rain” and “Thick Air,” the songs emit something mysterious, even sacred.

The most stirring take, however, is the carefree “Copenhagen”: a homage to the great time at the Copenhagen Jazz Festival, at which time the Danish capital transformed itself into one giant stage,

into a melting pot of sounds and cultures. Or the way how Nostalgia have Brass Band Swing and Reggae grooves play off each other on the final "Swing Em Home." This is Zappa-esque slapstick with historical finesse and humor often missing in jazz.

Nils Wogram had himself photographed for the cover artwork in the picturesque garret of a poet and thinker. That, too, reveals his humor. Dozed off between bottles of beer, fast food and musical notes, an extraordinary musician is dreaming, who has made a stepchild of jazz, the trombone, his main instrument: if *Sturm und Drang* could only set a precedent, this form of jazz would open the floodgates in any club that knows a thing or two about jazz. In September Nostalgia will only be giving a few concerts with their Sturm-und-Drang luggage because Nils Wogram will become a father for the third time in the late summer. The big tour with Nostalgia will take off in the following year. By then, though, some DJs will have long fallen back on the willful charm of this cross-over jazz with all its emotional imponderables and stylistic pranks. Attack!