



Happy 25th Birthday, De-Phazz!

In 1997 the sheep Dolly was born, Roman Herzog held his famous `Ruck`-speech, Jan Ulrich was the first German to win the Tour de France, the Titanic was sinking in our cinemas, the Tamagotchi and the Teletubbies were present in every child`s bedroom, princess Diana had a fatal accident and the whole world was listening to `Candle in the Wind` by Elton John nonstop for weeks. But what else was going on?

In Heidelberg a rocket named `Destination Future Jazz` was launched. In short: De-Phazz. Founded by Pit Baumgartner as an open band project, each album was to represent a journey to a different musical planet. The rocket, however, was to venture into completely different spheres: De-Phazz is now one of the most successful German bands, selling out world-wide tours, creating scores for movies as well as radio hits such as `Mambo Craze`. And with a song like `No Jive` having been played over 9 million times on Spotify, it is safe to assume that the distinct De-Phazz-Sound is simply timeless. An inseparable element of this sound are the voices of Pat Appleton and Karl Frierson, but ex-Kraan-drummer Jan Fride or Joo Kraus` trumpet are also much-loved regulars in this sound-collective.

The mixture between electronic synthesized sounds and various instruments coined the style of the band from the very beginning. Dub, Jazz, Soul and Latin alternated in sturdy kitsch and club-grooves. `We see these styles as windows through which we can discover the new and rediscover the familiar`, says Pit Baumgartner, who to this day loves to rummage through flea markets in search of old vinyl gems. Even the FAZ praised that the band ties together `the best love-music of the past fifty years`: The tragedy of Blues, the coolness of Jazz, the joy of Swing, the occultism and eroticism of African and Latin-American rhythm, the nostalgia and irony of the good old German `Schlager`.

No scandals are to be found in the 25-year history of the band, no TV`s were thrown out of hotel windows. `Not even a transistor radio`, Pit Baumgartner adds with a grin. Instead, there were countless highlights: `When I received the official permission of Bert Kaempfert`s daughter to use his material and was therefore able to work with a global hit like `Strangers in The Night`. That just filled me with absolute joy. `Or the unforgettable evening with the Ukrainian Big-Band in Moscow, or the concerts in collaboration with the `Stüba Philharmonie: `Witnessing a symphonic orchestra with 60 musicians suddenly play your little song just gives you goose bumps all over.`

To celebrate the 25th anniversary the sample scientist invited his favourite musicians to the `Jelly Banquet`, title of album number 17. The familiar Pat Appleton, Karl Frierson and Barbara Lahr are part of the get-together, but also new voices such as Ola Onabule, Inga Rumpf, Carol Schuler, Lily Dahab, the band Ganes and Pere Ubu-singer David Thomas.

One last question for Pit Baumgartner: When should fans best listen to his music- while dancing, while relaxing on the sofa or during a dinner party? He laughs.: `A couple of years ago a friend called me and said: I made love to your music yesterday. And I answered: Wonderful! Could you get any closer to your audience than that?`