

It's Psychedelic Baby Magazine Space Debris interview

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Space Debris is a German space rock band. They combine variety of genres, from 'krautrock' to jazz fusion.

*Where and when did you grow up? Was music a big part of your family life?*

Christian Jäger: I grew up in Germany, near Heidelberg. No one in my family played instrument. My parents even forbid me to buy a drum set with my own money when I was 15 years old. My best friend to this day helped me to buy my own drums.

*When did you begin playing music? What was your first instrument? Who were your major influences?*

When I was 15 years old, my first drum set was old black Sonor vintage set with only concert-toms and UFIP Ride cymbals. Two years later I changed for awhile to a TAMA, Imperialstar. Then in 1994 I bought my black Ludwig 1969 kit and about 10 years later my white Rocker Ludwig 1976 kit. Both drum sets I'm still playing. My early major influences were Ian Paice, John Bonham, Billy Cobham and Simon Phillips, but also a lot of other rock and jazz drummers.

*What bands were you with prior to the formation of Space Debris?*

I played first in a soul cover band and in a real looney-chaos-duo (Laurel & Laurel) with self-made instruments and a fine trio (Brian Ortwin) with own songs in a rock-crossover-style, later in a Deep Purple cover band and then for more than the last two decades in Space Debris. In the meantime I played also for two years in the band (Paisley Tree) with my wife on vocals (recorded LP). I never had drum lessons, my teachers were LP's and books. I'm an autodidact and I never have practiced much. I'm just playing my stuff.

*Can you elaborate on the formation of Space Debris?*

We made sessions with the Deep Purple cover band between 1994-1998, mostly without singer and only sometimes with the bass player, because only Tommy Gorny, Tom Kunkel and me liked to play our own music. After the DVD of our gig at Herzberg Festival 2006, filmed and shown by German TV (WDR Rockpalast) and the gig at Zappanale Festival 2007 we had a little awareness. Later in 2008 Tom Kunkel quit and since then the outstanding Winnie Rimbach Sator joined the band. Only the bass player position changed since 2008. Today we have the best one ever with Vroni Frisch who studied music together with Winnie in Mainz, Germany.

Who's in Space Debris and what do you all play? Have you all made any changes to the lineup since you started or is this the original lineup?

Today's line up is: Vroni Frisch on bass, Tommy Gorny on guitar, Winnie Rimbach Sator on keyboards, and me on the drums/artwork/recording/mixing etc.

*When and where did Space Debris play their first gig?*

August 5th 2008 at Open Air Festival Neonfest Odenwald, very freaky, with installations of neon-artists.

*How did you decide to use the name 'Space Debris'?*

A friend, Christian Horle listened to the early demo tapes for the first LP and had this band name idea, he also did the photos of the Palmyra artwork. She's A Temple, which is also out as a reissue with much more of that photo artwork plus now added coloured inner sleeves.

*Krautrocksessions 1994 – 2001 was your first release that captured the beginning of your band. What can you tell me about these recordings?*

Oh, those sessions have original and very innocent spirit and are very imaginatively played. Very deep feelings, very true sound recorded with 1-4 Mikros analog.

*Breitklang is your own label.*

I do the whole label work, that's what we call 'breitklang', but it's not a company. I first used this word in the liner notes of the first album. I worked on two mono recordings with stereo equalizer to get something like a room-feeling. If you make for example the 4khz louder at the left channel and quieter at the right channel and then the 5 khz louder at the right channel and quieter at the left and so on, then you will get a sound of a larger room and with headphones it's wider ('breit' means wide).

*What's the songwriting process like?*

No classic songwriting. We are playing without written or verbal arrangement. Only sometimes with the beginning cord, so we are doing 'spontaneous composing' (like Holger Czukay of Can called such kind of music), that means that we build structures by playing and we try not to do only plus one unchanging riff, we try to develop melodies and rhythms by listening to every musician.

*Were you inspired by psychoactive substances like LSD at the time of writing the albums?*

No, never, we don't even drink much beer! Our drug is music.

*Improvisation is a big part of your life.*

Yes, it's not my way to plan things and construct the things to reach a definite purpose. Things must flow and you must ride on the wave of the flow, no ambitions, only the ambition to make music which transports true and real emotions of the musicians.

*I usually ask about particular albums, but that would be absolutely impossible in your case. You released so much different albums. Would you like to take us back and go through your discography?*

The first four albums were played with the previous keyboarder Tom on the Hammond. We played every week together and become fans of our own music, because we start doing only the music we like the most. The third album has the first consistent recording and a sound concept. The Archive-CDs are tapes with older recordings and not from the actual members. Albums with Winnie on the keys are different and with more style and sounds. They are more consistent. Winnie's and mine favorite is still She's A Temple but also Behind The Gate and Mountain Ultimate. The older recordings like Elephant Moon was much more abstract and experimental, but the actual recordings are more concrete and mature.

So to give an orientation: the last studio LP Behind The Gate (2017) has the highest quality in sound and the last live LP Mountain Ultimate (2018) is together with She's A Temple (2013) as the best live performance of Space Debris.

*Is there any unreleased material?*

Yes, at the end of this year we will publish two archive CDs Volume 5 and 6. Volume 5 will include original and unreleased track from 2006 (from the LP Three) and Volume 6 is a complete Free festival concert of 2012 (Freak Valley Festival). At Bandcamp you can listen to example of a previously not released track "Villamountain" from the She's A Temple concert.

*I really enjoyed listening to Behind The Gate.*

Oh, thank you! Behind The Gate is a record with Janni Schmidt on bass, he also plays with Miler Anderson and Pete York and it was the right fourth puzzle for us. The recordings were made in two sessions, so the sound and the feeling is very uniformly distributed and at a high level. We nearly topped the band level in my opinion with the new Mountain Ultimate live LP. Recorded with very professional bass player Vroni Frisch. Tommy Gorny and Winnie Rimbach Sator know each other now for about 10 years, so understanding and experience is great for this style of work.

*What other musical activities have you undertaken?*

Tommy is playing in a folk band Fleadh with an Irish songwriter. They are often doing gigs. Winnie is a professional. He's playing with Imakyo, Mine and H1scOre and he has his own label: Exo10Records. Vroni plays also with Mine and is doing jazz with the band Jatzt. She is also a composer of orchestra music.

*What are some future plans?*

Haha! Like our music, no plans! Let's see what the future will bring...

*Who are some of your personal favorite bands that you've had a chance to play with over the past few years?*

Baby Woodrose, Chad Wackerman (Zappanale), Guru Guru, Birth Control, Epitaph, Weltraum, Electric Moon, Aphodyl, Monkey 3, Hidria Space Folk, Hattler, Man, Wicked Minds, Demon's Eye, Project Object, Trigon, King Crimson, UFO, Soft Machine (Herzberg Festival).

*Let's end this interview with some of your favourite albums. Have you found something new lately you would like to recommend to our readers?*

Actually, I'm listening to classical records from Max Reger (violin-concert for example) or Mendelssohn. And I just bought records from the Lucifer's Friend! A really fitting music tip from me for fans of Space Debris. I prefer Banquet, debut and Where The Groupies Killed The Blues. This was a fantastic band.

And here is a collection of the favorite records by Space Debris members: (link to website „musicians“-botton)

*Thank you for taking your time. Last word is yours.*

Oh, thank you a lot for doing this interview and greetings to all the It's Psychedelic Baby Magazine readers! Maybe we see each other at a festival!

– Klemen Breznikar

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