

*Bleu*, not Blue. That makes a difference. Because it's not about the sadness of the big feeling, but about the melancholy of the fine sounds. Lorenz Raab, Ali Angerer and Rainer Deixler have been on its trail for more than two decades. And they have chosen a special constellation for it.

Raab's trumpet, sometimes also the flugelhorn, are companions of the voice. They are the mediums of a narrator who likes to take a few strides, pausing at significant points, in order to then reach his goal with a measured but determined stride. For they have the tone of an experienced artist who feels as much at home in the world of classical music as he does in the clubs of late nights, and who combines this expanse of impulses into a serene chamber-music improvising blend. Kenny Wheeler meets Mozarteum, possibly with an electronic musician at his side, a combination of the teachers and influences of yesteryear that have long since developed into an individual style of playing.

Ali Angerer, on the other hand, is already a tamer of contradictions in his choice of instruments. On the one hand, there is the tuba, deep and massive, a body of sound that effortlessly reaches out and dominates the room. On the other, he counters with an electric dulcimer, which, as a drone zither with buzzing, fragile string sounds, makes the band sound transparent and, with a little synthetic expansion, also allows for discreet, surprising effects. Finally, Rainer Deixler sees himself as a pulse generator, less as a rhythm servant. His drums prefer enigmatic accents, cymbal sounds and unusually beaten drums, which on the one hand give structure to the music, but on the other hand see themselves as a texture that surrounds the melodies and gives them a basis for spatial development.

In sum, this results in *Bleu* as a trio of chamber jazz-like interlocking sonic ideas. "Deeper" as studio album number 5 since the self-titled debut in 2001 is on the one hand further development, on the other hand Conclusio of a time experienced together musically. The music is even more restrained, more reduced than on the previous albums, and at the same time seems casually concentrated, like the bundling of creative energies. This is improvisation as well as clarity, melodic immediacy as well as harmonic rambling. Hence the title. Because Raab, Angerer and Deixler have grown older together with their trio. They can rely on a fund of profound experience gained with their other projects and with *Bleu*. This results in music of delicate beauty, a little melancholic at times. But it is also a reason to smile. *Ralf Dombrowski*