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On a slice

NIKLAS FITE | GÜNTER CHRISTMANN

«Insisting»

CORBETT VS. DEMPSEY, CvsD CD111



Two hardcore followers of free improvisation from different generations meet for an improvised explosion. Born in Poland, but based outside Hanover, Germany, cellist Günter Christmann traces his roots back to the beginnings of European improvised music, when he played trombone in Rüdiger Carl Inc., the trio that released *King Alcohol* on FMP in 1972, as well as groups led by Peter Kowald, Alex Schlippenbach and others. Christmann's personal bow playing drew him away from free jazz and deeper into a kind of improvised chamber music, which he explored in

detail with his ensemble Vario and as a member of King Übü Örchestrü, as well as in an extensive collection of solo and duo records on the Moers label.

The young, Swedish guitarist Niklas Fite has, in a short time, developed into an exciting guitarist in the landscape of John Russell and Derek Bailey. He is a widely used guitarist in his home country and in the "freer" clubs in Copenhagen, and we have heard him with Raymond Strid, Sture Ericsson, Joe Williamson, Sven-Åke Johansson and Margeux Oswald, to name a few. He is the son of Stockholm guitarist Andy Fite and was a student of British guitarist John Russell, with whom Christmann worked extensively.

On 5 and 6 May 2019, they had a meeting in Langenhagen in Germany, where they recorded the eight free-flowing stretches that we get on the record *Insisting*. They start with "exhalation", and immediately we discover that this is no ordinary guitar and cello record. Here there is free improvisation and playing in a way that is a long way from the blues scales or guitar jazz as we know it from the history of Charlie Christian, via Wes Montgomery and Jim Hall to Pat Metheny, Bill Frisell and all the others we are more used to to listen to. But that does not mean that the music we are served here is not very interesting.

On the eight tracks, the guitar and the cello almost intermingle with each other. There are sound experiences and communication much more than melodic tonal ranges, but an extremely fascinating use of both guitar and cello that creates interesting images.

It is impossible to pick out a few favorite tracks, because all the improvisations are exciting, and the whole that the two create by giving us "new" angles to the two instruments, is what remains the strongest after listening to the tracks a few times.

An exciting meeting!

Jan Granlie

Niklas Fite (guitar), Günter Christmann (cello)

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By Jan Granlie (<https://salt-peanuts.eu/author/jangranlie/>)
