



Ralf Schmid – vita

Every musical innovation was related to the search of new sounds and their integration into familiar structures. To be successful in this search, it's necessary to take risks. The pianist Ralf Schmid is such a passionate sound seeker, unafraid of risks.

Schmid is an avantgardist in the literal sense, in constant search of the unheard but always at the service of the listener, who also becomes a spectator and active part of the overall imagination in his newest projects.

If Schmid would just aim at a successful career in music, his dreams had already come true. He is highly active in Europe as well in the US and Latin America, he has worked with such diverse artists as Herbie Hancock, Daniel Hope or Whitney Houston. This list could be endlessly continued. In Germany, he has a steady collaboration with trumpeter Joo Kraus with whom he produced six albums. On these he presented his profound capabilities in multistilistic contexts.

Schmid is considered to be a jazz musician, but his portfolio has no boundaries and extends the sheer production of sound. Within his search for the undiscovered, he remains true to his personal musical language that he expands constantly by integrating new idioms. Schmid is one of the sharp minds who freed themselves from the dogma of musical genres. Whether he conducts large ensembles as the radio Big Bands of Berlin, Frankfurt, Stuttgart or Hamburg, writes for choirs or symphony orchestras, works on brazilian music projects with Ivan Lins or Paula Morelenbaum – his goal is musical holism.

Ralf Schmid's music theater „A Distant Drum“ on 20 years democracy in South Africa was premiered at the legendary Carnegie Hall in New York. Curator Daniel Hope invited Schmid to this collaboration because of his exceptionally wide range of musical capabilities. In this case they ranged from South African township music, classical choir scoring to american jazz tradition.

But Schmid does not content himself with past achievements. In his search for holistic expression in the virtual age, his mission is the amalgamation of the electronic and acoustic sound worlds as well as the synaesthesia of visual and auditive signals. In his newest project **pyanook**, he not only inflames a ballet between two grand pianos but with specially designed data gloves, he can trigger and manipulate sounds in the flow of piano playing. The blend of sound and movement seems like magic.

To complete this vision, light artist and set designer Pietro Cardarelli creates dreamlike visual components that interact with Schmid's music and movements. This approach makes **pyanook** one of the boldest audiovisual ventures of the 21st century, for Schmid's creative esprit it's just a further step in his search for sound and harmony.