

Frank Wingold Solo Guitar ,to be frank'

Frank Wingold's new solo album ,to be frank' is released by BERTHOLD records on 5th of march 2021.

Wingold, guitarist, composer and professor of jazz guitar in Osnabrück, Germany, has brought to solo guitar many of the ideas from his trio's recent and successful release Entangled Music. The guitarist's extraordinary technique allows him as a solo player to reproduce the multilayered sounds so effective on his previous album. "I love synchronicity, when things happen at the same time, when they are interwoven and entangled," he explains. "I love to sit down with the guitar, perhaps with an amplifier, but no other electronic devices and just play." He has switched to using seven string guitars which give him much greater range and access to lower notes. This allows him to perform as if he is playing a piano. He even talks of an orchestral approach to the solo instrument.

Wingold uses two guitars to different effect. "I play a steel-stringed Eastman using nails and fingers, not the classic picking techniques," he explains. "Even when playing melodies I employ my fingers so that I have access to the whole range of strings. I play with a thumbpick on the steel-string, on the nylon string I play with nails. On either guitar I don't have to change my method for anything I do – not for melodies, chords, polyphony or arpeggios." With clarity and feeling, Wingold produces an independence of sound between bass, melody and chords. "This approach", he says "has been widely used by jazz pianists but rarely by guitarists. I like to make things on the guitar possible." The album highlights the two sides of Wingold's music in his use of improvisations and standards.

The Improvisations on the album, in whose recordings no overdubs are used, are particularly revealing of his playing style. "I wanted to integrate something that works more with space and with less or with almost no prepared material. With just a sketch, a snapshot, with nothing composed or arranged," he explains. He regards these improvisations as more like performance than recording, and manages in each of these pieces an impressive dramatic curve.

Most of the other tracks are adaptations of standards. "I use them on purpose," says Wingold, "but not in the traditional way as adapted by the likes of Joe Pass. Mine are abstract but the link is important. People can recognise the melodies. That's the way, jazz, developed. People played the same tune over and over and got bored. At some point they applied variations and did all sorts with the melodies, but audiences still recognised them."

Joshua, a composition by Victor Feldman, was played by the Miles Davis Quintet. "Here, it's a challenge to keep up bassline, chords and melody all at once," says the guitarist. Feels like funkin' it up is a transcription from a New Orleans brass band tune "with improvised polyphony between the trumpets, and sax and trombones on melody – difficult to adapt to solo guitar."

It might as well be spring, is "played impressionistically", while The Song is you is "patterned with harmonics which integrate a melody out of which the arrangement for the tune is built."

My shining hour, starts with low somber chords and adopts the full seven string extended range.

Alone together and I'll be seeing you "are my attempts at improvised polyphony. I tried to overlap melodies and bass melodies, plus melody chords."

Escapade is the only track on the album that Wingold composed himself. "I had an idea, wrote it down, and it worked as a solo tune, so I thought like hey it's nice to have one composition that's actually my music."

Wingold draws his influences from the blues guitarists of the 1930s and 40s such as Reverend Gary Davis and Mississippi John Hurt, but also from the classical guitar repertoire. However, as he explains "for my solo style I'm also inspired by pianists, who have all the possibilities for polyphony, different textures and synchronicity, especially Keith Jarrett and Brad Mehldau, but also by classical composers such as J.S. Bach, Benjamin Britten, Frank Martin. Reginald Smith Brindle and Leo Brouwer."

Wingold believes that there are many possibilities on the guitar which have not yet been exploited. On this album, he combines virtuosity with a range of musical influences to give listeners an entertaining, intellectually stimulating and groundbreaking musical experience.

Ian Bild
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