



## **Björn Meyer - Bassplayer - six-string acoustic and electric bass-guitars**

He grew up next to a piano outside Stockholm, studied trumpet in the Swedish youth music program, sang in a boys choir and played guitar in local garage-rock bands. Just shortly before his eighteenth birthday a jam session put him in direct contact with the electric bass. Those first notes, played on a left-behind instrument, opened up the door to an irresistible, resonating universe of sounds. After finishing a masters degree in Computer Science and Engineering he decided to “take a year off” and pursue his passion for the bass — a year that has lasted unbroken since 1989.

Already as a child Meyer had a great interest in how things work and what could be done to modify their normal function. The question “is this the only way it can work?” initiated a few disastrous attempts at modifying anything from radios to vacuum cleaners. However, from his first days as a bass-player, that same question has been a strong driving force of musical creativity. Time and again, the urge to express some specific musical ideas has inspired him to develop new and very personal ways of using the bass-guitar.

Meyer’s unmistakable musical handwriting draws largely from a curiosity towards anything from music-styles, playing techniques, electronics, the construction of the actual instruments all the way to the inner composition of a string. In addition, Meyer also considers the interaction between acoustic space and the electronic properties of the bass guitar an important part of the musical experience. As a result, he continues to expand his range of sounds and technical solutions enabling him to shape his sonic world even more carefully.

Meyer has integrated his distinct voice in the most diverse contexts, in- and outside the natural habitat of his instrument. More often than not, he has found himself in settings challenging traditional distinctions such as acoustic or electric, composed or improvised, ancient or contemporary. He has worked alongside Persian harpist and singer Asita Hamidi and is a long term collaborator with Tunisian oud master Anouar Brahem. He has spent more than twenty years with Swedish nyckelharpa player Johan Hedin and percussionist Fredrik Gille in Bazar Blå, co-defining the sound of contemporary Swedish folk music. For more than a decade he was a member of the minimalistic groove-collective Nik Bärtsch’s Ronin and thus helped to shape what has become known as “Zen-funk”.

Recent years have seen the birth of NEN, featuring Mats Eser, Chrigel Bosshard and Ania Losinger with her unique instrument Xala, as well as AMIIRA - an improvising trio with Samuel Rohrer on drums and the bassclarinet, soprano sax of Klaus Gesing. Meyer is also a frequent collaborator in the musical structures of Swiss composer / reed player Don Li and teaches occasionally at the conservatories in Stockholm, Zurich, Bern, Lausanne and Lucerne.

In the autumn of 2017 — thirty years after his first encounter with the electric bass-guitar — ECM released his first solo-album “Provenance”.

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## **Björn Meyer - Solo - Live - *Provenance***

A solo performance with Björn Meyer will certainly challenge many preconceived ideas about how a bass-guitar is supposed to sound as a solo instrument. The repertoire wanders effortlessly between alleged contradictions between composing and improvisation, electronic and acoustic, contemporary and traditional. A natural interplay unfolds between deeply pulsating moods, sounds - appearing as if from outer space or from nothingness, nordic-style folk songs, archaic-sounding hymns up to strongly rhythmic pattern structures. Drawing on more than thirty years of bass-playing experience, this repertoire showcases a completely new approach to an instrument that one thought one already knew.

In his solo work Meyer is particularly fascinated by the experience of sound in acoustic spaces: "Even though the instrument is technically non-acoustic, the music is deeply influenced by the properties of the space where it is played. The many different ways in which acoustics affect my compositions and improvisations have always been sources of surprise and inspiration. There is definitely a second member in this solo project - the room!"

### **Written**

".. Meyer has taken a unique approach to composition for solo bass guitar. It is one that will move the instrument forward as much as it will move the listener emotionally." - John Marley, Jazz Views

".. Anyone who knows Björn Meyer from his collaboration with Nik Bärtsch's Ronin or Anouar Brahem will have no doubts about his performance art, which is mature, imaginative, and geared towards wide-awake communication. The only question is whether he can captivate attention for an entire album. He can! ..." - Michael Engelbrecht, Deutschlandfunk DE

".. In the depth everything vibrates, at the same time silver threads of sound are shimmering on top. Meyer shows an electric orchestra-sound under a sound-microscope." - Christoph Merki, Tages-Anzeiger ZH

".. Meyer manages to make his tools sound not quite like a bass or a guitar, yet similar and distinct from both. Eloquent and evocative, *Provenance* may be simple at heart but opens a world of beautiful sonics to savor." - Geno Thackara, All About Jazz

".. *Provenance* demonstrates that melodic high-jinks and emotional intensity aren't just for those who inhabit the treble stave. Meyer's bass sings." - Rob Mallows, London Jazz News UK

".. The album is often stunningly beautiful; bittersweet tones and deeply affecting melodies brought to life with Meyer's unique guitar-like use of the bass. Highly recommended." - Karl Ackermann, All About Jazz

### **Current CD's**

Björn Meyer Solo - *Provenance* (ECM)

Anouar Brahem - *Souvenance* (ECM)

Bazar Blå - *Twenty* (bazaarpool / Hermes Records)

Gesing Rohrer Meyer - *Amiira* (Arjunamusic / Hermes Records)