

# F O I L S

Frank Paul Schubert  
Matthias Müller

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Soprano saxophone

## Matthias Müller

Trombone



HUNTERS 3:32  
A MILLION MIRRORS 4:31  
CRACKLING CARCASS 5:32  
LUNGS 5:32  
THE EPIPHANY DIAGRAM 7:31  
BLACK WATER (SLOW REPEAT) 6:53  
WRITTEN ON RUBBER 5:18  
MOURN 4:14  
IN BRAILLE 4:40

recorded February 7th, 2011 by Lothar Ohlmeier at AUSLAND/Berlin  
mixed March 14th, 2011 by Niklas Schmincke at P4Studios/Berlin

liner notes by Clayton Thomas

**Foil:** "To set off by comparison "

Somehow, even though both Matthias and Frank play with a lot of the same musicians in and around Berlin (including me) I have never imagined they would play together. That wasn't a judgement about compatibility, or class, but essentially about desire - I always figured they were on separate paths, and wanted different things from their music.

So when this recording landed in my hand, with the invitation to listen and write about it, I was at first just surprised that it existed - and that furthermore, it was going to be released. There are a million unlikely recordings floating around on CDR's and hard drives for the world never to hear about - fortunately this is not one of them.

Although coming from different generations, and backgrounds, both Matthias and Frank share something very rare, and something very specific. They are both deeply sceptical musicians who, nonetheless, are looking for transcendence in their music.

When sonic investigation, intellectual diligence and a disregard for flabby emotionalism are your starting points, it can be really hard to get yourself out of yourself - to transcend your own head. Some musicians like Robin Hayward and Axel Doerner have defined themselves by the abdication of this need, but for a growing generation of musicians who have moved through or side-stepped reductionism, the potentials at the core of improvised music remains - as Paul Lovens would say - "stepping in the river and letting it take you".

**Foil:** "to obscure or confuse"

Silver and spotless high frequencies burn in thin lines. A mellow core bubbles beneath, pushing and provoking, but never straying from the scent. Artists are hunters.

A shot pierces the surface, exposing the light from within. The uneven plane ricochets in response creating a million mirrors.

Light falls, splayed and dazzling. Askew dreams painted in arcs, racing in the corridor of gravity, uniform as a crackling carcass.

This breathing, this spotted chronic breathing, this dank colic stained-crimson scarred breathing. Whose festering lung is at the bottom of it?

In marker or house paint, fine-line or spray, blade cut wood or leather - laser and the like, the lines are drawn. Rough-hewn and scattershot the epiphany diagram takes form.

The flash of headlamps catch the white peaks of an ever-rising tide. They climb and fall on black water, like burning emulsion on slow repeat.

Written on rubber, hieroglyphs elongated and stretched out of all proportion - the surface pulled taught and invisible. Silence snapped back in tacit agreement.

Mourning is contagious, a rite requiring no embellishment.

A dictionary written in Braille. Each dot and indent imbued, pregnant, personal. Inhale. Exhale. Sound. The pause is a breeding ground.

Clayton Thomas

F O I L S



So what do you do when you want to get your feet wet but you don't want to drown?

This set of duets looks to answer the question.

On the surface, we might hear the echo Paul Rutherford & Evan Parker, but listening closely, the tempos are all wrong, the durations extended to the point of breaking, the counterpoint incongruous with that generations thinking. Another language is being spoken here, one that hears with four ears all that Berlin improvisers have achieved in the past 15 years - integrated with musicality and empathy, and totally free of mimicry.

If I was surprised this recording existed, then I'm stunned by what they recorded - Matthias and Frank explore the breadth of their experience with trust and openness, never shying from layering one school of thought against another - never being thrown off course by a hard line, a dense texture, an extended silence. This exploratory and generous record achieves a rare balance - they have crafted a unique vessel to survive the waters.

