

# Manfred Paul Weinberger Nonet

MANFRED PAUL WEINBERGER

PETER NICKEL

CHRISTIAN MAURER

ANDREAS LACHBERGER

JÜRGEN HAIDER

KURT ERLMOSE

HELMAR HILL

CHRISTIAN WENDT

EWALD ZACH

## Transformation



Manfred Paul Weinberger Nonet

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- 1 **T-Line to Braintree** ..... 06:33  
Manfred Paul Weinberger, Andreas Lachberger
- 2 **Strongly as in the Evening Sunset** ..... 07:21  
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- 3 **Call for Blues** ..... 09:25  
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All Songs composed by Manfred Paul Weinberger  
except (\*) by Dave Brubeck, (\*\*) by Anna Maurer

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Heaven of Lark is based on Skylark by Hoagy Carmichael  
Strongly as in the Evening Sunset is based on  
Softly as in the Morning Sunset by Sigmund Romberg  
Recorded on November 13th and 14th, 2025

by Franz Schaden

at Wavegarden-Studios, Mitterretzbach/Austria.

Mixed and mastered by Franz Schaden

Produced by Manfred Paul Weinberger

Photos: Andreas Balon

Artwork: Margarete Geffke

Contact: Manfred Paul Weinberger

+43 650 4214111

booking@mpweinberger.at

www.mpweinberger.at

Manfred Paul Weinberger - trumpet, flugelhorn

Christian Maurer - soprano saxophone

Andreas Lachberger - tenor saxophone

Jürgen Haider - baritone saxophone

Peter Nickel - trombone

Kurt Erlmoser - guitar

Helmar Hill - piano

Christian Wendt - double bass

Ewald Zach - drums

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Transformation

## Manfred Paul Weinberger

### Transformation

Für diese Produktion stellte ich eine Auswahl von Stücken unserer Mexico Tournee im November 2024 zusammen. Zwei jüngere Kompositionen, die ich nach dieser Tournee, inspiriert von dieser Reise, komponierte, verleihen vorliegender CD eine zusätzliche Facette. Kunst ist Ausdruck menschlichen Fühlens, Denkens und Handelns, und sie entsteht in einer vom Herzen geleiteten prozesshaften Auseinandersetzung. Das für die Betrachter\*innen Wahrnehmbare entwickelt sich im Gestaltungsakt, während dem der einzelne Künstler, die Künstlerin Entscheidungen trifft. Unserem menschlichen Ringen, unserem Empfinden, eine Form zu geben, um sich durch diese Arbeit mitzuteilen, ist ein Grundbedürfnis in uns. Die Suche nach dem künstlerischen Ausdruck kann also als Versuch gesehen werden, Erlebtes, Gefühltes und Reflektiertes durch den schöpferischen Akt zu transformieren. Empathie spielt in dieser Transformation eine zentrale Rolle.

Musik repräsentiert heute eine Kunstform, die ohne ihre Entwicklungsgeschichte all das Wunderbare, das sie auszudrücken imstande ist, nicht transportieren könnte. Das große Sammelwerk der Songs, die zum Standardrepertoire der Jazztradition wurden, stellt dabei eine Quelle von unschätzbarem Wert dar. Der freie Umgang, den das Genre zulässt, weist gleichsam darauf hin, wie offen und zugänglich dieses Material stets auch für neue Einflüsse war. Der wechselseitige Respekt und die Bereicherung mit kulturellen Besonderheiten durch die Begegnung verschiedener Kulturen, machten diese Musik zu dem, was sie heute repräsentiert. Ihr haftet keine strenge Aufführungspraxis an, denn vergleichsweise einfachen Strukturen, Songformen, Formgebung von Melodie und Harmonie sind eine Aufforderung zum freien Gestalten. Dem Jazz wohnt eine kommunikative und verbindende Qualität inne. Das Stück „My Funny Valentine“ beispielsweise, von Richard Rodgers und Lorenz Hart's komponiert, wurde 1937 zum ersten Mal aufgenommen und schaffte es bis jetzt auf über 1600 dokumentierte Aufnahmen.

Als besonders spannend scheint mir der Aspekt zu sein, dass viele dieser Songs zwar eine ausgeprägt charakteristische Identität aufweisen, jedoch gleichzeitig einen Umgang mit ihnen zulassen, der das Hinzufügen einer persönlichen Note durch die Bearbeitung geradezu herausfordert. Um nur ein Beispiel der gegenwärtigen Musik zu nennen, sei die Version des israelischen Pianisten Shai Maestro von Duke Ellingtons „In a Sentimental Mood“ genannt, erschienen auf dem Label ECM.



Ein halbes Jazzorchester, das Nonett, wie es auf dieser CD zu hören ist, kann als Synonym für die Hälfte von etwas sehr Großem gesehen werden. Es impliziert eine Fülle an klanglichen Möglichkeiten. Als mir nahe liegende Arbeitsweise führt mich das Aufspüren melodischer Texturen zu Material, um Bestehendes weiter zu entwickeln. Den harmonischen Kontext und die formalen Strukturen dabei freier zu betrachten, als im Original notiert, erweitert dabei den Gestaltungsspielraum.

Mit der Arbeit an existierenden Werken, in deren Grundstruktur eingegriffen wird, bewege ich mich zwischen Arrangement und Komposition. Wenn ich dafür eine Definition suchen müsste, dann fiel mir als erstes der von Hans Zender verwendete Begriff der „komponierten Interpretation“ ein, den er für sein Orchesterwerk über



Franz Schuberts „Winterreise“ für sich in Anspruch nimmt. Mir macht es ungeheuer viel Freude, mir auf diese Weise Zugänge zur Musik zu verschaffen.

Mit „Transformation“ veröffentliche ich vier „komponierte Interpretationen“, deren Ausgangspunkt Songs aus dem „Great American Songbook“ sind. Viele dieser großartigen Songs aus einer rund 100-jährigen Musikgeschichte sind mir in meiner Beschäftigung damit ans Herz gewachsen. Es ist mir ein Bedürfnis, ausgesuchte Stücke dieses Repertoires zu würdigen und ihrem Wert auf meine Weise zu huldigen. Ein Stück dieser Produktion ist eine Komposition der jungen Pianistin und Komponistin Anna Maurer, das ich durch die Arbeit im Upper Austrian Jazz Orchestra kennen lernte. Drei Eigenkompositionen vervollständigen das Programm für diese CD.

Bei meinen musikalischen Wegbegleitern möchte ich mich für die wertvolle Zeit bei den Vorbereitungen und unsere zwei erfüllten Studiotage bedanken! Das Kollektiv bildet bisweilen komplexe musikalische Sachverhalte klar und verständlich ab, angefüllt mit viel persönlicher Inspiration und dem Engagement jedes einzelnen Musikers.

Auch dir/Ihnen viel Freude mit der Musik!

## **Manfred Paul Weinberger**

### **Transformation**

For this collection, I have gathered pieces from our November 2024 tour of Mexico. Two recent compositions, written after the tour but inspired by that journey, complete the selection of songs on this album.

Art is an expression of human feeling, thought, and action, that emerges through a process guided by the heart. What ultimately becomes perceptible to the listener takes shape in the act of creation itself, during which the individual artist is continually making decisions.

The human struggle to give form to what we experience and feel—and to communicate through this work—is a fundamental need within us. The search for artistic expression can therefore be understood as an attempt to transform through the creative act what has been experienced, felt, and reflected upon. In this transformation, empathy plays a central role.

Music today represents an art form that could not convey its richness, without also considering the history of its development. The vast body of songs that make up the standard repertoire of the jazz tradition is a source of immeasurable value. The freedom with which this genre can be approached also points to how open and receptive this material has always been to new influences. Mutual respect—and the enrichment that arises when different cultures encounter one another and share their

particular characteristics—has shaped this music into what it represents today. It is not bound to a rigid performance practice. Rather, its comparatively simple structures—song forms, melodic shapes, and harmonic frameworks—serve as an invitation to creative freedom. Jazz carries within it an inherently communicative and connective quality.



What especially fascinates me is that many of these songs possess a clearly recognizable identity while at the same time inviting an approach that encourages the addition of a personal voice through reinterpretation. The piece *My Funny Valentine*, for example, composed by Richard Rodgers and Lorenz Hart, was first recorded in 1937 and has since appeared in more than 1,600 documented recordings. One contemporary example is the version of Duke Ellington's *In a Sentimental Mood* by the Israeli pianist Shai Maestro, released on the ECM label.

A jazz ensemble of nine musicians—the nonet, as heard on this recording—may be understood as half a jazz orchestra. In this sense it can be seen as a kind of synonym for half of something very large, while still suggesting a remarkable range of sonic possibilities. In my own working approach, the search for melodic textures often leads to material through which existing works can be further developed. Considering the harmonic context and the formal structures more freely than they appear in the original notation expands the possibilities for musical shaping.

Working with existing pieces whose underlying structure is altered, I move in a space between arrangement and composition. If I were to try and define this approach, the first term that comes to mind is “composed interpretation,” a phrase used by Hans Zender for his orchestral work based on Franz Schubert's *Winterreise*. Approaching songs in this way brings me great joy and continually opens new pathways into the music.

With *Transformation*, I present four “composed interpretations,” whose point of departure is songs from the *Great American Songbook*. Many of these remarkable songs—drawn from nearly a century of musical history—have grown very dear to me through years of engagement with them. It has long been my wish to honor selected works from this repertoire and to pay tribute to their significance in my own way.



One of the pieces in this collection is a composition by the young pianist and composer Anna Maurer, which I first encountered through my work with the Upper Austrian Jazz Orchestra. Completing the album are three of my own original compositions.

I would like to thank my musical companions for the valuable time we spent preparing this project, as well as for the two days we spent together recording in the studio. As a collective, the ensemble succeeds in presenting even complex musical ideas with clarity and transparency, filled with personal inspiration and the commitment of each individual musician.

Finally, I truly hope you enjoy this music.



## Notes by Ed Puddick

Ed is an award-winning jazz arranger and composer who has been part of the UK jazz scene since graduating from the Birmingham Conservatoire in 2004.

### T-Line to Braintree

The Soprano sax gains prominence in 'T-Line to Braintree'. The orchestral combinations used here, along with the stunning performances by each of the musicians and the definitive quality of the recording, creates a unique ensemble sound that takes years to cultivate and huge effort to maintain. The music is joyful and inventive, as well as highly skilled and totally sincere. On this track, the featured Tenor sax solo glides over the backing figures with ease, expressing the fundamental human emotion that is at the heart of every performance on this recording. I could listen to the final loop forever!

### Strongly as in the Evening Sunset

A trilogy of re-compositions is opened by 'Strongly As In The Evening Sunset', based on 'Softly as in the Morning Sunrise' by Sigmund Romberg. It opens with plenty of



energy, even though the drums don't play immediately. This piece takes the listener on a virtual tour of the music of New Orleans and travels through several different time periods, eventually landing in the modern day. The interlude between the free-spirited Soprano solo and the raucous Guitar solo is a particular highlight – with some beautiful, sustained bell-tones in the orchestration. The Guitar solo gives meaning to the “strongly” in the title and is beautifully sculpted by both the soloist and the orchestration. The Guitar is followed by a highly distinguished bass solo leads us back to more inventive use of the ensemble in the head out, which builds towards a fantastically decisive and dramatic ending.

## **Call for Blues**

The opening counterpoint in ‘Call For Blues’ certainly gives the impression of ensemble calling for the familiar 12-bar form, which arrives following a unison melody from the Trumpet, Trombone and Bass over the repeated single-note Piano figure and drum groove. Superb solos are heard from Tenor and Guitar. The Tenor starts in trio format with Bass and Drums, to be joined later by Guitar, before continuing over some unaccompanied horn backgrounds, with echoes of Thelonious Monk. The ensemble eventually overwhelms the Tenor before breaking down entirely for the trumpet solo, which starts accompanied only by bass, establishing a new groove





to inspire this deeply expressive improvisation. The blues returns for the Guitar solo, which starts with a quote of Wes Montgomery's 'West Coast Blues' and leads to three engaging choruses of quartet playing. The ensemble writing following the Guitar solo is among the most creative and skilful you will hear for this kind of mid-sized ensemble. A return to the original groove signifies the return of the melody and the head-out, which doesn't quite end where you expect...



## Lullaby

A beautiful Bass solo serves as an intro to 'Lullaby' and a traditionally dreamy 3/4 groove, wholly befitting of the title. There are some dreamy details in the harmony behind the Trumpet melody too! A delicately crafted Trombone solo allows us to relax further, before the ensemble deliver a more energetic ending to bring us out of our slumber.

## Solaralos

based on Solar by Chuck Wayne

Another re-composition, this time of 'Solar' - the tune made famous by Miles Davis which was originally composed by guitarist Chuck Wayne in 1946. This new piece, the palindromic 'Solaralos', starts with a hypnotic bass and drum groove, a kind of interplanetary Morse code, which provides plenty of intrigue and mystery. The original

melody is heard, played by Soprano sax and Guitar, but is superseded by a more contemporary idea that distorts the form to a point where the original becomes an afterthought. Solos start with Soprano sax soaring over pedal-points established by the rhythm section and reinforced by the horns, then over the form. After a short ensemble interlude there is an intriguingly conversational duo between trumpet and drums, with bass and piano finding there way back into the frame when they hear the melody quoted. The full ensemble soon returns with the amalgamated melodies, leading back to the grove from the intro and building to an ending of Sci-Fi proportions!

## **Heaven of Lark**

based on Skylark by Hoagy Carmichael

This highly skilled and creative arrangement of Hoagy Carmichael's 'Skylark' offers such a fresh view on this old melody that we should consider filing under the heading "re-composition". After a cymbal roll that comes out of nowhere, and a short drum solo, the arrangement starts with a deceptive (although we don't know it yet) double-time figure, with the melody not revealing itself until the listening is fully engaged. Tempos and grooves are constantly shifting, delaying the full arrival of the presumed ballad feel until the Baritone sax comes in with the first solo, at the conclusion of which the tempo picks up



again, taking us into a more recognisable orchestration of the head, including the bridge played by the Guitar. The Piano then solos over a chorus at this brighter tempo before the

horns return with a new orchestration of the bridge and the final section of the head out, with the Trumpet bringing the melody to its final conclusion.

## **In your own sweet way**

by Dave Brubeck

The intro to this arrangement of Dave Brubeck's 'In Your Own Sweet Way' is highlighted by the crystal-clear recording quality of the drummer's sophisticated brushwork, dovetailed with a tight ensemble sound which ultimately gives way to the well-known melody of this great jazz standard. Solos by Piano and Trombone maintain the themes of musical clarity and precision. These solos are separated by an intriguing ensemble passage in which each instrument follows its own melodic line, seemingly derived from the melody. These countermelodies converge into unison at chosen cadence points, and finally to set the tone for the Trombone solo.





Contrapuntal lines then act as backings for the Trombone solo, following which the melody returns and leads to an extended coda featuring more expressive solo brushwork.

## Being Ali

by Anna Maurer

The piano sets up a lively groove at the start of Anna Maurer's composition 'Being Ali', with the lyrical melody played by Guitar and Bass. The musicians move between 4/4 and 7/8 with ease, with the Soprano Sax adding a brightness to the ensemble that is a distinctive feature of this excellent band. Fluent solos from Baritone Sax and Double Bass are accompanied by thoughtful backing figures, into which the solos eventually melt, creating a seamless performance. The head-out is proceeded by a flawlessly executed drum solo, weaving in and around the ensemble figures, before a final climax leads to an energetic coda.



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Manfred Paul Weinberger - trumpet, flugelhorn  
Christian Maurer - soprano saxophone  
Andreas Lachberger - tenor saxophone  
Jürgen Haider - baritone saxophone  
Peter Nickel - trombone  
Kurt Erlmoser - guitar  
Helmar Hill - piano  
Christian Wendt - double bass  
Ewald Zach - drums



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