

# TREFFPUNKT JAZZ: STUTTGART & HONG KONG

“Keine Angst vor Jazz” (No Need to Mistrust Jazz) was the name given by Stuttgart’s radio station – still under the aegis of the American military government at the time – to an initial series of jazz programmes broadcast just after the war. These gave airtime to a genre that only a few years earlier had been banned from the German airwaves. The year was 1947. Eight years later, the series creator Dieter Zimmerle, head of jazz at the now independent broadcaster SDR, came up with an idea for a series of concerts called “Treffpunkt Jazz”. In those intervening eight years, people’s initial mistrust of jazz had subsided and given way to genuine interest and enthusiasm, due in part to the high-profile German and overseas guests that were now appearing with increasing regularity in Stuttgart. Lee Konitz came in 1956, and Tony Scott made a stopover in the Swabian capital on his European tour in April 1957. That same year also saw performances by the Modern Jazz Quartet and Miles Davis. The guest artists were accompanied by the rhythm section from SDR’s own in-house dance orchestra; the solo celebrities, Tony Scott included, were generally also invited to the studios for a recording session. For this very occasion the clarinettist prepared a selection of standards. He was joined by Horst Jankowski, one of Germany’s most talented young pianists, who was already making a name for himself as a technically brilliant improviser with a gift for spontaneous invention.

The two must have hit it off, for two weeks later Scott took his Stuttgart rhythm section with him for a concert in Yugoslavia, at which he gave the first performance of one of his most popular compositions: **Blues For Charlie Parker**. When Joachim-Ernst Berendt recorded this title with Scott in 1962, the clarinettist was in Hong Kong, just one of many staging posts during a South-East Asian odyssey that lasted several years – Scott’s attempt to escape the US commercialisation of jazz and seek out new inspiration. Berendt, then himself in search of new jazz horizons, met Scott in Asia on several occasions, armed with a portable tape recorder and microphone. His Hong Kong encounter with Scott also features a group of Italian jazz exiles brought together by saxophonist Giancarlo Barigozzi, although the names of the local backing performers on the wonderfully intimate track **Moonlight In Vermont** from Singapore went undocumented. Despite certain acoustic deficiencies as a result of the far from ideal recording conditions, most notably audible on the track from Singapore, these tapes are deserving of our attention as rare testimony to a hitherto little documented phase in Scott’s career.

“I like to play ballads simply, to give them a warm quality,” said Scott of his own approach to playing slow tempi. He used to name Ben Webster as his role model, the man who had taken Scott under his wing as a young musician and whose emotional, melodious ballad-style sax playing had inspired him to adopt the same warmth and suaveness on the clarinet. Audible proof of this is Scott’s inimitably delicate legato, seemingly caressing the clarinet even in its upper register, a sound he literally breathes into the instrument unlike anyone else. The two versions of **Moonlight In Vermont** or the more extended **You Go To My Head** serve as prime examples of Scott’s expertise with ballads. In contrast to the slows, the upbeat numbers reveal a very different Scott. Here his thin, brittle, almost shrill tone is perfect for articulating the virtuoso bebop lines he injects with urgent, hectic energy. The inspiration for this side of Scott’s playing was Charlie Parker: the clarinettist was fascinated by Parker’s grasp of complex rhythms and occasional asymmetric phrasing. “He played so many notes, up and down, all around, that it sounded like a hundred chickens going mad when a fox enters the coop,” was how Scott described his first encounter with Parker’s music. The live Stuttgart recording of **A Night In Tunisia** and the studio recording of **Lover, Come Back To Me** represent the other Scott. **Blues For Charlie Parker** combines both sides of his playing.

SIDE A: **1 MOONLIGHT IN VERMONT** KARL SUESSDORF 3:54

**2 LOVER, COME BACK TO ME** SIGMUND ROMBERG 6:53

**3 YOU GO TO MY HEAD (TAKE 1)** JOHN FREDERICK COOTS 7:26 **4 BLUES** TONY SCOTT 4:16

SIDE B: **5 A NIGHT IN TUNISIA** DIZZY GILLESPIE 4:05

**6 ALL THE THINGS YOU ARE** JEROME KERN 5:56 **7 BLUES FOR CHARLIE PARKER** TONY SCOTT 4:47

**8 MOONLIGHT IN VERMONT** KARL SUESSDORF 6:31

1–4 Studio Recording Villa Berg, SDR Stuttgart (April 24, 1957) 5 Live Recording Treffpunkt Jazz Stuttgart, Liederhalle (April 23, 1957)

6–7 Live Recording City Hall, Hong Kong (Spring 1962) 8 Live Recording Singapore, unknown venue (1962)

Tony Scott (cl)<sup>all</sup> / Horst Jankowski (p)<sup>1-5</sup> / Peter Witte (b)<sup>1-5</sup> / Hermann Mutschler (dr)<sup>1-5</sup>

Mario Costalonga (tp)<sup>6</sup> / Giancarlo Barigozzi (ts)<sup>6</sup> / probably: Silvano Salviati (p)<sup>6,7</sup> / Sandro Paganucci (b)<sup>6,7</sup> / Alfredo Bendini (dr)<sup>6,7</sup> / unknown (p), (b), (dr)<sup>8</sup>

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