



PANGPANG *Kisskiss Pangpang*

Since its formation in 2014, Pangpang has been a musical playground for heavy riffing and ecstatic improvisations, as well as delicate ambiances and group interplay. Their 2018 debut album *Kisskiss Pangpang* contains eight compositions – elaborate without being showy – that draw on sources of inspiration as disparate as John Coltrane, Arnold Schönberg, Led Zeppelin and Ennio Morricone.

All alumni of the Norwegian Academy of Music, **Sander Eriksen Nordahl** (guitar), **Håkon Norby Bjørgo** (upright bass) and **Ivar Myrset Asheim** (drums) are part of the new generation of jazz musicians in Norway, and are also known for playing in bands like Billy Meier, Paal Nilssen-Love Extra Large Unit, Trond Kallevåg Hansen Trio, Audun Trio and Bear Brother.

All compositions by: Håkon Norby Bjørgo

Miso

“The first tune on the album also happens to be the first tune I wrote with this band in mind. In the last few years prior to writing it, I had mostly composed music with a strong emphasis on chords and harmony - Wayne Shorter’s mid-60’s records being a key source of inspiration. A growing desire to write tunes with freer structures and more emphasis on riffs and lines, coupled with a fondness for John Coltrane, Atomic and Ornette Coleman, as well as Arnold Schönberg, resulted in this tune. The melody is by no means based on the latter’s concept of twelve-tone serialism, but rather inspired by the rich chromaticism of his earlier works.”

Mexican Standoff

“Mexican Standoff has a definitive Ennio Morricone flavour to it, stemming from my long standing affection for his iconic film scores. Growing up, I’d watch Sergio Leone’s *The Good, The Bad and The Ugly* tirelessly, Morricone’s music being a major part of the appeal. The fact that the last ten minutes of the film were missing from my VHS did little to lessen my appetite - the visuals, the atmospheres and the music made me come back again and again anyway.”

Casu Marzu

“Casu Marzu basically consists of the angular opening melody and the big heavy riff near the end, with an improvised section in between. This section presents the task of connecting the two other parts - getting from A to B - even though they have quite different characters. To me, playing music like this provides an interesting challenge: it sets up a compositional goal for the improvisation, providing framework to stimulate the imagination, yet allowing freedom for spontaneity. In this case we play around with implied tonal centres, creating tension and release while building intensity.”

The Bing Bang

“In a sense, the first and second halves of *The Bing Bang* represent two of the principal contrasting opposites featured on this album. The first half has assertive riffs and long, chromatic lines suggesting sequences of different tonalities. The second half on the other hand pivots around space and timbre, with rich textures and dynamic cascades of sound. Both sections feature composed as well as improvised elements, but we approach them with a different mindset.”



Osim

"This short through-composed piece is by far the softest track on the album, providing a sombre contrast to the more ecstatic tunes. The influence of 20th century classical music is quite recognisable, but to me the tune still feels very much cut from the same cloth as the rest of the tracks. In fact, the guitar part is actually based on the melody of Miso played backwards, hence the title. Osim, being the newest song on the record, indicates the direction in which this band is developing; not necessarily becoming quieter, but rather more dynamic. The future will see us playing both softer and harder, in addition to playing both strictly notated through-composed parts and openly improvised sections."

Chili Con Carne

"Chili Con Carne opens with a heavy riff, over which a jagged melody is then played. Some sudden twists and turns provide variation and loosen up the regularity of the form. The improvised section on this track exemplifies how we tend approach open improvisation in this band: not really «no rhythm» and «no tonality» but rather «free rhythm» and «free tonality»."

Nostalgia Isn't What It Used To Be

"This tune - essentially a six minute crescendo - features Sander's soloing over a series of modulating odd metre riffs. There's definitely a retro vibe going on, which the ironic title - not of my invention - references. Sun Ra and Gong's early 70's albums provided the initial spark of inspiration that resulted in this tune."

Ahab

"The final tune on the album draws inspiration from Ken Vandermark's music, as well as the character from Herman Melville's novel Moby Dick after whom this tune is named. There's no tangible connection between the two, but they found their way into the same composition nonetheless."

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