

July 31, 2021, was a very special day for us. It was not only the first time that we had the opportunity to participate in such an unusual form of a concert as the Strandkorb OpenAir (the concert takes place in the open air, and fans have their places designated by beach baskets known mainly from German beaches on the Baltic Sea) but also once again we had the pleasure to talk to Ost about the latest achievements of the Hämatom team and their plans for the future. This conversation was so long and full of various curiosities that once again we decided to break the interview you are reading into two parts. In the first, we will get acquainted with the spring release entitled „Berlin” and in the second we will present you loose reflections on the current situation and plans of the band.

GGW: Hello Ost, nice for a chance to talk live, not on the Internet like recently. We have less than 30 minutes, so let us go straight to the questions. At the beginning of 2021, you announced that a new acoustic album is coming. We really liked the form of the promotion itself, especially the animations with Don Nordeone and the gang. We are very impressed with the album „Berlin”. In our opinion, the album came out very fresh in a different musical style, and despite the change of instruments, you still feel that it is Hämatom and that’s your energy. Were you worried about how the fans would react to the announcement of such an album?

Ost: A bit. We talked to other bands that released such an album, and usually $\frac{1}{3}$ fans like it, and $\frac{2}{3}$ don’t recognize it at all. But this idea matured for some time, and finally, the time has come to transfer it into music. We are pleased that in this case, our fans ratio was not $\frac{1}{3}$ to $\frac{2}{3}$, but 50/50 and it is also visible after the concerts. Metal fans are incredibly intolerant when an electric guitar disappears. They are more attached to instruments than to music. Maybe that’s naive of me, but I really wish people would pay more attention to the song and not to what instruments it was. Naturally, the attendance or the behavior of fans on the current tour is not worth assessing, because all this is Strandkorb OpenAirs, and not only that some fans completely reject this form of fun, but also





baskets and distances force people to have quite static fun. Nevertheless, I believe that „Berlin” is a full-fledged album in Hämatom’s discography and history and that it is a very important part of it. It would also be boring to put out something like „our style” again.

”

Isn’t it boring to exist for 20 or 30 years and do the same thing over and over again? For me, it would be dead on the spot. Even bands like Metallica, which are very consistent in their work, have rediscovered each other with each new album.

Naturally, they lost fans sometimes, but at least they were able to surprise themselves and the audience. What about the concerts promoting “Berlin”? After all, the presence of these other musicians, trumpeters, pianists, etc. makes it an amazing atmosphere. I still enjoy it myself.

GGW: We have the impression that the pandemic has brought us many album releases with ideas „put in a drawer for later”. Maerzfeld, not wanting to play rock for people sitting on chairs, recorded the album „Anblaggd”, Eisbrecher released a CD with covers, which he also started to do for a long time. Do you think you’d schedule the recording of „Berlin” for later if the pandemic had not left us at home for over a year? Has this idea matured in you anyway?

Ost: Yes, but then it probably wouldn’t be such an album, but just something like Unplugged. We wanted to do something new. I don’t know if we were to release our album later, we would have had such an idea as during

a pandemic - there is quite a direct parallel to the Spanish flu. People hid in their houses for years, until finally there was a crazy time when everyone went out, danced and enjoyed life. This whole situation made a big difference in making „Berlin” sound this way.

GGW: We read in an interview that the original style from the 20s of the last century is your doing. Will you elaborate on the topic a bit? These times just seemed similar to what is happening now or do you have any sentiment towards the music, style, or events of those times? How long did it take you to compose and record this album? Did you also make use of other musicians on instruments that we have not heard from you before? Again, did you record all the parts separately and in sterile conditions, as you did when recording the EP „FCKCRN”?

Ost: Exactly, as I mentioned there is a direct reference to the Spanish Flu. One day I heard in the broadcast about the times when this disease raged - masks, isolation, etc. - exactly what we are experiencing now, although we are definitely different in terms of technological advances. A very depressing time that was born decades later, a crazy time of coke and whores. It inspired me right away because it's amazing how one grew into another, no? „Berlin” stood as if in the middle of it all, here you danced, here was the first porn film, there was coke ... The music itself? I don't know, it was definitely not the first thing that appeared in my head when I was planning new songs ... This parallel was such a leitmotif all the time. On the technical side, when it comes to recording the album, it was a bit looser. But in a nutshell, how the album was made: halfway through December, I went out for a beer with our manager to set milestones for the next 2-3 years, because it was already known then that the tour would not take place. We also decided that there is no point in releasing a new album this spring. In mid-January, it was already known that our next album would be acoustic and it would be called „Berlin”. Everything was already agreed with the publisher and the deadline was set - the beginning of March. Well, you know, it was mid-January and we didn't have a single song ... So a week later we met and wrote, recorded and wrote for 10 days in a row. Wake up at 10, between 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. to create a song, quickly write the text, Süd recorded drums, West bass, listened in full, apply corrections, to play the guitar, then the wind instruments and all the other arrangements, until finally at 21:00 Nord could start singing. The song is ready and then we repeat the whole process for the next 9 days :) I don't know what made it so good and efficient for us, maybe that's just what it was supposed to be like.



We got an amazing inspiration, it is possible that you get it once in your life. I'm guessing we'll never make an album that smoothly again. In 10 days from 0 to complete album - this is madness!

And still, recording with such talented musicians? It was a wild joy.

GGW: Staying on the topic of your premiere concert - there were many distinguished guests. What guided you when you chose them? The fact that they find themselves in very unconventional and often danceable rhythms? Did you just have this fantasy? ;)

Ost: They're mostly our friends. We've known Jenny (Beyond the black) for a long time, the same thing with Ben (Feuerschwanz / D'Artagnan). It's probably even longer with him because we started our careers more or less at the same time and we saw each other on the first release shows. Also, there is no great magic or planning involved. It's more of an opportunity to meet my buddies, so we just called.

GGW: Since we're at dance tracks - are you good dancers? Would you like to see fans dancing instead of doing pogo and starting moshpit?



We are great dancers: D Especially when I am drunk I move like John Travolta!

GGW: So you are perfect for weddings!

Ost: Well, I miss that a bit here. German weddings are not like Polish weddings. In Poland, before vodka is poured, everyone is dancing. In Germany, first you have to pour some so that people start to move ... but if you pour me a little, you won't stop me!



GGW: Albums title track immediately caught our attention. Where did you get the idea to use an excerpt from Dolly Parton's hit?

Ost: It was created in the same evening when I was sitting in my bunker with a bottle of Jim Beam, listening to Polish music ... and Dolly Parton in the cover by Miley Cyrus came on;) And you know what happened next - „Jolene, Jolene” sounded from the speakers and I thought „Berlin, Berlin”. However, instead of doing a remix or a cover, we decided to make our own song, where only the phrase was reworked.

GGW: What would you say about going one step further and doing the project in yet another musical style? Techno?

Ost: I'd love to! In nightliner, we even listen to songs from this musical genre very often. The Prodigy for example! I am sure that we will do something someday, as I said, we would be very bored in Hämatom if we couldn't afford such musical departures. I don't know what, when how, and where, what story we will add to it, but we will definitely keep experimenting.

GGW: Were you surprised by the positive reception of this album and the high position on the charts?

Ost: Yes, that was surprising. The fans were divided, but the album landed high in the charts and the split between fans and haters was not as big as we expected ... so it's definitely a surprise.

GGW: Thanks for the very detailed answers! Let's close the part about the new album and move on to slightly lighter questions :)

We invite you to read the second part of the Ost interview !

