

Holger Mertin - Biography

Holger Mertin is initiated into the world of rhythm at the age of 12 when receiving his uncle's drum set. This present unexpectedly seals his fate, as from this moment onwards, Mertin is constantly exploring various rhythms and sounds and turns any object into a drum instrument.

Holger Mertin is a multipercussionist and musical ethnologist (M.A.). During his studies he discovers the richness of ethno-percussive instruments (Universities of Frankfurt, Cologne; School for Oriental and African Studies, London). Henceforth he intensifies his rhythmic playing skills and gains experience during international residencies. He plays the hang, cajon, waterphone and his individual percussion set composed by frame drums.



Among Mertin's current projects figures the popular concert series *Drums and More* in which the multipercussionist invites artists from various musical and creative directions to enter into an improvised dialogue. He is furthermore engaged in the *Holger Mertin – Jaki Liebezeit Duo*, in solo performances and the dance/music happening *Mitumba*, a creation by the Cologne-based dance company *Mouvoir*.

The high quality and variety of his playing style allowed Mertin to collaborate with diverse internationally renowned musicians and artists. He has worked, among others, with Jaki Liebezeit (Can), Ali Haurand (European Jazz Ensemble), Milan Sladek (mime), Eberhard Kranemann (Ex-„Kraftwerk“), Martin Sasse (Martin Sasse Trio, Sting), Hayden Chisholm, Paul Shigihara (WDR Big Band), Eberhard Kranemann, Roland Peil (Die Fantastischen Vier) and Ali Haurand (European Jazz Ensemble). Holger Mertin has furthermore performed solo at various occasions, for example at 'Meinl Drum Festival', different art events organised by WDR Siegen and WDR Cologne, Frankfurt international music fair and at the 'Kunst(Zeug)Haus' museum in Zurich, Switzerland.

Holger Mertin authors a popular monthly workshop column for the percussion journal *STICKS*. He furthermore conceives and moderates a video seminar for small percussion instruments for the music portal www.musikmachen.de. Mertin teaches percussion at the Centre for Contemporary Dance at the University for Music and Dance in Cologne and organizes workshops and seminars relating to the subjects 'cajon', 'body percussion' and 'improvisation'. He also develops innovative percussion instruments in collaboration with Meinl.

In his performance, Holger Mertin combines intuitive sensitivity with technical precision. His particular interest lies in the expansion of stylistic boundaries. Be it experimental jazz scores, improvised and pop music, or the complex meters of world music, any rhythm presents an artistic starting point for the talented multipercussionist. Next to playing his individual instruments, he equally explores the very own sounds of diverse everyday objects and his body. This way, Mertin's unconventional and contagious rhythms provide a live artistic experience to the audience.

Contact + Links

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Holger Mertin discovers the appeal of rhythm at the age of 12 when he receives

„This man is an acoustic miracle“

Ingeborg Drews, Jazzpodium 06/08

„Holger Mertin's performance is fascinating“

Julia Eiden, Westfälische Rundschau/Siegener Zeitung, 10.09.2012

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