



# OLAF RUPP

## GUITAR

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**Olaf Rupp (\*1963) plays Improvised Music on the acoustic and electric guitar. The organic flow of his music is guided neither by chance nor by dominant, willful decisions. In his music he explores how more or less dense murmurations of notes (motion-clusters) can be perceived as one agglomerated sound in motion. This means that every note is a dot in a higher matrix and its colour is more important than the position of that note in any hierarchic classification system. So a sequence of notes creates a moving sound, not a melody. And the intrinsic colour of every note is more important than the melodic or harmonic burden which the listener may or may not put on it.**

**Besides many cooperations five solo albums are published so far on the labels FMP, GROB and GLIGG. Olaf Rupp has been touring in many countries and performed with extraordinary musicians such as Paul Lovens, Tristan Honsinger, Peter Brötzmann, Butch Morris, Lol Coxhill, John Zorn and Michael Wertmüller. Important groups are among others XENOFOX, his duo with Rudi Fischerlehner, a Duo with cello player Ulrike Brand, and WEIRD WEAPONS with Tony Buck and Joe Williamson. [www.audiosemantics.de](http://www.audiosemantics.de)**

Olaf Rupp (\*1963) spielt Improvisierte Musik auf der Konzertgitarre und der E-Gitarre. Seine organisch fließenden Themenentwicklungen entstehen weder durch Zufall noch durch dominante Willensentscheidung. Er beschäftigt sich in seiner Musik viel mit der geräuschhaften Klangfarbenwirkung mehr oder weniger stark verdichteter Bewegungscluster (Ton Murmurationen). Dabei ist jede einzelne Note ein charakteristischer Farbpunkt in einer Klangmatrix und diese "Tonfarbe" ist wichtiger, als die Position dieser Note in üblichen Ordnungssystemen. Eine Reihe von Tönen erzeugt also keine Melodie, sondern einen bewegten Klang. Und die eigene Farbe jeder Note ist dabei wichtiger, als der melodische oder harmonische Überbau, mit dem man sie zu beladen geneigt ist.

Von Olaf Rupp sind fünf Solo Alben erschienen bei FMP, GROB und GLIGG. Er arbeitete aber auch international mit vielen wichtigen Vorreitern der Improvisierten Musik wie etwa Paul Lovens, Tristan Honsinger, Peter Brötzmann, Butch Morris, Lol Coxhill, John Zorn und Michael Wertmüller. Wichtige Gruppen sind aktuell unter anderem das Duo XENOFOX mit Rudi Fischerlehner, das Duo mit Cellistin Ulrike Brand sowie WEIRD WEAPONS mit Tony Buck und Joe Williamson. [www.audiosemantics.de](http://www.audiosemantics.de)

## BANDS

### **XENOFOX**

Olaf Rupp (electric-guitar), Rudi Fischerlehner (dr) CD: LIVE AT LYDFESTIVAL AARHUS at Farai-records

### **RUPP — MÜLLER — FISCHERLEHNER**

Olaf Rupp (electric-guitar), Matthias Müller (tb), Rudi Fischerlehner (dr) 2 CDs: TINGTINGK at GLIGG-records 2011 and TAM NotApplicable 2013. Festivals: Ulrichsberg, Saalfelden und MIB-Bremen.

### **Ulrike Brand — Olaf Rupp**

Ulrike Brand (Cello), Olaf Rupp (electric guitar)

### **DIE DICKEN FINGER**

Olaf Rupp (electric-guitar), Jan Roder (e-bass), Oliver Steidle (dr) CD: OFFROADCORE at GLIGG-records 2011, Festivals: KOLLEKTIVNIGHTS Berlin, SWR NOW Jazz

### **WEIRD WEAPONS**

Olaf Rupp (acoustic-guitar), Joe Williamson (db), Tony Buck (dr) 2 CDs at EMANEM 2005 und Creative Sources 2011, Festivals: UNCOOL 2001

### **SOLO**

CDs: SEPTEMBER, cd, GROB 1998, MAI, vinyl, SIEBEN 1999, LIFE SCIENCE, cd, FMP 2000, SCREE, cd, GROB 2002, 7", vinyl, EP, happyzloty 2002, FRETBOARD MINER, cdr, audiosemanatics 2006, WHITEOUT, cd, FMP, 2009, AULDLANGSYNE, cd, GLIGG records 2012, Festivals: TOTAL MUSIC MEETING, ECHTZEITMUSIKTAGE, Mulhouse, Zürich, Hannover, Bern, Glasgow, Belfast, Gdansk...

### **HDRS**

Tristan Honsinger (cello), Olaf Rupp (electric or acoustic guitar), Axel Dörner (tp), Oliver Steidle (dr) CD: SOWIESO at GLIGG-records, 2014

### **HONSINGER – RUPP – BORGHINI**

Tristan Honsinger (cello), Olaf Rupp (acoustic-guitar), Antonio Borghini (db) CD (Duo Honsinger-Rupp): STRETTO at FMP, 2010

### **DARK HORSE**

Phillip Gropper (as), Olaf Rupp (electric guitar), Antonio Borghini (db), Max Andrzejewski (dr)

"One of the most intense and focused solo electric guitar recitals that we've ever heard."

**DOWNTOWN MUSIC GALLERY**

"Rupp's brain works as fast as his fingers, and he plays with impressive precision even at the fastest of tempi, but the music never sounds like mere technical display: each piece is unique and all are equally satisfying."

**PARISTRANSATLANTIC**

"Olaf Rupp is like no guitarist I've ever heard before. (...) The music he creates from his guitar is made of many fleet notes in atonal runs, alternating with sonic clusters, as he seems to approach the guitar almost pianistically. If you have heard Cecil Taylor playing his intense brief improvisations, then you have the idea here."

**CADENCE MAGAZINE**

Rupp also plays electric guitar, and the volume pedal allows him breathing space to skirt around the raw edges of feedback and explore ringing harmonics and variations in dynamics. Even in the acoustic pieces, there are occasional pools of calm in the storm of fluttery strumming that reveal an acute ear for melodic line, a sense of clear harmonic forethought and a feel for large-scale.

**Dan Warburton, THE WIRE 2-2012**

"Olaf Rupp's sound world is every bit as singular as that of both Derek Bailey and Hans Reichel, and his musical personality is every fathom as deep."

**ALL ABOUT JAZZ**

"Olaf Rupp has been altering notions of what acoustic and electric improvised guitar music can sound like for more than 20 years."

**DUSTED MAGAZINE**

"It harnesses the buzz of reality."

**THE WIRE**

"Nun ist Virtuosität auch eine Falle – hier aber liegt Rupps besondere musikalische Leistung, denn die lawinenhaften Tonkaskaden, die unter anderen Fingern blenden würden, schon gerade wenn sie so präzise und konzentriert atonal splitteln, purzeln und dramatisch rollen wie hier, räumen einen hier auf wie ein entspanntes Sprudelwellenbad."

**DE:BUG**

## DISCOGRAPHY:

> HAPPY JAZZ, JR3	Relative Pitch, NY	2017
> TRAINTRACKS, Brand / Rodrigues / Rupp	Creative Sources	2017
> shadowscores, ULRIKE BRAND – OLAF RUPP	Creative Sources	2016
> hundred beginnings, XENOFOX, duo w R. Fischerlehner	Farai records	2016
> Argyromania, DIE DICKEN FINGER	GLIGG records	2016
> Live at Lydfestival Aarhus, duo w R. Fischerlehner	Farai records	2015
> EVIL FINGERS, Honsinger-Dörner-Rupp-Steidle	GLIGG	2014
> TAM, Rupp / Müller / Fischerlehner	Not Applicable	2013
> STRALAU, w. Chris Dahlgren (Viola da Gamba)	Softrecords	2013
> AULDLANGSYNE acoustic and electric guitar solo	GLIGG	2011
> OFF ROAD CORE, DIE DICKEN FINGER	GLIGG	2011
> JÖRG FISCHER / OLAF RUPP / FRANK PAUL SCHUBERT Phugurit	GLIGG	2011
> RUPP / MÜLLER / FISCHERLEHNER	GLIGG	2011
> THREE SIDES OF A COIN #1 w. Martin Schmidti Schmidt	GLIGG	2011
> WEIRD WEAPONS 2 with Tony Buck, Joe Williamson	Creative Sources	2011
> STRETTO, w/ Tristan Honsinger	FMP	2010
> TOOMUCHISNOTENOUGH, Rupp-Wertmüller-Pliakas	FMP	2009
> WHITEOUT electric guitar solo	FMP	2009
> SPECTER OF GENIUS, duo w Michael Wertmüller	JAZZWERKSTATT	2009
> INDUCTIE anthologie	SQRT	2008
> TWELVE ´S Chris Iemulo, Olaf Rupp	SETOLA DI MAIALE	2008
> NOOMISSO, Shoji Hano, Olaf Rupp	KOOTOWN	2008
> FRETBOARD MINER, acoustic guitar solo	audiosemantics	2006
> WEIRD WEAPONS, Tony Buck, Joe Williamson, Olaf Rupp	EMANEM	2005
> ROSTOCK, AIR acoustic trio	Meta-Records	2004
> BERLIN STRINGS, 4mCD compilation	AbsintheRec	2004
> TENSILE, international experimental acoustic guitar anthology	LabileMusic	2003
> KERNEL PANIC, duo w. Joe Williamson	musica genera	2003
> SCREE, solo guitar	GROB	2002
> 7" EP, solo guitar	happyzloty	2002
> LIFE SCIENCE, solo guitar	FMP	2000
> BEASTIESHOPBEACH, electronic duo w. Götz Rogge	GROB	1999
> MAI, 12" EP, solo electronics	SIEBEN	1999
> SEPTEMBER solo guitar	GROB	1998
> BEASTIESHOPBEACH, electronic duo w. Götz Rogge	GROB	1998
> STOL electronic duo w. Stefan Mathieu	Kitty-Yo	1998
> BUTCH MORRIS BERLIN SKYSCRAPER	FMP	1998
> SEMIPRIMAVISTA, electronic duo w. Stefan Mathieu	Algen	1996
> SILKE ARP BRICHT MINIATUREN, solo guitar	n.UR-KULT	1994

## FESTIVALS:

> A L'Arme Festival, Berlin	2017
> Phonognoms Jazzfestival, Aarhus	2016
> KALEIDOPHON Ulrichsberg	2016
> Brecht Festival, Augsburg	2016
> In Between Festival, Wroclaw	2016
> JAZZFESTIVAL WILLISAU, Willisau	2015
> KONFRONTATIONEN, Nickelsdorf	2015
> Elbjazz, Hamburg	2015
> Brecht Festival, Augsburg	2015
> LYDFESTIVAL, Aarhus	2014
> ZWEI TAGE ZEIT, Zürich	2014
> SAALFELDEN	2013
> TRONDHEIM	2013
> KALEIDOPHON, Ulrichsberg	2012
> SOPOT JAZZ FESTIVAL, Sopot	2012
> De Single, Antwerp	2012
> JAZZANDMORE, Sibiu	2012
> UNCOOL, Poschiavo	2012
> JAZZANDMORE, Sibiu	2010
> Umlautfestival, Berlin	2010
> Echtzeitmusiktage, Berlin	2010
> Jazz Jantar Festival, Gdansk	2009
> JAZZANDMORE, Sibiu	2009
> Uncool, Poschiavo, Switzerland	2009
> NOZART, Köln, Germany	2009
> Shinjukku Pit Inn, Tokyo, Japan	2008
> Moers Festival, Germany	2007
> Uncool, Poschiavo, Switzerland	2007
> Guitar Festival Münster	2007
> Musik Kultur Stankt Johann, Austria	2007
> ResortOff, Netherlands, acoustic guitar solo tour in four cities	2006
> DOM, Moscow, Russia	2006
> ANGELICA, Bologna, Italien	2006
> KALEIDOSKOP, Ulrichsberg, Österreich	2006
> KONFRONTATIONEN, NICKELSDORF, Österreich	2005
> Klangwerkstatt, Berlin	2004
> MAERZMUSIK, Berlin	2004
> TONART, Bern, Switzerland	2004
> JAZZ Á MULHOUSE, Mulhouse, France	2003
> UNCOOL, festival of contemporary music, Poschiavo, Schweiz	2003
> UNCOOL, festival of contemporary music, Poschiavo, Schweiz	2002
> Festival Eberswalde	2002
> KONFRONTATIONEN, NICKELSDORF, Österreich	2001
> UNCOOL, festival of contemporary music, Poschiavo, Schweiz	2001
> TOTAL MUSIC MEETING, Berlin	2000
> CCA BAUSTELLE, Glasgow, Schottland	1999
> UNCOOL, festival of contemporary music, Poschiavo, Schweiz	1999
> SAMPLING RAGE, Podewil, Berlin, Deutschland	1999
> JACK POHL, Stadtgarten, Köln, Deutschland	1998
> BATEAUFAR, Paris, Frankreich	1998
> ISTANBUL MÜZİK SELENICI, Istanbul, Türkei	1997
> HXA FESTIVAL, Tschelyabinsk, Russland	1997
> ARCHE DES XXI. JAHRHUNDERTS, St. Petersburg, Russland	1997
> KLANGWERKSTATT, Neue Musik in Kreuzberg, Berlin, Deutschland	1997
> KLANGWERKSTATT, Neue Musik in Kreuzberg, Berlin, Deutschland	1996
> KLANGWERKSTATT, Neue Musik in Kreuzberg, Berlin, Deutschland	1995
> TOTAL MUSIC MEETING, Berlin, Deutschland	1995
> ECHTZEITMUSIKTAGE, Anorak, Berlin, Deutschland	1995
> 0024 YLEISRADIO, Helsinki, Finnland	1994
> SCHICHTWECHSEL, Völklingen, Deutschland	1993

## **PRESS:**

Rupp, nach wie vor einer der gegenwärtig originellsten, eigenständigsten und besten freien Gitarristen des Planeten – bleiben wir bescheiden – hier mit den nicht minder freigeistigen Posaunisten Matthias Müller und dem Schlagzeuger Rudi Fischerlehner in einem atemberaubenden 5-Pack, das fordert, schafft, kämpft und belohnt. Man spannt den Bogen ganz hart an, doch nach dem Schuss findet man die Erschlaffung lustig und vielversprechend, so macht man neue Geflechte und Spannungen daraus. Spannung, Dynamik, Punktierung, Augenblicksversprechen und grundgütige bedrohliche Enttäuschung sind mögliche Parameter, unter denen sich diese Geflechte bilden und wieder auflösen. Verfolge den Prozess.

**TERZ** [www.terz.org/texte/texte\\_1302/honker.html](http://www.terz.org/texte/texte_1302/honker.html)

A stimulating platter of free improvisation between Olaf Rupp (electric guitar), Matthias Müller (trombone) and Rudi Fischerlehner, whose drumming reminds me of the great Roger Turner. Improvisation made with small multiple gestures, a pointillistic approach that can produce passionate drives, all served in mid-size durations (7 to 15 minutes) that let your attention refocus regularly. Recommended.

<http://blog.monsieurdelire.com/2012/03/2012-02-29-ruppmullerfischerlehner.html>, François Couture

**MONSIEUR DELIRE**

To properly distinguish them, trombonist Matthias Müller, featured on Tingtingk was born in Zeven, lives in Berlin, and besides working with guitarist Olaf Rupp and drummer Rudi Fischerlehner on this CD, frequently partners other advanced musicians in the German capital such as saxophonist Frank Paul Schubert and bassist Clayton Thomas. His balanced yet raucous style takes advantage of the horn's slippery vocalism. Trombonist Matthias Muche on the other hand, is a Köln resident. Featured on Excerpts from Anything alongside pianist Philip Zoubek and bassist Achim Tang, he also often works with dancers and multi-media artists, and his playing, at least here, seems more minimalist and formalist than Müller's.

One of the reasons for Müller's freedom of expression on the five tracks which make up the CD is the sympathetic interaction among the trio members. Austrian-born Fischerlehner, who is now also Berlin-based and, who also creates soundtracks for video and installations, avoids excessive percussiveness to concentrate on the tinctures available from lightly applied cymbal quivers or chromatically oriented pops or paradiddles. Switching between acoustic and electric guitars, Rupp, another Berliner who has worked with the likes of bassist Joe Williamson and drummer Tony Buck, takes advantage of the characteristic attributes of each six-string. Commonly strumming southwards, with pinches and snaps, elsewhere he uses slurred fingering and oscillated friction to stimulate more free-form improv. An instance of this occurs on "Meknais" as the guitarist contrapuntally slides staccato pulses alongside the drummer's super-speedy rolls and rim shots as Müller's supple tongue-fluttering displays continuous forward motion. As the trombonist mutters and growls, his work is underlined with guitar string strums and plinks.

Throughout, the three often operate in triple counterpoint with timbres continuously bleeding together. While Fischerlehner splatters rhythms from low-pitched percussion or vibrates sympathetic beats, Rupp's guitar reverb or quivering strings makes common cause with Müller's trombone tonguing that encompasses craggy slurs from within the body tube and brassy upturns. The heartbeat-synched improvisations reach an apogee on the longest and title track. Müller's accented air wafts in such a fashion as to meet up with the drummer's balanced beats, while Rupp's leisurely sustained drones and friction-laden strums combine with the trombonist's snarls and barks. The performance's final variations downshift to a leisurely tempo with the guitarist rubbing unique textures from his strings, the drummer rolling, popping and rebounding, while the trombonist's extended slurs define the narrative

<http://www.jazzword.com/reviews/105347>, Ken Waxman

**JAZZWORD**

After a few discs of solo acoustic guitar (one on FMP), this is Olaf Rupp's first disc solo electric guitar. The picture of Mr. Rupp playing his guitar in the booklet shows him to playing his Fender solid body almost vertically with a slight diagonal, using the tops of his fingers to tap or pluck the strings. Listening to the first piece on this disc, he sounds as if he is playing a harp, actually an electric harp like the one that Zeena Parkins plays. On each of the fourteen pieces, Olaf sounds as if he playing the guitar in a different and an unusual way. Little in the way of devices to alter his sound, it is his fingers; his approach to playing that is most unique. At times he sounds like Fred Frith, especially on the first 'Guitar Solos' album, specifically that last crazy track. Olaf's frenzied tapping technique also recalls Elliott Sharp at times. For those who dig the further explorations of free guitar madness, this is one of the most intense and focused solo electric guitar recitals that we've ever heard.

**DOWNTOWN MUSIC GALLERY**, January 2, 2009, Bruce Lee Gallanter

Born in the Saarland in 1963, guitarist Olaf Rupp for many years played free music only privately. That changed in 1998 with the limited edition CD-R September, a rare item now. Two years later, Life Science on FMP combined electric and acoustic performances and saw Rupp developing a unique constructivist language that owes no debt to, but shares something of, Derek Bailey's unflagging dedication to the mortality of the moment, Sonny Sharrock's visceral power and Keith Rowe's absoluteness of discipline. The acoustic Scree followed in 2002, but Rupp hasn't released another solo disc until now.

Significantly, it isn't a single session date or a live recital, but a careful selection of performances from the summer of 2008. What's immediately striking is a relentless narrowness of means, throbbing strums reminiscent of flamenco (has he listened to Ramón Montoya?), dark bass zither effects as on "Part 8", and only very rare excursions into feedback altissimo, as on "Part 12". It would be hard to find an Improv record comprising so many separate performances - 14 in all - which shows so little variation in technique and sound. And yet this is Rupp's great strength, an art of accretion that makes the set as a whole far more impressive and potent than any of its component parts. It harnesses the buzz of reality.

**THE WIRE # 301**, March 2009, Brian Morton

The more time passes, the more it becomes apparent that the electric guitar is an instrument with characteristics inherently valuable when it comes to solo free improvisation. Olaf Rupp's sound world is every bit as singular as that of both Derek Bailey and Hans Reichel, and his musical personality is every fathom as deep.

His predilection for damping his strings makes for a dry, almost arid program. As the music is apparently to be taken as a body with more than the usual degree of predetermination, it is pertinent to note that "Part 7" is a piece where Rupp summons up an augmented vocabulary without recourse to anything other than string manipulation. The dexterity that this technique implies might be due to his playing position. If the pictures are anything to go by, he holds the instrument more like a considerably smaller double bass than any member of the guitar family, although the relatively reflective "Part 11," one of the occasions here when brevity is not a blessing, suggests that is of little relevance.

On "Part 1" he is momentarily sound-tracking an ant colony engaged in its customary level of activity, although an issue as basic as the relatively low volume of the piece undermines such superficial impressionism. When the piece does evolve, the process is anything but haphazard, although a frenzied passage almost undermines that impression in turn.

Any unpredictability implied by the analysis of "Part 1" is more than borne out on "Part 4" where Rupp comes as close as he ever does to evoking Bailey's spirit. His work is however more clamorous, more prone to rhetorical flourishes manifested in volume than Bailey's ever was, at least whilst playing solo. The results are however still compelling; the music's illogical flow enhanced by Rupp's deft manipulations and indeed his innate grasp of the possibilities electricity—and thus volume—have to offer.

Clocking in at just over ten minutes, "Part 6" lies more than literally at the heart of the program. Within it Rupp deploys his full vocabulary and in so doing lays down a challenge to all those for whom the guitar is no more than a penis extension. His grasp of dynamics in the moment is a law unto itself, but the time and effort involved in coming to terms with it are both well worth the effort. Again he employs next to nothing in the way of sustain, but the results resonate to a degree that's out of all proportion to the vagaries of his way.

**All About Jazz**, March 8, 2009, Nic Jones

With all the due respect – because the guy is an old associate of the clan – I've never managed to truly appreciate Olaf Rupp's technique whenever the occasion arose to evaluate his output. *Whiteout* is the first attempt on an electric axe – a Fender Stratocaster played in a vertical position on Olaf's laps – and a honest one too, regardless of the presence of a number of not excessively precious tracks (sorry, I hardly identify with those jangling overdriven mega-clusters which saturate the headphones, destroying the fine details by drowning them in a jumble of noise). On the contrary, when Rupp puts the fingers in trickle-and-dribble mode he generates cascades of scintillating harmonics and minuscule glitzy notes which constitute the most solid asset of an admittedly unsympathetic approach. A world difficult to penetrate, despite the use of the best mental flexibility available; the promise is to try again, as repeated listens didn't reveal anything that could cause a change of perspective for the moment.

**TEMPORARY FAULT**, February 23, 2009, Massimo Ricci

It could be seen as a testament to human progress that music this painfully cerebral is able to find an audience. Olaf Rupp has been altering notions of what acoustic and electric improvised guitar music can sound like for more than 20 years with the likes of Butch Morris, John Zorn, Stephan Mathieu and Tony Buck. On *Whiteout*, his first solo release in a decade, the German guitarist doesn't shy away from the kind of freakish arpeggios or wavering tremolos that dare a timid listener to press the stop button.

Rupp doesn't generally deal in sheets of blues-drenched volume, ala Keiji Haino or the ear-destroying sludge of *Aufgehoben*; in fact, there are moments when this disc finds itself nearly as hushed as the work on Hisato Higuchi's *Dialogue*. But, by and large, Rupp revels in blistering harmonics and angular runs, delicately pushing his fingers along the strings in order to emphasize distortion and eliminate any opportunity for harmony. At times, it's almost as if he's checking his guitar's pulse. His digits are often a blur, yet his execution is exact. His music is what jazz might sound like after every last bit of entertainment has been eradicated. Any sense of joy, of hard won ecstasy is completely missing. In its place is a chilly impenetrability.

*Whiteout*'s ever-rational excursions aren't easy stuff to take in long sittings. Even though these are improvisations, one gets the feeling that most of the time, Rupp has freedom in a chokehold even while he's exploring the outer limits of his own skills. Whereas by-the-seat-of-their-pants ensembles such as Smegma or the Nihilist Spasm Band can goad a few chuckles, Rupp is deadly serious. And sometimes that's just no fun at all.

**DUSTED MAGAZINE**, March 11, 2009, Bruce Miller

An album of freely improvised guitar solos. Rupp uses lots of distortion and delay combined with some unusual picking techniques to pull all kinds of strange sounds out of his guitar. Technically Rupp can't be faulted, he is as fast and precise as they come, and is willing to explore new techniques. Rupp stumbles upon some cool sounds during these excursions, but it often feels like he's meandering. Though I recognize that these are supposed to be freely improvised non-thematic pieces, but the lack of structure, takes away from what could have been a significantly better album. Rupp's experimental excursions would work best in the context of a structured piece, or his excursions should be juxtaposed with more conventional guitar playing.

**MAKESHIFT**, March 11, 2009

Free Jazz has always been about pushing the limits of your instrument. It seems once a musician has abandoned the strictures of traditional harmony and structure, the only limit left is what you can extract from your instrument. Olaf Rupp is like no guitarist I've ever heard before. *Whiteout* is a selection of Free Improvisations over three months in 2008, not just the recording of one set on one night. It is also his first work on electric guitar, and his approach here is like no other electric guitarist I've heard.

His technique remains "non-electric" in that he uses no distortion in amps, and he never uses pedals or electronic effects. Truly, what he does is simply amplified acoustic guitar, but that doesn't mean we have sweet Folk music on *Whiteout*. The photos in the liner notes show his unusual way of holding his Fender Stratocaster, seated in his lap with the neck straight up as if he were playing the cello, or perhaps more accurately, is if it were a sitar. The music he creates from his guitar is made of many fleet notes in atonal runs, alternating with sonic clusters, as he seems to approach the guitar almost pianistically. If you have heard Cecil Taylor playing his intense brief improvisations, then you have the idea here. But Rupp is most unique in the plain but involving sonority he draws from the instrument, and *Whiteout* sparks my curiosity. I would like to hear his acoustic guitar work.

**CADENCE MAGAZINE # 3**, July/September 2009, Phillip McNally

(...) Guitarist Olaf Rupp, also German, is of a decidedly different ilk than that which gave birth to FMP and to the halcyon days of German free improvisation. *Whiteout* is his first entirely solo electric guitar recording in 10 years, though he has recorded acoustic guitar performances in the meantime. Visually, Rupp is a striking figure—stocky, shorn pate and holding his instrument upright under the influence of Chinese pipa players (or fellow plucker Uwe Kropinski). Rupp and Brötzmann could be considered complementary forces. They are both self-taught and despite the cultural baggage of being "European" and purveyors of "art music," a wistful, timeworn and bluesy sensibility emerges in the plaintive moments of both. Rupp's immense webs and clusters of bunged notes yield shimmering overtones, but after the excitement clears, it's the plaintiveness and soul of his phrasing, alternately scumbled and twanging, that acts as a warm sonic blanket. (...)

**All About Jazz**, January 11, 2010, Clifford Allen

Felix Klopotek bescheinigt OLAF RUPP bei *Whiteout* einen selten gewordenem Formwillen und eine ebenso ungewöhnliche „Vielfalt der Eintönigkeit“. Dieses Seltene und Ungewöhnliche macht Rupps Musik zu ‚Ruppmusik‘. Sie besteht unverwechselbar in hypermanisch rasendem Bekrabbeln der Gitarre, hier seit langem wieder einer E-Gitarre. Die Klangbilder, die dabei entstehen, ähneln in ihrer Manie - oder zumindest Manier - Sergey Kuryokhins Pianosolos (minus dessen Humor), also doch eher dem Fingerpicking von Joe Morris (dem hat noch keiner Humor nachgesagt). Den mit ‚Part 1‘ und ‚3‘ exemplarisch vorexerzierten Duktus aus gedrängter Perkussivität, der beim 10-min. ‚6‘ atemberaubend kulminiert, variiert der 45-jährige Wahlberliner bei ‚2‘ und ‚4‘ (und wieder besonders schön bei ‚11‘) mit ruhigeren, ‚gitaristischen‘ Passagen, die die Gitarre quasi zu Atem kommen lassen, bei ‚5‘ und ‚10‘ mit feinem Streichklang, bei ‚8‘ mit tatsächlich monoton repetierten, dann aber auch, sich überschlagenden oder ausscherenden Noten. Klanglich ein Kontrast, entspricht jedoch die Spielhaltung in allen Fällen Rupps Präsentation als kahler, voll konzentrierter Zen-Mönch, der, mit senkrecht gehaltener Gitarre, die ‚Kunst des Krieges‘ meditiert. Rupp erzielt den Rupp-Effekt weniger durch eine Limitierung seiner Spieltechnik, die ist durchaus maximalistisch, als durch die bloße Raserei der Finger, die auf einen Sound abzielen, der aus einer Unzahl einzelner Punkte, einzelner Noten besteht, die als schwärmende Klangwolken von einem ruhenden Magnetpol ausgerichtet werden. Er ist ein pointillistischer Action Painter, ohne dabei in Aktionismus zu verfallen. Was Klopotek Rupps ‚puren Materialismus‘ nennt und als ‚Maximalausdruck‘ strikt scheidet von romantischen ‚Gefühlsausdrücken‘, äußert sich als technische Erzeugung und Beherrschung hoher Energiezustände. ‚12‘ ist ein Gipfel gitarristischer Atonalität, eine heißkalte Reflexion rockistischer Zerrbilder, ‚13‘ eine Spaltung des Blueskerns. Wer heute über Gitarrenspiel mitreden möchte, für den ist *Whiteout* Pflicht.

**BAD ALCHEMY # 61**, 2009, Rigobert Dittmann

Von der großen und avancierten zur kleinen und selbstverständlichen Form: nicht, dass Olaf Rupp, dieser gegenwärtigst grundgute große - und dabei nebenbei immer noch hochoriginäre - Saitenreiter nicht ganz weit vorne wäre, aber als vollmundig angekündigte avantgardistische Avancen an die Hörer erscheinen diese nach 10 Jahren akustischer Auslotung zum ersten mal wieder elektronisch begangenen Saiten beileibe nicht. Rupp findet halt immer ohne zu suchen, und auch diese 14 Teile sind ein stoisches Weitermachen und Weiterfliegen in bodennächster und unpräzisionssester Virtuosität. Jetzt schon klar, dass er einer der größten Freispieler dieser Zeit ist.

**TERZ # 2**, Februar 2009, Honker

Nach seinem Debüt auf FMP 1996 legt Olaf Rupp nun sein zweites Solo-Album beim immer mal wieder aufflammenden Free-Label vor. Es sind dies die ersten Solo-Aufnahmen des Berliner Gitarristen mit ausschließlich elektrischem Instrument seit zehn Jahren. Damals nahm er für „Grob“ rein akustisch auf. Die 14 Stücke der neuen CD entspringen einer wohl kalkulierten Kompilation bereits eingespielter und zu unterschiedlichen Zeitpunkten entstandener Aufnahmen. Da stark auf Gestaltung und Form geachtet wurde, wirken sie wie aus einem Guss, bilden eine Einheit. Klangfelder werden bearbeitet, frei, schrill und subtil. Sie gleichen sich in vielem, erfahren aber dann doch wieder, beim zweiten Hören, unmerkliche Änderungen. Olaf Rupp arbeitet sich an Tönen und Klängen ab, produziert Sounds ohne in Egomane zu verfallen. Die „Spurensuche in Rückkopplungen und Obertönen“ (Booklet) gestaltet sich vielfältig. In ihren subtilen Momenten ermöglicht sie dem Hörer Entdeckungen und ein Klangabenteuer. Alles ist „meisterhaft komponiert in improvisierter Musik“ (Booklet).

**JAZZ PODIUM # 3**, März 2009, Reiner Kobe

Spieltechnik ist ein Thema, das auf diesen Seiten angesichts immer neuer Interfaces und Editiermöglichkeiten völlig in Vergessenheit geraten ist. Olaf Rupp spielt Gitarre wie kein anderer. Sein Markenzeichen ist eine Clustertechnik, die vage an Flamenco oder auch an die Harfe erinnert, aber von ihm ins referenzlose Freie entwickelt wurde; gut zu hören ist diese zum Beispiel im Opener oder auch dem zentralen Zehnminutenstück seines neuen Soloalbums. Eingespielt mit elektrisch verstärkter Gitarre, aber mit sehr gebremster Verzerrung, klingt dieses Album über weite Strecken fast akustisch, selbst da, wo etwa Streich- und Flageolett-Techniken zum Einsatz kommen. Nun ist Virtuosität auch eine Falle – hier aber liegt Rupp's besondere musikalische Leistung, denn die lawinenhaften Tonkaskaden, die unter anderen Fingern blenden würden, schon gerade wenn sie so präzise und konzentriert atonal splintern, purzeln und dramatisch rollen wie hier, räumen einen hier auf wie ein entspanntes Sprudelwellenbad. Vielleicht erinnert der seltsam beruhigende Effekt an Bilder von Jackson Pollock. Vor allem aber erinnert diese feine Platte daran, dass auch im profansten Gerät noch ganze unerschlossene musikalische Welten stecken können.

**DE:BUG # 130**, März 2009, Multipara

Gottlob gibt es immer noch ein Häuflein Verwegener, Unverbesserlicher und Ewiggestriger, die ihre musikalischen Obsessionen nicht in den Wind wirtschaftlicher oder anderer existenzieller Zwänge hängen. Zum Beispiel der Berliner Gitarrist Olaf Rupp. Auf „Whiteout“ macht er den Atem der elektrischen Gitarre hörbar. Seine molekularen Strukturen verdichten sich zu einem Gesamterlebnis, das die Eindimensionalität der Zeit außer Kraft setzt. Die 14 Partikel, die sich hier zu einer Suite zusammensetzen, entstanden zu völlig unterschiedlichen Zeiten und ergeben erst in der vorliegenden Form einen finalen Sinn. Ein hintersinniges Spiel mit den Konstanten von Improvisation und Komposition.

**JAZZTHING # 78**, April/Mai 2009, Wolf Kampmann



Phänomenal. Auf den Höhepunkten übersteigt Michael Wertmüllers Raserei im Weikersheimer w 71 das Auflösungsvermögen des Auges, die Arme verwischen zu einem wie von Giacomo Balla futuristisch gemalten ‚Dinamismo di un batterista‘, er wird ganz zum entfesselten ‚Schlachtzeuger‘. Aber alle Finger, auch die von Olaf Rupp, Turbogitarrist in Gestalt Meister Propers, sitzend zur Rechten, und die des Overdrivebassisten Marino Pliakas am linken Flügel, flirren an diesem Dienstagabend - es ist der 26. Mai 2009 - so schnell wie die Beine von Zenons denksportlichem Achill – denn zwischen den schnellsten Schritt passt immer noch ein kleiner Schildkrötenschritt, zwischen jeden Sekundenbruchteil passt noch eine kleinere Bruchteilsekunde. Wertmüller kickt das Rennen und die Zwischenspurts mit Startschüssen an, die schockhaft die Luft zerreißen. Die lossprintende Zang!Tumb!Tumb!-Musik besteht fast durchwegs aus 16tel, wenn nicht 32stel-Noten, arpeggiando, staccatissimo. Pliakas rifft den E-Bass wie eine Gitarre. Zwar triggert er mit seinen Sonntagsschuhen auch Pedaleffekte, aber das hohe Tempo ist Handarbeit, nur gelegentlich lässt er zudem noch einen Loop tickern. Oder er bratzelt über den geschmeidigen Notenfluss elektrische Entladungen als Störfeuer. Statt Fluss sollte ich besser Gewebe sagen oder Kunststoff, so mikrofaserdicht und engmaschig ist das gewirkt. Wertmüller webt daran zuerst mit filzig dunklem Getrommel, donnernd zwar, aber ohne martialischen Grimm, sein modernistischer Furor trägt Zivil. Im zweiten Abschnitt konzentriert er sich auf metalloides Geschmetter und massiven Hagelschlag – prompt wurde für ganz Deutschland Sturmwarnung gegeben. In der dritten, einer gedämpften Passage schleift und schabt er mit Besen und Holz. Das Klangkontinuum wird durch zwei ausgedehnte Rupp-Solos gegliedert, bei denen Pliakas erst noch mitfiebert, dann Wache steht und Wertmüller einmal sogar seinen Arbeitsplatz verlässt. Mich irritiert sowas bei einem Trio sehr. Andererseits sind Verdichten, Ausdünnen und Gewichtsverlagerung bewusst eingesetzte Steuerungselemente, um das Gebrodel des Trios noch weiter zu verlebendigen, dem ansonsten nur die Flucht nach vorne bleibt, das Accelerando von Speed zu Hyperspeed. Rupsps Klangpartikelstürme, ganz sein Element, verdeutlichen das Webmuster und stehen als Teil schon für das Ganze. Seine Finger krabbeln und pluckern so schnell wie ein Zahnradchen, sie zerpflücken, zerhacken, zermörsern das Notenspektrum, bis die Raserei der Ruhe selbst zu ähneln beginnt. Ein Illusionstrick, der durch Rupsps statisch-aufrechtes Sitzen unterstrichen wird. Als sei das eine Art Zenübung. Nur manche Grimasse verrät den Luftwiderstand. Aber man grinst ja unwillkürlich selbst, wenn Drums und Bass, Full Blast-notorisch miteinander verkoppelt wie Black & Decker oder Lombardo & Dunn, mit einem Ruck wieder einsteigen. Futuristisch, neusachlich, ein Dynamo, der kinetische Energie umwandelt in Antigravitation. In einem Zug wird durchgespielt. Und auf den endlich losbrechenden Beifall gleich eine Zugabe draufgepackt – motorisch kantiger, aber ungebremst rasant. Der Rausch der Geschwindigkeit und Überfülle als Mindfuck. Wir müssen uns Achilles im Fotofinnish mit dem Phantom der Schildkröte als glücklichen Menschen vorstellen.

**BAD ALCEMY** Rigobert Dittmann 2009 [rbd]

The more time passes, the more it becomes apparent that the electric guitar is an instrument with characteristics inherently valuable when it comes to solo free improvisation. Olaf Rupp's sound world is every bit as singular as that of both Derek Bailey and Hans Reichel, and his musical personality is every fathom as deep.

His predilection for damping his strings makes for a dry, almost arid program. As the music is apparently to be taken as a body with more than the usual degree of predetermination, it is pertinent to note that "Part 7" is a piece where Rupp summons up an augmented vocabulary without recourse to anything other than string manipulation. The dexterity that this technique implies might be due to his playing position. If the pictures are anything to go by, he holds the instrument more like a considerably smaller double bass than any member of the guitar family, although the relatively reflective "Part 11," one of the occasions here when brevity is not a blessing, suggests that is of little relevance.

On "Part 1" he is momentarily sound-tracking an ant colony engaged in its customary level of activity, although an issue as basic as the relatively low volume of the piece undermines such superficial impressionism. When the piece does evolve, the process is anything but haphazard, although a frenzied passage almost undermines that impression in turn.

Any unpredictability implied by the analysis of "Part 1" is more than borne out on "Part 4" where Rupp comes as close as he ever does to evoking Bailey's spirit. His work is however more clamorous, more prone to rhetorical flourishes manifested in volume than Bailey's ever was, at least whilst playing solo. The results are however still compelling; the music's illogical flow enhanced by Rupp's deft manipulations and indeed his innate grasp of the possibilities electricity—and thus volume—have to offer.

Clocking in at just over ten minutes, "Part 6" lies more than literally at the heart of the program. Within it Rupp deploys his full vocabulary and in so doing lays down a challenge to all those for whom the guitar is no more than a penis extension. His grasp of dynamics in the moment is a law unto itself, but the time and effort involved in coming to terms with it are both well worth the effort. Again he employs next to nothing in the way of sustain, but the results resonate to a degree that's out of all proportion to the vagaries of his way.

**ALLABOUTJAZZ** March 08, 2009 , Nic Jones

<http://www.allaboutjazz.com/php/article.php?id=32026>

Born in the Saarland in 1963, guitarist Olaf Rupp for many years played free music only privately. That changed in 1998 with the limited edition CD-R September , a rare item now. Two years later, Life Science on FMP combined electric and acoustic performances and saw Rupp developing a unique constructivist language that owes no debt to, but shares something of, Derek Bailey's unflinching dedication to the mortality of the moment, Sonny Sharrock's visceral power and Keith Rowe's absoluteness of discipline. The acoustic Scree followed in 2002, but Rupp hasn't released another solo disc until now.

Significantly, it isn't a single session date or a live recital, but a careful selection of performances from the summer of 2008. What's immediately striking is a relentless narrowness of means, throbbing strums reminiscent of flamenco (has he listened to Ramón Montoya?), dark bass zither effects as on "Part8", and only very rare excursions into feedback altissimo, as on "Part 12". It would be hard to find an Improv record comprising so many separate performances - 14 in all - which shows so little variation in technique and sound. And yet this is Rupp's great strength, an art of accretion that makes the set as a whole far more impressive and potent than any of its component parts. It harnesses the buzz of reality.

**THE WIRE** 301 März 2009, Brian Morton

Felix Klopotek bescheinigt OLAF RUPP bei Whiteout einen selten gewordenem Formwillen und eine ebenso ungewöhnliche „Vielfalt der Eintönigkeit“. Dieses Seltene und Ungewöhnliche macht Rupps Musik zu ‚Ruppmusik‘. Sie besteht unverwechselbar in hypermanisch rasendem Bekrabbeln der Gitarre, hier seit langem wieder einer E-Gitarre. Die Klangbilder, die dabei entstehen, ähneln in ihrer Manie - oder zumindest Manier - Sergey Kuryokhins Pianosolos (minus dessen Humor), also doch eher dem Fingerpicking von Joe Morris (dem hat noch keiner Humor nachgesagt). Den mit ‚Part 1‘ und ‚3‘ exemplarisch vorexerzierten Duktus aus gedrängter Perkussivität, der beim 10-min. ‚6‘ atemberaubend kulminiert, variiert der 45-jährige Wahlberliner bei ‚2‘ und ‚4‘ (und wieder besonders schön bei ‚11‘) mit ruhigeren, ‚gitaristischen‘ Passagen, die die Gitarre quasi zu Atem kommen lassen, bei ‚5‘ und ‚10‘ mit feinem Streichklang, bei ‚8‘ mit tatsächlich monoton repetierten, dann aber auch, sich überschlagenden oder ausscherenden Noten. Klanglich ein Kontrast, entspricht jedoch die Spielhaltung in allen Fällen Rupps Präsentation als kahler, voll konzentrierter Zen-Mönch, der, mit senkrecht gehaltener Gitarre, die ‚Kunst des Krieges‘ meditiert. Rupp erzielt den Rupp-Effekt weniger durch eine Limitierung seiner Spieltechnik, die ist durchaus maximalistisch, als durch die bloße Raserei der Finger, die auf einen Sound abzielen, der aus einer Unzahl einzelner Punkte, einzelner Noten besteht, die als schwärmende Klangwolken von einem ruhenden Magnetpol ausgerichtet werden. Er ist ein pointillistischer Action Painter, ohne dabei in Aktionismus zu verfallen. Was Klopotek Rupps ‚puren Materialismus‘ nennt und als ‚Maximalausdruck‘ strikt scheidet von romantischen ‚Gefühlsausdrücken‘, äußert sich als technische Erzeugung und Beherrschung hoher Energiezustände. ‚12‘ ist ein Gipfel gitarristischer Atonalität, eine heißkalte Reflexion rockistischer Zerrbilder, ‚13‘ eine Spaltung des Blueskerns. Wer heute über Gitarrenspiel mitreden möchte, für den ist Whiteout Pflicht.

**BAD ALCHEMY** # 61, 2009, Rigobert Dittmann

Btw: yesterday an awesome concert of Olaf Rupp, playing solo acoustic (classical) guitar at the DNK series (OT301, Amsterdam): playing very precisely with all the ‚noises‘ that playing a nylonstring guitar involves (nails on strings, ‚bijgeluiden‘ et cetera), almost as if overlaying different types of sound in a way that can be compared to what goes on in electronic / laptop music... Also Gjerstad & Olsen played, but Rupp, well ‚blew my mind‘...  
**ariealt.net** November 14, 2006

Danach jedoch ein sanfter Hammer: Olaf Rupp live, stets fantastisch. Der Berliner Gitarrist einmal mehr als Albeniz auf Speed: mit großartigen Flächen-Flageolets kitzelte er die Akustische sensibel impulsiv, filigran und energetisch. Unglaublicher Charakterkopf mit uroriginärem Stil, immer wieder ein Vergnügen!

**JAZZTHETIK** #192 Februar 2006

#### L'EAU QUI DORT

Il Faut toujours se méfier de l'eau qui dort. Derrière le look austère du guitariste allemand Olaf Rupp, qui se produisait pour la première fois en France hier à la chapelle Saint-Jean, il y a un temperament fiévreux...

Adeptes de la guitare classique acoustique qu'il tient à la verticale à la manière d'un violoncelle, il a impressionné le public pas son jeu virtuose et foisonnant.

Avec la constance d'un métronome, il caresse à vive allure et vigoureusement les cordes de son instrument tout en faisant courir sa main gauche sur le manche, déversant une densité des notes d'une régularité étonnante. Comme une coulée de lave qui embraserait les sentiers sinueux d'une pente abrupte, ce tapis sonore envahit la moindre anfractuosité. Il en extirpe encore une ligne mélodique par petites touches éparses qui peu à peu se détache du magma se frayant un chemin parfaitement dessiné.

À d'autres moments, il entre dans des propositions apaisées d'une profonde sérénité, sans relâcher pur autant la tension. Accordant un soin particulier à faire vibrer parfaitement une corde pincée, préservant les silences qui suivent une harmonique. En quête de perfection, de sons purs, lumineux.

Un concert comme un ouragan, vertigineux...

L'ALSACE, Mulhouse, 2004

Seit 15 Jahren arbeitet Gitarrist Olaf Rupp als improvisierender Musiker, mit LIFE SCIENCE erschien seine erste reguläre Solo-CD auf dem ehrwürdigen Freejazz-Label FMP, das sich seit einiger Zeit auch für eine jüngere Generation zu öffnen beginnt. Zurück auf GROB, wo Rupp bereits zusammen mit Götz Rogge die ziemlich hardcorelastige CD BEASTIESHOPBEACH veröffentlichte, gibt es abermals Hardcore pur - und zwar im Sinne von Intensität, Verdichtung. Und das an der Akustikgitarre. Rupp zeigt hier, dass er einen ganz eigenen Stil ausgebildet hat, rasant, virtuos, aber keineswegs aufgesetzt oder musikerhaft. Chadbourne kommt in den Sinn, doch die Bezugspunkte bei Rupp sind andere, reichen vom klassischen Gitarrenspiel bis zu Flamenco(sic!), die als Restformen auftauchen, aber auch vom permanent quirligen Spielfluss geschluckt werden. Erstaunte "Mann wie schnell" -Ausrufe sind hier zwar angebracht, doch das Wesentliche entwickelt sich nicht aus dem Formalen, sondern dem Momenthaften, Sprunghaften, der Kunst des Dazwischens. Auch Olaf Rupp kennt seine "unsauberen" blue notes.

**testcard** #12, Mail 2003

A few weeks earlier, Olaf Rupp's hour-long performance at NBI was a revelatory and hypnotising affair. Playing a nylon-string acoustic guitar he produced dense and overlapping sheets of sound and noise that were only occasionally interrupted by a few fragments of notes that might, under other circumstances, pass for melodies. Sounding completely fresh and without any electronic processing whatsoever he managed to give every laptop jockey in town a run for their money. **stretcher.org** Ed Osborn 2003

"Berlin based guitarist Olaf Rupp likens his improvisations to riddle pictures which, when first viewed, reflect only superficial abstraction. Looking beneath the surface and into the hidden structure below reveals the embedded picture. This analogy is further reinforced by his assertion that his music deals with tone grids that define underlying sound. The accuracy of this assertion is clear from the first note of Scree.

Rupp, who is self taught, draws his influences from many sources: Derek Bailey's freeform, found sound approach, and Marc Ducret's complex tone clusters and flamenco technique come instantly to mind. It would be wrong, however, to give the impression that Rupp's style is only a collection of borrowings. Using only a classical guitar with no additional sound manipulation (similar to British improviser Roger Smith), he hits the strings very hard and produces music of exquisite accuracy. He may be self-taught but this has not hindered his acquisition of prodigious technique and, like many untrained musicians, he finds no contradiction in eliding styles. Thus the collision of flamenco-style arpeggios with dense chord clusters and a ringing steel tone holds no fear of incompatibility for either Rupp or the listener.

Neither is he afraid to labour a point. On "Action Of Rain And Frost" Rupp builds a persistent drone out of a continuously strummed chord that gradually reveals the hidden sound world contained within. Overtones become audible, harmonic resonance takes on new depth, as different notes within the cord appear to vie for precedence. The strummed chord is gradually transformed into a rolling flamenco caress and new layers of strength within the chord are revealed. This is where Rupp's unique approach to guitar improvisation begins to reveal its huge potential.

He is also capable of a more measured elongation of time in his playing, opening the spaces inherent in his architectural tone grid. The application of classical discipline comes to the fore here only to be subverted by a Bailey-derived randomness of single, interconnected notes. The intensity to Rupp's playing allows the listener to savour the whole sound of the plucked note from initial application of the finger, through the wholesome resonance of the string to the final decay of the vibration."

**THE WIRE** 226 December 2002, John Cratchley

"Radikale Improvisationen auf der akustischen Gitarre."

**DIE ZEIT** 51/2002 Ulrich Stock

"German guitarist Rupp plays acoustic instruments exclusively on this solo CD, and initially, his work might bring to mind another underground favourite, Steffen Basho-Junghans. Indeed, common points of reference do exist. Basho-Junghans favors hypnotic, repetitive chords, loaded with overtones and harmonics. Rupp follows that formula on one piece ("#7"), where a single chord is struck rhythmically and repeatedly, creating a buzzing, amorphous cloud of overtones.

But in general Scree dazzles with jagged runs of dissonant note clusters and chords, often suggesting a species of turbocharged, wayward flamenco and "outside" classical guitar, mixed with a some elements of traditional Chinese music (particularly for the pipa, an ancient four-stringed lute). Rupp played an electric Fender Stratocaster on his debut recording, Life Science, but his intensity on this CD clearly doesn't suffer as a result of unplugging. In fact, hearing all of this energy electrified might be way too much of a good thing.

"Scree" is defined as "a mass of debris comprising loose fragments of rock," and the twelve pieces on this recording do conjure up, in terms of notes, a great many small hard, inter-related objects with a dangerous latent energy. The swarming, smothering sound of Rupp's rippling arpeggios, lightning runs and staccato chords is perhaps symbolic of some inexorable force, e.g., a tumbling avalanche of musical scree, although the force is not always in motion, and the music sometimes slips into a more reflective mode. In fact, once Rupp's amazing tour de force digital dexterity has served its notice on the first several pieces, the silences between the notes gradually become more prominent, giving the listener a chance to take a breath and assimilate the ebb and flow of the music. Some later tracks actually invite a kind of contemplation, with the frequent use of microtones, harmonics and string damping giving some of the more subdued pieces an austere Zen Buddhist quality. All in all, Rupp offers up an exciting, challenging CD, highly musical in the broadest sense, and a must for anyone who likes to hear an acoustic guitar pushed to its physical and aesthetic limits."

**BBC** London, Bill Tilland, 2002

Wie expressiv Minimalismus und umgekehrt wie minimalistisch Eruption sein kann, stellt Gitarrist Olaf Rupp auf "Scree" (Grob/A-Musik) heraus. Mal geht er in die Breite, mal zieht er dünnere Linien nach, doch stets bleibt es spannend, den geraden oder verzweigten Wegen seiner molekular anmutenden Intentionen zu folgen. Seine Klangflüsse verdichten sich zu einem Naturereignis, das, rückübersetzt in den abstrakten musikalischen Kontext, die verblüffende stilistische Nähe von Free Jazz und Ambient deutlich macht.

**Jazzthing** #47 De Feb 03

"Equally surprising to me was the solo guitar of OLAF RUPP. On LIFE SCIENCE (FMP 109), Rupp plays in a highly original style that has traces of Reichel, Hendrix, Flamenco, Bailey and Doran. A self-taught guitarist, Rupp's technique on both acoustic and electric (a Strat, for those who care) is jaw dropping and on all these improvisations (Bios/Flor/Nerf/ Ciel (post electro)/ Heat/ Viva/ Voce/ Path/ Rain/ How big is your Heart?/ Body/ Soil. 76:33. June November 1999, Berlin), he uses it tastefully, passionately, intelligently. A typical piece has Rupp moving from ultra-slow melodic lines to fierce two-handed tapping and into bizarre power chords or flourishes. It is highly abstract and challenging music, but not at all uninviting (it's free improv you could play for a metalhead, I guess). Whether on electric or acoustic, his playing is utterly absorbing as he pushes towards a new language for improvised Guitar. More please Mr. Rupp."

**CADENCE** (U.S.A.) Vol 26 No. 12 December 2000

Berlin guitarist Olaf Rupp wrestles a grungy electric and a meaty acoustic through a variety of stylistic approaches. Loose, stunted classical arpeggios, deadfinger dragging strums and hurricane runs along the neck all combine in what sounds like a damaged take on folk blues. The atmosphere is dramatic but never overblown, with tight, raging note stabs giving way to pools of silent reflection without ever sounding self-conscious. It feels like a liberated performance: a slow, egoless drift downstream, perfectly realised and preserved in real time.

**THE WIRE**, David Keenan, #202, december 2000

LIFE SCIENCE - Das Wissen ums Leben auszuspielen, ist dem Berliner Gitarristen Olaf Rupp ein Anliegen. Er erweckt in keinster Phase den Eindruck, jemanden imitieren oder eine bestimmte Spielhaltung vertreten zu müssen. Rupp hat diverseste Einflüsse grund seiner starken Persönlichkeit ins Eigen transformiert. Er spielt seine Gitarren pur. Ohne Präparationen und Effektgeräte. Einfach seiner Technik vertrauend, die ganz im Dienste seines beeindruckenden nonkonformistischen Klangverständnisses steht.

**JAZZLIVE**, han

"Olaf Rupp Solo-CD "Life Science" (FMP/Helicon) ist ein Beispiel für einen enzyklopädischen und gitarristischen Forschungsansatz zur Post- Punk- und Post-Bailey-Improvisation, der die Gitarre (im Sinne von Gitarre-Gitarre, also: Flamenco, aber auch autodidaktisch) ausdrücklich zulässt und weiter spielt."

**JAZZTHING** NR. 35 SEPTEMBER/OKTOBER 2000

Gitaris free improvisation dan musisi avant garde dari Berlin Olaf Rupp ini merupakan gitaris yang lebih berkonsentrasi pada permainan improvisasi dan sound, memainkan akustik dan elektrik gitar sama baiknya dan dengan elektrik gitarnya dia dapat menciptakan sound-sound yang bervariasi tanpa menggunakan asesori efek gitar dan teknik bermainnya kadang mengadaptasi permainan Cecil Taylor pada piano, dia sering menggunakan teknik cluster pada gitarnya seperti Cecil Taylor pada pianonya, juga kadang mengesek senar-senar gitarnya dengan jarinya untuk membuat variasi suara, improvisasi pada permainan musiknya seolah-olah tidak habis-habis. Pada album "Life Science" yang berisi 12 komposisi selain mengeksplorasi permainan elektrik gitarnya juga banyak memunculkan permainan akustik gitar, walaupun masih dengan landasan free improvisasi, kadang sound yang keluar dari petikan gitarnya tidak terduga dan memunculkan sound yang baru, kadang bermainnya bisa sangat abstrak tapi kadang lembut dengan akustik gitarnya. Dan dari album ini tampak personality dari Olaf yang dialirkan lewat nada-nada dan teknik permainan gitarnya perfect. Album eksperimental ini tampaknya menunjukkan konsistensi Olaf Rupp pada jalur free improvisasi, selain proyek dia pada musik elektronik dan musik konkret.

[www.wartajazz.com](http://www.wartajazz.com), WJ

Olaf Rupp Life science (FMP,2000) Musicien exigeant, sans doute torture, ce guitariste allemand est en lutte constante avec son instrument, dont il extrait des sonorités à mille lieux des canons de l'esthétique, dite conventionnelle (le contraire aurait été étonnant sur un tel label !), afin de donner vie, à de curieuses sculptures sonores, escarpées, abruptes, voire indigestes pour certains. Auditeurs distraits, passez votre chemin !

[www.lamediatheque.be](http://www.lamediatheque.be)

Olaf Rupp, che sembra la controfigura di Wim Wenders giovane, imbraccia una chitarra acustica e comincia a far correre le sue agili dita su e giù per la tastiera, vagando tra flamenco, fughe classicheggianti, svisate free ed echi lontani di blues, per una suite lunga cinquantasette minuti. Per la ritmica si aiuta battendo le dita sulla cassa e l'effetto è quello di una vera e propria orchestra. Rupp ci trasporta nei suoi personali territori musicali alquanto introspettivi ed è una cavalcata tra suoni e ritmo che in alcuni punti diventa davvero trascinate. Che magia è capace di trarre un uomo solo dal suo strumento, quando lo sa suonare.

[www.landscape.it](http://www.landscape.it), Paolo Redaelli,

Taken solely on the trappings of this release Olaf Rupp is something of an enigma, a German guitar prodigee who skipped the usual scuttling about in obscurity and shot straight to the big leagues of FMP. His debut disc for the label is complex primer detailing his impressive command of string theory and praxis. Recorded direct to digital at his leisure in a variety of settings from concert hall to bedroom the pieces illustrate Rupp's broad base of moods and fingerings. A brittle sheen of amplified ice coats many of his structures on electric axe while his acoustic peregrinations follow less bombastic roads venturing into radioactive strains of flamenco and even folkish chordal progressions. In the interview that comprises the notes for this release Rupp recounts a daily routine of morning Zen meditation followed by several hours of concentrated guitar exercises. The discipline in his self-described timetable manifests prominently in the methodical nature of this music. Rupp plucks, plinks and strums to an inner logic that is all his own. It's a collective technique tantamount to many of his peers in improvised music, but outside shop talk circles and to the ears of lay listeners (like myself) his machinations may seem overly pedantic on occasion. There are moments that walk the tightrope of excess as on the florid pyrotechnics of "Ciel (post electro)," but there's still something classically and ingratiatingly artistic about Rupp's decision to play first and foremost with his own wants and needs in mind. "Viva" announces on a repeated anthemic line caked with thick fuzz tone and distortion while arpeggiated figures laced with frosty trails of feedback form the crux of the close. To my senses it's on numbers such as this, with the added edge of amplification that his reticular string patterns really succeed in attaching themselves to the ears and beginning the work of dismantling barriers to their ingress. The synapse between artist and instrument is sometimes a closed system across these compositions. But there's still plenty on the surface to captivate listeners willing to peer through the figurative pane glass separating them from the guitarist's inner cerebral workings.

[www.allaboutjazz.com](http://www.allaboutjazz.com), Derek Taylor,

„Einen neuen Höhepunkt auf dem Gebiet des unbegleiteten Solos: Der Gitarrist Olaf Rupp, dessen Intensität weniger in der Lautstärke als in einer Harmonik liegt, die alle bisherigen Extreme übertrifft. Das Total Music Meeting hat viele Musiker nach Berlin gelockt. Viele sind in Berlin geblieben und beleben die Szene.“

**BERLINER MORGENPOST**, Matthias R. Entrefß, 2000

"Zu den überzeugenderen Konzerten gehörte auch der spröde Auftritt von John Russel (g) und Evan Parker (rs) sowie der Festival-Auftakt mit Olaf Rupp. Dieser spielte seine Elektrogitarre gerade auf den Knien haltend, wie einen Baß. Es ist eine wilde, freie Musik, die unerwartete Klänge bringt und zeitweise wie eine Übersetzung der taylorschen Cluster auf die Gitarre wirkt. Ein schönes Festival also ..."

**JAZZTHETIK**, Meinhart Buholzer, Germany 2000

"One of the more convincing concerts was the performance of Olaf Rupp. He played his electric guitar upright on his lap like a bass. It is a wild and free music bringing forward unexpected sounds, which sometimes seem like a adaptation of Taylors clustertechnique to the guitar."

**JAZZTHETIK**, Meinhart Buholzer, ,(translated)

Olaf Rupp is a German guitarist based in Berlin, and his singular approach to improvising on the electric guitar places him in a league with players such as Raymond Boni and Marc Ducret. While his language is as personal as Derek Bailey's, it does not yet possess the transcendental ability that the British master's does; Rupp's playing is, more often than not, an in-your-face approach to finding small unexplored or underexplored sonic nuances in the body of the instrument itself (or in his own technique), and drawing them out into the open directly and forcefully with as little space as possible between idea and execution. All but one of the tracks were recorded live to CD in a broken down house in the suburbs of Berlin, and the 13-minute "How Big Is Your Heart" was recorded at the UNCOOL Festival at Lago di Poschiavo, Switzerland. It is the key to the entire musical language Rupp expresses. Warped, angular arpeggios are juxtaposed against tonal patterns that can claim no consistency because of Rupp's complete disregard for the tone switch on his Fender Stratocaster. He attempts to play patterns without variation on a guitar whose very nature is to create it. He finds one sonic hash mark; dives into it; brings it up from the depths quickly, furiously, architecturally; builds it up to a point where he and instrument are one; and then destroys it in a fit of noise, finger-picked maelstrom, and whammy bar fluctuations and chord modulations. Rupp's music is far less academic than Boni's and as explosive as Ducret's, with aspirations to be as literate and articulate as Bailey's. It is already original, already fiery enough to be arrogant, while holding a small place for receptivity from outside sources -- as in the melodic chord structures that are dissembled with left-hand acrobatics la Jimi Hendrix. Life Science is a stellar debut by a gifted and uncompromising young artist. ~

**All Music Guide** [www.getmusic.com](http://www.getmusic.com), Tom Jurek

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