



artist: **AGITATION FREE**
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AGITATION FREE with new live album “Shibuya Nights”

Of all of the experimental German groups who emerged in the early 1970s, **Agitation Free** was certainly one of the most musically adventurous. From their beginnings in 1967, the band embraced the concept of performing long and free improvisations, experimenting with the use of liquid projectors, slide shows and their own films in live performances. The Electronic Beat Studio that **AGITATION FREE** initiated under the direction of Thomas Kessler also developed into the creative center for the Berlin groups **ASH RA TEMPEL** and **TANGERINE DREAM**.

The sound of **Agitation Free** featured the pioneering electronics of **Michael Hoenig** one of Germany's best at creating atmospheric melodies and powerful-layered soundscapes which both enhanced and defined the bands style. Also featured were guitarists **Lutz Ulbrich** and **Gustl Lutjens** whose magic fingers could conjure up exotic Eastern scales or soaring melodic melodies with ease. Drummer **Burghard Rausch** and bassist **Michael “Fame” Günther** were a polyrhythmic rhythm section extraordinaire that propelled the music. Recording two classic albums for the German division of Vertigo Records, (the classics **Malesch** in 1972 and **“2nd”** in 1973), the band split up in 1974.

Although a number of posthumous albums, (featuring recordings made between 1972 and 1974 appeared following the band's demise), and a studio album (**“River of Return”**) appeared in 1999, it was almost 35 years after disbanding that the original band came together once more to perform.

In February 2007, **AGITATION FREE** reunited to perform a series of concerts in Tokyo to mark the occasion of member **Michael Hoenig**'s addition to the “Progressive Rock” section of the Tokyo Tower Wax museum. Agitation Free guitarist **Lutz Ulbrich** had already been a wax-presence there for several years. As fate would have it, everything came together perfectly. Unknown to them, a multitrack recording was made of all three concerts that took place at the O'West venue in Tokyo's Shibuya district, which eventually led to Hoenig compiling the best of the performances in the original musical sequence of the three concerts. The resulting new album, **“SHIBUYA NIGHTS”**, offers clear evidence that **Agitation Free** remains one of the best and most original groups among their illustrious German contemporaries.

This superb live recording **“SHIBUYA NIGHTS”** features five selections from **“Malesch”** and five from **“2nd”**, along with three new compositions and “Nomads,” from the 1999 album, **“River of Return”**. Programmed perfectly, the track sequence creates a magical, mystical tour through those halcyon days when inspiration flowed freely, guitars and imaginative synthesizer soundscapes comingled to conjure up sonic panoramas of far-off imaginary lands. The album’s production features a flawless mix and immaculate mastering, employing a superb mixture of audio-verité effects which are partly original sound recordings from their 1971 tour of Egypt and the Middle East. Aeroplanes, conversations, trains and synthesized segues create a non-stop listening experience which completely capture your imagination. Musically, it also features a multitude of highlights, as every track explodes from the speakers.

The opening track **“You Play for Us Today”**, gets the album off to a running start with its deep, loping percussive beats underpinned by **Gustl**’s sizzling guitar and **Michael**’s synthesizer interplay. **“Sahara City”** begins with original Arabian percussion, which disappears into a dense multi-layered soundscape of ambient synthesiser textures laced with the Eastern overtones and sonic exotica. **“Shibuya Nights”** is a new composition that rattles your eardrums with **Michael**’s and **Burghard**’s deep primal drumming. **Gustl**’s layered guitar and sustained notes literally ooze from the speakers, propelled by the heavy undulating rhythm. The whole thing underscored by **Hoening**’s modal electronic textures.

“Laila” opens with a crash; leading into some beautifully layered dual guitar soloing. A powerful heavy jam, it serves as the album’s centerpiece. That track flows right into **“Nomads”**, which once again revolves around amazing ritualistic rhythms and percussion. They serve as the backbeat for another celestial-music mantra overflowing with multiple layers of **Lutz**’s spiraling lead guitar and **Michael**’s synthetic textures. The rhythm section throughout the album is truly outstanding.

“Das Kleine Uhrwerk”, from **“River of Return”**, is a nice exotic change of pace featuring dual Ukuleles played by **Lutz** and special guest, actor **Issey Ogata** along with electric slide guitar from **Gustl**. Together, they intertwine weaving a sonic tapestry of delicate folk / jazz fusion that dances lightly over a nimble rhythm section.

The album closer, **“Rücksturz”** is a pure power surge. A heavy, dramatic guitar piece, it again features **Gustl**’s sustained lead lines spiraling high over a dense, dramatic musical arrangement climaxing with crash-and-burn synthesizer/ guitar feedback.

The album’s ultimate triumph is that much of the music, first performed four decades ago, not only evokes the revolutionary innovative spirit of glorious days gone by, but, as played here makes for even more compelling listening in today’s homogenized musical environment.

After almost forty years, the five musicians of **AGITATION FREE** have reincarnated their creative vision and the band look forward to **performing concerts in Europe in early 2012**. This says much about not only the music, but the musicians who performed it – a rare accomplishment in these days of cash-in reformations. **“SHIBUYA NIGHTS”** provides ample proof that good music such as this can indeed be timeless.