



Karthago „Live At The Roxy“



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The history of the Karthago Live Album is inseparably connected to my own life in the years 1975 and 1976. Cornelius and Marcellus Hudalla represented the management, photographers, PR and booking agents as well as producers of the records. We existed and lived together with the great road crew – Karthago, a big blended family with varying “family members”. All of us were extremely committed, more or less freaky, unexceptionally gifted and absolutely convinced of our work. It is probably also a matter of age to regard yourself as the best, to believe that the world has waited only for you. But that was – aside from the individual constellation – no unique attitude at that time. Many popular bands in Germany had the same or similar approaches.

The bands’ views and orientations towards life and music were very diverse, just the way “normal” families generally are. Many



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claimed to give a political statement with their music, others wished to document and spread a concept of life. Again others wanted to revolutionize classical music in a modern and rocking way, or to create unprecedented soundscapes with new electronic instruments. Then there was the elite who was determined to coin a technically perfect jazz performance, or those who created a whole new thing out of many of these tendencies.

It often led to tracks of "endless" duration. The genre called "Krautrock", marking a genre of German rock music in the early 70s, embraced quite a number of very differing musical styles. What they had in common was the feeling of breakup and breakout which derived from the 60s. It was musically represented especially by the Beatles and the Stones and was probably the biggest spiritual and social change of virtues of the modern age, happening within a small time period.

What was also shared by all German bands of that era was being discriminated by the English and American pioneers, by the music industry, radio and television stations, print media and a big part of the people.

"Schlager" still dominated the music consumption in Germany. The rock bands with their loud, beat-oriented music, the shrill looks, their pushing to freedom and independence, their longing for boundless individuality and social justice were outsiders. The awareness of that fact made us proud and strong. We felt that we had changed the world considerably. Modern rock music of that era was worldwide the most important medium to blast old-fashioned, authoritarian structures of thinking which had - in times of two world wars - almost led our planet into self-destruction and nuclear insanity.

The expression "anti-authoritarian" became the key word of the young generation since the mid-60s. Along with that, the "sexual revolution" being propagated, extensively enjoyed and exemplified in the universe of rock music expanded to the youth of the western world. This also was, literally spoken, motivation and "mainspring".

Karthago could not be related to one of the before mentioned styles within the "Krautrock-Scene". The band belonged to the few who were able to produce entertaining, chart-related rock music on a high musical level. We deliberately wanted to be compared to what was created by the best musicians in England and America. That referred to the technical skills to play international rock music of best quality.

Our inspirations were the roots of rock'n roll, former blues legends, The Beatles and Stones as well as exceptional geniuses like Hendrix, Clapton and many more. As a sound unit we were completely different and independent, visually and compositionally, we were Karthago and at the same time a little bit a top-Krautrock band of that era.

Because of its instrumentation with percussions, Karthago was sometimes compared to Santana. Back then not really famous, but later the most successful and only surviving band of all times in that genre were the Scorpions. They come from Hannover, like Joey Albrecht.

The bands knew each other well. For some time, we were their booking agents and later, after Karthago, partially also their concert promoters. I could write quite a lot about the Scorpions' success now and I consider it as evidence to the fact that a German mainstream



band of the 70s could be internationally successful. Klaus Meine and Rudolf Schenker are unique as artists and human beings, and all my respect and admiration is due to them - they had to work incredibly hard to achieve the top of the hill.

After the spring tour 1975 with Glenn Cornick, featuring "Rock´n Roll Testament", Karthago split up for good. The musical differences were too extensive, the interpersonal and social assimilation problems irreconcilable. The last three concerts took place in Switzerland in march 1975, cooperating with our local promoter there, Harry Sprenger. All of us were sad, paralyzed, but no one had the strength to turn everything alright. Glenn went back to London, Ingo became part of Kraan and the Hudalla Brothers moved from the thrilling metropole Berlin to Scherpenseel, a village of 500 souls and part of the association of municipalities Übach Palenberg in the back-country of Aachen, right next to the Dutch town Heerlen.

There we founded our first corporation in a renovated barn. Our partners were Norbert Mückl and Engelbert Fleischer, two absolutely firm guys who were also working in management, booking and event management. It was our aim to become accepted in the local event business in North Rhine-Westphalia and to get ahead by making up a successful touring branch. From the commercial point of view that seemed to be the right decision in the beginning. I, Cornelius Hudalla, did never really truly fulfill that step though. I had to leave all my friends, my scene that ranged to Kommune 1 and the precursors of Bader Meinhof, the Kreuzberger Kiez between Cottbus gateway, Görlitz station and Silesian gateway as well as I had to leave "Kontrastprogramm", our gorgeous photographic studio and office with its high walls and the big windows, located in Richard Wagner Street between German Opera and Charlottenburg Castle.

No more Berlin air, no police officers or battles with water cannons, no intellectual, creative or political conflicts, no wall, no Wannsee, no photographic inspiration, no freaky, willing city girls, no film, radio or television celebrity at every turn, no editorial office of a newspaper where you could drop in, no theater scene, no music scene, no stoned do-gooder or inventors of new loud speakers, no subway, no bar without curfew where you could hang around twenty-four-seven and meet interesting people, no sex, drugs and rock´n roll.

But even more serious for me was to give up my successful career as a photographer due to moving away from Berlin. My brother and me gained international popularity in the early 70s by shooting the top-selling Hendrix poster, we were approved stars in the photographer scene for pop music in Germany and Europe. Our creative work had brought us together with many genre icons of music business, already before Karthago. Our first meeting with Karthago was a request for a really wicked photo shooting. Concerning my person, there were several indications for a not yet finished, inner move to another city. I left my apartment in Sorauer Street 13 in Kreuzberg to Joey, I did not change the Berlin license number of our business Passat, let my hair grow longer and longer - just to keep my home in Berlin and to leave a return to the familiar environment open. In the hick-ass town I used every opportunity to stand out and to provoke. My looks, the Berlin license number and the access to cannabis and weed in the Netherlands were reason enough for the police to check up on me because of drugs and terrorism tendencies. I did not feel welcome there and was not accepted indeed, at least not by the executive.



The highlight of that "war" was a conflict with the local police. At that time I produced the album "Rhapsody" with Pell Mell in Stommeln near Cologne. Pell Mell was Germany's classic rock band no. 1 and also client of our management. The production happened on behalf of Dieter Dierks. Joey Albrecht was guest musician on the record. Due to a damage of one of Dieter's new multi-track tape recorder we had unforeseeably one evening off and decided to go to a Kraan concert - in the city hall of Übach Palenberg of all places. Joey and me were happy to see Ingo Bischof again and we had a drink with the Kraan guys after the concert. We sat there far into the night. As if written in a script, we came into a police stop on our way back to Stommeln, just a few meters behind the city hall. Of course, we - being a little buzzed - found those measures by the police absolutely unnecessary and unfair. That grievous injustice made us protest heatedly and courageously in a way that is in official language also called "defamation of a civil servant on duty". The gentlemen of law and order were the majority and enjoyed being provoked, so we were forced to come to the police post.

There we had to walk through a espalier of sixteen police officers who beat us up in a way I had never experienced before. Thomas Schmitt of Pell Mell, Germany's first-class violinist and trained lawyer said: "I am an attorney" and wanted to protect us in that unjust situation. The answer was a punch of the right fist of a police officer that made him silent right away and unable to move his lower jaw for the next days. Most of us spent the night in the police cell whereupon I remember being knocked down and peed on by an officer. You can imagine in which miserable condition we arrived in Stommeln the next day to continue the production of the Pell Mell LP. Dieter's mom who cooked lovingly for us at that time made every effort to nurse us back to health. I was an outsider in the new corporation and it was tough to integrate myself into daily routine. In retrospect I have to thank my partners at that time, my brother Marcellino, Norbert and Engelbert for the creative freedom with which I was able to found the Blitz Musik publishing company, to produce Pell Mell and finally "Live At The Roxy" by Karthago.

After the split of the band I needed a lot of time and strength to realize that plan. Time also means that I could not administrate other requirements in the company which led to the fact that I was not able to make any contribution to the cost recovery of the young concern. I never wanted to accept the end of Karthago. Too big was my belief in the band and its international career. I spent many nights sleepless, agonizing about how to bring the people together again, how to resurrect Karthago. In doing so, the idea of a live LP developed. Nothing was more evident actually - after all Karthago was the most wicked live act in German rock scene at that time and the former two albums were relatively far away from what characterized the band on stage. We had discussed that topic for quite a while indeed without being able to putting it into action. The negative circumstance that everybody including the management was deeply in debt and pressured by the finance office after the active times helped me realizing the live project.

Those sorrows led to tensions and accusations between the involved. The situation demanded a solution. Since there were still requests for Karthago performances, I had to bring the band together, to motivate "my company" to be event manager and to persuade the label to fund a Live LP. No easy task in a situation like that, especially because the management and the label had to take another financial risk, additionally to already existing



debts. But by touring and live recordings there was the possibility to amortize debts and to open up new perspectives, too.

First of all I had to pitch that idea to my co-partners and my executive and to convince them to conduct the undertaking. The fact that the band did not own a PA or a light system any more made the situation complicated. All that stuff had to be rented for the tour. Up to that point, the whole thing was hypothetical because the band did not exist anymore and every single person had to be motivated for my project. After succeeding in convincing Joey, Ingo and Tommy in one-on-one talks, we still had to cast for bass and drums. That was primarily difficult because of the high-leveled musical standard.

It was probably Ingo who could persuade ex-member Gerald Luciano Hartwig to join the project. The man was in terms of musical skills and PR the first choice. Gerald was "the guy" for the band. Concerning the drummer, Karthago's and especially Joey's requirements were at the highest stage. Nobody in this country seemed to fulfill the expectations. Of course there were many talented drummers but rarely one who could convey a certain rhythm feeling to provide the right groove to Karthago's music. You need to consider that once Tommy Goldschmidt played the percussions in the band, one in south America born former drummer, and that the soloists Joey Albrecht and Ingo Bischof possessed remarkable rhythmical skills. Curt Cress was the band's preferred candidate but he had other engagements. So we chose Ringo Funk, drummer of Atlantis and ex-drummer of Jeronimo, whom Joey knew quite well and expected to conform to the requirements. Since the cooperation with Tom Cunningham, Joey wanted a second guitarist and singer to perform Rock'n Roll Testament authentically. We could involve Reinhard Bopp of the Mannheim band Hard Cake Spezial for that part. Hard Cake Spezial was geared to the USA and certainly one of the best German bands featuring guitar licks in two voices and vocals in several voices.

So Reinhard's background was compatible with Karthago's music. Then the road crew had to be arranged. Our chief roadie Georg Früchtenich had moved to the United States due to wedding and needed to be replaced. Because of renting equipment at Flash Light Und Sound in Hamburg we worked together with Karthago's original roadie Walter Rudat again. A few years before, Walter had left the band in a cloak-and-dagger operation in Copenhagen after it had "forced" him to stem Ingo's Hammond organ up to the third floor of the club. It happened on tour through Scandinavia at a concert with Thin Lizzy. Karthago's members Bodo Neuman and Jürgen Greene Fiedler were present there, too. We obtained the support of our regular equipment supplier Gerd Kühnl from Bielefeld. Only the agreement of the label was lacking. Branco Civanovic, boss and possessor of Bellaphon, was no ordinary negotiating partner - but I was insistent and motivated as hell.

We ourselves had high requirements after cooperations with first-class sound masterminds like Thomas Kuckuck, Barry Hammond and Geoff Emmerick and workings in the best studios in Europe - so they were definitively justified when thinking of the band's skills. It was not easy to reconcile both sides and to achieve a congruent production budget of the label. At that time, only two mobile units of measurement were possible, the ones of Dieter Dierks and Conny Plank. We decided for Conny Plank because Dierks' mobile car was booked for a recording of the Rolling Stones. I was curious to work with Conny whose sound was well-



known to the whole scene and whom I had often met and watched during my work as a photographer and journalist. Ingo and Conny had already worked together in cooperations for Kraan. Especially the outstanding drummer sound and his reputation in music business were impressing. After fixing the cornerstones, the elaboration of the project began.

The tour had to be booked, conditions to be negotiated and contracts with locations, organizers, guest musicians, technology companies and recording studios to be closed. Time schedules needed to be drawn, temporal sequels to be coordinated, routes to be arranged, hotels to be booked and rehearsals to be organized. The musical program was reassembled, GEMA announcements written and appropriate texts for the media composed. The following PR measure included multiple distribution of ready-made texts and photographs as well as appointments at radio and TV stations or interviews during rehearsals. All that happened over the distance between Scherpenseel and Berlin, without mobile phone, computer or fax. I am actually wondering why no band has ever used the significant sound of the rattling paper tape and the stroken type bar of the Telex machine for a song. I guess no one of the composers has ever really worked in an office. For all those who worked in (editorial) offices all around the world that sound was music and feeling of success in one. You were in contact with the whole wide world and when that infernal machine started something happened or began to move somewhere. In our case it was the Karthago tour in 1976.

It should be the most successful tour in band history. The dress rehearsal in Nürnberg aroused excitement of the public and great media feedback. Our tour manager Walter Weidenhaupt was busy getting the boys out of bed even after long nights and to get rid of interview requests or to coordinate them. Highlights were the concerts we recorded for the Live LP. One took place at the Fabrik in Hamburg, a Karthago stronghold since 1972, and the closing concert in Berlin's Roxy Palast, a completely new live club accommodating more than 3000 people and so exceeding all previous locations. Our shows were sold out - sensationell.

It was gigantic - a German rock band that as the first of its kind had sold more than 3000 tickets for a single concert. I do not dare thinking about what could have happened if we had continued what if we had arrived earlier at an agreement with the interested parties from the USA who had shown up quite swanky at our office in Richard Wagner Street, what if...

What is left is the probably best live album in the history of German rock music. Fireworks of rhythm at the percussion by Tommy Goldschmidt and Ringo Funk, the best Gerald Luciano Hartwig I have ever heard on the bass guitar, Reinhard Bopp being the perfect complement to Joey, Ingo Bischof who shines as a master of all keyboard instruments, using sound layers, sometimes as the vibrant driver of the rhythm combo, as congenial partner of the lead guitar or as brilliant soloist. And finally Joey Albrecht, lead singer with a powerful, unique voice and a world class guitar play. The guts that he showed let him float above all top guitarists. With his quick fingers, his ingenious technique, the god-given talent, the huge sound repertoire, his anger, world weariness, his vulnerability and aggression, his intensive sexual sense he produced that certain something that could bring the audience to ecstasy and give even the quiet souls goose bumps. On stage, Joey could totally let go, go overboard, electrify co-musicians and listeners likewise.



Karthago music was emotional, inspiring and stirring. The CD starts with the typical Karthago concert intro "The World Is Like A Burning Fire" of the record Karthago 1. "Sound In The Air", "Rock'n Roll Testament" and "We Gonna Keep It Together" are songs of "Rock'n Roll Testament". The only and thitherto never recorded track is "Thema In C", the only really German rock-like Kathago song, one that was written early in the band's history, partly banished from the repertoire. It was requickened for the recordings because the audience and me liked it so much and it provides space for a drum solo of Ringo Funk. "Second String Rambler" is a new version of the String Rambler of the founding years, for me one of the best tracks of the production. The ballade "Wild River" is surprisingly the only song of "Second Step". Reinhard Bopp plays solo in the Don Nix song "Going Down", a typical bonus track after concerts, using a Bottle Neck. "We Give You Everything You Need" is also part of Karthago 1, in my memory Gerald's song in the first place. "Highway Seeker" and "See You Tomorrow In The Sky" are tracks with a special guitar sound and Joey's tribute to Jimi Hendrix. Also to mention is "Phasing", handmade by Conny Plank.

Somehow, the electronic live version from the PA was not taped. So we had to retouch that while mixing in the studio. It was one of Conny's giftedness to produce it manually with two tape recorders. Never will I forget how he did that full of fervency using his whole body - how he tightened his buttocks, lifted and lowered them, how he wiggled on tiptoe from one side to another like a prima ballerina, and finally - after relaxing his body again - how he smiled at us happily, the voluminous, long, blond hair combed behind the ears. Hey, old boy there up in heaven, I hope you are as pleased about my description as I was always pleased about your expressive "action". I thank Manfred and Ecki from M.I.G. for republishing that great piece of German music history 35 years after its development that I am lucky to be part of. The music is as timelessly good and present as if it was produced yesterday. Nobody could ever perform it better than the musicians of Karthago themselves if they only came on stage together again.

Düsseldorf, 29.03.2011

Cornelius Hudalla

producer, manager, photographer, journalist

TRACKLISTING:

CD 1

01. The World Is Like A Burning Fire (05:34)
02. Sound In The Air (05:00)
03. Rock 'n' Roll Testament (04:56)
04. We Gonna Keep It Together (07:29)
05. Thema In C (10:40)



06. The Second String Rambler (12:37)

CD 2

- 01. Wild River (06:44)
- 02. Highway Seeker (Did Nobody Tell You) (15:49)
- 03. We Give You Everthing You Need (13:24)
- 04. Going Down (05:02)
- 05. See You Tomorrow In The Sky (03:32)