

HALFTIME SHOW

ILJA RUF TRIO

FEAT. NILS LANDGREN & BERND RUF

ILJA RUF · HANNES PRIES · NIKLAS MÜLLER

HALFTIME SHOW

1. **Average Boy** 4:29
2. **Tides** feat. Nils Landgren 6:02
3. **The Crows Fly Again** 6:02
4. **Seven Is Not Enough** 4:07
5. **Home** feat. Bernd Ruf 3:39
6. **Green** 8:39
7. **Change My Mind** 12:36
8. **Halftime Show** 3:31
9. **La danse de la lune** 8:36

Ilja Ruf - piano & vocals

Hannes Pries - drums

Niklas Müller - bass

Feat. **Nils Landgren** - trombone

Bernd Ruf - clarinet

ILJA RUF TRIO



ALL MUSIC AND LYRICS BY ILJA RUF

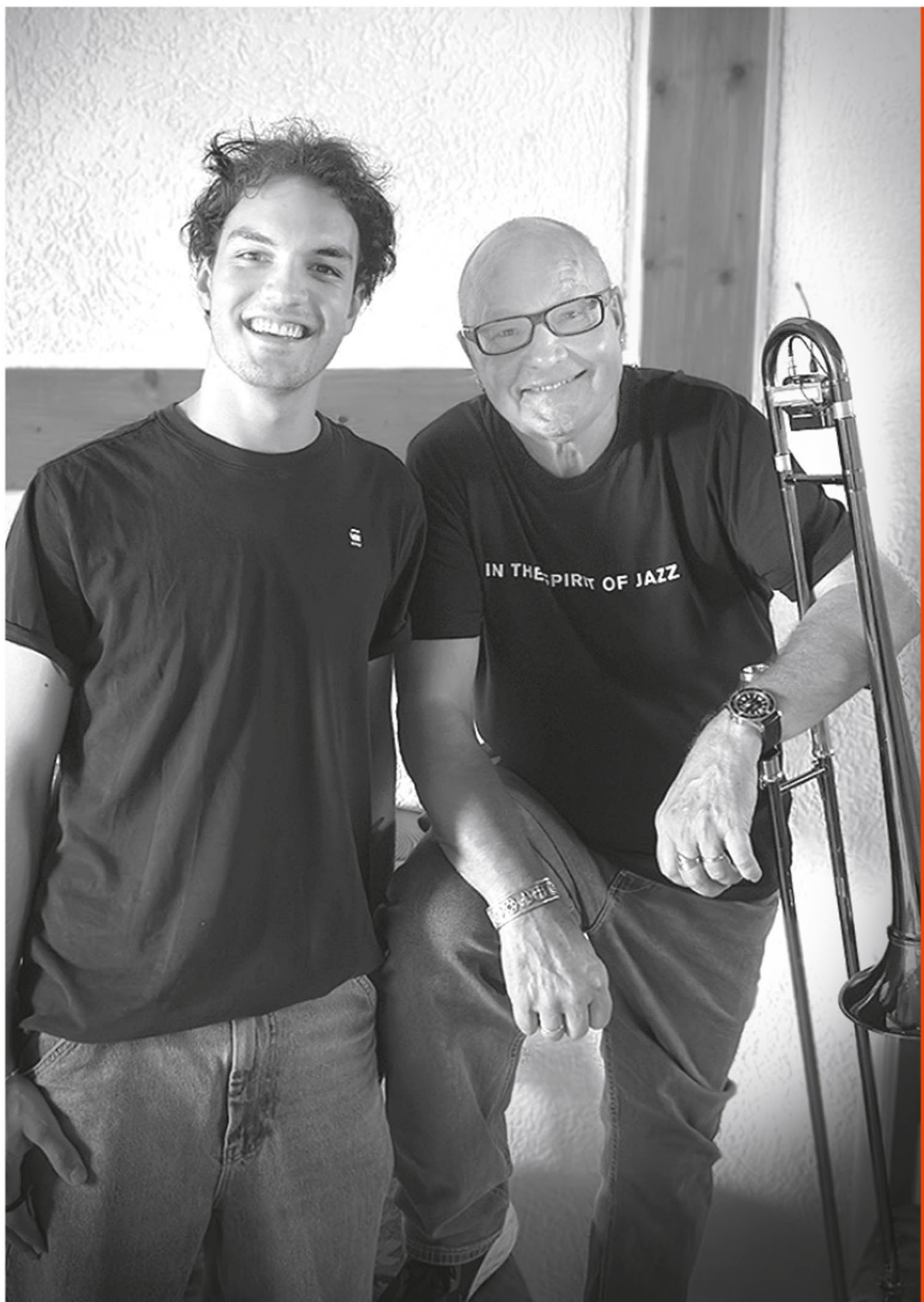


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I am very grateful for the Lübecker Jazz Prize 2021, which allowed me to produce this album. Many thanks to the two prize donors Björn Engholm and Frank-Thomas Gaulin and Armin Mueller-Stahl, who made this drawing for me.

A big thank you to Nils Landgren. We've known each other since I was 11 years old and he's always supported me since then. I am very happy to have him as a special guest on this album.

Ilja Ruf

**ILJA RUF AND NILS LANDGREN AT THE RECORDING
SESSION FOR "TIDES"**



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+ legà Ruf
X un clorade

HALFTIME SHOW

Ilja Ruf - piano & vocals

Hannes Pries - drums

Niklas Müller - bass

Nils Landgren - trombone on track 2 „Tides”

Bernd Ruf - clarinet on track 5 “Home”

Drawings inside and on CD label by Armin Mueller-Stahl

Recorded in GermanPops Studios, Summer 2023 by Hannes Pries

Editing & Mixing by Hannes Pries / Mastering by Christoph Stickel

Thanks to Frank Pries for the use of the Steinway

Recordings with Nils Landgren by Julian Altrock

Photography by Lukas Pries

Artwork by Jan Baruschke/DOMINO Medienservice Lübeck

Produced by Hannes Pries & Ilja Ruf

Executive Producer: Bernd Ruf

iljaruf.com; germanpops.de

Ilja Ruf hat in **Hannes Pries** und **Niklas Müller** zwei Gleichgesinnte gefunden, die sich gleichermaßen in Jazz, Pop und Klassik wohl fühlen. Das muss auch so sein, denn die Musik des musikalischen Grenzgängers Ilja Ruf pendelt zwischen unterschiedlichsten Genres. Ilja Ruf ist vielfacher Preisträger unterschiedlichster Musikwettbewerbe von Klassik über Songwriting bis Jazz. Sein Solo-Debut-Album „Ilja_19“ als Songwriter, sein Duo-Jazz Album „Dialogues in Jazz – Utopia“ mit Bernd Konrad sowie seine Alben mit dem Klassiktrio ClariNoir wurden für verschiedene Schallplattenpreise nominiert. Ilja Ruf beschreibt in HALFTIME SHOW durch seine berührenden und mitreißenden Songs, durch musikalische Tiefe sowie lustvolle, virtuose Improvisationen sein Lebensgefühl als Angehöriger der Gen Z. Besonderer Gast ist Nils Landgren.



In Hannes Pries and Niklas Müller, Ilja Ruf found two like-minded musicians who feel equally at home in jazz, pop, and classical music. This must be the case because the music of the musical border crosser Ilja Ruf oscillates between the most diverse genres. Ilja Ruf is a multiple prizewinner of various music competitions, from classical music to songwriting and jazz. His solo debut album 'Ilja_19' as a songwriter, his duo jazz album 'Dialogues in Jazz - Utopia' with Bernd Konrad and his albums with the classical music trio ClariNoir have been nominated for various record awards. In HALFTIME SHOW, Ilja Ruf describes his attitude to life as a member of Gen Z through his touching and stirring songs, musical depth and joyful virtuoso improvisation. Special guest is Nils Landgren.

AVERAGE BOY

It's a lonely world for the average boy
What's the purpose of his life?
His twenties are an odyssey and
Cold is all he finds
His mother's voice inside his heart asks "What have you become?"
In your stony face it's hard to find my son

In the morning at the kitchen table
He longs for love
Then he sits down at his piano chair and
Plays what he's been dreaming of
He remembers that the average boy has nothing loveable
It's a lonely world for the average boy

Ohh yeah
Lonely boy

Still he tries to be a little better every day
He tries to be a little better
He tries to give everything he has every day
As he grows into an average man
Lonely world
Lonely boy

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Lonely boy

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He tries to be a little better
He tries to give everything he has every day
As he grows into an average man
Lonely world
Oh, oh, oh
Lonely boy

Oh yeah
Lonely boy

In the evening when he walks home
There's a man across the street
The man lights a cigarette
He's forgotten how to speak
The boy takes out his phone because
He needs someone to talk to
Then he remembers that the average boy
Has no one to call

Mmh, average boy

It's a lonely day for the average boy
It's a lonely day for the average boy
It's a lonely world for the lonely, average boy

THE CROWS FLY AGAIN

Bleeding in my visions of the night
Now I call you up
'Cause this is not a dream no more
Freezing on the glaciers of the fight
And now I spill blood
For someone who I abhor

We are living in a tale that my grandfather has fought
In a world swallowed by flames

When the crows fly and form a big, black cloud
And the distance calls out the dying names
They wake up the burning souls under the ground
And they satisfy their lust with growing pain
The crows fly again

Winners drown their fears in a song
A killing refrain
Going crazy in the second verse
Sinners can't help but sing along
Everyone is the same
In the shadows of the birds

We are living in a tale that my grandfather has fought
In a world swallowed by flames

When the crows fly and form a big, black cloud
And the distance calls out the dying names
They wake up the burning souls under the ground
And they satisfy their lust with growing pain

And they spread their dusty wings
And they sharpen their claws
And they reach for the crown

And the singers start to sing
Of awful screams and applause
As they attack the town

When the crows fly and form a big, black cloud
And the distance calls out the dying names
They wake up the burning souls under the ground
And they satisfy their lust with growing pain

SEVEN IS NOT ENOUGH

Every day that goes by I can feel
That my love for you grows
And every once in a while let me say
What I want you to know

That I think of you on Friday
When I'm missing you
And I think of you on Sunday
Oh, oh, oh, oh
And I need you on my worst days
And on Thursdays too
Every Saturday I fall for you

If I was the one to build the world
Then I made an extra day
That is just for us and only us
'Cause seven is not enough
And I name the day after you
'Cause it must be beautiful
A few hours no one bothers us
Yeah, seven is not enough

Oh

With every year going by I can feel
That my love for you grows
And every once in a while let me say
What I want you to know

That I think of you on Friday
When I'm missing you
And I think of you on Sunday
Oh, oh, oh, oh
And I need you on my worst days
And on Thursdays too
Every Saturday I fall for you

If I was the one to build the world
Then I made an extra day
That is just for us and only us
'Cause seven is not enough
And I name the day after you
'Cause it must be beautiful
A few hours no one bothers us
Yeah, seven is not enough
At least not for us

And I think of you on Friday
When I'm missing you
And I think of you on Sunday
Oh, oh, oh, oh
And I need you on my worst days
And on Thursdays too
Every Saturday I fall for you

And I love you on a Monday
And on Tuesday too
On Wednesday as well
And I love you on our extra day
That I need to make
'Cause seven is not enough

And I love you on a Friday
And I love you on a Wednesday
And I love you on our extra day
That I need to make
'Cause seven is not enough

La la la la la la laa
La la la la la la laa
Seven is not enough
Seven, s-s-s-s-s
Seven, s-s-s-s-s
Seven is not enough

HOME

A house from a fairytale
A garden with flower trails
Leading the way to you
A soft sounding melody
Out of the apple tree
I hum along
I'll be home
I'll be home
Mmh

A town like a murder scene
Easy to get lost in
So far away from you
Bleeding noise day and night
But with you on my mind
I get along
I'll be home
I'll be home
I'll be

Home is where I find you
I leave my troubles at the door
Smiles painting my room
Belong to us from years ago
I'm home

Home is where I find you
I leave my troubles at the door
Smiles painting my room
Belong to us from years ago
I'm home

A house from a fairytale
A garden with flower trails
Leading the way to you
A soft sounding melody
Out of the apple tree
I hum along, da da da
Da da da da da da
Da da da da
Da da da da
I'm home
I'm home
Mmh

CHANGE MY MIND

Broken pieces of forgiveness
Oh, I've seen them times before
So easy to pick up
So appealing to give up
But I leave them on the floor

Quiet knocking at the entrance
Guilty tears behind the door
So easy to believe
What a pity they're not real
I don't trust them anymore

No more words, no more words, no more words
Oh, no
You won't hurt, you won't hurt me no more

You will never change my mind
Yeah, you fucked it up this time
Even after all you've done
It's a shame that you try
Go and don't you dare come back
Just find someone new instead
Who can fall for your lies
You will never change my mind

All your usual empty phrases
Used to numb me like a drug
I don't need an antidote
To be seeing what I know
Since you first performed the plot

No more words, no more words, no more words
Oh, no
You won't hurt, you won't hurt me no more

You will never change my mind
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And even after all you've done
It's a shame that you try
Go and don't you dare come back
Just find someone new instead
Who can fall for your lies
You will never change my mind

Never change my mind

Change my mind, change my mind
Change my mind, change my mind
Change my mind, change my mind
Change my mind, change my mind

HALFTIME SHOW

The truth is
I've been practicing my lines on my way to you
Maybe it's stupid
But I believe that my car knows me better than you do
I've no problem filling secrets in my empty cups
And I sleep pretty well in my back seats
Where I don't need to be afraid that you'll wake me up
And say that you desire me in your bedsheets
'Cause you're the superstar
And I'm yours to love
No, I need to go
To finally play my own halftime show

The truth is
I'm just another trophy in your gallery
How stupid
That I believed that you'd change for me
And I'm ashamed that I can never erase my engraved name
But I can prevent the notch from getting deeper
And the girl before me will probably never be the same
And maybe soon you try to put me where you keep her
'Cause you're the superstar
And I'm yours to love
No, I need to go
And finally play my own halftime show

And I am the one to end your prime
And I am the one to stop you from winning ten times in a row
And I am the one to step into the light
When I finally start to be my own

The truth is
I've been practicing my lines on my way to you
And you're so stupid
Even my car knows me better than you do
I won't have a problem finding someone I can trust
And I can't wait to be loved in my backseats
And I am not afraid to tell you that I'm breaking up with you
And say what no one's dared to say before
You're no superstar
And I'm not yours to love
No, I need to go
To finally play my own halftime show
Now I will go
And finally pla

AVERAGE BOY

Being in your early twenties can feel overwhelming and scary sometimes. You leave your teen self, your childhood friends, and the place where you grew up behind while you try to navigate your life through the big questions: Who do I want to be? What is my passion? Will I ever find someone to share my love with?

Some dreams go, some change, and some grow. The feeling of loneliness and insecurity accompanies the average boy each day who hopes to be more than that and tries to give his best in this period of life.

TIDES

The sea has been romanticized for ages. Tales of pirates, Atlantis, Poseidon, and mermaids are just a few tales people like to tell, and still, to this day, a big part of the seas stays undiscovered.

Ilja grew up by the Baltic Sea, so it is only logical that it became a part of his life that gives him peace and is an inspiration for music and thoughts.

The composition features Nils Landgren who has known Ilja since he was 11 years old and regularly gets him to join his band. His intimate playing on his legendary red trombone colors the sea and floats on the piano trio like a sailing ship leaving the haven.

THE CROWS FLY AGAIN

There have been wars for as long as there have been people. When Russia launched an invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, Ukraine called upon all men to fight. In this song, Ilja imagines talking to a friend about the beginning of a war, how unimaginable it is to leave your current life with all your plans and dreams behind to take the lives of others. Terribly, even more wars have developed in recent years with peace becoming more and more absurd. The Crows fly again.

SEVEN IS NOT ENOUGH

“The Beatles” were the first ones to sing of a week that has more than seven days and Ilja liked the idea of having more time than usual. He wishes to be the builder of the world to add an extra day just for his loved one and him, because “Seven is not enough”.

This sweet love song with its catchy chorus melody complements the album perfectly, invites you to dance, and reminds you of the beauty of love.

HOME

There are fewer beautiful things than returning after a long, exhausting journey to a place you call home and where you feel comfortable and secure.

Ilja dedicates the song to his mother and has his parents’ house and garden in mind where he grew up as he writes about birds singing melodies out of the apple tree and beautiful flower paths. The song is a warm hug to everyone who longs for hope and rest.

GREEN

When Ilja was a child he used to write short stories and sometimes dreamed of becoming an author. Until today he loves to invent fantasy worlds that differ from the real world and act like a secret parallel universe. In this composition, he puts a green filter on a vibrant city scene and hopes to create a feeling of harmony and peace.

In the composition’s dreamy atmosphere, he captures the expression of the uniqueness of a moment, like an impressionistic painting.

CHANGE MY MIND

After the end of a romantic relationship, there can be a phase in which one of the lovers tries to convince the other that splitting up would be a giant mistake. In this song, Ilja takes the side of having enough of being played with and an on-and-off relationship.

The long, experimental solo is a letting go and establishes a feeling of freedom and self-determination. After that it's clear, there is no going back or a way to change his mind.

HALFTIME SHOW

The truth is, with "Halftime Show" Ilja crafted a song in the tradition of typical storytelling songwriters. The smooth chord progression accompanies the protagonist on his way to ending his current relationship. Throughout the verses, it becomes clear that his partner hasn't been very invested, even toxic indeed, and the sendoff into the Bridge is his decision to take control of his own life again and to stand up for himself because he knows he deserves better. Drawing inspiration from a friend's relationship Ilja uses the metaphor of a Halftime Show, which stands for getting into the light and winning, to tell this touching story.

LA DANSE DE LA LUNE

As mystical as the Sea, the moon lights the night sky in a melancholy way. Ilja lies in a soft meadow in summer, stares into an orange scenery, and lets his imagination choreograph a unique dance between the colors, stars, and the moon.

A long melody is followed by a Fugato which is the start of a transcending Bass Solo that prepares the listener for the finale of the spectacular dance.

Bringing Jazz, Classical, and Tango influences together, Ilja creates an emotional and dreamy atmosphere that presents a refreshing sound to the traditional Jazz Piano Trio Style.

HALFTIME SHOW

ILJA RUF TRIO

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