



SÖNKE MEINEN & PHILIPP WIECHERT

With nothing but two acoustic guitars, Sönke Meinen and Philipp Wiechert create a musical world which opens up the niche of guitar music in every direction and goes well beyond just technical skills on the instrument. Sometimes full of energy, sometimes fragile and intimate, their music ranges between virtuoso fingerstyle, soulful folk and intoxicating film music. The guitars are no more than their tools to create handmade music full of ideas, colours and emotions.

Sönke Meinen and Philipp Wiechert first met at a festival campsite when they were still teenagers, not suspecting that their shared love for the guitar would become the foundation for a close friendship and constant mutual inspiration. This was followed by studying together - and then, at first, different career paths:

Sönke Meinen earned an outstanding reputation in the international guitar scene as a solo guitarist and as part of his duo with the Danish violinist Bjarke Falgren. He won prizes at various international competitions. Guitar legend Tommy Emmanuel called him "one of the most creative guitarists of the current guitar scene".

Philipp Wiechert established himself as a highly requested theater musician and composer, among

others at the Staatstheater Hannover and the Kellertheater Winterthur. He is the guitarist of the Sarah Lesch Band and also tours regularly with bass clarinetist Falk Breitzkreuz.

For Sönke Meinen and Philipp Wiechert, their different influences and approaches are by no means a barrier, but much more the foundation for their openness for different genres, their out-of-the-box approach of playing and composing and their inimitable duo sound. This is particularly evident in their new album "COCOON", which will be released in the summer of 2023. Sönke Meinen's and Philipp Wiechert's music is poetic, creative and vivid, full of exciting grooves and stirring melodies.

newest duo album:

COCOON (CD, LP, digital), © + © Sönke Meinen & Philipp Wiechert, released on August 25th 2023, produced by Sönke Meinen, Philipp Wiechert & Mohi Buschendorf

contact:

info@soenkemeinen.com

mail@philippwiechert.de

website:

www.soenkemeinen.com

www.philippwiechert.de

socials:

youtube.com/soenkemeinen

[@philippwiechertmusic](https://youtube.com/philippwiechertmusic)

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the newest duo album „COCOON“:

COCOON is the new duo album by Sönke Meinen and Philipp Wiechert, featuring only original compositions full of stirring, surprising and touching moments.



After 15 years of close friendship and playing several hundred concerts together, Sönke Meinen and Philipp Wiechert began to translate their experiences and stories into music a few years ago. In 2023, these creative encounters resulted in the birth of COCOON.

The album title refers to their approach to composing together: In order to not only showcase their technical skills on the instrument, but to focus on the stories in their music, it was important to the two musicians to create an environment free of judgment, pressure and any form of expectations. In regards to the now finished album, Sönke Meinen and Philipp Wiechert remark, "Composing music together, and starting with a blank sheet of paper, is something very personal, and it really doesn't work with

everyone. However, in this project we wrote eleven pieces that none of us could have written on his own. And that really feels very special."

The eleven pieces are sometimes quiet and tender, sometimes energetic and virtuosic: "Piano" and "Birds of a Feather" are calm and peaceful ballads inspired by Nordic folk and classical music, while "Vicious Cycle" with its suspense and tension could have come out of a Hitchcock movie. "Fool's Paradise" references Sönke and Philipp's roots in fingerstyle guitar and jazz, while "Pardon My French" is a dynamic waltz to which the two musicians add an almost whimsical touch with all sorts of surprising harmonic and melodic twists.

For the duo, however, the word "cocoon" is even more than just a metaphor for composing together:

"As our new songs took shape, we realised that music itself can also be a kind of "cocoon," a comforting place for turbulent times - and maybe, for our audience, the pieces on our album can become such places, too."

After the release of the album, Sönke Meinen and Philipp Wiechert are now bringing their new music to the stage. They complement their pieces with personal and humorous stories, leave room for spontaneous interaction and effortlessly build bridges between energetic grooves and touching melodic moments. Handmade, entertaining, captivating.



Bio:

Sönke Meinen, born in 1991 and raised in Ihlow/Northern Germany, studied under Prof. Thomas Fellow, Prof. Stephan Bormann and Reentko Dirks at the Dresden University of Music, where he held a teaching position himself from 2019 to 2022.

Sönke Meinen won numerous competitions - in 2016 he collected awards at two of the largest international guitar competitions: the well-respected "Guitar Masters" (first prize) and the "European Guitar Award" (sponsoring prize).

Sönke Meinen is not only performing in solo concerts, but also in duo projects with Danish violin virtuoso Bjarke Falgren as well as with guitarist and theatre musician Philipp Wiechert. Bjarke Falgren's and Sönke Meinen's highly acclaimed duo debut album "Postcard to Self" earned two nominations for the Danish Music Awards in 2019.

Sönke Meinen lives in Hamburg.

Philipp Wiechert was born in 1989 in Eisenhüttenstadt and studied acoustic guitar and jazz guitar with Prof. Stephan Bormann, Prof. Thomas Fellow and Reentko Dirks, also at the Dresden University of Music.

In addition to duo concerts with Sönke Meinen, Philipp Wiechert tours as guitarist and musical director of the Sarah Lesch Band and in duo projects with saxophonist and sound artist Jörg Piesendel and clarinetist Falk Breitzkreuz.

He gained a high reputation as a theatre musician and composer, among others at Bad Hersfelder Festspiele, Staatstheater Hannover, Theater Junge Generation (Dresden), Theater der jungen Welt (Leipzig), and at Kellertheater Winterthur. Philipp Wiechert currently lives in Leipzig.

In addition to their musical work, Sönke Meinen and Philipp Wiechert are sought-after lecturers and workshop leaders as well as artistic directors of the Freepsum International Guitar Festival, which has been taking place annually since 2011, and of the "Gitarrennacht im Schlosspark Krumke".

