



Gerald Peter Interview

Gerald Peter is one of the best keyboardists and seaboardists of the moment. He is a fundamental figure on the use of tech applied to keys. Not in vain, he was performing on international Geoshred and Seaboard demos, and he is the creator of MIDI.live Además, acaba de lanzar su nuevo single "Enigma" junto a su grupo The Gerald Peter Project, ya disponible en YouTube, Amazon, Itunes, Spotify...

His new brand single "Enigma" with The Gerald Peter Project is available now in YouTube, Amazon, Itunes, Spotify...

Hello and thank you so much for talking with us. Can you introduce yourself? Who is Gerald Peter and How were your musical beginnings?

I am Gerald, born in Vienna, Austria. I am 32 years old and I am passionate keyboardist, composer, producer and creative coder. I always had a big interest for music and also science/technology, that are the two areas I focused on in my life later on. I started already in primary school making music, singing in the choir and playing the recorder. I attended private piano lessons in the age of 10 for 6 years, my passion for making music really exploded as soon as I got my first keyboard, electric guitar and a computer with Cubase so I could start recording and arranging my own musical ideas. At the same time I also went to a tech high school and discovered my biggest musical influence at that time, Dream Theater and Liquid Tension Experiment which shaped and inspired me a lot. In the age of 20, after finishing high school, I decided to study computer science but at the same time start my own band project, I actually started 3 band projects within the next 6 years and attended numerous local bands as a keyboard player while finishing my tech studies. I got more and more interested into composing/producing as well as kept working on my playing technique. My biggest dream at this time was to create a huge prog rock opera concept album, which took me several years to finish. I released it 2013 titled 'Jeremias' with my band 'Circle of Illusion'. Two years later I released another album with my band Inspirational Corner where we experimented with the fusion of various different musical styles. I was also working for ROLI as Seaboard product specialist and demonstrator in the year 2015, and in 2017 I was touring with Cirque du Soleil "VOLTA" as a keyboardist in the live band. Since then I am mainly focusing on my solo project "The Gerald Peter Project" composing/producing the second part of my conceptual piece "Incremental Changes" where I incorporate everything I love, from progressive, cinematic music to big arrangements as well as midi-generated visuals I create myself.

Can you explain us a bit about your experience on the Cirque du Soleil?

In 2016, I was signing up to an instrumentalists audition in London and I got lucky, because a few months later I got a full time job offer to be the keyboardist of the new Cirque du Soleil show 'VOLTA' starting at 2017. Because it was a new show, I also attended creation, which was an interesting and very challenging experience at the Cirque Du Soleil HQ. We did long hours every day, working with the producer/composer from M83, Anthony Gonzales, rehearsing and sound programming. The show was very "sound-heavy", that means, the biggest

challenge was to match the sonic vision of the composer and at the same time, follow our band leaders calls. It's usual, that the timing of each show is a bit different depending on the artists performance, so being able to adapt to changes/calls very fast during the show and being very flexible in general is a necessity during working for Cirque du Soleil. Overall it was a great experience, where I was part of a huge production, got to meet a lot of interesting people and lived in 5 different cities within a year, I also got to play a solo on one of my favourite instruments everyday during the show, the Seaboard! :-)

When and how did you start to play the new generation of keyboards and, specially, the Seaboard?

I was thankfully introduced to the Seaboard and ROLI in 2014 by Jordan Rudess (keyboard/piano/synth virtuoso and rockstar as band-member of Dream Theater, president of Wizdom music, amazing person and inspiration in general) which also lead to working for them in 2015/2016 as a product specialist demonstrator. From the first moment on, I knew this was something special and I had a million ideas of what I wanna do with it. Luckily as a product specialist I got to spend a lot of time with the instrument, now I am using it in all my musical projects.

What are your main influences?

I would say that three genres had a big impact on my musical mindset, which are progressive rock/metal, jazz/fusion and hollywood soundtrack/film-music. For progressive rock/metal of course my earliest and biggest influences were Dream Theater, Liquid Tension Project, Jordan Rudess but also Transatlantic and Symphony X. Nowadays I also love to listen to Haken, Frost, Tesseract, Plini, David Maxim and Lunatic Soul. For Jazz Fusion I got really into the music of the jazz pianist Hiromi Uehara and also solo albums of George Duke, Adam Holzman, Pat Metheny, Scott Wilkie and Dave Weckl. These days I love listening to Snarky Puppy, Anomalie, Bill Lawrence, Dirty Loops and Cory Henry. When it comes to film music I am really inspired by the music of Danny Elfman, Hans Zimmer and John Williams.

When I write music I don't try to think on what other artists did, I rather follow my intuition, my spontaneous ideas. I mostly compose through freely improvising on the piano.

How did you start with the NAMM's demonstrations and How do you feel when you are performing on this huge event?

I was performing already three times at the NAMM show, 2016 for ROLI, 2018 playing GeoShred for moForte/Wizdom music and 2019 with my own music, the Gerald Peter Project as well as Audio Modeling/SWAM Instruments. It's always a crazy event, there are so many good musicians and great people at one place, I am always nervous before performing but it's every time a fun experience where great things happened.

But you aren't only a performer, you are a composer and producer too. Tell us something about the prog rock opera album Jeremias and your projects with your band Inspirational Corner.

It all started with a dream, I had a surreal dream at night, and when I was waking up, I had a story in my head and a lot of musical ideas and I knew, I had to do something big with it. I took actually half an year off from university to write music for a big prog rock opera concept album inspired by Dream Theater's Scenes From a Memory and Danny Elfman's movie soundtracks. One year after I wrote, reproduced and arranged about 80 minutes of the entire album / music (around 2010-2011), the difficult part began, to find the right singers, writers and band to perform, text and record with. It took me about another year, then the team was complete with awesome musicians and singers and finally in 2013, the album 'Jeremias' was finished and I accomplished the biggest production I have done so far, and I am very proud of it. It also got a

lot of positive reviews and listeners from different magazines all around the world, and we also got to perform it live a few times in Austria and Germany.

I found Inspirational Corner as an instrumental band parallel to Circle of Illusion to explore all the other musical styles, I was very interested in, which did not fit so much into my other band Circle of Illusion. So first we started in playing some really cool jazz/funk/rock/ fusion covers, later on we worked on our own tracks. We recorded one album, called 'Chameleon Lab Explosion', it's as the name suggests, a style-fusing/-changing, experimental and energy-loaded album, you can find it online.

Which is MIDI.live and how did it come about? A lot of artists as Jordan Rudess use it!

I have a background in computer science/coding (I studied computer science with focus on computer graphics on university), so one of my passion is to create my own MIDI responding visuals. I am fascinated by the idea of not only hear tones coming out of my instrument but also "see" them, that's the concept of Midi.live and also my newer Midi visualizer I am currently using for my shows in my solo project, "The Gerald Peter Project". The idea is simple, you play a note on the keyboard and get an immediate visual response for it and changing/bending the pitch, expression or timbre of the note being played, changes also the visual. Currently I am working on a new version of my visualiser using the programming language Java and a graphic framework called 'Processing'.

So...we've talked about your skills as a keyboardist, seaboardist, producer, programmer, composer... What else??? Hahaha but it's true. There is more! because we know that you are so good with Geoshred too and you took part on the NAMM 2018 exhibition with the great Jordan Rudess. Tell us about this, please.

Thank you, I was also introduced to GeoShred by Jordan, and this is turns your iPhone/iPad in an actual instrument. I loved the idea of having my instrument always with me in the pocket and started practicing it on the iPhone. So I ended up, creating some videos with GeoShred, playing at the NAMM show 2018, next to Jordan Rudess and also performing recently at the Guthman instrument competition in Atlanta.

Future projects?

I am currently working on the album 'Incremental Changes Pt. 2', which is the second part of my first solo EP of "The Gerald Peter Project". I am excited for this release, 50 minutes of new music, I worked a lot to make this record happen. I am passionate of fusing many different styles together, in this record I also experimented with new styles I never did before, especially it has some electronic touch to it. It features again, the awesome drummer 'Aaron Thier' and also some special guests, e.g. award-winning soundtrack vocalist Julie Elven.

Finally, We always ask our guests the same three questions:

Do you think that some musical styles are better than others?

No, but it is ok to have preferences. Taste is very individual.

Do you feel that you need a good training to play whatever?

It's like sports, the more you practice, the better you become (at whatever). So if you wanna become a good musician, it just really depends on the hours of (focused) practice you spend on your instrument. I think, a university, school or teacher can just be guide, but it is not necessary,

it basically comes down on the hours you spend working on the instrument (I never went to music school/conservatory, just private lessons).

What do you think about the popular belief that musicians should play for free?

I think like in any other aspect of life, the market defines the value and also the overall expectations. As long, musicians/groups will play music for free or as long streaming will be free for everyone, it will also be expected from society that music is overall free. But in general, it takes years of practice to master an instrument, recording/producing albums can be more than 1000 hours of work, 1000s of dollars for gear/instruments, investments for promotion, rehearsal space, studio costs, website, photo shoots etc. so as in any other job, which requires craft, skills, investments, I don't think musicians should play for free, if they are booked by someone or asked to play somewhere.

Thank you so much for accepting our invitation. It was awesome to spend this time talking with you about music and your career. Thank you and We hope to see you playing on a concert of your tour soon!!

For our followers, You Enigma is available on youtube, spotify, bandcamp, itunes, apple music, amazon, etc.