

Jazzy Diaspora - Birth of a Secular Jew

Jazzy Diaspora - oder: Die Geburt eines säkularen Juden

When Paul Brody came to Berlin in the early 1990s to join the experimental music scene, he introduced himself as a 'dada jazzer' to his new flatmates, and replied he wasn't Jewish when asked in a job interview about his background.

By 2014 he had released seven Jewish themed solo albums, performed with leading Jewish music innovators such as John Zorn, David Krakauer and Frank London, and lent his horn to dozens of other recordings. What happened to the dada jazzer from California?

Confronted by Germany's ongoing confrontation with its history, Brody came to examine his own family background and cultural heritage. Music became a space where he could express his ambivalent feelings of a tradition he felt a part of, but could never completely understand. Like other secular Jews, Brody learned that questioning is a basic element of contemporary Judaism. Music became a place to embody this question without demanding an answer.

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