

Arts & Entertainment

BROTHER VIRUS INFECTS AMERICA AND ALL THAT JAZZ

By WILLIAM PESEK JR.

What is BROTHER VIRUS? According to the band, BROTHER VIRUS is an answer to the answers given by the administrators of style and condos their merry widows....

BROTHER VIRUS is the new German-Chinese art of music cooking—the charm of a bloody bouncer and the pilgrimage of Rome....

BROTHER VIRUS is amazed at the miracle of love....

However, manager Glen Leslie has an explanation which is more in touch with reality; "BROTHER VIRUS is an experimental, improvisational quartet from Munich whose style ranges from psychedelic, high-energy rock to contemporary jazz."

On their newest release, *A Night at the Nirvana Club*, the quartet displays their prowess and versatility as they flirt with four different layers of different funk rhythms. At times it seems as though they are four soloists playing simultaneously, but with a common goal. What begins as simple funk tune turns into a minimalist power tool.

Anyone who says that nothing new is happening in music has not heard BROTHER VIRUS. By changing meter, groove and other parameters they build walls of sound, which ultimately come crashing down. It's like climbing a rock-face and thinking that you have reached the summit only to look up and see that there's more to come. Some song titles are "Tonat Duke", "Daughter of the Queen of the Clean Noodles", and "The Bill: Frisell and Free Dope for Ivan Lendl."

The band surfaced last year from the depths of the Munich free-jazz movement which marries facets of contemporary jazz and traditional blues with avant-garde-rock. Also, BROTHER VIRUS is part of NetArt, an association of Munich artists dedicated to giving "musical expeditions into the world of the living."

It's not hard to pinpoint some of their more mainstream influences like Jimi Hendrix, Pat Metheny, and Frank Zappa as well as less commercial acts like Thelonius Monk and Steve Reich. Yet even with these traceable roots, their

music still repels the realm of classification without permeating it.

Labeling-resistant music is what these four German musicians create—unconventional and exploring. Guitarist Gunnar Geisse finds great asylum as a founding member of the BROTHER VIRUS and sees the band as an escape from the stifling Munich music scene. "I never found a band where I could put all of my musical styles together," he says. "I basically play what I want to play." The band is rounded off by keyboardist Werner Klausnitzer, bassist Patrick Scales, and Maurice de Martin on drums.

But creating their own brand of aural sculpture has paid off for the band in the guise of a newly acquired recording contract with ENJA, a major German label which is the exclusive importer of most marquee-caliber U.S. jazz acts. ENJA currently carries Michael Scofield and Franco Ambrosetti.

Where does the name BROTHER VIRUS come from you ask?

"The music sounds strange sort of like a virus" interjects Geisse. "A virus is often thought of as a sickness, as something bad—but with BROTHER

VIRUS, people see that a virus can be a good thing too." Adversely the word 'brother' denotes a sense of family and fraternity. Combining the two words is verbally characteristic of their sound—to the extreme.

In February BROTHER VIRUS got a crash course in the etiquette of American audiences with two area shows at CBGBs and the Knitting Factory. "It felt very comfortable to play in the US," says Geisse. "I liked that they were very open to the music, it was fun." Unlike the stormy nature of the German music scene, the US music community forecasts smoother sailing for up and coming acts. According to Geisse, "There's no competition like in Germany. The musicians support each other over here."

BROTHER VIRUS will return to the states this coming autumn following the release of their forthcoming album and a possible tour of Japan. Whatever the future holds for BROTHER VIRUS, you can bet that they'll be around to infect and revitalize the world of contemporary jazz.

BROTHER VIRUS is here. ■