



Recorded February 07, 2024 at Kunsthaus Weiz, Styria  
Recording Engineer: Klaus Kellermann  
Mastering, Art Director, Photos: Andreas Friedl  
Mastering Assistance, Illustration: Danila Amodeo  
Pressing: Austrovinyl

Instrument: Kawai EX Grand

Recording Equipment:  
Microphones: DPA 4053, Earth Works QTC1, Schoeps 141 (MK 41)  
Cables: Cardas Clear, Trenner & Friedl Orinoco Flow  
Recorder: SONOSAX SX-R4+

Headphone: Denon AH-D7200  
Headamp: Aune X7s pro  
Field amp: HEED ELIXIR  
Mastering Amps: Jeff Rowland Coherence II, Model9ti

Field Monitors: Trenner & Friedl ART V4  
Mastering Monitors: Trenner & Friedl RA12, SUN

Pressed in virgin colorless 180g Vinyl (Make the world better, be colorblind)

Produced by Andreas Friedl  
for Trenner & Friedl

We would like to thank Angela Kahr of Kunsthaus Weiz for supporting us with the fantastic Concert Hall, Josef Tuttner for fine-tuning the Grand, Åke, without him no Kawai EX (RIP mate), Thomas Schneider for supporting Vika, and Vika for getting paid with cookies.

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# VKGOESWILD

DARK IMPERFECT



T&F LP 001

STEREO 33 $\frac{1}{3}$  r.p.m. 180gr Vinyl

It was in Summer 2022

Like on so many previous evenings, my friend Danila and I spent our time listening to our favorite records. Once again we lost ourselves in the great "Maggot Brain" by Funkadelic "That would be a great piece to play on the piano!" I remarked.

We immediately googled and the first suggestion that came up was "Live in Brazil - Funkadelic/Maggot Brain - Vikagoeswild." Less than 10 seconds later, Danila and I looked at each other with tears shimmering in our eyes. This Ukrainian pianist had captured us from the first notes. That evening, we listened to many tracks of Vika, mainly covers.

The very next day, without even asking, the all-knowing internet suggested to me that there was going to be a concert soon, just an hour's drive from us: "Vikagoeswild lives at the Alois-Günther-Haus", a mountain lodge in the Fischbach Alps.

Though I don't believe in "signs," I joyfully accepted this "nudge of fate" as just that.

We enjoyed a wonderful, very intimate concert in an alpine hut nestled in the Austrian mountains. The highlight for me was "Maggot Brain," which Vika played as the final piece upon my request. Already on the journey home, the idea began to sprout in me, to finally produce music again...

Just a few weeks after the concert, I learned that Vika Yermolyeva would be settling in Austria! Folks, if that wasn't a sign!!!

About half a year later, I met with her in a small cafe, and very cautiously, I broached the idea of a joint recording.

My idea: In 2024, our loudspeaker company Trenner & Friedl would be celebrating its 30th anniversary. Alongside unveiling new anniversary speakers, we aimed to showcase the essence of what our speakers were designed for. For me, it was already clear that it had to be something truly exceptional. A record with the best possible sound quality, featuring music that makes you forget about the sound quality and only leaves the music behind.

I explained laboriously, expecting that I would have to do much more persuasion. Yet, to my surprise, Vika simply responded with a soft, 'Ok, I'm in. Let's do it!' That was a moment!

Vika is not only an outstanding performer but also a talented, sensitive composer; her works are brimming with passion and depth, truly touching. For me, it was evident that her works had to be featured on this record.

I really fell in love with her deep album 'Happiness is not the point,' which unfortunately is only available online. It's dark, deeply emotional, sensitive music that I simply couldn't get enough of. It resonated with me on many levels. I was determined to record Vika's own music, music that is deeply personal. Our first record should be a musical portrait of Vika Yermolyeva. What a fortune, that she wanted the same.

The next few months were spent searching for the right grand piano, the right space, the right piano tuner, the date that worked for everyone... I didn't have to search for the right sound engineer; my longtime friend Klaus Kellermann is one of the best sound engineers around, and we've created many great productions as a team. What luck that he also came on board! Our last collaboration was 20 years ago, and it was as exciting as it used to be. We picked up where we left off, but with the treasure trove of experience gained since then.

We discussed the recording concept and opted for a microphone setup inspired by the legendary Decca Tree from the 1950s, the golden age of vinyl. Thanks to its minimalist microphone arrangement, it ensures tremendous transparency and dynamics, coupled with believable depth and center-localization.

In the fantastic Kunsthaus Weiz, I found a very special Kawai EX concert grand piano, an old acquaintance, so to speak. About 19 years ago, I organized its transport from Malta to Austria.

The Kawai EX series grand pianos enjoy an excellent reputation; they are extremely dynamic in touch and have a unique sound and a great soul. They are relatively rare to find.

The opportunity to record with such a piano was just the icing on the cake.

February 7, 2024: Josef Tuttner, the piano tuner had already been fine-tuning for hours and we all arrived punctually at 11am from various parts of Austria.

Our experienced sound engineer and the high-resolution monitoring equipment made it easy to find the right microphone setup, and so we were ready to go quite quickly.

The grand concert hall sounded as good as expected, though we wished the low-frequency noises of the city were quieter. In post-production, however, we decided against frequency adjustments because we felt that the full spectrum was simply more authentic and natural.

Vika was excellently prepared, so we mostly never needed more than one take. Only the beverage suppliers and garbage trucks forced us to take a break now and then.

All the recordings that made it onto this record were done in one take. We consciously chose rough edges; no cuts disrupt the flow of the music. Vika plays live, so to speak. Imperfection is inherent in all things, and therein lies the perfection.

It is with great pride that we now present to you our first vinyl record!

We hope you will enjoy listening to it as much as we enjoyed creating it. Andreas Friedl

