



# Vono Modern Leben



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LP / CD / digital

After a couple of decades dancing in the dark, Berlin brothers Norbert and Volker Schultze finally found their way back into the spotlight via Bureau B's much-needed reissue of their minimal and masterful debut LP 'Dinner Für 2'. Now the Hamburg imprint turn their attention to the second VONO LP, 'Modern Leben', which found the brothers Schultze expanding on the stark palette of their debut, adding spiky fretwork and muscular rock chords to their infectious synth-lines and efficient rhythms for an altogether heftier sound.

On 'Modern Leben', VONO confidently stepped out of the minimalism of their debut, diving headlong into a bold blend of German post-punk, synth pop, and rock influences. Across its 13 tracks, the Schultze brothers offered a kaleidoscope of moods and textures, from brooding gloom-tunes to moments of brighter optimism, crafting an album that feels both cohesive and adventurous.

The opener, "Ich steh' im Regen", sets the tone with its effective simplicity: a crisp drum machine, a restrained bassline, and a smooth croon that calls to mind early Japan or Roxy Music. It's an emotional and understated entry into the album's darker undercurrent. In contrast, "Modern Leben," bursts to life with jagged guitars, stomping machine drums, and icy synth tones, its sharp angst giving way to a dreamy, melodic coda in the final third. The tempo slows for "Und Niemand Weiß," a shadowy slice of Neue Deutsche Welle that builds steadily into a dramatic, synth-heavy crescendo, while "Automaten" sees the duo augment their signature sound with driving rock guitar for an excursion into the anthemic. On "Bin Ein Jeder Hat Ihn Gern Boy," taut guitar chops and a brooding synth bass create a simmering tension, sustained by twisted electronics as the track unfolds. The A-side closes on an uplifting note with "Nachtwanderer," its sweeping synth washes evoking a sense of hope as it transitions into a widescreen, cinematic finish.

The B-side opens with the DAF-t duality of "Du Siehst So Gut Aus", its lyrical list of compliments yelped over aggressive electro-punk backing, before the romantic "Wenn Du Mich Küsst" cartwheels further towards playfulness via stomping beats and bombastic melodies. The slower "Hurra" introduces greyscale synth stabs and growled vocals, adding an ominous layer to the album's diverse sound, which takes a further detour via the percolating rhythms and almost tropical tones of "Genieß' den Morgen". As we close in on the run-out, "Fred der Ritter" and "Weil Nicht Sein Kann" ramp up the energy, blending galloping bassline and angular guitar with pseudo space-rock synth riffs, leaving "Mönch In Kina" to bring the curtain down with a familiar mix of tension and drama.

From here, VONO's sound continued to evolve, coalescing into the hulking EBM roar of 1986's 'It's Time' before the duo dissolved. So much like its creators, 'Modern Leben' is an album that thrives on contrasts, seamlessly moving between stark post-punk grit and expansive synth-pop melodies, while maintaining the intensity and edge that runs through all three of their albums.

Patrick Ryder

### TRACKLIST

- A1 Ich steh im Regen
- A2 Modern Leben
- A3 Und niemand weiß
- A4 Automaten
- A5 Bin ein jeder hat ihn gern Boy
- A6 Nachtwanderer

- B1 Du siehst so gut aus
- B2 Wenn du mich küsst
- B3 Hurra
- B4 Genieß den Morgen
- B5 Fred der Ritter
- B6 Weil nicht sein kann
- B7 Mönch in Kina

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