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DIE FERMENTIERTEN – GHOST SHIP (CD by Veto Records)

With Die Fermentierten we are in the company of a Swiss trio of Lino Blöchlinger (alto- and bass saxophones), Valentin Baumgartner (guitar, EFX, Vocals) and Tobias Sommer (drums). A debut recording and a testament and tribute to Valentin Baumgartner, who tragically died two days after completing the recordings through an accident while walking in the mountains. A tragedy. Originally Die Fermentierten began as a duo of Blöchlinger and Sommer. Lino Blöchlinger is a Swiss saxophonist and flutist, son of saxophonist Urs Blöchlinger. He participated in his father’s Urs Blöchlinger Revisited and Fisherman's Orchestra. With the quintet Le String Blö he released an album for Veto in 2019 with compositions by saxophonist Sebastian Strinning and Lino Blöchlinger. Since early childhood, Tobias Sommer has played the drums and is equally at home in jazz and metal contexts and everything in between. He is a member of the live-dub band King Crab and techno-project Kajak. Valentin Baumgartner studied jazz at the Hochschule Luzern and had his band Extrafish brewing their own blend of world music. Björn Magnusson guests on two tracks with a synthesizer. What is their music about? It is a sort of avant free rock, full of ideas with drastic and inventive manoeuvres and twists. They play with the energy and attitude of punk. Most of the ten tracks resulted from group improvisation. Baumgartner and one by Blöchlinger wrote three. Some pieces like ‘Hustle with Care’ are noisy improvisation, whereas others like Fire Ants on Christmas’ are short jazz-induced improvisation with fine intertwined lines by sax, guitar and drums. Baumgartner often adds distorted and manipulated sounds from his guitar, like in ‘Uncle Festher’s Birthday Song’. ‘Three eyes no soul’ is a song with vocals
by Baumgartner in a rhythmic complex song with disorienting synth by guest player Magnusson. ’22 Dogs Dropping from a Moontower’ starts as a tight over the top explosion and changes halfway into a modest and open improvisation finding its way out in a noisy apotheosis. No idea if the trio often played live. However, they sound like a solid trio. And alas, this recording marks the end of a promising collaboration. (DM)