

SWR >>



STAGG

*An* **UNBELIEVABLE  
STORY**

Editor: Manfred Weisz

IT'S ALREADY CRAZY,  
WHEN YOUR PAST CATCHES UP WITH YOU  
AND YOU REALIZE TODAY,  
THAT SOMETHING FROM BACK THEN  
HAS ENDED WELL

# Prologue and Agreement

This little book is a special edition for the readers of the

## It´s Psychedelic Baby Magazine



The following is a summary of contributions made by various authors, who have provided everything possible to the topic in a splendid way.

A large proportion of the older (analogue) documents were, wherever necessary, technically revised and digitised in the best possible quality for better legibility and recognisability. A small part, mainly photographs, were taken over for authenticity, but also sometimes "unvarnished".

Please note, this book has been translated into English. But some of the german documents e.g. contracts, agreements etc. remain in the original version, for reasons of authenticity too. The meaning of each is explained in the following.

The text and picture material comes on the one hand from official sources, which are quoted accordingly, but on the other hand also from personal notes and picture additions.

The copyrights and rights of use must be strictly observed and lie exclusively with the editor. This applies to the entire book as well as parts of the text and picture material.

Now there is nothing more to say, aside from the fact, that I have simply enjoyed putting my own thoughts on this whole story down on paper and to thank both **Klemen Breznikar**, Owner and Editor In Chief, for presenting my book in his magazine and **Vincent**, my elder son, for his support.

So let´s get started.

October 2020

Manfred Weisz (Editor)

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# Introduction

Hello friends of the cultivated rock-jazz-music of the early 70s.

The following story should of course primarily familiarize you with the music of STAGG and the intention behind it..

But not only. It is also an into images and words turned reminiscence of beautiful musical times. The protagonists belonging to this were five musicians who moved out in 1973 to simply perform good rock-jazz.

The fact that the music of that time would finally even result in a CD- /LP- production, is based on an almost unbelievable story.

Main actor of this story is M. Steinheuer, who as a music scout, progressive rock- und underground-freak himself, not only initiated the whole thing, but accompanied and coordinated it throughout.

STAGG thanks him very much for this.

How he came to us and how everything else developed from his point of view is best told to you in the first chapter „**STAGG and Long Hair**“

As far as our music is concerned, you can play with short excerpts on our homepage. ([www.stagg-band.de](http://www.stagg-band.de)) and, if you like, purchase it as CD or „old school“, as LP in the specified stores.

Of course our music is also available on YOU TUBE (see STAGG – full album)

STAGG wishes you a lot of fun browsing our website, listening to our music und especially reading this unbelievable story, which I would like to guide you trough in this special magazine.

October 2020

Manfred Weisz



# 1. Chapter „STAGG and Long Hair“

**a long story briefly told  
(or - how it all began)**

The Südwestfunk (now SWR 3) radio station cannot be credited highly enough for not only giving airtime to Anglo-American bands and playing the German underground heroes on its Popshop programme in early 1970, but also for making a contribution to - mostly German - young talent groups.

Competitions were held regularly and the winners were allowed to make recordings in the station's own studio U1 in Baden-Baden. It was also possible to apply by cassette or tape to convince the editors.

Many bands made their first steps in a recording studio there. This was all done under time pressure and with sound engineers who were not necessarily trained for recording underground music. Despite the enormous pressure, many bands managed to record recordings of such quality that they were played on the radio.

But the productions in the radio station's own studio were not recordings that could be bought as records; these recordings only survived on cassettes or tapes in the station's archives, where they had been lying dormant for decades.



Walther Krause and the Pop Shop team (Photo: Private Archive Frank Laufenberg)

Since the mid-1980s, when neopsychedelic rock and various forms of alternative music were introduced, many musicians have been referring to the roots of the underground and progressive rock music of the early 1970s.

After the stylistic madness and confusion of pop music, listeners of the early 1970s, who were still indulging in their passion for music at the time, were reminded of their musical and musical taste roots. Old tapes and cassettes were checked and suddenly the old SWF recordings came into view. The recordings mostly sounded dull. Only a few had survived the 25-30 years well.

If even then these recordings were not for sale, what could be more obvious than to satisfy the addiction to ever new music by making sure that these recordings were distributed?

An editor as well as employees of the archive were pleased about the interest. Together with the music freak and old friend S. Bloch, who has been involved in the record and CD business for many years, considerations were made as to how such releases could be organised.

The author as music scout and legal adviser and Monsieur Bloch as independent marketer, it could be done!

The label Long Hair ([www.longhairmusic.de](http://www.longhairmusic.de)) was launched in May 2000 and the first 6 releases were CDs with bands that had recorded with Südwestfunk at the time.

In 2009 the recordings of the group STAGG came into the author's focus. The recordings were musically of a very high standard, only finding the band proved to be extremely difficult after so many years. Nevertheless, one member of the band STAGG was identified in 2018 after intensive internet research, and little by little the remaining musicians were found.



All former band members were very impressed by the idea of publishing the recordings on CD and LP and so it happened....

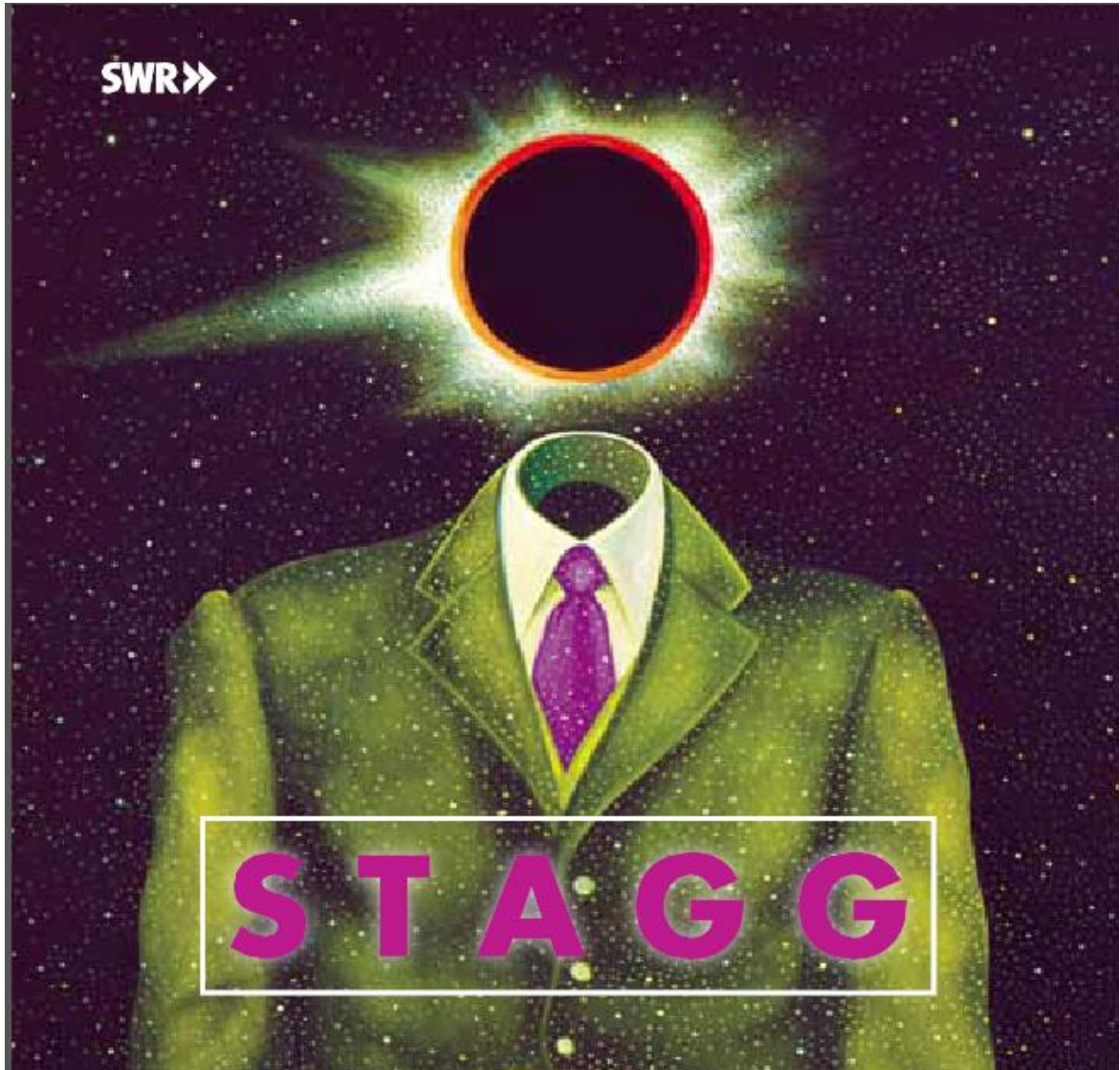
Thus, after more than 45 years, the recordings were finally placed where they should have been at the time, on the turntable (or rather in the CD player).

January 2019

M. Steinheuer

*Yeah, that's how it was...*

*At the turn of the year 2018/19 the members of the group STAGG hold their musical product, in the form of a CD / LP, in their hands. But as already mentioned, the story began about 45 years earlier.*





In 1973, like so many other groups in Germany, we applied to the SWF's music editorial office with simple tape recordings and made contact with radio and music legends **Walther Krause** and **Roland Schaeffer**. They showed great interest, but we were asked to deliver 1 or 2 more songs for the production.



Südwestfunk

Anstalt des öffentlichen Rechts

Südwestfunk, 7570 Baden-Baden, Postfach 820

POP-SHOP

Harald Wanka  
6000 Frankfurt/Main



Baden-Baden  
Hans-Bredow-Straße  
Fernsprecher (0 72 21) 27 61  
Durchwählverkehr 276 ..  
Telex 784236 8  
Durchwählverkehr 784236 ..  
Bankkonto: Dresdner Bank AG  
Filiale Baden-Baden 6 230 283  
Postcheckkonto:  
Karlsruhe 634 18-756

Ihr Zeichen

Ihre Nachricht

Unser Zeichen VI

Datum 7.11.73

Lieber POP-SHOP-Hörer,

wir haben uns über Ihre Zuschrift gefreut und geben Ihnen gern die gewünschte Auskunft:

Ich finde die Musik recht gut gespielt. Allerdings war ein bisschen wenig auf dem Demo. Könntet Ihr bitte 3-4 Titel, die Ihr gerne im Pop Shop aufnehmen würdet, im Laufe der nächsten Wochen runterschicken?

Eine Produktion käme Anfang '74 in Frage.

gez. Roland Schaeffer

Wir würden uns freuen, Sie weiterhin recht oft als Hörer unserer Südwestfunksendungen begrüßen zu dürfen.

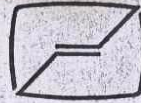
I h r

- Walther Krause -

071006 / 2. 73

Gesetzlicher Vertreter des Südwestfunks ist der Intendant. Der Südwestfunk kann auch durch vom Intendanten Bevollmächtigte vertreten werden. Auskünfte über den Kreis der Bevollmächtigten und den Umfang der Vollmachten erteilt der Justiziar des Südwestfunks, Baden-Baden, Hans-Bredow-Straße.

And so it happened, we got the invitation to the hoped-for studio date with SWF on 11.01.1974. Freddy, our saxophonist, found our trip to Baden-Baden quite exciting. How he, and the rest of the group as well, experienced the music session with all the trimmings at the SWF, he will tell you in detail in the next chapter, in his own way.



**Südwestfunk**

Anstalt des öffentlichen Rechts

Südwestfunk, 7570 Baden-Baden, Postfach 820

Pop Shop

Herrn  
Harald Wanka  
6000 Frankfurt/Main



Baden-Baden  
Hans-Bredow-Straße  
Fernsprecher (0 72 21) 27 61  
Durchwählverkehr 276 ..  
Telex 784236 8  
Durchwählverkehr 784236 ..  
Bankkonto: Dresdner Bank AG  
Filiale Baden-Baden 6 230 283  
Postscheckkonto:  
Karlsruhe 634 18-756

Ihr Zeichen

Ihre Nachricht

Unser Zeichen

VF

Datum 18.12.73

Sehr geehrter Herr Wanka,

wir möchten die Gruppe gern zu Aufnahmen nach Baden-Baden einladen. Hätten Sie am 11.1.74 (Freitag) Zeit, zwischen 15.00 und 19.00 Uhr Aufnahmen für den Pop-Shop zu machen? Zum Aufbau erwarten wir Sie gegen 13.00 Uhr in Baden-Baden, UKO, Studio U I. Pro archivierbarem Titel zahlen wir DM 75.--. Ich bitte um eine kurze Bestätigung.

Mit freundlichen Grüßen

Ihr

Walther Krause

But first a small matter of the heart.

In connection with a short note written by **R. Schaeffer** on 14.12.1973, in which he emphasizes not only the musical aspect but also the sound of the recordings, the mention of two persons becomes essential. One of them is **Bernd Stellmacher**, who was responsible for this good sound. And on the other hand **Rudi Weser**, brother of Joël (keyb.), who was simply indispensable in the band as "Mädchen für Alles".

# brainstorm

Kontakt:

Roland Schaeffer

7570 Baden-Baden

Hochstraße 32

Telefon 07221 / 26585

14. 12. 73

liebe Stag

Das neue Demo hat mich wirklich  
überzeugt. Vor allem habt ihr eine über-  
durchschnittlich gute Aufnahmequalität hin-  
gebracht.

Was mich selbst als Musiker sehr interessiert ist,  
wie habt ihr einen so sauberen Klang produziert.  
Als Aufnahme könnte man irgendwas Freitag im  
Januar in Frage. Der Termin und die schrift-  
liche Bestätigung sind euch in den nächsten  
Tagen zuzusenden.

Allen guten

Roland Schaeffer

Rudi

Bernd



*We would have liked to share and celebrate our joint success with both of them, so many decades later. But even after intensive research Bernd was apparently no longer to be found and Rudi left us much too early. Guys, wherever you are now, thank you very much. You will remain in our memory!*

## 2. Chapter „STAGG at the SWF – Studios (1974)“

The hair was long and the heels were high. However, you weren't allowed to see them at all, because ideally the flared trousers went all the way down to the floor. This was a good way to make an impression, but there was only one way to really impress the girls. You had to be a rock musician. If you also had a talent for sounds and rhythms, it was best to go down to the basement and practise.

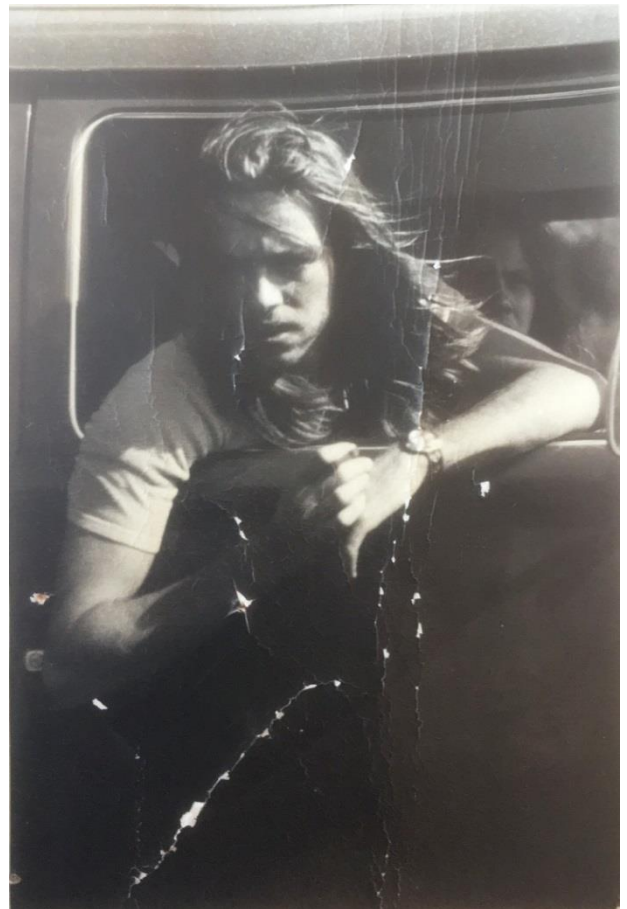
That's how we did it in the early seventies in Frankfurt am Main.

It was immediately clear that this is really good! Our own compositions were based on the idols of the time: Jethro Tull, Soft Machine, Genesis,

**..... everything that was complex but beautiful came into the bag**

After the songs were finished, we went on stage - and lo and behold, for seconds we sounded as good as our idols.

Then one day the call came from the "pop shop". That was exciting. Us five grubby hippies in the recording studio will the doorman even let us in? From tender and girlish, to athletic, pithy and clownishly silly, to shaggy, sinister looking, our appearances offered everything. But first of all there was the problem to solve: how do we get our stuff there at all? First there was the Hammond C3, a massive wooden mountain range with countless sensitive, heat-emitting tubes inside. As heavy as an oil tanker and designed to crush the fingers of a musician on the door edges of the cellar room while carrying it in and out. No matter, we knew it from the miserable assembly and disassembly at the gigs. After loading, the VW Bully, which was already old at the time, had a hanging belly and smoked quite well when it rolled south along the A5.



Getting into the studio wasn't that difficult at all and there was also the pretty cuttergirl who cut and glued the hand-wide tapes with nimble fingers. Her little feet stood on a salad of tape remnants.

She looked nice, and everything else was very pleasant too, if it hadn't been for the sour-faced sound engineer sitting behind the glass pane. Just what he needed! He probably had to listen to our baroque compositions of 7/8 beats and recurring Spanish cadenza and saw the decline of Western culture coming.

We were told unequivocally that we had to record our "art" in the given time, including assembly and disassembly our whole music stuff.

As already mentioned, tutto completto in 4 hours.

But then suddenly a sudden skill was revealed.

After the drummer had been installed in a body sauna-like (the one where only the head is sticking out) cabin and everyone was on standby in his cabin, the recordings were done in one go.

Maybe it was a slight resignation on the part of the sound engineer that we managed to give him a fifth track instead of the allowed four.

That's how it happened. The journey home eludes memory. A mixture of exhaustion and euphoria made it possible to heave the huge C3 and the rest of the band stuff down the stairs and through the door again. Thank God, without any finger bruises!

So nothing stood in the way of a world career as a rock-jazz musician.

Januar 1974

Freddy Höhn



Photo: WDR/ Becker

Roland Schaeffer \*

*\*A big thank you goes to Roland Schaeffer, who not only discovered us, but also brought us to the SWF studio in Baden-Baden and gave us great support the whole time. I would meet him again in 1979, at a concert in the CAPITOL theatre in Oberursel, where ROUNDABOUT, one of my bands after the STAGG-Aera, and Mani Neumeier's GURU GURU performed together.*

*Note from the Edior*

Now, they had been made, the studio recordings at SWF and in a later Popshop show, in spring 1974, as part of a short portrait of the group STAGG, also in extracts, had been broadcast.

By the way, I can think of a small, somewhat unattractive side story that I would like to talk about for the sake of completeness, but which even our music scout has no knowledge of.

An incident in which we were close to taking legal action against the SWF and suing them for the release of copies of the recorded music titles.

But one after the other.

### 3. Chapter „STAGG / SWF ... in a Clinch“

After we received our invitation to the SWF studio, thanked them for the same and confirmed our commitment to 11.01.1974, we went about the contract formalities. We received 2 drafts, already signed by the SWF's honorarium and licensing department, and were then asked to return 1 copy, signed with consent. According to the conditions for authors and contributors, small printed and in a legal language that was not easy for us to understand, it was not clear whether we would be able to get copies of the studio recordings. This prompted me to include an additional agreement in the contract in handwritten form, clearly legible, marked in red and thus easily recognisable for the contractual partner.

**Südwestfunk**  
Anstalt des öffentlichen Rechts

Honorar- und Lizenz-Abteilung

Baden-Baden  
Hans-Bredow-Straße  
Fernsprecher (07221) 2761  
Durchwählverkehr 2762703  
Telex 7-942388

225316  
Südwestfunk, 7570 Baden-Baden, Postfach 820

Herrn  
Harald Wanka - Stagg

6000 Frankfurt/Main

- Bitte aufheben als Beleg für Ihr Finanzamt -

Ass. Datum	Min. Empf.-Nr.	Vertrags-Nr.
17.01.74 / mnd	225316	2216192

Wir verpflichten Sie hiermit zu den beigefügten allgemeinen Honorarbedingungen zu folgender Leistung/Darbietung:

pop-SHOP Beatproduktion  
5 Titel a DM 75,--

Aufnahme / Beschäftigungszeit von bis  
11.01.74

Sendetage Uhr

5 Titel / Fahrtkosten

V-Typ	Kernz. Soll	Prof.-No.	VK	TRV	Bruttobetrag DM	Beitrag zur freiwilligen Altersversicherung DM	Auszahlungsbetrag DM	ZA	Zinstermin
11 0	0420 42	104779	0 0		375,00	3	375,00	01	
10 0	0420 52	104779	0 0		153,00	8	153,00	01	

303 Besondere Vereinbarungen

**Aufnahme Kopien für die Gruppe vorbehalten!**

Wenn Sie einverstanden sind, bitten wir Sie um Unterzeichnung und Rücksendung des anliegenden Doppels, womit dieser Vertrag gültig wird. Dies ist nicht erforderlich bei V-Typ 10 und 40. Falls Sie Ihr generelles Einverständnis schriftlich gegeben haben, ist die Rücksendung nicht erforderlich. In jedem Fall gilt die vorbehaltlose Entgegennahme des Honorars als Einverständnis.

\*) Erläuterungen zu „NR“: 1 = Probe-Ausarbeitungshonorar 4 = Filmtaxe 7 = Zellenhonorar - Zellenpauschale  
2 = Auftrags-Sendehonorar 5 = Wiederholungshonorar 8 = Beispielsweise, Auftragspauschale, Live-Gold  
3 = Plakat-Abgabung 6 = Materialabgabung 9 = Sonstige Unkosten

\*) Ein Betrag in gleicher Höhe wird vom SWF an die Vertragsgegenrichtung abgeführt.

Vereinbarte Vergütungen aller Art, wie Honorare und zu erstattende Kosten sind Bruttovorgütungen und schließen die Umsatzsteuer sowie sonstige Abgaben ein.

Geordneter Vertreter des Südwestfunks ist der Intendant. Der Südwestfunk kann auch durch vom Intendanten Bevollmächtigte vertreten werden.

True to the idea that prefabricated contract forms are not carved in stone if both parties agree to the side agreement set out in writing.

"Recording copies reserved for the group" So I had written it into the contract with my less distinctive handwriting. The idea behind was, if the recordings worked out well, to be able to use them as DEMOS for organizers and promotion.

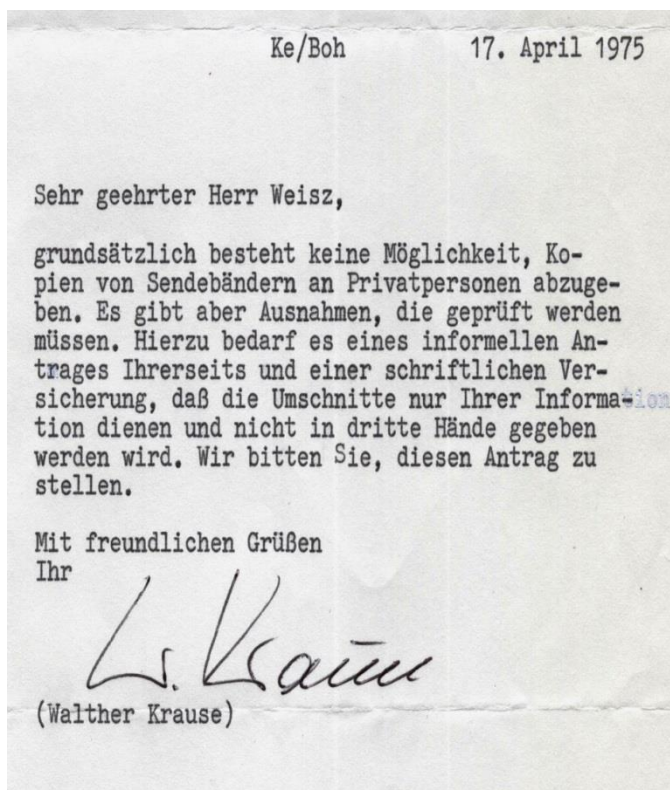
"Reserved" therefore, if we failed the recordings we would not also have to pay for expensive music scrap.

As there was no objection from SWF's honorarium and licensing department, I considered the matter closed and thought we had a deal!

When the recordings were in the box (on tape) on 11.01.1974, I cautiously asked the recording engineer if we could make a copy for the band right away.

What an erroneous request.

Firstly, I was told that this was technically and temporally impossible. (*We remember, 70s, analogue age. No possibility to just drag the recordings to a USB stick or mp3-player in a few minutes*). Secondly, if at all, the recordings would only be available after the broadcast of the programme. And thirdly, it is not for him to decide, this is a matter for the honorarium and licensing department.



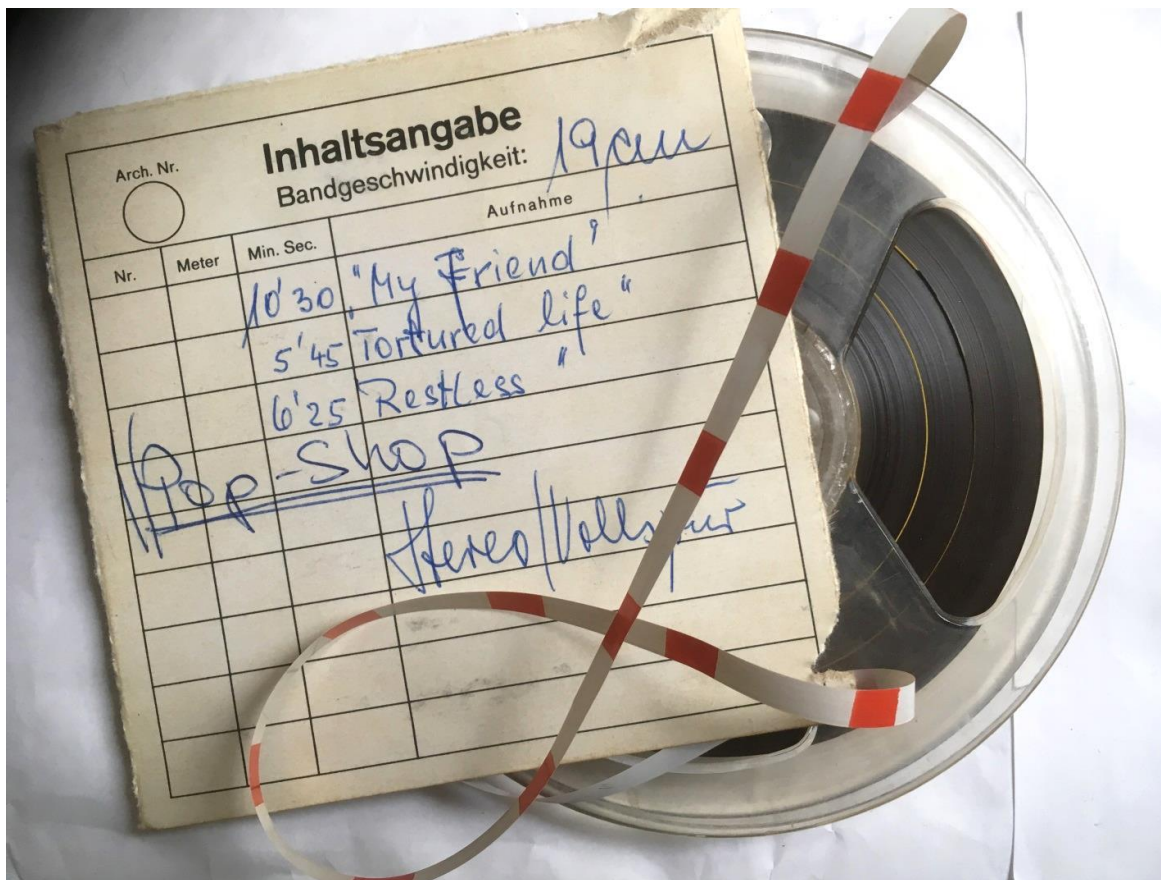
After broadcasting the contribution to the group STAGG, several requests to the SWF regarding tape copies remained unanswered or were rejected. And so the idea matured of finally having the matter, which had been dragging on for over one year, legally clarified. A letter to the honorarium and license department had already been written but had not yet been sent, when a rather conciliatory letter from Walther Krause arrived. The requested application was made and the desired insurance was given.



In May 1975 we received 3 of the 5 recorded titles, namely the 3 pieces that were also broadcast. These were "my friend", "tortured life" and "restless".

We would not have a claim to the remaining 2 titles, because they were not broadcasted.

The whole ordeal was simply annoying!



STAGG had split up in the late summer of 1974, so I let it go and took no further steps. For the recordings I had to pay 29,04 DM production costs + 1,00 DM transfer fee, a lot of money for a poor student.

The end of the story,

Perpaps we could have gotten all the recordings back then, but probably not.

So what the hell.

Spring 1974 to 1975

Manfred Weisz

*And what happened to the original recordings in January 1974?*

*They lay in the dark archives of the radio station and slumbered there until they met the interest of our music scout and music publisher "long hair music" described above.*

*STAGG was suddenly a topic. But "who or what" was STAGG. The right time to introduce ourself first. Or more precisely, to be introduced, because that's what the publisher will do for us.*

## 4. Chapter „STAGG ...the Band“

When STAGG was founded, the intention was probably to no longer reproduce music, but to realize own ideas. After several personnel changes, the group introduced itself in September 1973 in the current formation in SFB-Beat-Workshop on the final day of the second International Berlin Radio Exhibition (IFA) with great success. It is the great joy of playing and the unswerving, lively musical interaction of the band members among themselves that also reaches the audience and captivates them. Diverse forms of expression combine with ease to create longer but never boring compositions. In these arrangements one finds the different individual ideas of the band members, realised through the manifold musical and emotional expressions of the individual musicians as well as the whole group.



### Stagg – SWF-Session 1974

Label: Long Hair – LHC215  
Format: CD, Album, Reissue, Remastered  
Land: Germany  
Veröffentlicht: 2018  
Genre: Jazz, Rock  
Stil: Krautrock, Prog Rock, Fusion, Jazz-Rock

Even music critics, who are rather reserved in their praise, emphasize "It is impressive when a naturally rather unwieldy 7/8 beat in STAGG comes along fluently and powerfully driving, then finds its way broadly into the dominant and is crowned by an almost dance-like tumbling melody, only to end in a ballad-like gliding vocal part.

This is made possible by...

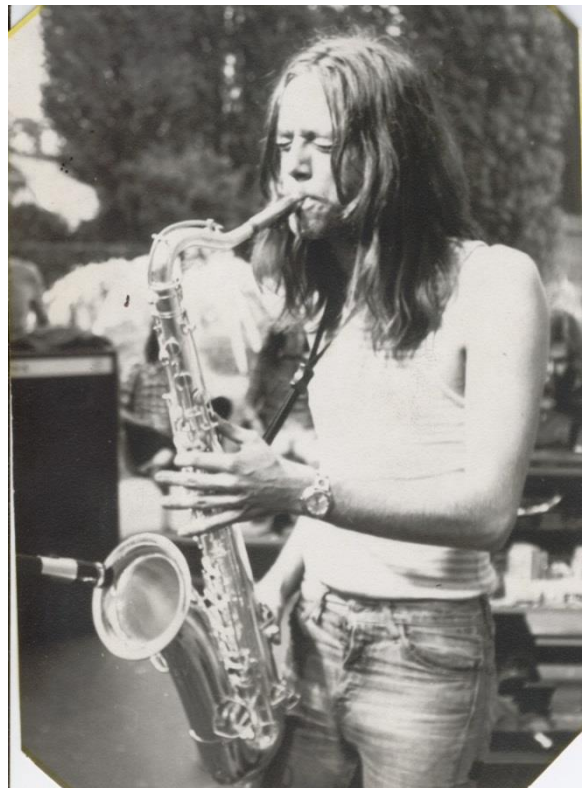


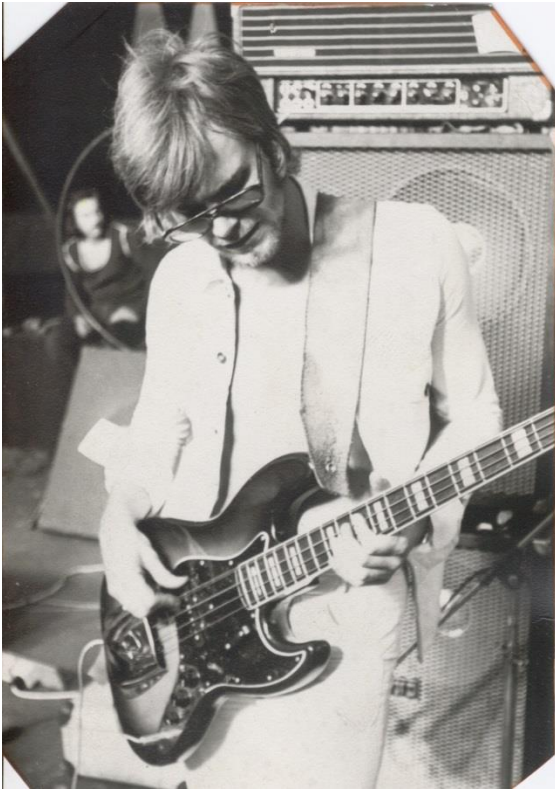
## ....Ulli Ost

the man on drums, whose skilful, finely differentiated playing clearly accentuates the entire music and explores the possibilities of his instrument, which gives the band much more than just merely it's timing.

## Freddy Höhn....

the flutist and saxophonist, who conjures up a wide range of atmospheres with his wind instruments, only to then suddenly take the listener away into soft and wide solo melodies or into rhythmic, sometimes staccato-like passages.



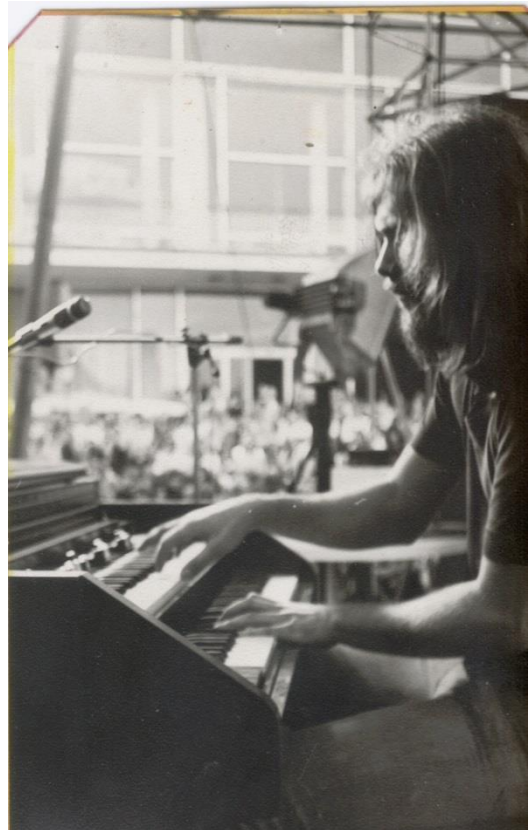


## ... Harald Wanka

who with his virtuoso bass playing, powerful and reliable gives the music of the band its basis and carrying capacity and on the flute can also lead the listener into strong rhythmic parts or into gentle and touching melodies and spheres.

## Joël Weser...

who with his uncompromisingly direct, even sometimes really dirty sounding Hammond-sound influences and accentuates the sound of the group. He uses the synthesizer to create atmospheres, melodies and, like the Hammond-organ, as a solo instrument.

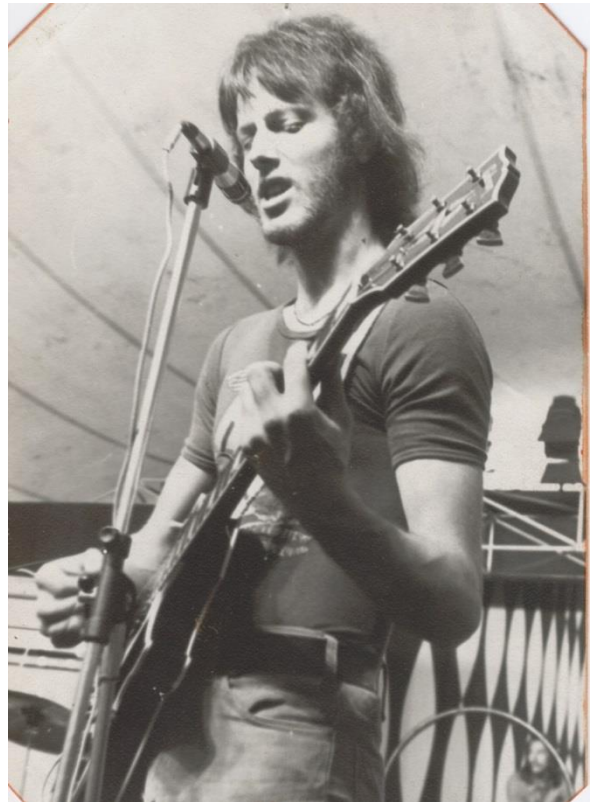


# Manfred Weisz...

Guitarist and lead singer of the group, who with his unmistakable singing skillfully secures a further form of expression for the group.

He is able to sing soft, expressive melodies as well as expressive, pressing rock parts.

The same can be experienced in a convincing way with his guitar playing.



In the compositions of the group STAGG, the listener is presented with such a variety of forms of expression and sound that it is impossible to grasp or classify them with sweeping formulations (rock jazz or pop jazz...) alone.

This is not important to the band members of STAGG. What is decisive for them is to give an ever new authentic and lively expression to what moves and interests them musically, both as individual musicians and in their interaction and interplay as a group.

This is also what the listener experiences as joy of playing and expression at STAGG and what reaches him above all.



December 2018

the publisher

*The next thing that will certainly interest the inclined reader is the naming. How did the band actually come to be called "STAGG"?*

*In contrast to the British pop group: Dave Dee, Dozy, Beaky, Mick & Tich, we found the stringing together of the first names, perhaps due to the use of German language, rather silly. A real band name was needed.*

*Harald, our bass player, had already dealt with this topic very intensively in previous STAGG formations and spent nights thinking about it. But unexpectedly often comes. When fate and flash of inspiration meet, something special sometimes arises, in this case our band name.*

*Let's just let Harald tell it himself.*

## **5. Chapter „STAGG“** (the name to the band)

Short and crisp, it should be memorable, visually an eye-catcher, unique and unmistakable - our band name.



There was a choice of concrete names of authentic sources from film, radio, press, television or a handy fantasy name. But perhaps a synthesis of both would also be possible. So we had the not so easy task, philosophically speaking, not to search but to find.

While browsing through an evaluation brochure for cars, we found a wonderfully beautiful English sports car called STAG, which you can only dream about but could never afford.

The dictionary provided the German translation of „Hirsch". The deer was given another organ in the form of a G by open-heart surgery and the band name was ready. After the steam of the obligatory discussion within the group had dissipated, the name was agreed upon and stuck with it ever since - with a lot of heart.

Sometime in 1971

Harald Wanka

*In the introduction to the previous chapter 5 "STAGG" (or the name to the band), I had briefly mentioned that there were several formations of the group. Four, to be exact. STAGG I and II were the forerunners of the current III version described here and STAGG IV, the line-up after that. How musical understanding changes within a few years and is enriched by changing players, can be shown very well with these four STAGG formations.*

*And off we go to a time, which was decades ago, maybe a little incomplete but certainly not an uninteresting retrospective of the band's formation and chronicle.*

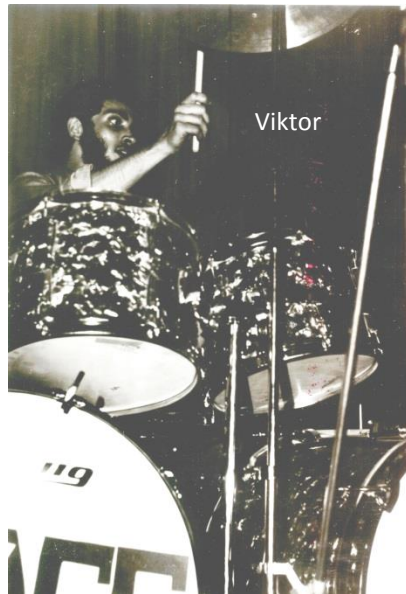
## **6. Chapter „STAGG I – IV ..... the Chronicle of the Band“**

Crystalline founding members of all STAGG formations were my friend Harald and me. For this reason, the author is allowed to keep this chapter a little more personal, because there is much more that connects us than just our musical careers. Already in our tender childhood, we got to know each other through common sports activities and became inseparable. Soon at the beginning of the 60s we discovered a special attraction in enjoying pop music not only passively by listening or dancing, but also actively practicing it and thereby, admittedly as a welcome side effect, increasing our own attractiveness. As Freddy had already noticed, being a musician, especially with the girls, was a absolute smash hit. So instruments had to be found, Harald learned to play bass and I learned to play guitar.

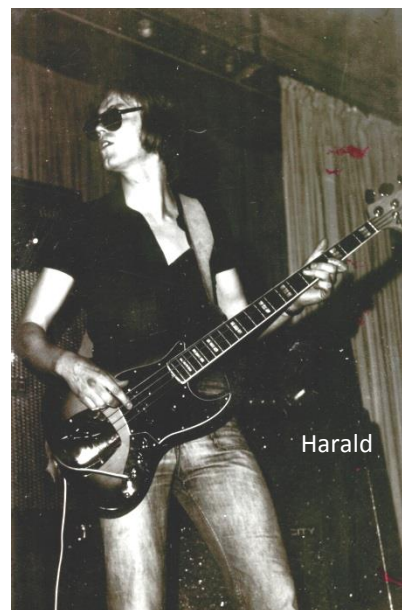
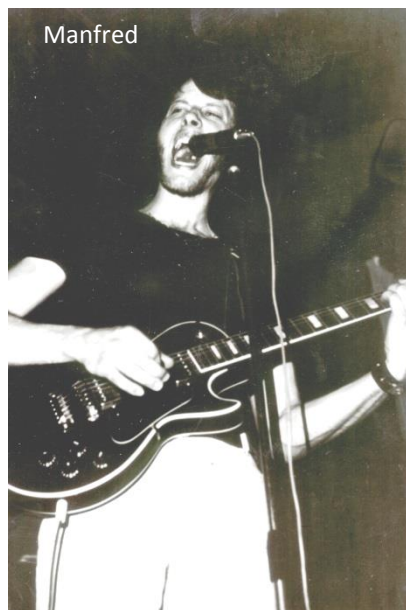


While searching for like-minded musicians, a second guitarist was quickly found, and a drummer did not need to be searched for long. Simple Beatles songs were practised and at the age of 14 th we were already on stage as break fillers. Like a viral event, "performing pop music by yourself" had attacked our organism. A few years passed and we realized, that we were getting tired of that „simple" pop and rock music in the Beatles style, with a classical 4-piece line-up (2 guitar, bass and drums), on the one hand, and due to the fact that both the drummer and the second guitarist had left the band, on the other hand, the way was cleared for considerations of personal and musical reorientation.

Following the then current groups "NICE" and "Hardin & York" Harald and I flirted with a keyboard instrumentalist. In 1971 we took Joël on board and in Viktor, a competent drummer. STAGG I was born. But Joël did not come alone. In his luggage he had, the already mentioned boys, Bernd and Rudi.



## STAGG I



With this line-up not only an immensely expanded spectrum and understanding of music was achieved, but also the whole performance of the group, sounds, logistics and management became more professional by Bernd and Rudi joining the team. Music was no longer covered, but increasingly composed by the group itself. However, this STAGG line-up did not last long. Viktor was soon to turn to studying dentistry in Romania and so the search for a new drummer started all over again.



It was a happy coincidence that we met Ulli in 1972. Enchanted by our music, he immediately agreed and so STAGG II was born. Ulli drummed as if from a foreign galaxy. Complex rhythms and odd beats found their way into our music as if they were the most natural thing in the world. It was really fun to combine rock with jazz elements.

## STAGG II

along with  
Ulli + Bernd



But something was still missing. In order to emphasize the rock-jazz ambition, wind instruments, such as flute and saxophone, were necessary according to our understanding and the spirit of the times. And there, initiated by Ulli, only his friend Freddy came into question. "Colosseum" and Dick Heckstall-Smith on saxophone sent their regards and Ian Anderson from "Jethro Tull" played with "Living in the Past", the hottest 5/4 beat of all times. These bands, to name but a few, were the talk of the town in the rock-jazz genre at the time and were our measure of all things.

Freddy joined in, it was the year 1973 and  
**STAGG III** and Freddy were „on stage“!



With **STAGG I - III** Harald and I experienced by far the most intensive time of our entire musical career. This included sessions at and with various radio stations, whereby I would like to talk about the SFB sessions in the next chapter, as well as top-class live performances with jazz greats like **Klaus Doldinger**, **Volker Kriegel** and **Albert Mangelsdorff**.

But we also shared the stage with internationally known rock groups like **THE THIN LIZZY BAND** from Ireland.

Concerts at renowned school festivals and gigs in small jazz and underground cellars, such as the **SINKKASTEN** and the **AQUARIUS** in Frankfurt, were as much a part of our venues as rock and pop events in large halls.

An absolute "to be there" for all local and supraregional bands, was the **QUARTIER LATIN**, the Frankfurt UNI student carnival party, the biggest party nationwide, and for this one, as highlight of the year, it was important to get an engagement. An event to which, in the opinion of the organiser **Andreas Schacht**, one was only allowed to "join the dance" if one belonged to the illustrious circle of the hip music bands. We had the honour of performing three times in a row (1972, 1973 and 1974) in different STAGG formations.

After **STAGG III** broke up, in late summer 1974, the two of us, Harald and myself, as the "core" of the group, tried to find new suitable band members. It was to be mid 1975, until, with the help of **Martin** at the shooting gallery and **Groupie** at the blower, we were able to bring STAGG-specific rock-jazz music to the ears again under version IV. Due to the reduced instrumentation, the venues were now rather smaller clubs. But even in this line-up we had successfully played the pieces, rewritten accordingly. But understandably, due to the lack of a keyboard player, we could not quite continue the impressive soundscape of the past days.



**STAGG IV** with Groupie on saxophone and Martin on drums

But in the STAGG-free period between the end of 1974 and mid 1975 Harald and I were not idle. We participated in jam sessions to get to know new musicians and to win them for a STAGG IV formation. Furthermore, we celebrated our debut as studio musicians at the Hessischer Rundfunk, where we were engaged for recordings with three guest musicians from other bands (drums, keyboard, saxophone/flute). And this is how it happened.

Volker Rebell, presenter, music programme designer, author and pioneer of rock-pop-jazz music on HR radio was looking for musical partners for his own production. Harald and I already knew Volker after he brought STAGG III to his HR studio immediately after our successful appearance at the 2nd International Radio Exhibition in Berlin (IFA) And introduced us as a local Frankfurt rock-jazz group in the programme "rumms".

The music press had also pointed out this feature in advance.

Im September spielten sie auf der Berliner Funkausstellung im S-F-Beat Workshop und demnächst stellen sie sich im Hessischen Rundfunk bei „R-u-m-m-s“ vor.

Volker asked us for musical support for a satire on the current music fashions in Schlager (a special form of german music), pop music and rock.

But not only music should be ironically targeted, but also the pop industry and the media. "Hau Rock", the title of the broadcast, wanted to caricature music managers and pop experts, record parties and pop music programmes.

**hr Hessischer Rundfunk**  
Anstalt des öffentlichen Rechts  
6 Frankfurt am Main, Bertramstr. 8, Postfach 3294

**Hörfunk**

Herrn/Frau/Fröulein  
**MANFRED A. WEISZ**  
6 FRANKFURT AM MAIN

**Zahlungsart:**  
 \* Überweisung auf Konto **BORNHEIMER VOLKSBANK 5198**  
**501 901 00**  
\* Ist dieses Feld nicht angekreuzt und auch sonst kein Konto vermerkt, so teilen Sie uns bitte Ihr Postfach- bzw. Bankkonto mit.

6 Frankfurt am Main, den **4 12 74**

Personenkonto	Konto	Kostenstelle	Kostenträger	Honorarart
999 025 /	XXXX 42 401	0610	2320	30

Wir verpflichten Sie hiermit, zu den umseitig aufgeführten Bedingungen, zu folgender Darbietung:  
Sendedatum **Termin der Aufnahme 18./19.+21.11.74**

Titel der Sendung bzw. der Aufnahme **SCHLAGER-ANTI-HITPARADE** Art der Mitwirkung oder Leistung **INTERPRETATION**

vereinbarte Honorar in DM		%	Einkommensteuer	%	Ergänzungsgabe
<b>400 00</b>					
/. Auszahlender Betrag <b>*400 00*</b>	Einkommensteuer/Ergänzungsgabe (in Worten:	Konto 17210	Konto 17211		

Deutsche Mark

We were happy to say "yes" to this project, as broadcasting was completely new territory for us too. We went to the HR-Studio on 18./19. + 21.11.74 and recorded 32 tracks in 3 days.

They each received 400,00 DM per musician and enjoyed the, in my opinion, very successful production. The programme was then broadcast on a so-called "Samstag im Funk" as an anti-hit parade with the title "Hau Rock", in the HR II.



In 1976 the IV. formation of the band STAGG came to an end and its musicians were history.

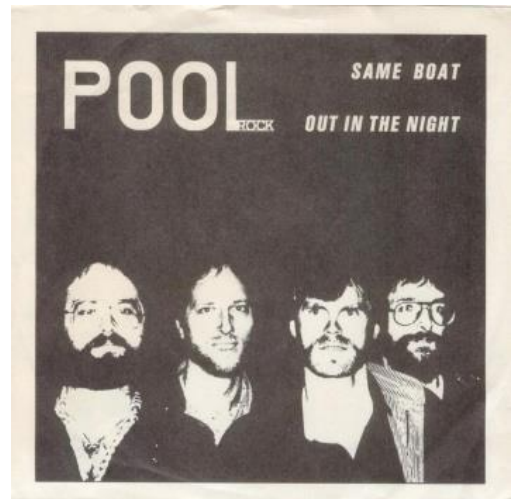
And also the musical paths of Harald and me separated, temporarily. From 1977 to 1979 I was the singer of "Roundabout", a band oriented on the YES and KANSAS sound, whose drummer, Jürgen "Mob" Böttcher, later co-founded the **Rodgau Monotones**.

At the beginning of the 80s, music was supposed to bring us together again. Harald and I started a band called "Pool" with Bernd Kuhn (git. keyb. vocl.) and Hans-Peter Hoffmann (drums), with which we, back to our roots, played honest rock-pop and even produced a "single". But this is a completely different story.

Let's go back to **STAGG III** and see how it went on.

In the years 1971 –1984

Manfred Weisz



*Although it was a lot of fun playing in all four STAGG line-ups, STAGG III was the most creative and musically profound formation of all.*

*In a very short time, enriched by Ulli and Freddy, we had put together such a veritable rock-jazz programme that it was obviously suitable for drawing the attention of Sender Freies Berlin to us with a DEMO recording. The SFB then confronted us with an offer that we simply could not refuse.*

*After only a few weeks of the founding of STAGG III, a first big appearance in front of an international audience at the 2nd International Consumer Electronics Fair in Berlin in September 1973 was already in store for us. Would we be able to make a proper debut? We accepted the challenge!*

*Before continuing with the actual story of the CD and LP production, enjoy reading the next chapter "STAGG goes Berlin".*

## 7. Chapter „STAGG goes Berlin ... IFA-1973 “

The day of the performance (9.9.1973) in Berlin was drawing ever closer. An increasing tension and nervousness in the group could not be denied. Actually we had planned to start in the morning on 8.9.73, but then we decided to start in the evening of 7.9. We thought it would be better to get through the night without traffic jams, because it was vacation season. An undertaking that almost turned out to be a big disaster. Another consideration for the night-time departure was to arrive in Berlin early enough on 8.9. to have enough time to familiarise ourselves with the locations at the exhibition centre. Experience has shown that before each performance it became increasingly stressful towards the end anyway.

With the bus fully packed and a second car we reached the “Zonengrenze” without any trouble and passed the checkpoint Herleshausen - Wartha.

Germany was still divided.



Crossing the border into the GDR went very smoothly. We seven lads were asked about the reason for our journey, we were looked sceptically at our appearance, but not frisked any further. A quick look into the bus, whether our request to play at the IFA was confirmed by our equipment, and things were done. The journey continued, in the direction of Berlin. Then, nobody knows why anymore, we got lost behind Wartha. We were standing somewhere in the open field.

That was highly dangerous.

It should be noted that transit between the FRG and West Berlin was subject to fixed routes which travellers were not allowed to leave. In addition, not only was the date stamped in the passports when entering the country, but the time was also noted. If a given time limit had been exceeded when checking out from the GDR to West Berlin, one had to explain and, if necessary, fight back the suspicion of hostile machinations to the people of GRD. We had already seen ourselves disappear for espionage in an GDR prison and never saw each other again. But it went well, we found the transit route again and were still "in time" at the border.

**ARD** 2. INTERNATIONALE FUNKAUSSTELLUNG, BERLIN  
31.8. - 9.9.1973

---

QUARTIERSCHEIN

für: Gruppe Stagg

Rundfunkanstalt: Sender Freies Berlin (Jugendfunk)

Hotel: - Pension "Elton" 1 Berlin  
Kurfürstendamm bb

Anreisetag: 8.9. Abreisetag: 10.9.73

1 Einzelzimmer / Bad/Dusche/ fl. Wasser / Frühstück à \_\_\_\_\_ DM incl.  
3 Bettzimmer

1 Doppelzimmer / Bad/Dusche/ fl. Wasser / Frühstück à \_\_\_\_\_ DM incl.  
4 Bettzimmer

DIE HOTELKOSTEN SIND VOM GAST  
DIREKT AN DAS HOTEL ZU ENTRICHTEN 22.- DM  
pro Person

SENDER FREIES BERLIN  
1000 Berlin 19  
Masurenallee 18-20  
Quartierstelle Tel. 3 08 3110

On the morning of 8.9.1973, we arrived safely in Berlin and drove to our pension. The accommodation, for 7 men, was in 2 multi-bed rooms. Well, it was a fair and we were not yet known super stars.

Cosy backyard milieu in Zille style. But beautifully situated close to the Kurfürstendamm and not far from the fairground. So everything was just fine.

After we had unloaded our luggage at the guesthouse, we immediately went to the exhibition centre to get our bearings and absorb the atmosphere of this major event.




Photo: Messe Berlin

Bernd, our manager, had already dealt with all formalities with the SFB in advance. In a letter dated 17.08.1973 we were given details about the performance itself and the remaining questions were clarified. It could start.

12/ 524/71

**SENDER FREIES BERLIN** Anstalt des öffentlichen Rechts  
1 Berlin 19  
Haus des Rundfunks  
Masurenallee 8-14  
Telefon 3081



Fernschreiber 1-82 813  
Berliner Bank AG, Depka 4  
Konto-Nr. 0 408 663 500  
Postscheckkonto Berlin West  
Konto-Nr. 766-105

Mitglied der Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Rundfunkanstalten der Bundesrepublik Deutschland (ARD)

---

EINSCHREIBEN

Herrn  
Bernd Stellmacher

6 Frankfurt/Main

Abteilung Jugendfunk  
(in der Antwort bitte angeben)  
Durchwahl 308/ 2692  
Datum 17.8.1973

---

Sehr geehrter Herr Stellmacher,

wir danken Ihnen für die Bestätigung unserer Einladung Ihrer Gruppe 'Stags'.

Inzwischen sind alle noch offenen Fragen geklärt:

- 1) Ihr Auftritt ist am 9.9. zwischen 16'00 und 18'00 Uhr. Wir bitten Sie, sich am Tag Ihres Auftritts bis spätestens 15'30 Uhr auf der Freifläche des Messegeländes am Funkturm vor der Halle 18 zu melden.
- 2) Die Dauer Ihres Auftritts ist ca. 30 bis 45 Minuten.
- 3) Es steht eine BTW 200 Farfisa Marschall 100-Anlage zur Verfügung.
- 4) Ihre Unkosten werden bezahlt und zwar:
  - a) Fahrtkosten: Bahnrückfahrkarte 2. Klasse
  - b) 2 Übernachtungen in einem Hotel oder Pension.  
Da es sehr schwierig war, für die Funkausstellung noch Zimmer zu bekommen, mußten wir Sie teilweise in Mehrbettzimmern unterbringen. Die Unterkünfte liegen dafür aber sehr zentral.
  - c) Sie erhalten ein Tagesgeld für 1 Tag von DM 40,-.  
Wir haben zwar Unterkunft für die von Ihnen angegebenen 7 Personen bestellt, können aber nur die Unkosten für die direkt am Auftritt Beteiligten bezahlen. Das gilt auch für Fahrtkosten und Tagesgeld.
- 5) Wir bitten Sie, sich am Tag Ihres Auftritts, morgens ca. 10'00 Uhr beim Pförtner, Haus des Rundfunks, zu melden. Sie erhalten dann die Eintrittsausweise für die Funkausstellung.

Falls Sie noch irgendwelche Fragen haben, schreiben Sie uns oder rufen Sie uns an.

Wir freuen uns auf Ihr Kommen und wünschen Ihnen eine gute Fahrt.

Mit freundlichen Grüßen

*J. Lauströer*  
(Alfons Lauströer)

*Hartmut Deckelmann*  
(Hartmut Deckelmann)

Wir bitten, alle Zuschriften ausschließlich an den SENDER FREIES BERLIN und nicht an Einzelpersonen zu richten

After a restless night, at least that's how I felt, we arrived on 9.9.73 at 10:00 a.m. at the porter's office in the Haus des Rundfunks, as we were told, and there we received our admission passes and a precise description of where we had to take our equipment and where our performance would take place.



Foto: Messe Berlin

A huge area and several tent-like covered open-air stages made the heart beat faster. In addition, the sun was shining brightly, hopefully the weather would stay the same until our performance. Thank the weather god, it did.



Rudi took care of everything and captured our performance in pictures.



Rudi

To sum up, our trip to Berlin and our performance at the IFA 1973 was not only exciting but also a complete musical success. On 10.9. we drove happily and satisfied, then without any problems through the GDR, back to Frankfurt. And so it could go on.

September 1973

Manfred Weisz

*After our walk through the band's chronicle and our trip to Berlin, I would like to return to the actual topic and continue the unbelievable story.*



*Good music not only has to be adequately produced, but also presented in a pleasing way. This meant having to digitally refresh the old analogue studio tapes as well as to design the cover and the contents in an appealing and informative way. How this was done, I will gladly summarize for you in the next chapter. But before that some legal issues had to be clarified between STAGG, the publisher and SWF.*

**Vereinbarung über die Veröffentlichung von Tonträgern LP/ CD**

zwischen

**der ehemaligen Musikgruppe STAGG,**

bestehend aus den Mitgliedern

Freddy Höhn

Ulrich Ost

Harald Wanka

Manfred Weisz

Joel Weser

-nachstehend **Musikgruppe (MG)** genannt

und

**Malesch Records/ Long Hair**

Serge Bloch

13 Rue du Fort

67700 Saverne

Frankreich

vertr. d. RA Manfred Steinheuer, Telegrafenstr. 15, 53474 Bad Neuenahr-Ahrweiler

-nachstehend **Label** genannt-

Rechte: Genehmigung für Tonträgerherstellung als CD/ LP Auflage je 500 Stück (fünfhundert).

Produktion/  
Kosten: Tonaufnahmen der **MG**, aufgenommen am 11.01.1974 im Studio des damaligen SWF, insgesamt 5 Titel ggf. zzgl. weiterer Titel aufgenommen für den HR.

Die Kosten der Nutzung der Aufnahmen des SWR (früher SWF) sowie alle anderen Herstellungskosten trägt das **Label**.

Pauschale Abgeltung  
der Genehmigung: **je 10 Freixemplare LP/ CD pro Musiker.** Versand frei Haus spätestens 20 Tage nach VÖ-Datum.  
Option: weiterer Erwerb von je 20 Tonträgern/ Musiker zum Groß-Handelspreis.

Vertragsdauer: 01.09.2018 bis 30.08.2023

**MG** erklärt sich bereit, **Label** zu Händen seines Vertreters (Manfred Steinheuer), sofern vorhanden, Unterlagen (z. B. Fotos, Poster, Zeichnungen, Erlebnisberichte o.ä.) zeitnah zum Vertragsschluss per E-Mail bzw. Briefpost zu übersenden. Physisch übersandte Unterlagen werden umgehend nach Verwendung zurückgegeben.

Ort, Datum.....  
Unterschrift Malesch Records/ Long Hair  
vertr. d. RA Manfred Steinheuer

.....  
Unterschrift STAGG  
Mitglied

M. WEISZ

## 8. Chapter „STAGG.....digitally remastered (2018)“

After the agreement on the release of sound carriers had been reached between STAGG and Malesch Records / Long Hair and the (now) SWR had released the titles to the publisher, nothing more stood in the way of the project.

The analogue music material was sent to **Jörg Scheuermann**, sound engineer in a Munich recording studio, where it was digitally revised.



# STAGG - 1974

Digitally Remastered 2018

The master disc was excellent. The music sounded much brighter and more transparent and the instruments, especially the drums, appeared much more differentiated.

This created ideal conditions for the sound of future sound carriers.

For the production of the CD / LP, the recordings were sent to the company "Handle With Care" in Berlin, which then forwarded them to OPTIMAL (cutting – pressing - and print shop).

High time to take care of the text and picture material of the CD/LP now.

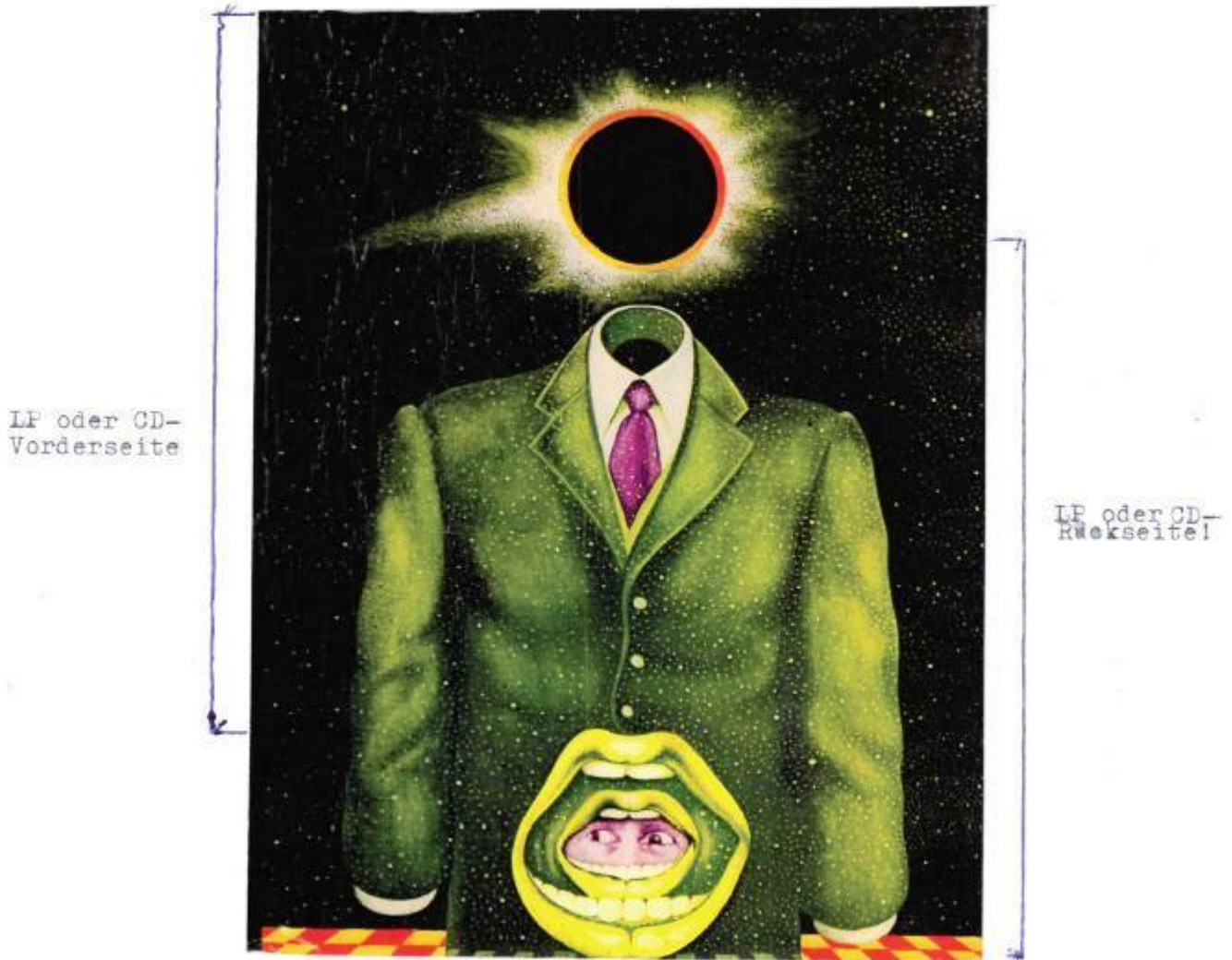
A front cover motif had to be found that corresponded to the spirit of the 70s, but with which we would still be able to identify today, 45 years later, and which in its pictorial representation, however, would allow a reference to our music to be derived. An apparently difficult undertaking.

But our music scout brought a well-known graphic artist from Hanau, **Helmut Wenske**, into the game, who had already painted cover pictures for well-known bands in the 70s and offered to fall back on "free pictures" in his extensive fund. No sooner said than done. Several motifs came to the view. Here is a small excerpt.

The decision was not easy.



Finally, a motif, "Green Man", as I liked to call it, became our favourite. Done, on to the next decision.



Why exactly this one?

Besides the appealing motif, typical for the 70's, two interesting aspects emerged.

Firstly, the graphic designer (Helmut Wenske) provides on this cover exactly the form of representation we wanted in front and back. This option of the artist was one of the important points for our decision.

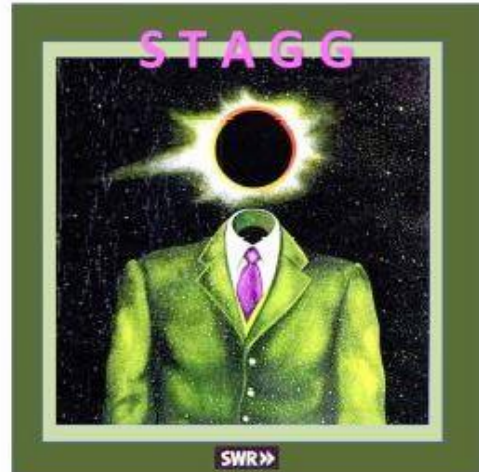
Secondly, because the divisible motif allowed a two-part, complementary statement and thus a certain connection to our music could be established.

Perhaps a possibility, intended by the graphic artist, which we later on could exactly use (see p. 45).

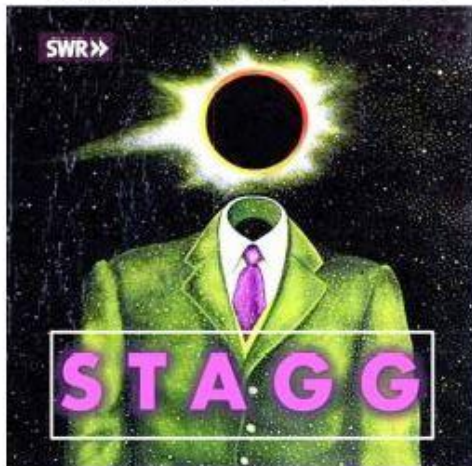
Platz 1 (4 Punkte)



Platz 3 (jeweils 1 Punkt)



Platz 2 (jeweils 2 Punkte)



Having finally found a front cover motif is one thing. But combining it with the band name, in terms of font size, spatial arrangement and colour design, as well as with or without a frame, is another. More than 20 designs were discussed, for the remaining 5 even an internal ranking was organised. Winner (1st place) was the current design in the top left corner.

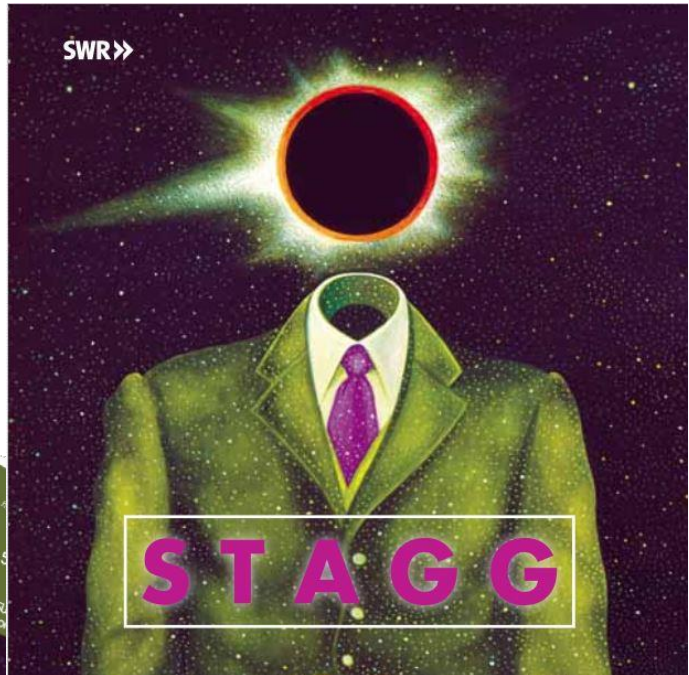
In the meantime, the graphic designer, **Kerstin Ax**, from Winnigen, had converted all the text and picture material into a wonderfully arranged booklet resp. inlay and designed perfect labels for both the CD and the LP.

**Martina Häusler**, translator from Bad Neuenahr-Ahrweiler, had done an excellent job of translating the booklet resp. inlay into English for the international market.

All preparations had been made, now we could take off.

Even before the holidays and celebration-meetings, in December 2018, the CD free copies for the musicians were on the gift table.

What a wonderful Christmas present!



The CD sales in the stores and distribution agencies took place before the turn of the year 2018 / 2019, and those silver discs were on sale at AMAZON, DISCOGS, GREEN – BRAIN - KRAUTROCK, EBAY and of course LONG HAIR MUSIC. The large black vinyl version was available from February 2019.

More information about the band and their music refer the following reviews

Some time after the release of the CD, extensive information material and reviews were found on relevant platforms, such as Green-Brain-Krautrock\*, Baby-Blue-Seiten\* and rateyourmusic.com (4½ of 5 stars) ★★★★★



\*The history of the Long hair label starts with the release of recordings of more or less unknown bands from the late sixties/ early seventies, who run a band competition in former German radio station SWR (South West Broadcast) and received with the recordings a wider public. A few of them like My Solid Ground, Kraan, became famous and recorded a lot of albums on well known German Krautrock labels. Others like Coupla Prog, Puppenhaus, Papa Zoot or Jud's Gallery played and recorded their music at the radio studio but received no official record deal and most of the band members started a career in an other profession. STAGG, five guys from Frankfurt, all students are one of the very best who recorded at the SWF. Well trained on their instruments flute and sax, organ and keyboard, guitar, bass, and drums STAGG recorded the five tracks, all in all about 40 minutes of amazing and extra ordinary music. They are a real gem! The music is full of energy, amazing melodies and surprise twists. The sound is absolutely unique and reminds a mix of Gomorrha's playing on their second album, a more rocking version of Thrice Mice but also of Jethro Tull in times of Benefit or Aqualung. Two long tracks (each about ten minutes) which allowed the musicians to show their musical abilities with a surprising organ and keyboard sound, often unison with sax or flute, a rocking guitar with slightly Spanish interjections, very tight bass and drums playing with a drummer playing in 'an always getting forward' style. This Frankfurt band played a lot of concerts in Frankfurt area but also Berlin, Munich, Hamburg or Cologne clubs. The music is really amazing and the melodies played by guitar, keyboard and flute and sax reach your heart and brain and after the album finishes, you will start to hear it again and again. This is one of Long Hair's finest albums ever. We are very proud to release it after seven years for searching for the guys who played this unique sound! CD comes with 24 pages booklet (vinyl album with gatefold sleeve and four sided full coloured insert) with band story, a lot of photos and other notes. The radio recordings were remastered and the sound is brilliant. Don't miss this yet unknown but soon legendary sound. A MASTERPIECE!!!

## Von: [Achim Breiling](#)

\* STAGG probably came from Frankfurt, and met in the early 1970s. But too much biographical information about the formation is not to be found, not even in the booklet of the CD reviewed here. They were probably quite active live throughout Germany, recording a radio session for Südwestfunk in January 1974, and then disbanded sometime during the rest of the decade without having released a recording. None of those involved left behind any major musical traces. Only the drummer Ulli Ost (who apparently came from a band called Abraham) was later still active with the jazz rock formation Leaf.

In 2018 Long Hair Music have now released STAGG's SWF3 recordings on LP and CD. The label has been doing its best to prevent bands from being forgotten that did not release an album during their existence. Most of the time they fall back on radio sessions, often those that were recorded in the studios of the former Südwestfunk in Baden-Baden. Fashion Pink, Coupla Prog, Jud's Gallery, Cannabis India, minus two and Puppenhaus, for example, have secured their place in music history. STAGG also deserve one, as the recordings reviewed here prove.

The quintet from Frankfurt obviously felt at home in jazz-rock areas, and on "STAGG" you can hear mainly such musicians. Sax and flute are mostly soloists, accompanied by the dynamically driving trio of guitar, bass and drums, and by the versatile keyboard work of Joel Weser (mostly organ or synthesizer). Sometimes there is also singing, in English and slightly bluesy and roaring. By the way, the band name is borrowed from a British sports car called STAG (Hirsch), and a G has been added.

The label is very euphoric and describes the album as one of the best they have released so far, even as a masterpiece. Well, the music is certainly not bad. Very capable musicians are virtuosic and closely interwoven. With this, they certainly moved in the first league of Teutonic jazz rock. There is less evidence of herbaceous dilettantism, and if the band had released an album with this material at the time, it would probably have attracted attention. In stylistic terms, however, there was hardly anything to offer that could be heard in jazz rock at the time. But STAGG certainly did not need to hide from anyone, including Anglo-American colleagues working at the same time. In retrospect, however, the music is not extremely original. Jazz rock with saxophone and flute can be heard, based on an organ and accompanied by the appropriate vocals. Colosseum may serve as a rough point of comparison. However, the music is a little more electronic, as evidenced by the various whistles and chirps of the synthesizer.

**Nevertheless "STAGG" is a great record**, which Krautrockcompleteists and of course lovers of the classic organ-jazz-program can (should) get. One wonders what else might be slumbering in the SWF archives.

Okt. 2018 – Febr. 2019 - Manfred Weisz



*Now you have already experienced a lot about us.  
Both the members of STAGG and the instruments they play.  
But, there was something else? Exactly, there was also singing! What is behind the songs and how the content is interpreted by the music, you will find out in the next chapter.*

## **9. Chapter „STAGG ... Music tracks and their Meaning“**

### **rush hour:**

This is the attempt at portraying a big-city scenario. The flute score at the beginning describes the calm before the big storm. It is Sunday afternoon and it seems like there is a ban on driving for the weekend. The streets are emptied; this gradually changes during the course of the night, and increasingly so in the early morning. The situation is coming to a head with the partial integration of the individual instruments, and eventually culminates in a chaotic rush.

The traffic reaches a stage of uncontrolledness, and from then on can only worm its way through the city as a slowly flowing pulp. The vocals reflect an individual citizen' fate on a Monday morning, typical for a majority of the population.



The drum solo at the end of the piece intends to clarify the rise and escalation of the evening rush hour once more but in a different form.

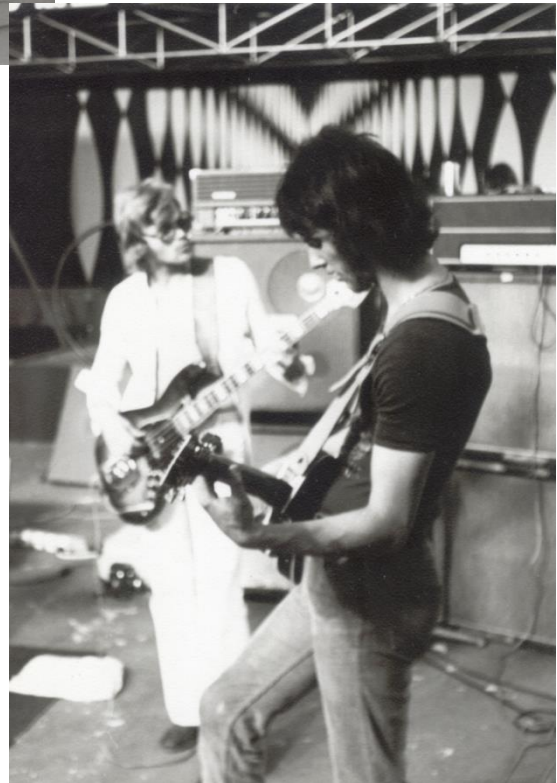


### **Wallfahrt:**

After a change in line-up resp. an extension of the group Stagg, pilgrimage is the product of new influences. Measures and tonal constellations of this kind were uncharted territory for the core of the group. The exotic unison theme of saxophone and organ are supposed to evoke oriental associations in the listener. A new Mecca, new horizons for our music were created.

### **restless:**

Here, too, the new formation allows the arrangement of an older piece in a laid-back form. The guitar chorus moves along a harmonic progression popular with the group, which can be found in Spanish Flamenco music. The guitar play was given a Mediterranean flair accordingly. The piece is about man's restlessness, whose thoughts are yearning for repose and abode.





### **tortured life:**

The song also expresses the terrific speed of life and could be the continuation of “restless”. However, the vocal score talks about those people who are forced to live in one place. Be it the tin shacks in the slums or the concrete jungles in the cities. Mentally not quite dead, there is the desire to “get out”. The organ chorus at the end of the song pulls the desperate ones out of their dreams and forces them back into the reality of their ghettos.

### **my friend:**

Friendship, but most of all disappointed friendship, offers an enormous emotional bandwidth. A filigreed and at the same time complex mesh is revealed by the music.



Although still in unison in the beginning, keyboard and saxophone are thronging and herald the inner rift. An emotional up and down, reflected in the following unison part of flute and guitar and interjected by the aggressive organ, eventually lead to the emotional breakdown.

In a moderate  $\frac{3}{4}$  beat, supported by the flute, the lyrics of the song enlighten the willing audience.

A thrusting Saxophone between the vocal strophes initially lacks the desired slow-down.

But then, in a flute part that starts off solemnly, the disappointed protagonist is given the opportunity to reflect. Yes, he even encounters a sort of recurring assurance during the following lively 4/4 measure, which is topped off by a final feeling of elation.



However, a cacophonous organ intermezzo wakes him from his dreams, and he realizes that his situation hasn't changed at all and everything starts all over again..

In the years 1971 - 1973

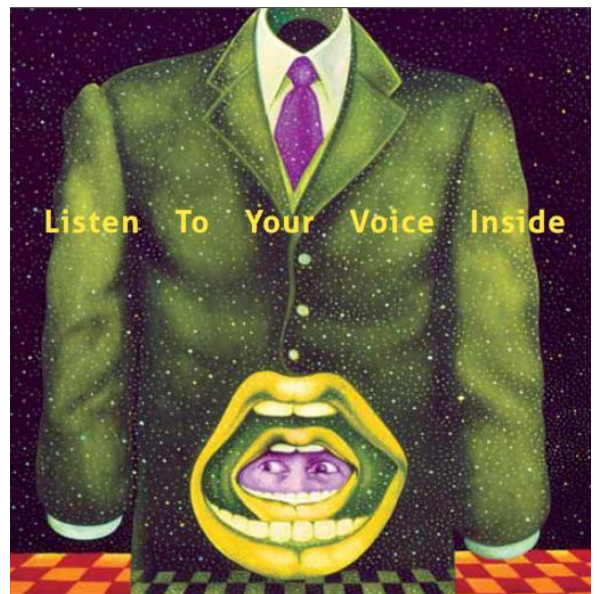
Harald Wanka + Manfred Weisz

*With all that has been said about us, there is one more important aspect that we do not want to withhold from you.*

*Namely, how we would actually describe our music and how we play the music ourselves.*

*Written in lyrical prose, nobody can do this better than Joël.*

*One more tip. When you listen to our music, turn off your head and enjoy it from the inside out.*



## **10. Chapter „STAGG in Process“ (an attempt at self-portrayal)**

The following words describe the band “STAGG” in many regards:

It is in their way of working, as a group of people that create and perform music – music that grows from more or less concrete compositional ideas, while equally evolving from playing. It is therefore always a display of emotions, states of mind, interaction, associations and feedback on what is heard and played.

Over time, new aspects and complex formations come about in this way, which eventually lead to a finished piece?

Only apparently!

Because no matter how often this piece is played, about the joy of playing in the respective encounter, it will always sound different. In terms of change and development of the individual musicians and the whole group, through the constant, intensive encounters that are associated with it. For example, through the willingness as a band to carry the current soloist and to nourish what he is expressing with an appropriate resonance.

Or, to enter into an enthralling synergistic process via an immediate, open dialogue, in which two, three, or all of the musicians create an thronging but subtly interlocked, dragging beat.



But even when a wide, radiant sound surface suddenly bursts open and everyone is captured by the sensation of rising and irresistible expanse, such experiences leave traces. But they also point to possibilities and a way of expressing and shaping oneself in a special way in contact with oneself and in a direct encounter with the others and the music.

In the performances, where the momentary movement of the individual, as well as the direct interaction between the fellow musicians as well as with the audience and the respective surroundings, always gives the pieces a new colour, atmosphere and quality of expression.

For the musicians always a fulfilling experience. The pieces of music prove to be part of an extended space of possibilities, in which they always present themselves in a new quality of expression. They also contain the possibilities and a way to express and shape themselves in a special way in contact with themselves and in a direct encounter with others and the music.

Felt in 1973 / described in 2018

Joël Weser

*We are slowly approaching the end of our little but hopefully interesting story and it is time to end the time travel, to arrive in the here and now.*

*45 years lie between the studio recordings at SWF and the release of the CD / LP.  
How would a meeting of the band members look like after such a long time?*

*In November 2018 the time had come.*

*In the following lines, Freddy puts it best when he describes what we all felt inside after we met again.*

## **11. Chapter „STAGG - Veteran´s Meeting“ (or - 45 years later)**

It was the brightest day of the summer and the bicycle tour led along the small river in the Elsass. Suddenly the mobile phone rang

*„This is Ulli Ost speaking„. "Please who?"*

*"This is Ulli Ost from Stagg, it wasn't easy to find your number."*

Decades are passing. Stagg? That was the jazz-rock band I had played in flute and saxophone before. My goodness yes, that was definitely still when I was a student. Exactly that one! But why does this long, wafer-thin root of the past reach for me?

*"There's a rock-jazz freak from back then who listened to the tape recordings of our 1974 SWF session and wants to promote us". CD, LP and everything. All that stuff.  
We have to talk about the rights."*

Aha and when and where?

*"You'll get everything via mail, Manfred will take care of it."*

Manfred, Manfred? Sure, the guitarist and singer. A few days went by, when the first mails arrived, they were full of enthusiasm. He was always like that, Manfred, our singer and guitarist. Determined and full of energy, the opposite of us rather phlegmatic rock-jazz homies who took things rather slowly.

I have secretly asked myself, what has become of us?

Soon a date was found and the meeting place was to be in the house of Joel's girlfriend. Joel, the man at the Hammond organ. The closer the meeting point came, the stronger my heart was beating. Do I even recognise them and will they recognise me?



Then the moment when I saw the drummer Ulli behind the half-open door of the room, unmistakably, the same youthful face, perhaps a little more angular through the glasses and 45 years later.

It was written on the forehead of the others: "My god Freddy had changed". The devastation that a pleasurable life has left in my face may not have completely cleared away a shine through of my old face.

"Aha, when I look closer I recognise you" is the well-meant greeting. Later we sat together in a huge breakfast restaurant and everyone shared their biography. It's absolutely crazy how different the paths, which we had taken in the last four decades, had meandered through the jungle of life.

From the coach for teambuilding, who is active worldwide, to the chief of paediatric orthopaedics, the teacher, the lawyer, (who had changed his mind completely after training as an orchestral musician), to the head of the legal department of a bank.

And so I thought to myself: "Maybe the range of the band members' CVs is a reflection of the complexity of the music we made together, 45 years ago".

**"Yes, I think that's how it was!"**

November 2018

Freddy Höhn



*I previously mentioned that Bernd, our manager, was apparently not to be found even after intensive research and so we had to accept with regret that he, like Rudi, would not be present at our veteran's meeting in November 2018.*

*But the hope of at least meeting him somewhere, sometime again, remained.*

*As the saying goes, "The ways of the Lord are unfathomable", and so life has once again proven us wrong, if „Lady Luck" is added.*

*As the last STAGG veteran "Bernd" was found after all, I will tell you in the last chapter, as another "little" unbelievable story, and also tell you how our music once again made it into a radio studio.*

## 12. Chapter „STAGG.....the Circles are closing“

When the STAGG members increasingly lost sight of each other in the late 70's and early 80's, sooner or later the ties to Bernd were torn off.

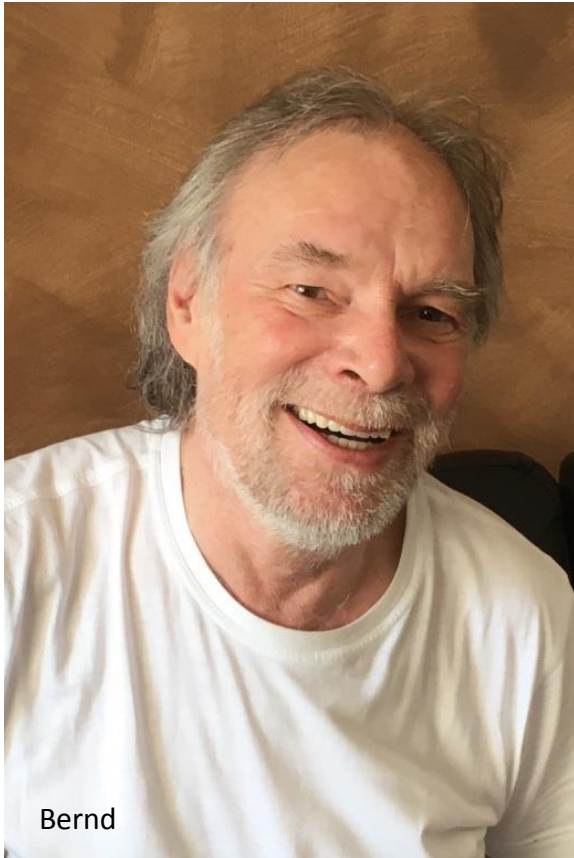
I told a good girlfriend of mine, with whom I am still on friendly terms from that time until today, the whole STAGG story and stressed how sad it was not to have Bernd with us anymore.

Then she told me that the last time she saw Bernd was about 10 - 15 years ago, at a weekly market in Frankfurt / Bornheim, as an employee of a potato dealer.

Since I don't like to be satisfied with things where not all possibilities are exhausted to make it better, I had the plan to visit this special weekly market and to ask for **Bernd Stellmacher**, as a former employee, at different stands.



Beside all the fruit and vegetable stands there were only 2 sellers of the mentioned potatoes. Even if the probability of finding Bernd again was minimal, but it was not zero, and I was lucky with the second market trader, **Detlef Otto**.



Bernd

Detlef confirmed that Bernd worked with him many years ago and that he even still had Bernd's contact information. However, for reasons of data protection, he did not want to give it away.

So I gave him my mobile phone number, with the request to call Bernd, so that he could call me back.

When Bernd did not get in touch for a week, I was quite unsure whether contacting him would work that way, I decided to visit the weekly market again and ask Detlef to give me Bernd's phone number directly, which he did after a charm offensive from me.

Detlef, thanks for the support.

In the morning of the same day I called Bernd and went to him, and in the early afternoon, after so many years, we were already lying in each other's arms and wallowing in the memories of past times.

And also a second circle closes. After 45 years, our music has once again found its way back to where it all started, namely a radio studio. A rather local station, the **Ems-Vechte-Welle**, is an ad-free citizen radio station that serves the Lower Saxon districts of Emsland and the county of Bentheim. The E.V.W. has particularly aligned music programs and lures e.g. with "ROCK ART", moderated by **Stephan Glück**, Prog.Rock fans, each age, with selected tidbits of this genre to the radio receivers.

At the request of one of the listeners, our two songs "My Friend" and "Rush Hour", on 26.08.2019, were played in full length in the "long tracks" section and well commented

(Quote St. Glück: "*Lost jewel*").

Another interesting music program is offered by this Station with "ROUNDABOUT", presented by **Ludwig Egbers**, which is primarily concerned with new record releases.

In this broadcast, on 09.09.2019, STAGG was once again released into the ether with the track "Restless" or today one would rather say sent into cable.

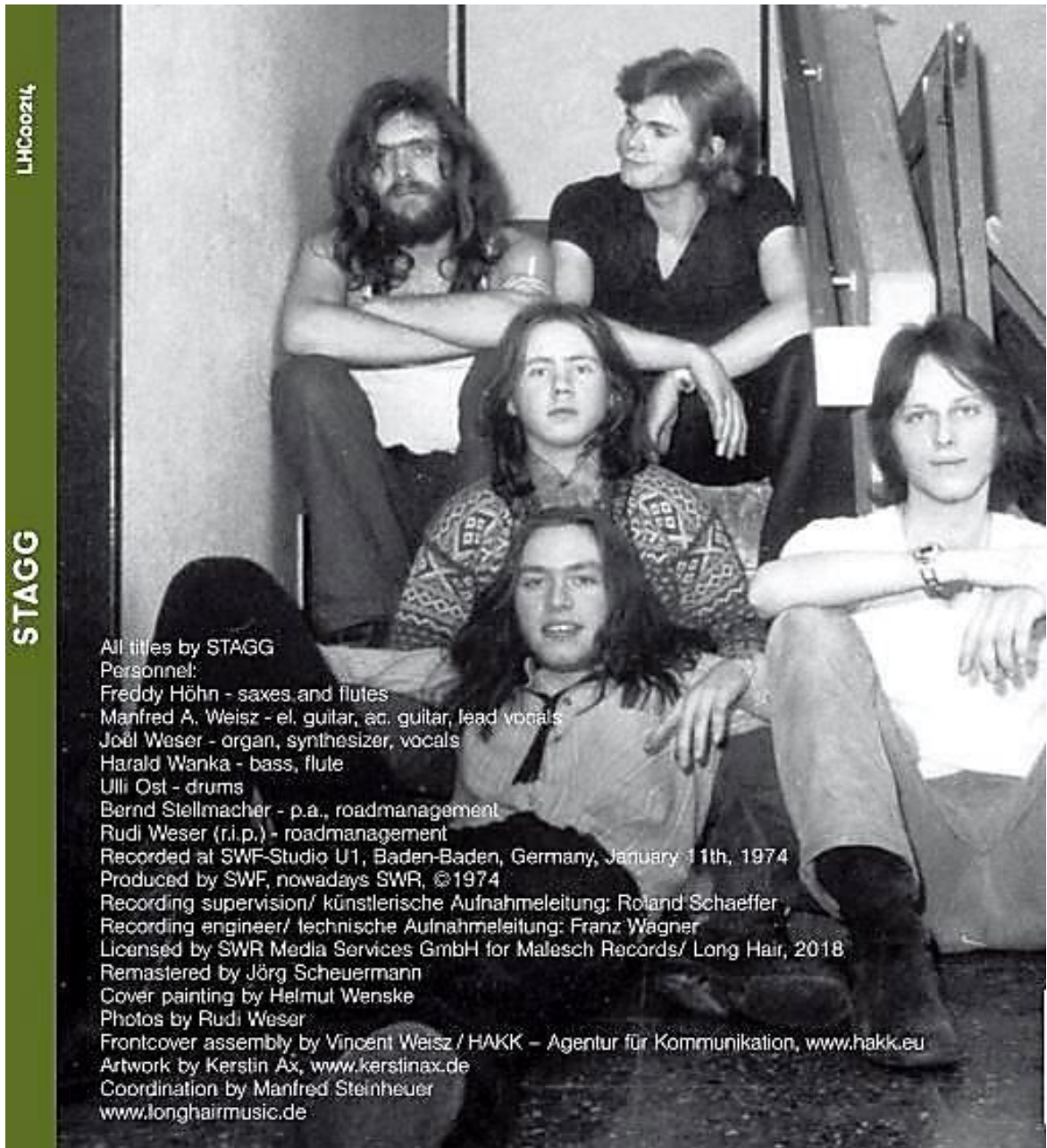


May, August, September 2019

Manfred Weisz

## Epilogue (or that's all?)

The fact that a CD / LP was produced from a music session of the group STAGG in the studios of the SWF in Baden-Baden, 45 years later, is certainly a historical uniqueness. How this came about has already been described in detail at the beginning. At this point, once again a heartfelt "Merci" to all of our "comrades-in-arms" listed under the credits of the CD.



With M. Steinheuer, this freaky music scout, my thanks are not limited to the music production, but also extend to two other aspects that are closely related to it.

On the one hand to his perseverance in researching after us over 9 years and finally finding STAGG. That demands the highest recognition.

On the other hand, one of the most important things for me is that through his action, band members from back then, who have long since fallen out of sight and mind, have found each other again.

And so I finally come to the conviction that I want to dedicate the whole story to M. Steinheuer, without whom our music of that time would never have found its way out of the sound archives of the SWR and all the thoughts on it, pictures and texts, would never have been put on paper.

I am also very much attached to my boys, including Bernd and Rudi. Only in this very group I could play and experience the music as Joël so aptly described it.

Already in late summer 1974 the paths of STAGG III had separated.

For the most diverse reasons. No musical reasons, this is something that must be kept in mind.

But, as Freddy put it so nicely, everyone had to follow his own predetermined course of life.



Nevertheless, fate wanted us to get together again in 2018. Calculated in the standards of the Middle Ages, after a whole life time, because at that time nobody became older than 45 years.

And thus to answer the question. No, that wasn't all. Musically maybe, but not as far as the band STAGG is concerned.

Here a next veteran's meeting, in the sense of a release party, is already planned.

And this time certainly with Bernd and perhaps also with M. Steinheuer, our music scout, to whom we owe all this.

The photo you see above, with which I would like to thank the boys once again and conclude my story, is from the very first days, so it is at least 45 years old.

(wrinkled, like us ? ;-)) so what)

February 2019

Manfred Weisz

## Last but not least:

*Serge Bloch via e-mail vom 18.02.2019*

Hallo Manfred Weisz !

The " Stagg " LPs are here now and they are really great.

I am happy to send you these LPs.

Thank you for your help to publish the " Stagg " project.

Many greetings from Elsass

SERGE

[longhairmusic@orange.fr](mailto:longhairmusic@orange.fr)

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*M. Steinheuer via e-mail vom 27.08.2019*

Hello Manfred,

You will certainly want to know how the sales are going. According to Info Serge from Monday this week about half of the CDs and LPs have been sold. Not bad for a completely unknown band.

Have a good time

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*At this point also a big thank you to Serge and long hair music. We would like to let the critics have their say, whereby the focus is not so much on the band's rating, but rather on the comment about the label at the end of the review from rateyourmusic.com, which is reproduced in excerpts. There is no better way to say it, I have nothing more to add.*

### **STAGG SWF-Session 1974 - Review** by [snow\\_over\\_mongolia](#) Jan 17 2019

Now brace yourselves, Krautrock and Krautjazz fans everywhere, for this is possibly the top Kraut archival release of the year.

Sound quality is a bit rough around the edges (this was all recorded live and in one take, given the time constraints they were under), but excellent nonetheless. And the music is.. well, it's every bit as good as you wish it were

Sturdy Hammond organ riffing, brilliant flute work, a restless, continuous flow of ideas.. Even the vocals are powerful and good ! Top tier stuff, really.

It's a very compact, "designed for maximum impact" release too : as soon as the opening track "Tortured Life" kicks off, you know you will love this. Five tracks in a little under 40 min. - but there isn't a dull moment to be found here.

Really, I can't stress enough how great this material is. If bands like Thirsty Moon, Brainstorm, Eiliff, Xhol, Altona, Thrice Mice or Puppenhaus are part of your daily listening diet, then you cannot live without this..

Long Hair should be given a medal or something for unearthing those tapes. A treasure is what this is.



Long  
Hair  
INC214

*Here it ends, the*

# **UNBELIEVABLE STORY**

I'm sure, you enjoyed it.