

WINDMINISTER - Band History



Original line-up 1979/80:

- Christiane Ufholz (voc, dr) • Thomas "Monster" Schoppe (voc, bg)
- Eberhard Klunker (g) • Olaf Wegener (g) • Klaus Renft (Producer)

The group WINDMINISTER was founded in 1979 by Eberhard Klunker and Olaf Wegener in West Berlin. The name refers to the escape of the two musicians from the GDR in 1975 - at night with a rubber boat across the Baltic Sea. Both musicians had played in various well-known groups in the GDR before they both played together in the Hansi Biebl Blues Band until their escape. They had been friends since early youth and shared common musical preferences and goals. After their escape, both musicians lived in West Berlin, where their commitment to acoustic, concert-oriented music began. In the following years, in the course of Wolf Biermann's expatriation, many former colleagues from the GDR came to the West, preferably to West Berlin.

In 1979, the idea of forming a band took shape, and the group WINDMINISTER was created. The line-up included Renft musicians Thomas Schoppe and Klaus Jentsch, as well as singer Christiane Ufholz. However, they did not consider themselves a "Renft-Combo West", but rather a formation leaning more towards art rock. In early 1980, there were two concerts at Berlin's "Quartier Latin". At that time, however, no one knew that Stasi agents had been sneaked into the audience to create a negative atmosphere against the band. Before the first note was even played, jeering and heckling filled the auditorium. After that came the project's imminent end. The reasons for the band's breakup are understandable in hindsight. The technical possibilities available at the time did not do justice to the complex harmonic structures of Windminister's music. Neither on stage nor in the recording studio were the results satisfactory. As a result, there were differences of opinion about the future musical direction of the group.

The musical substance of Windminister's music was partially found in later releases by the musicians involved. Particularly noteworthy: The album "Bootsmann" released under the name Windminister by Eberhard Klunker and Olaf Wegener (2005, Harp label), as well as the album "Beautiful Machines" by Christiane Ufholz and Eberhard Klunker (2014, Marktkram label).

The current metamorphosis of WINDMINISTER comes again in the form of a rock band with electric guitar. When Eberhard Klunker spoke with producer Bodo Strecke about the band and its history, the hexaphonic guitar was mentioned. Klunker had built a prototype in the 1980s. This electric guitar was capable of sending the sound of each guitar string to a separate amplifier with speaker cabinet. That would have been the solution to the sound problems for the original band. Bodo Strecke immediately recognized the potential of this idea, and together they got to work to find a version suitable for live stage performances.

A new band, WINDMINISTER, was formed, committed to the musical tradition of the original band and bringing the Windminister concept into the present with a new line-up, a new guitar sound, and new English-language lyrics.

WINDMINISTER - new line-up 2025:

- Steffi Breiting (voc) • Eberhard Klunker (g)
- Simon Pauli (bg) • Siddhi Shah (dr)

Email: kontakt@strecketon.de
<https://www.youtube.com/@windminister-band>
www.windminister.com