



In the forest, in the city, inspiration comes to us from many sources. Sometimes you just have to start by placing your hands on the keyboards or drum machines. For [Jens Tozzberg](#), his recent work with

[Mike Dehnerts](#)

Fachwerk label is just the tip of the iceberg he's been treading on for a number of years. We caught up with him recently and here's our little chat!

CGNY: Hi Jens! Thank you for chatting with me! You came to my attention via your recent tracks which I loved. Excellent techno.

JT: Thanks...love to hear that!

CGNY: Very much the style of techno I really enjoy and am a big Fachwerk fan. So tell me, how does techno make you feel when you listen to it. (For me it's like a sense of excitement: my heart races or just as if someone has switched on a beautiful light in a dark room!). And when you make it - how do you know when it's "done". When you have a track that you are like "yup - that's good that'll be one for release"

JT: The Jens Tozzberg project has been set up dedicated to [Fachwerk](#). I had my experiences with Drum & Bass and Dub techno before but always felt at home with heavy peak time techno sounds. In the last years I got more and more bored by the actual development of techno during this time. It seems that most tunes are just a drone noise thrown onto a heavy bass drum and some percussion. It feels like that minimal hype that came up in the mid of the 2000s. I always wanted to make tracks you can remember, tracks that suck you onto the dance floor or push

you to the floor if that's more of a good expression! About listening to techno in general: well I grew up with techno in the end of the 90's and became a little sad when this age came to an end. So listening to techno nowadays feels more like coming home to me. It's something familiar like a good old friend you know quite well but that is smart enough to still surprise you. When it comes to producing, I see myself more as a crafter than an actual musician. Don't get me wrong! It still feels like making music but for me it's more like putting all these tiny bits of ideas in my head together, forming something that is bigger than its parts. And I know instantly when forming the first patterns - "Wow, this is going to be a good one". That happens from time to time J

CGNY: How did the Fachwerk connection come about? Did you know Mike and took a chance to send in something? How did it happen?

JT: Well we met at a festival in Germany some years ago and became friends. I had my own label, releasing my own stuff and never wanted to directly ask for a Fachwerk release as it doesn't feel right to me to make use of a friendship. Last year I played a live set at Tresor in Berlin and Mike was there and shortly after that we dived into the process of setting up a new project.

CGNY: That's the best way right? Not pushing but letting your talent speak for itself! So you grew up where - in Berlin or elsewhere?

JT: I grew up in the corner between Poland, Germany and Czech Republic. I moved to Berlin 15 years ago.

CGNY: How was the music scene there when growing up?

JT: Well it was better than you would expect from a region like that. We had a good club infrastructure with big headliners of that time playing there (DJ Rush celebrated his birthday twice in Görlitz). It was all about techno at this time.

"Even the strangest IDM should be taken as it is. It's emotion with sound. Keep the intellectual discussion out of it".

CGNY: And presumably you were out clubbing?

JT: Yeah for sure....I think I took the way of most of the other artists around too...clubbing -> DJing -> getting interested in the technical aspects behind it -> start producing -> become a superstar!! (laughs)

The thing is the longer you are into the scene and the more you understand the mechanism behind it (technique on the one side, the whole club and music infrastructure on the other side) the more it loses its magic. So you have to create your own magic through the music. Well that sounds a bit esoteric but it sums up quite well my inner drive for producing music.

CGNY: So in terms of this project with Mike - was there any collaboration with him or you made the tracks and sent them to him? I mean I know he did a remix for you but apart from that - how much input does Mike give?

JT: After he was considering doing a release, I sent him a bunch of tracks including "Brewer" which is on the A-side. Mike loved it and then decided to go further. He has a very direct and tight way of saying what he likes and especially when not. So it took a while to make something that he wanted without bending myself. Mike has a great sense for good tracks.

CGNY: There is such a HUGE proliferation of techno - and with the internet it spreads often virally...it can be overwhelming (as a listener which I am) to 'pick' one that is special or stand out over time. Last year for me the whole Amour album from Architectural was such a one. But as an artist - how do you make your mark - and of course having such a well-respected label such as Fachwerk release your tracks must be huge...

CGNY: Yeah it has become sooo easy to produce techno. I receive many demos every week

and they all sound literately the same. It's so frustrating. Now having an institution such as Fachwerk behind your work helps a lot. It's kind of a filter for the listeners. To start everything from scratch (new label, new artist) is very hard. So I can benefit from Mikes long time work as a fantastic A&R that created that good Fachwerk platform or led to it which I am very grateful for.



CGNY: How did your gig at Tresor come along and what are your ambitions for other gigs - places you'd like to play if you have them. Do you make music your full time career or have you another side job?

JT: About Tresor: the booker (Diana was on holidays) had some records of my other project and asked if I want to play live...it was just that simple.

I want to constantly evolve my live set as this is still quite new for me but I also love DJ'ing so in an ideal world I could play alternating DJ and live.....and yeah I still have a full time job!

CGNY: Isn't that lovely - wow things seems to fall into place for you without too much effort!! Always a good sign!

JT: Yeah but it happened slowly. (I am not a really patient guy!) And it is the work all the years before it that leads to such coincidences But again: that feels great!

CGNY: So I always ask this question, if an alien landed from another planet - how would you describe techno to him/her?!

JT: I always had that discussion with my parents and some friends back in my youth about the "worth" of techno music....and you mostly need someone with a higher level of open-mindedness to understand music that's far away from the pop culture. I mean try to explain to some Lady Gaga fan the coolness of grindcore or how satisfying it is to let yourself go to some crispy noisia drum & bass sound. The same goes for techno. When you try to educate someone that is only a pop listener you have to find the lowest common denominator (I hope you can say so in English) to explain what some music is about.

However, I won't say that no pop listener at all can understand techno...I want to point out the fact that the more someone is away from a specific culture the harder it is to make someone understand.

"Most artists I met have some kind of...weird behavior...and the better the artist the weirder the mind."

CGNY: Perfect answer and what I feel as well! It's not a snobby thing, it's just a cultural perspective thing maybe.

JT: You can say that people interested in any kind of subculture are more aware of the world around them. That could be hip hop, techno or gothic. But that does not mean that these people are not also into some commercial music. I like Adele's "Hello" as well as some dirty techstep shit J It's all about touching me. Most commercial music doesn't touch me but from time to time....there is a gem.

CGNY: So you didn't mention what other things you like - or maybe even places or art that inspires you. I mean when making a track - what do you set down first - is it the bass, the drums, do you get a melody in your head? What's the process?

JT: I am in fact very deeply rooted in nature. I love being in the forest and hearing all those layered natural sounds. I miss that a lot although Berlin is in fact a very green city. And leaving the world of concrete and people always reloads my batteries. When it comes to inspiration, it's hard for me to point out something particular that drives me. It's more that I always want to combine my experiences in the past (especially musically) and my skills today to form something I like. That could be some dreamy and cheesy downbeat track one day and a peak

time rave anthem the next day. It's both in me...and besides that new hardware is always inspiring. I think it's that ancient play instinct!

When I start a new track, 80% I start with some chords or melodies...or messing around with some preset sounds just to wait for that special button in me to be triggered.

CGNY: Tell me one thing you want the world to know about you or your music?

JT: Turn your head off! It's just music! I mean...there are so many artists that missing that one ancient aspect of music and that is to touch people (in a happy way, in an angry way, in a sad way or in a way that makes you dance) even the strangest IDM should be taken as it is. It's emotion with sound. Keep the intellectual discussion out of it. Most artists I met have some kind of...weird behavior...and the better the artist the weirder the mind.

CGNY: In terms of your career what other things/gigs have you planned in the coming year that you can share - returning to Tresor?

JT: Career: yeah returning with a special live set to [Tresor](#) on August the 12th and doing some other live shows in the meantime. Besides that the Fachwerk record already seems to be heard by some people so some other labels requested unreleased material of mine. So it seems there is a lot more to come.

CGNY: If you hadn't gone into music – what other career might you have had?

JT: After school I was so close doing a traineeship at a TV station but then decided to study economics! Well all that led me to this point so I think it's not worth it to discuss other opportunities from the past...but yeah sometimes I think what could have happened if I would have taken the actor way! Still interested in that!

CGNY: It's all performing!! Thanks again for your time Jens!

Check out this weeks podcast - exclusive to CGNY from Jens!

<https://soundcloud.com/cgny/jens-tozzberg-exclusive-podcast-for-cgny>