

# Theo Bleckmann *Berlin Las Vegas*

**Theo Bleckmann** - voice  
with **Fumio Yasuda** - piano/arrangements  
and the Todd Reynolds String Quartet

*"Europe was created by history. America by philosophy."* – Margaret Thatcher (b. 1925)

This concert program is a two set journey starting in war-torn Berlin and taking refuge in glamorous Las Vegas. German born American **Theo Bleckmann** sings of Berlin in its heyday and of its imminent demise. ***Songs of Love and War, Peace and Exile***, penned by **Hanns Eisler, Kurt Weill, Bertold Brecht**, and others, including Bleckmann's haunting rendition of Lilli Marleen, make up the first set. Delivered with moving tenderness and care, Bleckmann and arranger/pianist Fumio Yasuda breathe delicate life into these classic, almost haiku-like songs, reminding us of the immediacy and relevance of their personal and political implications today.



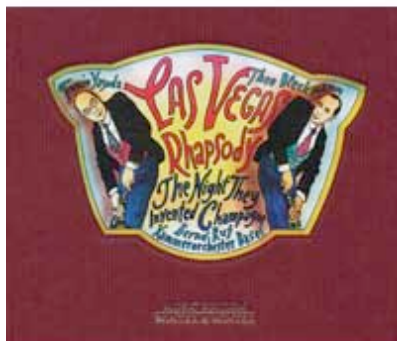
- **Berlin - *Songs of Love and War, Peace and Exile***

Winter & Winter CD N° 910 138-2

*"Bleckmann's voice is reminiscent of war-ridden Germany, the kind of entertainment that hid in dark, street-corner nightclubs to forget the woes of war in early 20th century Berlin. But somehow, the experience is completely thrilling and intense [...] The message is clear; I could listen for hours without needing to know a single word."*

- Democrat and Chronicle, May 2008

In seemingly stark contrast to *Berlin*, ***Las Vegas Rhapsody*** is about the search for illusion, being a star in Las Vegas, forgetting and leaving behind all history and past. This set unfolds through familiar show stoppers in dazzling arrangements and yet, at the end of this lush and entertaining show we have come full circle to Berlin: *"Dreams turned reality. And I, a man of mortality. Tonight I will be seen in my last routine."* Berlin and Las Vegas: exile, escape and elation in a sonic experience of brittle beauty and fleeting happiness.



- **Las Vegas Rhapsody**  
-***The Night They Invented Champagne***

Winter & Winter CD N° 910 116-2

*"The most transcendent vocal album in many a moon (for my money, anyway) reminds me of Björk's Selmasongs. Bleckmann's voice and Yasuda's orchestrations have the same blissfully troubling emotional pull."*

- Francis Davis - The Village Voice, January 2007

## Berlin *Las Vegas*

### **THEO BLECKMANN**

Genre-bending, -skipping and -skirting vocalist and composer, **Theo Bleckmann** has been a steady force in the music scene in New York for over 15 years, forging his own sound in jazz and contemporary music today incorporating jazz, ambient and electronic music as well as performance art. He has performed worldwide on some of the great stages including Carnegie Hall's Zankel Hall, the Sydney Opera House, L.A.'s Disney Hall, The Whitney Museum and the new Library in Alexandria, Egypt with artists like Laurie Anderson, Anthony Braxton, Steve Coleman, Dave Douglas, John Hollenbeck, Sheila Jordan, Ben Monder, Meredith Monk, Michael Tilson Thomas, Bang On A Can All-Stars, and John Zorn. The New Yorker called him a "local cult favorite", Downbeat a "mad' genius", The New York Times "excellent" and according to OUT Magazine, Bleckmann is "a singer who has only recently fallen to earth." Recently, Bleckmann was interviewed by Terry Gross for NPR's Fresh Air.

A Winter & Winter recording artist, Bleckmann's releases include *Las Vegas Rhapsody*, *Berlin*, and the upcoming *Twelve Ives Songs* (with Kneebody), as well as Refuge Trio's first recording. *Origami* (on Songlines), his first recording as a leader, received 4 +1/2 stars (out of 5) from Downbeat Magazine. His voice can be heard on over 40 recordings on ECM, CRI, Label Bleu, Polygram, Songlines, Traumton and Winter & Winter. [www.TheoBleckmann.com](http://www.TheoBleckmann.com)

### **FUMIO YASUDA**

Tokyo born pianist/composer/arranger **Fumio Yasuda** has worked in concert and film music for over three decades. In 1995, he began his musical collaboration with Japan's most famous photographer, Nobuyoshi Araki in his series of *Arakinema*, which has been performed worldwide. Yasuda has released several CD on the German label Winter & Winter, among them *Heavenly Blue*, *Kakyoku (Flower Songs)*, *Im Zauber von Verdi (Charmed by Verdi)*, *Schumann's Bar Music*, *Death Sentiment*, *Der Kastanienball*, and his two collaborations with Theo Bleckmann, *Berlin* and *Las Vegas Rhapsody*.

Yasuda has performed at the Schleswig-Holstein Festival, the Stanser Musiktage, among others, and recently scored two feature length movies "Help me Eros" and "Wild Cherries" that were shown at the Tokyo-, Vancouver-, Bangkok-, and Venice Film Festivals.

[www.fumioyasuda.com](http://www.fumioyasuda.com)

(Ensemble of 6 musicians, sound/lighting crew of 2)

### **Representation:**

