

HOEHN

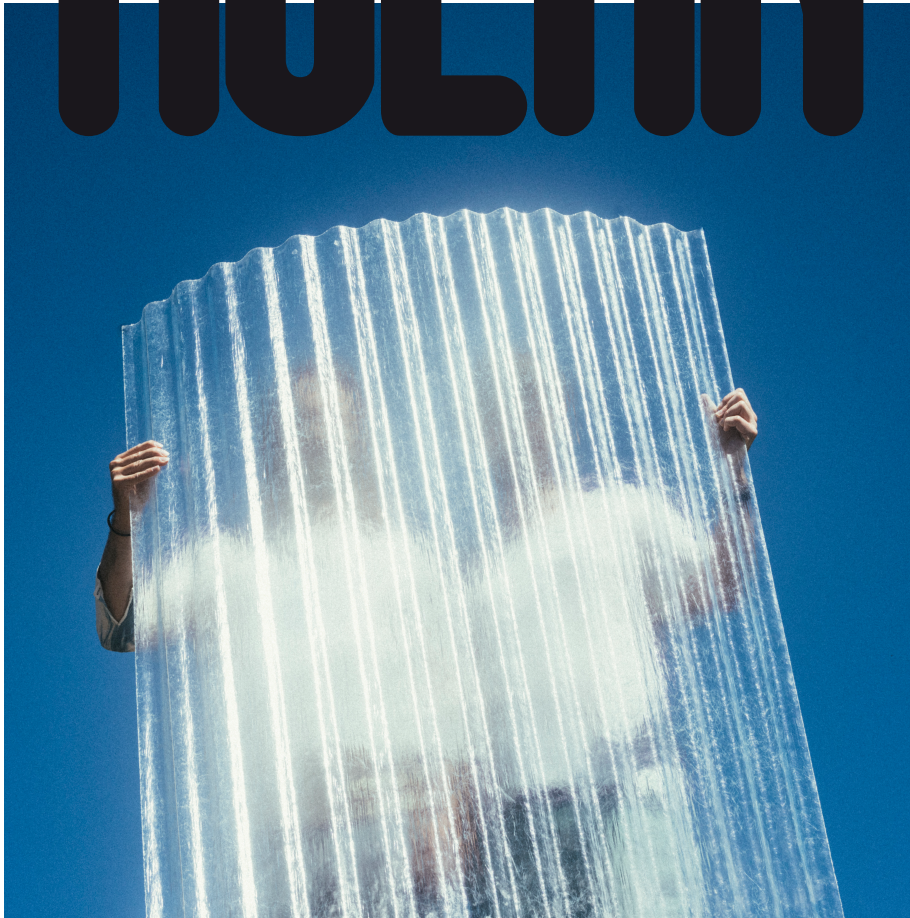


HOEHN, a Swiss instrumental duo consisting of two brothers, Samuel and Silvan Kuntz, have been playing guitar together since an early age, relying heavily on an intuition born of their brotherly bond. *"We understand each other so well musically,"* they say, *"that we know exactly what the other's playing and where we're heading. We only seek eye contact in unexpected moments, and often something good comes out of it."*

It was during summer holidays as children in the south of France that Silvan first showed Samuel how to play the guitar. As they wrote their first pieces together, they quickly established their musical roles: with trumpet as his first instrument, Samuel's approach to the guitar is that of a melodic instrument while, in contrast, Silvan prefers to experiment with timbres and different guitar tunings, capturing harmonic and percussive layers. Perhaps unsurprisingly, they followed complementary paths in their studies at Lucerne University, with Samuel focussing on jazz and Silvan on classical music.

For some years, Samuel and Silvan have formed one half of alternative pop band Panda Lux, who enjoyed significant success with their second album, 2020's *Fun Fun Fun*. More recently, under the name San Silvan, Silvan released his first solo EP, 'Lass Mich Los' (2023), which features a collaboration with Sophie Hunger. Now, on their debut studio album, **MISTRAL, HOEHN** – whose name is a tribute to their great-grandfather, renowned pianist Alfred Hoehn – combine their technical skills in both classical and jazz guitar with a lifetime's experience of writing songs together.

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MISTRAL, HOEHN's debut studio album, is named for the north-westerly wind characteristic of the south of France, with which the Swiss brothers associate beautiful childhood memories from the summer holidays where they first began to play guitar together. Inspired by a road trip through Portugal, its fifteen tracks were recorded in joint live takes over ten days in Berlin in collaboration with sound engineer and producer Miguel Murrieta Vásquez.

Fostering an aesthetic that merges a classical approach with analogue nostalgia, the brothers constantly infuse their music with curious sounds: the striking bottleneck melody sweeping through 'Ericeira', the silvery layers flickering like heat along the roadside in 'Vacuum', the glassy mystery of 'Rosalie II', the recurrent falsetto vocalisations surfacing throughout the album. In addition, each piece has a different guitar tuning. "*Unfamiliar tunings inspire us to write new pieces,*" the duo explains. "*They help return us to the intuition and creative visions we had when playing as children.*"

Though **MISTRAL** constantly alternates between the refreshing energy of 'Costa', the complex innovation of 'Hurricane Flower' and the elegant minimalism of the title track, a sense of longing and airiness run throughout the record. Furthermore, while many compositions were written beforehand, there are nonetheless pieces here that emerged directly in the studio through the brothers' improvisation, with such magical moments captured on the likes of 'Rosalie I' and 'Stream'. There are also virtuoso interludes, including opener 'Prelude', which further benefit from the Portuguese environment and a summer wind that's almost tangible. Ultimately, however, it's **MISTRAL**'s immediate rawness which allows simultaneously for a lightness of touch and an emotional depth, making this debut album so refreshing.