



The unassuming German trio--(L-R) : Oliver, Möbus and Rudi.

who after hearing our music often say that 'it's not jazz'. This doesn't bother me, as my influences are varied: from rock, twelve-tone to other traditional music," he says.

About the difference between European and the American Jazz, Möbus points out that it is the freedom with which jazz is handled in the continent that gives it a different character. As the band-leader, who composes most of their pieces, Frank Möbus draws on all the sources that he fancies. "In Europe there is a bigger space, there is this chance of playing music as an art form. In America, the place from which Jazz originated, there is always a constraint as the musicians are tied up with the hoteliers who tell them what to play." But he also adds that it is just an example regarding what the artistes in America have to usually face. "It is the non-cooperation from the government that makes them suffer. Bush is not willing to spend on culture. Here, in Europe, there is a lot of money for artistes and it gives them the freedom to produce work of their own choice," Möbus continues.

The group came into being in 1992. It was in Nurnberg, Germany, where the guitar-player Möbus met the bass-clarinet-player, Mahall. At the onset they hooked up with Marty Cook, an American jazz trombonist, and bass-player Henning Sieverts and drummer Jim Black in drum from the New York knitting factory scene.

With this set-up the group produced their first few CDs. From the early 1990s to 2002, the band has come up with five CDs. The recent ones among these five, were the work of the three musicians -- Möbus, Mahall and John

Shroder (on drums). But that set-up has also gone through a change. Oliver Steidel has replaced the former drummer. And the band is on tour with the new member for the first time.

As for their musical taste and creation, Möbus and Mahall have been the guiding forces behind the group. Their style, now, is termed as unconventional. Yet, their unconventionality at times makes the listener feel at home. As their compositions not only dote on things that have this sense of deja-vu but also course the listeners through a journey where highs, lows and even intentional commotion make them all the more enjoyable.

It is Möbus's second visit to Dhaka. The last visit was with another band of musicians. Now, with this band of three he is covering the region. They have 11 concerts in mind, one in Dhaka and seven in India, two in Pakistan and another one in Sri Lanka. The trio's visit is being sponsored by the Goethe Institut. Other than Möbus, Mahall too had the opportunity visit Asia before. "I have been to Singapore, Philippines and Hong Kong and many other South Asian regions and had played with other bands," he says.

Young Möbus did a five-year stint as a student at the Berkely College of Music, Boston. And it was he who chipped in with a few English words during the concert to let the audience in on a bit of background knowledge just to throw light on the pieces they played. But, he too realised that the jagged and disjointed sounds that make up the ultimate experience is self-explanatory and need not be translated in words. After all, music is meaningful not for its interpretations but for sheer the joy of it. ■