

# 5/8erl in Ehr'n & SEEC Photography

present a music video as slow as light is fast:

## Schau wo wir jetzt sind (Look where we are now)



0.000000001 seconds = 1 nanosecond

0.000000000001 seconds = 1 picosecond

The music video "**Schau wo wir jetzt sind**" ("Look Where We Are Now") lasts 3 minutes and 48 seconds, but its real time duration is only 427 nanoseconds. The action was slowed down by a factor of 500 000 000. What might be the most extreme slow motion video in art history was produced by the Austrian soul band **5/8erl in Ehr'n** and the arts & science project **SEEC Photography**.

Today, music videos are getting ever more spectacular, loud, and colorful in their fight for attention. *5/8erl in Ehr'n* and *SEEC Photography* went for another extreme; in their video, time is slowed down to the point where we can follow the motion of light, which propagates across staged scenes at the speed of almost 300 000 000 meters per second.

Watching the video without prior knowledge, it takes a while until one realizes that something about it is out of the ordinary. Out of the ordinary is also the equipment used to make this music video: a laser that emits pulses of light that are only a few picoseconds short, a camera that allows for shutter times as short as 0.2 nanoseconds, and laser safety goggles that add to the surreal appearance. It's cutting edge technology from the physics laboratories of the *SEEC* members *Thomas Juffmann* (Assistant Professor, University of Vienna) and *Philipp Haslinger* (Assistant Professor, TU Wien).

"This technology gets used in cancer research, in the development of self-driving cars, and in many other fields," says *Philipp Haslinger*. "Every new technology will eventually also inspire new artistic expression. Along with the artist *Enar de Dios Rodriguez*, we asked ourselves: What kind of unique photography and video could we make using our equipment? We eventually realized that it was the motion of light itself. We were working with laser light every day and yet we had never truly seen light move!"

After imaging people, plants, a T-Rex skeleton, and a plastic horse head in reference to a pioneer of fast photography *E. Muybridge*, *SEEC* is collaborating with *5/8erl in Ehr'n*. In each case, however, it is not the people or objects that star in the videos, but light itself.

Watching the video again, one now notices the little details that are out of the ordinary. One follows the light on its way, first reaching the tip of the nose of a band member, then moving on, at the speed of light, illuminating head and shoulders, leaving the nose in the dark. Finally, the spherical sheet of light reaches a screen, first illuminating its center, then moving outwards in circles that reveal the shadows of the band members and their instruments. Each pulse of light travels for only 15 nanoseconds.

"This is the first time a specific technology inspired a song we wrote," says *Clemens Wenger*, who plays keyboard and accordion in the band. "In some sense, these videos mirror our music. They are reduced to the essential, and create a poetic image."

While music is sometimes called the art of shaping time, this particular work also bends our experience of time. "Schau Wo Wir Jetzt Sind" puts us into a different space time continuum. While we are moving at the speed of light, everything else freezes:

When I just don't know  
When I know some things  
When I know you  
time stands still

Wenn ich was nicht weiß  
Wenn ich etwas weiß  
Wenn ich dich kenn  
steht die Zeit

"Schau Wo Wir Jetzt Sind" is the last song of the new album **YEAH YEAH YEAH**. It's a song that let's us leave our bodies and observe ourselves and the world from above: look where we are now. Although the collaboration between *5/8erl in Ehr'n* and *SEEC Photography* was planned long before the start of the Coronavirus pandemic, the song and video are ideally suited to trigger a reflection about the time we live in.



Enar de Dios Rodríguez & 5/8erl in Ehr'n



5/8erl in Ehr'n



Philipp Haslinger & Thomas Juffmann

## Who is Who:

**SEEC Photography** is formed by the artist Enar de Dios Rodriguez and the physicists Thomas Juffmann (University of Vienna), Philipp Haslinger (TU Wien), and Brannon Klopfer (Stanford University). SEEC is a photographic science-art project that investigates how light moves across a subject. This happens at the speed of light, which in science is denoted by the letter  $c=299\,792\,458\text{ m/s}$ , which is where the name SEEC comes from (see c). SEEC Photography has presented their work at various international venues and festivals (e.g. Aggregate Space Gallery, BAMPFA, Ars Electronica,...).

**5/8erl in Ehr'n** is an Austrian band established in 2006. Their unique sound, described as 'Viennese Soul', is created by the two singers (Max Gaier, Bobby Slivovsky), and an acoustic rhythm group consisting of contrabass (Hanibal Scheutz), guitar (Miki Liebermann), and an accordion/keyboard (Clemens Wenger). The band combines minimalistic music with poetic lyrics, which won them five Amadeus Austrian Music Awards.

For more information, please visit [www.seecphotography.com](http://www.seecphotography.com) and [www.5achterl.at](http://www.5achterl.at).