



HARMONIOUS THELONIOUS GRUMPY PIECES

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CD / LP / DIGITAL



With *Grumpy Pieces*, Düsseldorf-based musician Stefan Schwander, aka Harmonious Thelonious, returns with an album that gathers many of the elements that have defined the project over the years – while simultaneously pushing them apart. The record feels like a tightening of earlier ideas: interlocking melodies, hypnotic patterns, a sustained focus on rhythm and texture, paired with a sound that is rougher, drier and more immediate than before.

Musically, *Grumpy Pieces* draws from familiar territory within the Harmonious Thelonious universe: Pan-African and Middle Eastern rhythmic concepts, repetitive minimal structures, stripped-down electronics and noise used as a structural force. Yet everything here feels less fixed, more unstable, at times close to falling apart.

Melodies grind against rugged bass foundations; dry snare hits cut sharply through the mix. The groove remains central, but now carries a nervous, fractured quality – noticeably more restless than one might expect from a project active for nearly eighteen years.

The title *Grumpy Pieces* is more than a wry aside. The album reflects a present shaped by political and social tension. Anger, uncertainty and a muted sense of despair run through the tracks, without the music ever becoming literal or lapsing into overt commentary. Instead, it operates through friction: between dancefloor momentum and disruption, immediacy and resistance.

While the A-side opens in a comparatively direct and driving manner with *And You May Find Yourself*, the B-side increasingly embraces disintegration as a guiding principle, culminating in the aptly titled closing track *Dissolving*.

The album was once again produced in Schwander's home base of Düsseldorf, using a working method rooted firmly in the moment. The tracks were not arranged on a screen, but developed intuitively, recorded, abandoned and reshaped.

This approach also connects directly to the live practice of Harmonious Thelonious: music understood as a repetitive state, a trance-like space that insists rather than narrates.

Limitation, intuition and spontaneity are not stylistic gestures here, but essential conditions of the music itself. Influences from everyday listening – from Brazilian music and electronic records to film soundtracks – remain deliberately submerged, fully absorbed into a self-contained sonic world.

Grumpy Pieces is not a break, but a sharpening. An album that further condenses and roughens the unmistakable sound of Harmonious Thelonious, offering an uneasy yet physical soundtrack to the current social climate. Dance music with teeth.

— Daniel Jahn, 2026

TRACKLIST

- A1 And You May Find Yourself
- A2 Tzing!
- A3 Flip The Script (Dispair)
- A4 Tropical + Electrical
- B1 Beacon
- B2 Made In Italy
- B3 Les Belles Vacances
- B4 Dissolving

PROMOTION

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