

## Etienne Daho in Berlin: The French pop star live in concert



22/01/19

It's a lesson in fan-being, this concert in Berlin. Étienne Daho has come to Germany for the first time in 25 years. In France he solved in the eighties with pop-hits a "Dahomania", then established himself as an album artist and is now universally recognized as a major player in the music business. In Berlin, in the queue in front of the Kreuzberg Festsaal, French is spoken on this cold January Monday night, only a few Francophile Germans have mixed in between. The breakthrough in the neighboring country has never seriously tried Étienne Daho. Only in 1993 did he once venture a tour to non-Francophone foreign countries, with four concerts in Germany. The fact that the German-French Youth Organization presents the concert is often laughed at – most of them have their youth here for a long time.

Étienne Daho very consciously joins in the tradition of French pop, he has with Françoise Hardy and Jacques Dutronc worked with Serge Gainsbourg met for talks. For the next generation of pop chansonniers, from Benjamin Biolay and Dominique A to Lescop he was inspiration and door opener. In the winter of 2017/18, he even presented his French favorites in an exhibition at the Paris Philharmonic – the excellent video clip selection is still online, If you are interested in French pop, you can not avoid Daho. But the fan becomes different: You hear this gentle voice, flattering and yet cool, and it is the salvation – out of love or adolescence or holiday boredom. When such a voice has helped you can hear it again and again – and it's a little bit thankful.

And so she is then heard in the hall, first as a speaking voice, accompanied by sirens. Etienne Daho's latest album is called "Blitz", an allusion to the German air strikes on London, the city in whose anonymity Daho has long since withdrawn when the admiration of his compatriots becomes too much for him. "Blitz" tour – that sounds like the "Bravo"-Beatles-Blitz tour, but of course the audience here inspire in a more civilized manner. Some look shy around first, before they dare dance steps.

But it quickly gets more, because it turns out that the large device that Daho has driven up here – flickering light show, numerous replacement guitars, Plexiglas cabin around the drums – is indeed geared for the larger halls of his local concerts. But it also fulfills its purpose on a smaller scale, and the singer also seems to enjoy the closeness to the audience: his "happy to be here" called to the audience sounds credible. In French, Daho notes that he already knows that many French people are here, but the Germans think English is cooler. "Non!", It echoes back. He still stays with the English announcements.

### **Ringelshirts in the audience**

There are some pop singers that you would recognize by their movements, even if you only saw them in silhouette – Elvis. Michael Jackson. Morrissey, With Étienne Daho, that could well succeed, even though it's just a few gestures, a slight wobble here, an outstretched hand there. But they seem familiar once you've seen a video of him. The now 63-year-old performs her on stage ageless elegant and is accordingly cheered for it.

In interviews Étienne Daho has told that his first self-bought album was the first of Pink Floyd was "The Piper At The Gates Of Dawn". It was such a formative aid to the young Étienne that he plays two pieces today in honor of the then singer Syd Barrett, a cover version ("Arnold Layne") and a special homage. That Daho himself is a fan, he puts it offensive again and again, that's how this person works, so does his music. He proudly presents the song "L'Étrangère" for which he is a blonde singer Debbie Harry could win as a guest singer. As Harry's voice sounds from the band, Daho beams.

In the audience, some people have striped shirts – just like Étienne Daho on the legendary of the artist couple Pierre et Gilles designed album Cover from "La Notte, La Notte", with which Daho began to become known in the mid-eighties. Yes, of course Daho plays his big hits from that time, "Tombé pour la France", "Épaule Tattoo"; Couples are in their arms, sing "Ba-da-Ba-ba" and may think of first kisses at village festivals. But despite all the nostalgia, the Daho there antriggert: He is a music fan enough to update the songs in the sound, some eighties synth fanfare is only occasionally heard in between as a self-quotation.

After two hours the program is complete with additions, but the band comes back again, repeats two tracks. "À bientôt", says Étienne Daho. Bye for now? Would be nice! It does not have to be 25 years again.