

WAAN

WAAN is the brainchild of saxophonist **Bart Wirtz** and keyboardist **Emiel van Rijthoven**. Together with bassist **Matteo Mazzú** and drummer **Mark Schilders**, they shape a sound that blurs the lines between electronic and acoustic music, dancefloor energy and jazz improvisation. Since their debut, WAAN has become known for a raw, adventurous style—merging groove-based electronics, atmospheric melodies, and improvisational freedom. In the studio they work closely with producer **Oscar de Jong** (Kraak & Smaak).

Their debut album *Echo Echo* (Sonar Kollektiv, 2023) received international acclaim, two Edison Jazz Award nominations, and airplay on BBC shows hosted by Jamie Cullum. The album led to an extensive tour of festivals and venues including Paradiso, Bimhuis, Transition, So What's Next, Amersfoort Jazz, RAUW, InJazz, Eurosonic, Jazzahead (DE) and more. In 2024, WAAN released a live EP, capturing the tension between acoustic interplay and electronic textures on stage.

In January 2026 WAAN released their second album [We Want WAAN](#) on Sonar Kollektiv again receiving raving reviews.



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Links

waanmusic.com

[Spotify](#)

[Apple Music](#)

[Instagram](#)

[Facebook](#)

[Youtube](#)

[MUSIC VIDEO](#) - Why Didn't You Get Me? (Aug 2026)

[Live Injazz](#) 2024 full show video

Live line-up

Bart Wirtz (NL) - Sax & effects

Emiel van Rijthoven (NL) – Keys & effects

Matteo Mazzù (BE) - Bass

Mark Schilders (NL) – Drums

About Emiel

Emiel van Rijthoven launched onto the scene with his band Sensuàl, which earned him an Edison award (the Dutch Grammy). The combination of pop and Brazilian music made him a highly valued keyboard player in all kinds of cross-over genres. He has played with Lilian Viera, Rebekka Ling and LuzazuL, as well as being a regular addition to the band Koffie. He is best known amongst a wider audience as the regular keyboard player and bandleader with Waylon.

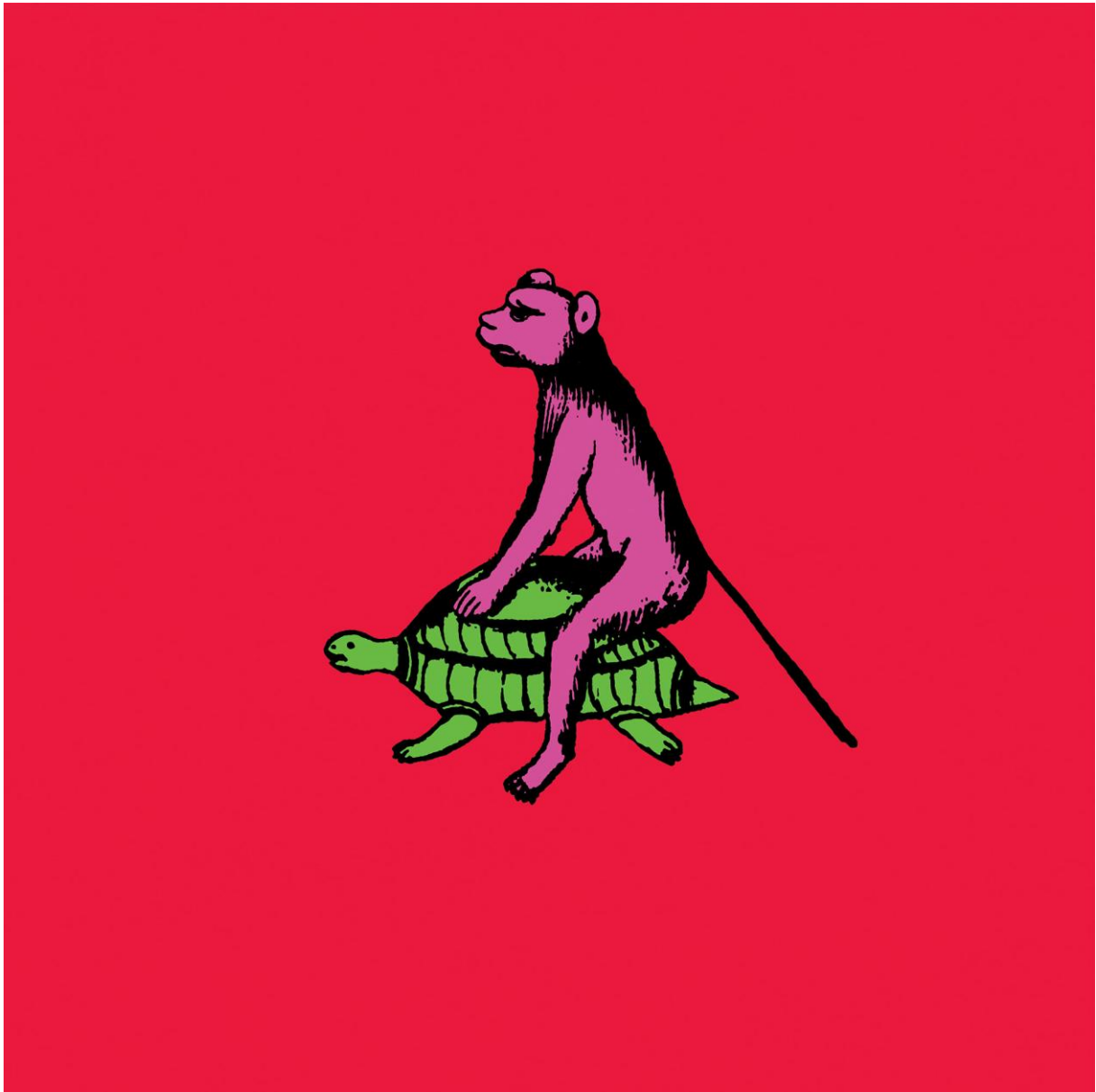
About Bart

Bart Wirtz' career took off after taking home an Edison (Dutch Grammy) in 2012 for his album *iDreamer*, which he recorded in New York with an all-American band featuring Nicholas Payton. His next album *Interview* (2014), for which Wirtz collaborated with American trumpet player Sean Jones, is a masterful fusion of musical influences. His fourth solo studio album *Beneath the Surface* (2016) saw the alto saxophonist explore a radically new direction, featuring a blend of hip hop, rock, jazz and funk, contrasting sharply with the sound of his previous work. Wirtz is a member of the Artvark Saxophone Quartet, performs with the New Rotterdam Jazz Orchestra and is cofounder of his own studio where he has composed and produced various albums.

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We Want WAAN



In January 2026 WAAN released their second album *We Want WAAN* on Sonar Kollektiv. The writing process began in the summer of 2024 on the Dutch island of Texel, where Wirtz and Van Rijthoven retreated into nature. Out of spontaneous jams and explorations, the sound shifted toward something freer, rougher, and even more rhythmically daring. Returning to Eminent Studios in Leiden with Mazzú and Schilders, the band shaped these ideas into a new body of work. Once again produced with Oscar de Jong, the record is marked by sonic layering, bold grooves, collaborations with Ivy Sole (US), and string arrangements. The album artwork was created by Braulio Amado.

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LIVE!

At the end of a fourteen-month sojourn around their homeland, the band picked five recordings - four from their show at the Nobel in Leiden, near The Hague, on 19th January 2024 and one recorded at the Theater de Bussel, in the town of Oosterhout, in the south of the country, on the 19th of April 2023. These recordings perfectly capture the meeting of acoustic and electronic music in a live setting with Schilders' subtly applied computerized sounds perfectly complementing Bart and Emiel's warm keys and saxes, and Matteo's switch between acoustic and synth bass. This resulted in a live EP: **WAAN – Live** (release June 18 2024)



Echo Echo

On **February 24 2023** their debut album Echo Echo was released on the German label [Sonar Kollektiv](#). The album presentation in a sold out Bimhuis was a big success!



International press quotes for Echo Echo

"It's a beautiful mixture between electronic instruments and acoustic instruments." - Jamie Cullum, The Jazz Show, 10 Jan. 2023

"If you are a fan of #FloatingPoints, #BADBADNOTGOOD, #EzraCollective or any of the other modern artists making jazz more electronic or electronic music more improvisational, WAAN is for you." – Osiris Media, 26 Jan. 2023

Two Dutch Edisons Jazz 2023 nominations!

Echo Echo was nominated in both the categories Best instrumental national as the public award.

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Noteworthy past shows

Fest/venue	City	Date
Bimhuis	Amsterdam	24-2-2023
Transition Festival 2023	Utrecht	1-4-2023
Jazz in Duketown Festival	Den Bosch	27-5-2023
Amersfoort World Jazz Festival	Amersfoort	20-8-2023
Paradiso Noord (opening for Jazzanova)	Amsterdam	27-9-2023
RAUW	Rotterdam	26-10-2023
So What's Next	Eindhoven	4-11-2023
De Nobel	Leiden	19-1-2024
De Phil	Haarlem	25-1-2024
Paradox	Tilburg	27-1-2024
Jazz Inside	Bergen op Zoom	3-3-2024
Dutch Club night	Bremen (Germany)	12-4-2024
Blue note Club sessions	Eindhoven	13-4-2024
Waddensea jazzfestival	Harlingen	8-6-2024
Injazz	Rotterdam	27-6-2024
Verkadefabriek	Den Bosch	28-9-2024
Popjazz Hilversum	Hilversum	19-10-2024
Eurosonic	Groningen	16-1-2025
Gărâna Jazz Festival	Gărâna (Romania)	11-7-2025
Cultura Nova	Heerlen	31-8-2025
Orange Jazz Days	Utrecht	4-10-2025
Opus Jazz Club	Budapest (Hongarije)	13-11-2025
Paradiso	Amsterdam	23-1-2026
GR8	Den Haag	12-2-2026
Peel Slowly and See	Leiden	21-3-2026
Paradox	Tilburg	9-5-2026
Zigzag	Berlin (Germany)	14-5-2026
Harris Piano Bar	Krakow (Poland)	15-5-2026
Metropolka	Bratislava (Slovakia)	16-5-2026
Muziekgebouw Eindhoven	Eindhoven	23-5-2026

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