



Jubilee Release # 11

JBBG – Jazz Bigband Graz

Urban Folktales
ACT 9528-2

German Release Date: April 27, 2012

There were times when big bands were a defining part of our society's musical cultural scene. Today only a few jazz big bands exist, and it appears the reasons for this change are not artistic, but rather financial. In Germany public radio stations are responsible for the funding of big bands, and in France the Orchestre National de Jazz sets the standard. Meanwhile in Austria, one ensemble has shown above all others that orchestral concepts are far from exhausted: the JBBG - Jazz Bigband Graz.

Finding audience appeal and new ways to attract listeners is the motto of the JBBG bandleader saxophonist Heinrich von Kalnein and trumpeter Horst-Michael Schaffer. They have won acclaim for their concept of not sticking to the traditional scheme of orchestral and solo passages, but rather creating a clear ensemble sound, which is strongly influenced by electronic music and fuses laptop and drum 'n' bass aesthetics. The JBBG have also been noticed outside jazz circles - laut.de, which is a German online portal for mainly pop and rock music, called them "an earthquake in the big band scene".

The six multi-layered pieces on "Urban Folktales" form a complex work of art that aims to set the benchmark in the international field of orchestral jazz in terms of conceptual clarity and stylistic variety. Sometimes meditative, sometimes swinging and sometimes grooving and rocking, the fusion of Western with Eastern harmonic traditions, influences from Austrian folk music, urban sounds, African music and some futuristic spherical sounds - as well as combining all of this in one place, JBBG gathers together some of the best Austrian, Swiss and German jazz musicians.

Its distinguished guests make "Urban Folktales" a global project: the Grammy nominated and Echo Jazz winning American singer Theo Bleckmann gives a wonderfully lyrical performance of Peter Rosegger's poem "Mein Lied" on "Seelenbaumeln" and after that goes on a "Space Trip" with a distant, almost alienated voice.

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ACT

Urban Folktales

Theo Bleckmann - Nguyễn Lê - Gianluca Petrella



On "Rêve Africain" we hear the impressive voice of Hadja Kouyaté from Guinea, who sounds like an African Mahalia Jackson. The Finnish trumpeter Verner Pohjola sets his unmistakably mark on "Seelenbaumeln" and Italian trombonist Gianluca Petrella is responsible for the tension on "High Voltage". Nguyễn Lê, the French guitarist of Vietnamese origin, enriches three pieces with the unique sound of his electric guitar.

From "Jazzpaña" with the WDR Big Band and the Jazz-Symphonie "Europeana", to Ensemble Denada from Norway and the Swedish Bohuslän Bigband with its artistic director Nils Landgren; with "Urban Folktales", the JBBG becomes yet another successful part of the long ACT tradition of outstanding and award-winning big band releases.



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Photo by Erich Reismann

- 01 Urban Tribes – Introduction
- 02 Seelenbaumeln
- 03 Space Trip – The Day We Landed
- 04 High Voltage
- 05 Rêve Africain
- 06 Coming Home

All compositions by Horst-Michael Schaffer and Heinrich von Kalnein (AKM).

Produced by Heinrich von Kalnein & Horst-Michael Schaffer
Co-Producer: Gregor Hilbe
Executive Producer: Sigggi Loch

JBBG - Jazz Bigband Graz recorded by Johannes Wohlleben at TomTone Productions Thalberg, Austria on July 18 – 22, 2011. Recording assistant: Thomas Hofstädter.

“High Voltage” recorded at Bauer Studios Ludwigsburg, Germany in September 2008 by Johannes Wohlleben.

Hadja Kouyaté recorded at Audiolane Paris, France by Bruce Cherbit on October 27, 2011. Produced by Gregor Hilbe. Edited by Christofer Frank at TheBox Graz, Austria on July 23 – 27, August 17 – 19 and September 19, 2011. Mixed by Johannes Wohlleben at Bauer Studio, Ludwigsburg on September 21 – 25, 2011.

Mastered by Martin Scheer, St.Pölten, Lower Austria on November 20, 2011.

Pre-production and Audiodesign by Gregor Hilbe at Atelierhaus Basel, Switzerland.

JBBG – Jazz Bigband Graz

directed by Heinrich von Kalnein & Horst-Michael Schaffer

Guests:

- Theo Bleckmann** / vocals, live electronic processing (02 & 03)
- Nguyễn Lê** / guitars, e-bow (01, 03 & 06)
- Gianluca Petrella** / trombone (04)
- Verner Pohjola** / trumpet (02)
- Hadja Kouyaté** / vocals (05)

Distributor:

- Allegro-Nail Distribution (US)
- A&N Music (GR)
- Andante Music (RO)
- Apostrophe (RU)
- C&L Records (KR)
- Divyd (SK)
- Dukyan Meloman (BG)
- Challenge Records Int. (Benelux)
- DC Comp (UA)
- edelkultur (DE & AT)
- Egea (I)
- Equinox Music (TR)
- GIGI Distribution (PL)
- Gramofon (BA)
- Harmonia Mundi (FR)
- Harmonia Mundi (UK)
- Intek (SI+HR)
- Jassics (ZA)
- Jazzworld (HK)
- JSC "Bomba" (LT)
- Karonte (ES & PT)
- Musikklosen (NO)
- Musikvertrieb (CH)
- Naxos (SE/FI)
- Outside Distribution (CA)
- One-Hifi (RS)
- Planet MGM Distribution (AU)
- Southbound Records (NZ)
- Sundance (DK)
- Videoarts Music Inc. (JP)
- 2HP (CZ)

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