



Parisien – Peirani – Schaerer – Wollny

Out of Land

ACT 9832-2

German Release Date: 26.05.2017

For once, here's a band for which the word 'supergroup' is completely apposite. Swiss vocalist Andreas Schaerer, German pianist Michael Wollny, French accordionist Vincent Peirani and his saxophonist compatriot Emile Parisien are four of the brightest and most charismatic stars in European jazz, and they have now formed themselves into a quartet. Between them, they have so far garnered no fewer than twelve German ECHO Jazz awards, as well as just about every distinction of importance in their own countries. They are in their mid- to late thirties, and their new live recording "Out of Land" demonstrates why they are at the very pinnacle of jazz musicians of their generation. It is because they are re-defining the possibilities of their instruments; not just cutting loose from the boundaries of jazz, but doing it in a way which energizes and inspires audiences of all generations.

The pivot and connector for this top-flight group of musical allies and equal partners has been Peirani. He had previously played with all three of the others, and has brought them together. The quartet member he has had the closest connection with is Parisien: they have been kindred spirits since working together in Daniel Humair's quartet. They work as a regular duo, and in the group "Living Being". Michael Wollny had been enlisted by Peirani at the end of 2012 for the latter's ACT debut CD "Thrill Box", and the two have continued to bring their combined "resourcefulness, erudition and shared relish for risk" (John Fordham in The Guardian) to their 2016 ACT album "Tandem". Schaerer had first met Peirani two years previously, when he had invited the Frenchman to join his band "Hildegard Lernt Fliegen" as a guest for their concert in Paris. After that, both wanted to do more together, but the overlaid state of their diaries conspired against it. It was only when Schaerer received invitations from Budapest and Berne which gave him carte blanche to put together any project he wanted, that he was able to enrol Peirani for a project - for which the accordionist also wanted to involve both Parisien and Wollny...

The four searched long and hard for the right name to put on their new band's birth certificate. Schaerer sent Peirani a whole raft of suggestions, including the indeterminate "Out of...". To which Peirani responded promptly with "Out of Land". "That was it, we'd nailed it," remembers Schaerer. The phrase "Out of Land" is intended to bring to mind that specific sense of leaving solid ground, and of venturing into terrain where it is far from obvious how things are going to develop. That was certainly a part of the concept: staying open to the ideas of the others, keeping the excitement intact, seeing what will happen musically in the moment. They did three days of rehearsals without prior preparation, and then went off to appear on stage together. Schaerer found it all very fulfilling: "It is simply a dream, almost a spiritual form of making music. It's about being able to address one's own visions in conditions of complete spontaneity, and also about transparency of communication with the others. These musicians can really do that!"

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That capacity of all four musicians to interact and co-create which Andreas Schaerer has described here begins with the Swiss vocalist himself, one of the great singing improvisers of our time. He has a vast vocal compass; his stylistic palette ranges from classical art song to crooning and scat. He can produce all kinds of improbable sounds, and is able to imitate many instruments – including various parts of a drum kit. His recent arrival at the ACT label was marked with the release of "The Big Wig", a major composition for 66-piece symphony orchestra. Accordionist Vincent Peirani, originally from Nice, is another musician making huge waves on the European scene. He too has received numerous awards and distinctions, the "Prix Django Reinhardt" and "Victoires du Jazz" in France and an ECHO Jazz award in Germany - his profile on the scene is huge. Peirani is able to magic an astonishing, maybe unprecedented range of sounds out of his button accordion and accordina. He is an inheritor of the great French accordion tradition, and that shines through in his playing, but his own expressive purposes take him further. Peirani's spiritual brother is Emile Parisien, and not only because both can improvise over anything from Wagner tunes to hiphop. And like his band-mates, Parisien takes his instrument acoustically and compositionally into new domains. That is also true of Michael Wollny's piano playing, which is full of fantasy and always capable of springing surprises, whatever the context - and he plays in many. Wollny is one of the very few German jazz musicians - of any era - to have carved out a substantial profile internationally.

"Out of Land" does put on record one first meeting: Wollny and Schaerer had never in fact previously played together. The listener can sense the unleashing of huge performance energy, impetus and joy right from the outset. Schaerer comments: "A whole lot of the things we had discussed in rehearsal were over-ruled once we got on stage. It was done quite consciously, the music in the moment simply demanded something different. That works with this band. It just gets airborne." The listener gets that sense of flying with the band right from the start of Peirani's tune "Air Song". This highly melodic miniature brings its own powerful emotional updraft. The rhythmic and dynamic exuberance in Peirani's tune "B&H" are overwhelming, while Wollny's "Kabinett V" overflows with the desire for sonic experiment and discovery. Schaerer's "Rezeusler" inspires the group to a combined burst of creative inspiration. This tune has evolved through various guises. Schaerer first imagined it as an uptempo roaster for sextet, it then morphed into a through-composed ballad for full orchestra, and is here in completely new clothes as a suite for quartet. The sounds of Peirani's accordion, Schaerer's voice and Wollny's piano swirl and eddy impressionistically, before they all dig in together for a heart-on-sleeve finale. "Ukubamba" is a fourteenminute all-encompassing jam session-like epic, which brings the album to a close. This album brings the listener tinglingly close to a moment of creation by four brilliant musical alchemists. The result is pure gold.



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Photo by Eve-Marie Lagger

- 01 Air Song** (Vincent Peirani) 4:35
- 02 B&H** (Vincent Peirani) 9:55
- 03 Kabinett V** (Michael Wollny) 9:12
- 04 Rezeusler** (Andreas Schaerer) 10:19
- 05 Ukuhamba** (Andreas Schaerer) 13:38

Emile Parisien / soprano saxophone
Vincent Peirani / accordion
Andreas Schaerer / voice & mouth percussion
Michael Wollny / piano

Produced by the artists
Executive Producer: Siggi Loch

Recorded live in concert at bee-flat Bern, April 10, 2016

Mixed and mastered by Martin Ruch at Control Room Berlin, November 2016

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Also available:

Andreas Schaerer "The Big Wig" (ACT 9824-2, also on vinyl)
Emile Parisien & Vincent Peirani "Belle Epoque" (ACT 9625-2)
Michael Wollny & Vincent Peirani "Tandem" (ACT 9825-2, also on vinyl)
Vincent Peirani Trio mit Michael Wollny "Thrill Box" (ACT 9542-2)

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