

Christoph Grab

REFLECTIONS



Christoph Grab saxes
Lukas Traxel bass
Pius Baschnagel drums

In his current programm REFLECTIONS, Zurich based saxophonist Christoph Grab is dealing with music composed by pianist Thelonious Monk - in a piano-free trio. He is accompanied by his long-time partners, drummer Pius Baschnagel and bassist Lukas Traxel. Grab, together with band members, felt it was important to find a personal and original interpretation of Monk's compositions. They mainly took his marvelous ballads and put them in a whole new light: "Ruby My Dear" becomes a drunken waltz; "Round Midnight" becomes a meditation on the edge of stillness; the melody "Ask Me Now" appears only in fragments during the improvisation and "Monk's Mood" becomes a frantic reflection of the eccentric jazz musician's emotional landscape.

In his ballads, Monk is more melodic than in his faster pieces, but his originality and eccentric subversive style is nevertheless evident in both the harmony and the melody. Monk's compositions challenge musicians to rely on their own musical instinct to create his or her authentic sound. Or as Monk himself put it cryptically: "Play your own way... a genius is the one most like himself."

Demo-Video:
<https://youtu.be/UIH8WknjKoo>



Infos about the musicians:

Christoph Grab – Tenor- und Altosaxophone



Studied at Swiss Jazz School Bern (Saxophone, Composition, Arrangement). His teachers and mentors were Andy Scherrer, Sal Nistico, Jerry Bergonzi, Joe Lovano, Dave Liebman a.o. He made a lot of recordings for radios and television, many tours and concerts in the whole world. Among the many musicians he recorded and performed with, there are names like Ray Anderson, Benny Golson, Louis Sclavis, Wolfgang Muthspiel, Irene Schweizer, Axel Dörner, Joe Beck, Mark Egan, Danny Gottlieb, Frank Moebus and many more.

His main projects at the moment are his quintet RAW VISION, his trio REFLECTIONS and his pulp troop SCIENCE FICTION THEATER.

Alongside to his work as a freelancer in switzerlands jazzscene his is/was part of some permanent

collaborations as: Reto Anneler's STILLE POST, Baumann/Grab/Haemmerli/Renold, Christoph Steiner ESCAPE ARGOT, Zurich Jazz Orchestra, Tough Tenor, ELLINGTONALITY, Raphael Jost & Lots Of Horns, Elmar Frey Sextett, Spittin' Horns, Axel Fischbacher Group, a.o. Earlier groups were KOJ, NEUROMODULATOR, Kurt Weil Vibes Revisited, ContempArabic Jazz Ensemble, Marion Denzler Group, The Blindside, Lukas Bitterlin Quartett, Blastic, Grab/Scarton Quartet etc.

With his intense research on live-electronics and his "hacked toys" he gained attention in the electronic- and DJ-scene.

In addition to his work as a performer, since 1998 he is a professor of saxophone and improvisation at the university of arts in zurich.

"Saxophonist Christoph Grab is one of Switzerland's top performers. His playing combines the dynamic expressiveness of the blues with the playfulness and complexity of jazz..." BaslerZeitung, 1/06

"Christoph Grab is one of the most innovative and prominent Jazz musicians in the Swiss jazzscene." BRIGITTE, 2/ 06

"His saxophone groans and rasps in one moment and is silkily seductive in the next..."(Rolf Thomas, Jazzthing 112, 2/2016)

"Christoph Grab is the most intriguing and most heavily-booked saxophone player in Switzerland; he is also an extraordinary visionary composer with a deep sense of sound design. (Hans-Jürgen Schaal, Fidelity 3/2014)

"Zurich Saxophonist Christoph Grab is an impressive instrumentalist with an unmistakable sound." (Kulturtipp, 4/2014)

"Christoph Grab performs state-of-the art Jazz, sophisticated and playful, expert and lyrical, intelligent and always accessible." (Beat Blaser, Schweiz am Sonntag, 3/2014)

Lukas Traxel - Bass



Lukas Traxel hat sich innert kürzester Zeit zu einem der gefragtesten Bassisten der Schweizer Musikszene entwickelt.

Er studierte an der Hochschule Luzern - Musik und genoss Unterricht bei renommierten Musikern wie Heiri Känzig, Larry Grenadier, Wolfgang Zwiauer, Nils Wogram oder Chris Wiesendanger und Masterclasses mit David Liebman, Reuben Rogers, Aaron Goldberg, Tim Berne, Matt Penman und Jochen Rückert. Den „Master of Art - Jazz Performance“ schloss er 2014 ab.

Lukas Traxel ist Preisträger der Friedl-Wald Stiftung 2013, repräsentierte die Hochschule Luzern 2014 am internationalen Jazzmeeting „IASJ“ in Kapstadt und gewann 2016 mit dem Marie Krüttli Trio den „ZKB Jazzpreis“.

Tourneen und Konzerte führten ihn bereits u.a. nach China, New York, Estland, Albanien, Serbien, Grossbritannien, Frankreich oder Italien. Dies zusammen mit Musikern wie Colin Vallon, Elina Duni, Nils Wogram, Jean - Paul Brodbeck, Julian Arguelles, Marc Mean und Norbert Pfammatter.

Pius Baschnagel – Drums



Studium am Musicians Institute (PIT) in Kalifornien, Abschluss mit Specialaward „Vocational“, nominiert für Jazzplaying Student of the year 1994. Weiterbildung in Cuba u.a. bei Enrique Pla (Irakere), in Rio bei Pascoal Meirelles (Tom Jobim), in NY bei Kendrick Scott, Masterclass mit Lewis Nash.

Auftritte und Aufnahmen u. a. mit Benny Golson, Barbara Dennerlein, Chico Freeman, Rhoda Scott, Daniel Powter, Till Brönner, NDR Bigband, George Gruntz, Franco Ambrosetti, Jens Winther, Benny Bailey, Gary Scott, Swiss Army Big Band, Pepe Lienhard Band, Jazz Via Brazil, Jimmy Woode, Pat Bianchi, Armen Donelian, Krüger Brothers, Zürich Jazz-Orchestra, Swiss Jazz Orchestra, Herbie Kopf, Bucky Pizzarelli, Picason, Othella Dallas, Sandy

Patton, Rick Margitza

Eigene Projekte wie Convergencia (Salsa), P.B.'s Latinworld, Avalanche Project, Baschnagel Group

Festivals in der Schweiz, u.a. Art on Ice, Caliente, Jazz no Jazz, Willisau, Schaffhausen etc.

Tourneen im Ausland: Litauen, Griechenland, Oman, Israel, Deutschland, China, Holland, Rumänien, Ukraine etc.

Dozent für Rhythmik und Schlagzeug an der Zürcher Hochschule der Künste, ZHdK.