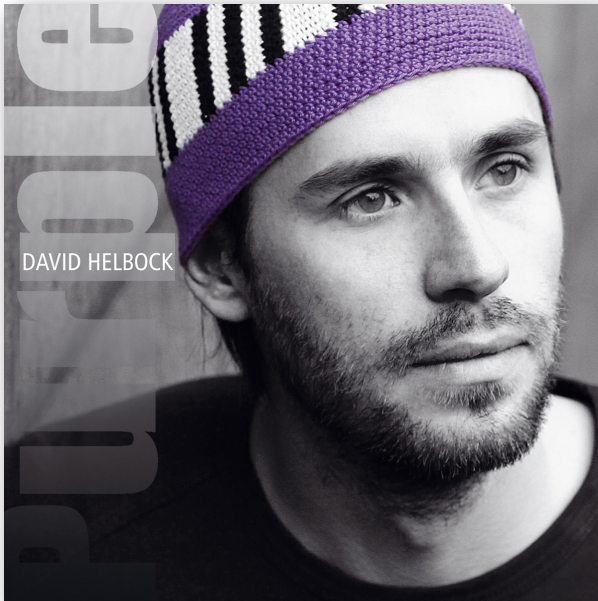


**TRAUMTON Records**

Grunewaldstr. 9 D-13597 Berlin Germany

030 331 93 50  
info@traumton.de  
www.traumton.de



**Release October 5, 2012**

## **David Helbock Purple**

**David Helbock: piano**

indigo cd 968412  
upc 705304**457429**  
file under: jazz

INDIGO Musik GmbH D/A  
MUSIKVERTRIEB AG CH  
LAVIAL Benelux  
DISCOVERY UK



**C. BECHSTEIN**

GEFÖRDERT DURCH DEN  
**ÖST.MUSIKFONDS**

## **David Helbock - Purple**

David Helbock has not only recently been regarded as an enfant terrible of young European jazz. Even those who have never heard a single note by the keyboard wizard from Vorarlberg probably associate his outer appearance with that ruffled, gaunt, bearded face under his characteristic woolen hat with the piano keyboard design, something not easily forgotten. Helbock has what it takes to become an icon. However, underneath his striking headgear a variety of musical ideas merge together. These range from ingenious to the obvious, but can only be combined in his head and may appear to outsiders as occupying opposing positions.

Helbock loves the moment of surprise. He searches for instrumental combinations far off the beaten track. David Helbock didn't recruit a conventional bass player for his trio, instead he chose a bass ukulele player. For his group Random/Control he finds unusual combinations with a brass and a wind instrument. In his project with the violinist Simon Frick he unleashes a whole band in a duo format. He is simultaneously a romantic and an anarchist, whose musical thinking

merges very different states of reality and virtuality, the past and future, urban insanity and pastoral security. Helbock is a phenomenon that never happens in one place or at one time, but instead is always manifesting a unity within diversity.

And now “Purple”. A solo album on the piano. For the pianist himself this is a logical step, as he is returning to his roots. After all, his debut album “Emotions” from the year 2003 was a soloistic piano work. But it’s not quite that simple. On one hand, Helbock is returning to his roots in two respects since he is playing songs from the idols of his youth. “Purple” consists exclusively of songs by Prince. Prince also started off as a pianist and branched out from the solo piano into all conceivable directions. But this purely superficial and coincidental relation is hardly sufficient to cause Helbock to produce an entire album with Prince songs. Always on the go, the pianist doesn’t even want to step out of his own world as Prince has always played an important role in his universe. But who would expect this from a “Junge Wilden” of European jazz, who is always swinging back and forth ingeniously between crafty avant-garde and naïve, graceful hardcore folklore, grabbing whatever he can.

And now we come to, on the other hand: On “Purple”, David Helbrock cleverly breaks with all expectations directed at him. Typically Helbock he remains true to himself but yet again entirely somewhere else. “Purple” is not one of those helpless attempts to translate pop into jazz in order to attract new attention. The musician, a current resident of Vienna, hasn’t the slightest need for that. He’s not keen on dousing well-known pop songs with pails of sophistication, granting them thereby the consecrations of jazz. David Helbock does exactly the opposite. He doesn’t need any translations, instead he removes everything that is superfluous and redundant from Prince’s opulent originals, reducing them to their substance and giving us the most minimalistic and restrained commentaries that have ever been made about the androgynous magician from Paisley Park. Only to then counteract with them at selected points with fire and fervour.

To make this work, he has selected predominantly Prince’s hits, songs that have long ago become common property. Who doesn’t know classics like “Kiss” or “Purple Rain”? He isn’t trying to demonstrate any exclusive insider knowledge, but instead he is inviting the listener to participate by means of collective memory. Helbock carries the songs to an entirely different world of sound, decelerating them and covering them with that refined sense of humour he also recognizes in the originals. These Prince variations have indeed a touch of royalty and grandness, especially because they give the listener so much room to fill them with the power of one’s own imagination. And if someone doesn’t know Prince – in the event that is even possible – they can still take Helbock’s songs for what they are: extremely individual fantasies on the solo piano. Who would have thought that Prince’s hits would also function in such a gown of mischievous regal charm? If you want, call it jazz.

**Links:**

**Web:** <http://www.davidhelbock.com>