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Olga Reznichenko Trio Rhythm Dissection

Olga Reznichenko: piano, compositions
Lorenz Heigenhuber: doublebass
Maximilian Stadtfeld: drums

Live:

30.04.24 DE-Bonn, Jazzfest
31.05.24 DE-Berlin, Donau 115
07.06.24 DE-Leipzig, Jazzclub
tbc

Olga Reznichenko Trio - Rhythm Dissection

In May 2022 *Somnambule*, the debut album of Olga Reznichenko's trio, was released and the young Leipzig-based band enjoyed an outstanding feedback from the media. Rondo praised their "refined sense for unusual song developments," Concerto wrote: "Reznichenko's piano playing is powerful and fast-paced, and that is very enjoyable. [...] Suspense is guaranteed, even in passages where she incorporates her Classical background, like in 'Slipping Pace Returning Time.'" On WDR3, *Somnambule* was one of the best German jazz albums of 2022: "On her debut album, she impresses with an abundance of melodic ideas that she continues to develop in never-ending twists and turns." The jazz talk show on *BR Klassik* radio applauded the "sophisticated, harmonically and rhythmically challenging music" and stated: "With her debut album as a bandleader, Olga Reznichenko [...] can not only establish herself, but even stand out."

The repertoire of *Somnambule* was based on imaginary dream sequences, whereas the pieces on *Rhythm Dissection* are inspired by real experiences and above all, by musical ideas. "Rhythmically and also harmonically, the new album is much more complex than our debut," Reznichenko explains, "the focus is more on improvisation, in many forms there is a stronger connection to jazz. I see the improvisations as part of the composition, so they are not completely free, but rather an expansion of the motifs."

Another essential aspect are odd meters, which Reznichenko has always enjoyed. This can already be heard on the debut album, for instance in "Final Mirrors" in 11/8. In the current repertoire, most of which was written in 2022, the "crooked" bars change almost constantly - even within the pieces, which come across as very lively, effortless and unpretentious nonetheless. "It seems that 5/4 is my natural flow, the meter appears in many of my improvisations," laughs the

musician, who was born in 1989 and completed her Master's degree at the University of Music Leipzig in January 2023.

Reznichenko's compositions are carefully thought out, but are also always heartfelt. As a matter of fact, some pieces are based on pure intuition, for example "Elegie". "The theme was initially an improvisation that I recorded at home. I only realised when I transcribed it that the meter was constantly changing." At first, she tried to fit the piece into 4/4 time, with unsatisfactory results. The consequence was to create a free form together. Even though Reznichenko is often very clear in her compositions, she says there is always space for ideas and impulses from her two musicians. In this way, some facets of the pieces were developed in interactions.

The aforementioned rhythmic variations create surprising changes of tempo and mood. The opener "A Ballad For A Cowboy Who Is Yet To Find Out About Fear" sets the tone. An enticingly melodic theme is followed by a forceful, dynamic passage that suggests nervousness, anxiety or even menace; but in the emerging improvisation most of these dark clouds vanish again. The meandering from catchy motifs to more abstract, but never completely out of form expressions is recurrent in many pieces. Just like Max Stadtfeld's extremely agile, sometimes rocky and forceful drum accompaniment, with which he establishes himself more than ever as an equal voice within the trio. Heigenhuber's subtle double bass provides a foundation or further momentum depending on what is needed in the sometimes wonderfully transparent (like "Solaris" or "Old Feeling") and at other times highly dense interplay. The dramaturgical arc of the album certainly has an absorbing quality, culminating in "Trampelpfad" ["Beaten Path"] with its insistent staccato aesthetics and offset rhythms as well as in the exuberant final title piece, which is inciting in the most positive sense.

"I like loud music," grins Olga Reznichenko, mentioning the metal band Pantera as an example. Other than that, her sources of inspiration range from noise rock, avant-garde and free jazz to classical music, with which she spent her first years at the piano. She is particularly fond of the late Romantics and Impressionists, as well as Ligeti and Xenakis piano works, and also compositions by the spectral music pioneer Georg Friedrich Haas (*1953). In addition to such influences, which for the most part can only be identified in subtle nuances, some of Reznichenko's pieces were shaped by impressions outside of music. "For 'Salty Drunk Fish' I had an improv draft, but I wrote most of the piece in Sardinia," she says. As the title suggests, "Solaris" was inspired by Andrei Tarkovsky's feature film based on the novel by Stanislaw Lem. "I watched the movie several times and enjoyed the atmosphere, especially because after a while you don't expect any more action. I wanted to achieve exactly that aesthetic for the piece."

Reznichenko believes that her trio is now playing more vehemently and sometimes more wildly than four years ago. Almost all the pieces on the album were rehearsed and tested in live shows before the studio session in February 2023; only the comparatively simple "Old Feeling" with its almost unbroken 6/8 groove was added shortly before recording. "After two days, we had a lot of really good takes, including some moments that I immediately fell in love with," says Reznichenko, reflecting on the concentration and intensity at Bauer Studio Ludwigsburg. "It was also a wonderful experience to play on this Steinway D from 1920, which has been played by so many famous pianists."

The joy of playing is now also revealed to the audience. Many passages on *Rhythm Dissection* feel energetic or even euphoric. The profound skills of the trio and Olga Reznichenko's clear creative will, the joyful play with rhythmic finesse and expansive melodic arcs, timbres and moods make the album a great pleasure to listen to. And it reinforces the band's by BR radio entitled "outstanding" status in the current jazz scene.

www.olgareznichenko.com