



VÖ 9. Mai 2025

Fabian Dudek This Every Place

FABIAN DUDEK: alto-saxophone, flute, composition**INGRID LAUBROCK:** soprano- & tenor-saxophone**FELIX HAUPTMANN:** piano, synthesizer**DAVID HELM:** bass**FABIAN ARENDS:** drumsindigo cd 269542
upc 705304**47322**1
file under: **jazz**

Fabian Dudek - This Every Place

Fabian Dudek has been releasing a new album every year since 2022 and each one seems to surpass its predecessor a little. His quartet's second production, *Isolated Flowers*, was nominated for the German Record Critics' Award, with the Horst and Gretl Will Foundation jury praising, among other things, the "captivating blend of [...] instrumental virtuosity and ambiguously idiosyncratic sound design". In 2023, Dudek presented the multi-layered album *Protecting A Picture That's Fading* with the sextet La Campagne, whose "density of events in gravitational compositions" (FAZ) earned him a nomination for the German Jazz Award. Last year, the quartet production *Distant Skies, We Dream* was again celebrated by the press and public. The Badische Zeitung was enthusiastic about the "secure balance between formal rigor and unrestrained playing", NRW Jazz heard "breathtaking music with crooked meters, played against traditional norms" and summed up: "an expressive, dense, almost unlimited, contemporary jazz in a class of its own."

The new album *This Every Place* also reinforces the impression that Fabian Dudek seems to have an inexhaustible wealth of ideas at his disposal. At the same time, his individual sound (both as an instrumentalist and as a composer) is becoming more and more concrete, his creative drive more far-reaching. For the first time, the bandleader has added an internationally renowned personality to his quartet, namely saxophonist Ingrid Laubrock. "After three quartet albums, I felt it was a logical and exciting step to add someone else," explains Dudek. "Laubrock was the first and only person I asked because she has been inspiring me for a while, both in the way she plays and in what she composes." Apparently the interest is mutual, as the joint project is set to continue. But that's just by the way.

"I had sent her my compositions for a complete concert program and when she came to Germany, she was very well prepared," recalls Dudek. Two days of rehearsals were followed by two concerts, in Rüsselsheim and in Cologne's Stadtgarten. The latter was recorded and there was time for further recordings the next day. "We were lucky enough to be able to leave our live set-up in the hall and simply continue playing the next day, again under live conditions, but without an audience." From the

recordings, Dudek selected four pieces of seven to eighteen minutes in length, which offer an intense, at times energetic and condensed, then again transparent essence of the recordings.

"I don't want the albums to be extremely long," explains Dudek, comparing them to his experiences in museums: if the exhibition is too big, the first impression is gone by the end. "Basically, I want to reach people with the music, leave room for interpretation and offer scope for attack, but not overwhelm the listener." In fact, the compositions and improvisations on *This Every Place* are so rich that they reveal new details on repeated listens.

He had never written for two saxophones before, says Fabian Dudek, which is why he was initially concerned with the question of how the expansion would affect the structure of his band, which has existed since 2018. However, the supposedly challenging composition process turned out to be quite straightforward and largely intuitive. Some of the new pieces were subsequently tried out and formulated in the quartet even before Laubrock joined the band.

"I was in New York twice just before I started writing, so three of the four tracks have a pretty direct connection to the city," says Dudek. To kick off the album, *Ice House Celebration* reflects an experience in a Brooklyn bar. "A group of people sat down at our table and it turned out that they had come together from different places to commemorate the death of a friend. This meeting seemed sad, of course, but also beautiful in a way." Here you can hear Ingrid Laubrock on soprano saxophone, while she plays tenor in all the following pieces. Also a bar memory, albeit in a completely different mood, is *Streetlight Dawn*, whose name comes from a cocktail in Manhattan - "it was a good evening", Dudek grins.

For the initially almost catchy *Beach*, the composer cunningly uses some chords that were once used by the Beach Boys in *Surfer Girl*. Dudek abstracts them quite strongly and soon the saxophones turn in a different, more tense direction. Nevertheless, summery associations light up again later on. The most extensive piece on the CD, *Where Thoughts Provoke*, is inspired by a painting by Henry Taylor in the Whitney Museum. "I used a different compositional approach here, sometimes just writing down instructions instead of notes. But that's not the only reason it's more open. There are several ideas that can be combined and don't have to be linear; these 'building blocks' can be flexibly combined. That's why the piece always sounds different and will probably never sound the same again as on the record."

Dudek's flowing, constantly changing rhythms were already striking on last year's album. This concept of "morphing grooves", which take on a different shape from bar to bar, can be found again on the new work. The tension between flows and experimental contrasts is important to Dudek. And that the flow can be felt, although it may not be possible to fully analyze the complex rhythms. "*Distant Skies...*" opened up the barrel by switching to electric bass and making greater use of the synthesizer. We have now built on this foundation with Ingrid and created new forms, some of them ad hoc."

"*Streetlight Dawn*" uses a slightly different structure and, according to Dudek, shows another way into the future. The grooves and clear 4/4 beats at the beginning and end of the piece contain hip hop influences that give the music a more approachable feel. "It's my first experiment in this direction, towards spontaneously graspable forms. But in between, I then take you back into a somewhat more inscrutable labyrinth. My aim is to create a mixture that is fun and at the same time builds bridges to the abstract, inviting everyone to walk through it."

Music that appeals emotionally and through intellectual sophistication, that offers entertaining aspects and at the same time represents an art form. This is what Fabian Dudek has in mind and is realized by *This Every Place*. With his clever to sophisticated compositions, extremely attentive and variable players as well as enormously expressive saxophone duets with guest star Ingrid Laubrock, he once again makes a striking mark on the contemporary international music landscape.

www.fabiandudek.de