

indigo cd 148892
upc 705304**465622**
jazz/vocal**Release October 27, 2017****ERIKA STUCKY**
Papito**Erika Stucky:** vocals, compositions
Andreas Scholl: countertenor
FM Einheit: electronics, soundscapes, perc
Knut Jensen: conductor, arrangements
Albert Wieder: arrangements**La Cetra Barockorchester:****Eva Saladin:** violin
Christoph Rudolf: violin
Sarah Giger: viola
Francesca Benetti: theorbe
Bernadette Köbele: violoncello
Federico Abraham: double bass
Johannes Keller: organ, cembalo**ERIKA STUCKY - Papito**

Erika Stucky is always full of surprises. Over a period of almost 25 years the singer, musician, songwriter and multimedia-artist has made many exciting international connections, for example with Dino Saluzzi, Carla Bley and even a guest appearance with Elvis Costello. Furthermore, she has developed many individual, often stunning, stylistically diversified formations during this time. Stucky's newest work is starting a new chapter with unexpected content. Even in relation to her already courageous repertoire thus far, Papito seems audacious. The charismatic American-Swiss is joined by a Baroque ensemble, the widely celebrated countertenor Andreas Scholl and by FM Einheit, who is known as an unconventional percussionist, sound designer and also as creative force of the Einstürzende Neubauten. Considering this spectacular constellation, it is no wonder that Stucky's variable voice develops facets that had seldom been heard until now. Without holding back any musical beauty she literally indulges herself in melodies and in sought out moments slips in touching crooning through trenchantly rough expression.

The collaboration with artists from Classical music, jazz and avant-garde is based on a conceptual idea. "It's been clear to me for years, that I'll make an album with songs about fathers and daughters someday," Erika Stucky explains. The penny dropped with the idea of making Papito the title of the production. Having grown up in San Francisco, the Spanish diminutive of "papa" was just as familiar to her as the American "daddy", but it set free different creative associations. Father Stucky once migrated from the Swiss canton Wallis to the USA, following his own father's example, and later returned to his alpine homeland with his family and belongings. He was a well-respected butcher, which has been an issue for daughter Erika till this day. His work brought her to a musical realization with strings instead of brass or woodwind. "I wanted to hear the vibration of guts, hear the animals cry in a way," Stucky says. "Gut strings have an unmistakable sound that comes quite close to the human voice. They sound and react more naturally than artificial strings, are more sensitive towards humidity and fluctuation in temperature. The more I thought about it, the clearer it

became to me that I definitely wanted to work with Baroque musicians, because they use this kind of strings and are the wild ones among Classical musicians, who are most likely to improvise.”

Almost at the same time she decided to prompt countertenor Andreas Schöll to participate as a guest singer. She perceives his sonority as “noble, charming and a little unsettling.” The two of them met during a program of the Swiss Radio. “Prior, we knew nothing of each other,” Stucky grins, “nonetheless, we electrified each other very quickly. He was fascinated by all the things I dare to do with my voice and I was captivated by the clarity of his singing and by the centuries-old melodies.” Out of the noncommittal, commonplace phrase so typical among musicians “we have to do something together sometime,” Stucky made reality soon after. “Only a few weeks later I was sitting at the piano at his place and we improvised on Caruso and the Beatles. From this moment on we just flew, overpassing all possible obstacles.”

The development of the collaboration with FM Einheit was equally fruitful and straightforward. Stucky knew that he is a fan of her CD *Lovebites*, which she recorded in 2002 with a horn section, among them Ray Anderson, three string players and other musicians. So she got in touch and visited the sound-poet, with the plan in mind that he might contrive to counterpoint the aesthetic of the baroque ensemble in certain ways. Unsurprisingly the two open minds hit it off well right away. “First he listened a lot, then disappeared into his studio and later returned with wonderfully spectral sound vignettes,” Stucky remembers excitedly. We are both fans of Ennio Morricone and also love subtle music. FM Einheit can flavor very finely. Many of his sounds on the album are not heard immediately. They much rather take effect psychoacoustically in the background. If you leave them out however, they are really missing.” Furthermore, Stucky says, he adapted certain aspects of her typical “extended vocals” and acoustically expanded upon them, which freed her from the task of providing subversive disruptions with off-key vocal sounds.

The seven Classical musicians contributing their part to the total artwork are members of the La Cetra Baroque Orchestra Basel, consisting of 150 persons. They come from Spain, Italy, Greece, Argentina and Switzerland. Sensitivity and precision are self-evident and beyond that they have an exceptional willingness to embark on the new and the non-conform. Besides two violins, viola, cello and double bass, there are cembalo, organ, guitar and the medieval lute theorbo. The latter was Erika Stucky’s wish, since she was fascinated by its sound, which can come quite close to a harp. She herself, Knut Jensen and Albert Wieder wrote the arrangements. Multi-instrumentalist Jensen has been Stucky’s closest and most continuous musical companion since over 15 years and has produced all her CDs since 2005. She met Albert Wieder, who is a helicon virtuoso and a member of the septet *Da Blechhaufn*, in 2014 for her project *Wally & the Seven Vultures*, for which Wieder wrote the horn arrangements.

Not only soundwise, but also compositionally and in terms of content *Papito* develops an extraordinary bandwidth. In addition to Stucky’s own songs there are also individualistic cover versions of pieces from Cole Porter, Steven Sondheim, Lucio Dalla and others to be heard. Romantic and grand sentiments, heart’s blood and yearning are inherent in the affectionate reminiscence of her deceased father. Stucky leaves the autobiographic terrain, when the subject matter gets more complex and the lyrics address emotional dissonances. Like in Randy Newman’s “Marie”, which brings up the subject of imbalances in a partner relationship rooted in a fatal father-daughter relationship. Stucky’s personal suggestion: “leave him, li’l sister, dump him, li’l sister!” (from: “Li’l Sister”). Possibly Billy Holiday should have also taken this advice, whose “Don’t Explain” is about addiction and psychic troubles. In comparison Stucky’s “Stacheldraht” [*Barbwire*] sounds rather undramatic. The song portrays a bar scene, in which the woman gets together with the wrong guy, but contents herself with the illusive thought: “if someone calls himself ‘Barbwire’, he must have some humor.”

The Stuckys undoubtedly have a pertinent dose of pioneering spirit in their genes. Once it became apparent in the courage to migrate to California, although everyone thought it was crazy. Erika Stucky demonstrates this pioneering spirit by always fathoming new creative paths and processes. They lead to unfailingly original, manifold award-winning projects. When Stucky juggles with ingredients from various worlds and mixes musical aromas anew, an exciting, sensual “fusion cuisine” is formed. Stucky may have taken a greater risk than ever with *Papito*, but she won once again. Her personal and convincing, profound but nonetheless catchy combination of Classical music, jazz, pop and electronica elements is inimitable.

LINKS:

Web: <http://www.erikstucky.com>