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Max Andrzejewski's Hütte und Chor

Johannes Schleiermacher: tenor sax

Tobias Hoffmann: guitar

Andreas Lang: bass

Max Andrzejewski: drums

Friederike Merz, Sarah Whitteron, Zola

Mennenöh, Laura Winkler, Tobias Christl: voice

Max Andrzejewski's "Hütte und Chor" [Hut and Choir]

No other young jazz-band in the last years in Germany has caused such a stir as Max Andrzejewski's "Hütte" [Hut]. Terms like newcomer, insider tip, talent or white hope are easily at hand for musicians under thirty, but the quartet with backgrounds in Cologne and Berlin was already a considerable step beyond the status of recommendation with their debut-album. The band of the drummer Max Andrzejewski took the German jazz-scene by storm.

With "Hütte und Chor" [Hut and Choir] "Hütte" is now striking out for their second blow. The name says it all. As we know already, "Hütte" are Max Andrzejewski on drums, Johannes Schleiermacher on saxophone, Andrzejewski's Siamese twin Tobias Hoffmann on guitar and Andreas Lang on bass. Additionally there's the choir under the direction of Tobias Christl, with Friederike Merz, Sarah Whitteron, Zola Mennenöh and Laura Winkler. This choir is not just a choir, but rather an assortment of five vocal soloists, who have - just like the instrumentalists of this constellation - each left their own individual trace on German jazz grounds.

Andrzejewski belongs to the few exceptionally gifted drummers, who at the same time impress as accomplished composers. He was always interested in a holistic music, in which it isn't about satisfying

playful egos. Instead of drumming himself into the foreground, he confidently makes up the energetic center of the band. What might reveal itself at first sight in a live context in this regard, does not necessarily work with the same certainty on a studio production. But Max Andrzejewski contrives playfully setting impulses, without always acting these out himself. At his young age, he is already a brilliant bandleader, who provides everything a band needs for his group: excellent material, energy and strength, motivation and sense of direction, but above all a strong feeling of togetherness. Although all four musicians are known from numerous projects, experiencing them in the immediate context of "Hütte" makes it hard to imagine, they can even elicit a single note from their instruments outside of this hermetic unity.

Vocals and music often assume an unsacred alliance in jazz. Often voice and instruments are in each other's way. This antagonism is usually most noticeable when the protagonists strive with all their might to hide it. Max Andrzejewski and co. go the opposite way. They place the emphasis on the oppositeness of the human voice and the dehumanized liveliness of instrumental sound. In the first one and a half songs we hear the "Hütte" and the choir alone, without the other element respectively. The choir is set in contrast to the band; they don't have to jointly prove themselves, but rather seek the confrontation. The beginning of the CD is reminiscent of a game of dodge ball. Here the one, there the other; a mixing of the two teams in the same arena doesn't seem intended. But the game takes its course and quite suddenly the unity accrues from the intentionally initiated separation.

However, the shared harmony is never confirmed too strongly. Whenever the band lulls the ear with a high level of intimacy, the choir comes into play to unravel the dense texture just a few moments later. The connective element between the musicians and the choir is the irrepressible delight in making music and fabulating. Breaking rules is a far too stereotyped verbiage of the jazz-vocabulary. Andrzejewski and his party are way passed that. What drives them and welds them together is the incredible alertness, with which they can react to constantly changing parameters. They blithely make references here and there, evoking reminiscences from the Swingle Singers to Frank Zappa and to the McGarrigle Sisters; a lot briskly jumbled together and reassembled with an astounding new logic. And also for impassionate nonsense a great deal of room is left.

Thanks to Max Andrzejewski's susceptibility, in the end everything finds its place exactly where it belongs in all of this. "Hütte und Chor" is a dry but all explanatory title for a rapid rollercoaster ride through the highs and lows of a musical amusement park, in which only a few stations are hoisting the jazz-flag.

Links:

Web: <http://www.maxandrzejewski.de>