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jazz/vocal

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**Christoph Stiefel
Lisette Spinnler
Bima Sakti**

Christoph Stiefel: piano, composition
Lisette Spinnler: vocals

Listening tips:

- [1] Jolene
- [2] Astracan Café
- [6] In ferne Himmel

Christoph Stiefel | Lisette Spinnler - Bima Sakti

Inspired Song, Singing Piano

A singer and a pianist: this combination has given us magical results in jazz many times. The especially memorable duos – Ella Fitzgerald & Ellis Larkins, Jeanne Lee & Ran Blake as well as Sidsel Endresen & Bugge Wesseltoft – deserve to be mentioned here. These three trios mark an aesthetic development, one which is characterized by an increasing detachment from traditional patterns of vocal jazz closely linked to the “Great American Songbook.”

In BIMA SAKTI the pianist Christoph Stiefel and the singer Lisette Spinnler continue this development on several levels. One doesn't only prick up one's ears to the unusual selection of pieces, but also listens to the extraordinarily differentiated and subtle way they deal with fine dynamic nuances and fascinating sounds. During all of this, neither the song nor the piano, in part prepared, stands in the foreground; much more both meld into harmonious unity, which sometimes exudes a downright celestial beauty.

Sometimes the duo's trip leads in fact "In ferne Himmel" [To a faraway heaven], one title of the six pieces from Stiefel's pen. Likewise, Spinnler and Stiefel feel at home in "Astracan Café," in Turkey ("Burası Mustur") or in Africa ("Djabaram"). The biggest surprise among the four titles is the song "Jolene," which, in comparison to Dolly Parton's original, comes across as much more melancholic, honest and moving.

Of course, in the duo's repertoire a few numbers emerge from Stiefel's trailblazing isorhythm cycle of works, from which further examples can be heard on the recordings with the Inner Language Trio and his solo CD. With her charismatic, limber and warm voice, Lisette Spinnler enhances the hypnotic effect of these pieces, themselves oscillating between catchy and complicated.

When art succeeds in celebrating beauty without artificiality, but rather transcends it, it can give us an impression of a lost paradise. Since such transcendent moments appear in the soulful music of Christoph Stiefel and Lisette Spinnler again and again, this music touches us in the middle of our hearts.

Tom Gsteiger, Sommer 2011



Links:

Christoph Stiefel: <http://www.christophstiefel.ch>

Lisette Spinnler: <http://www.lisettespinnler.com>