

MAROTY MUSIC

TITZ... "MAGIC"

Good trumpeters are like grains of sand on the seashore. Those, who have a unique "sound" on this instrument however, well they are few and far between. In turn, only a handful of these have sufficient vision to set themselves apart from the almost absurdly larger-than-life US luminaries of the past and/or present. To go further. Not simply to experience or follow musical evolution, but to actively participate. Christoph Titz from Aachen is one such musician – indeed he is a very special example of the type. Someone who has internalised jazz with all its roots and peculiarities, but who feels at home in all other conceivable styles. Someone who shines as a soloist but who can also subordinate himself to the sound of an ensemble or a big band, without ever risking his own identity. In brief: a true ace. A young gun and an old hand at one and the same time. With a mind of his own, great style and above all: a whole lot of soul! Where others will isolate entire oceans of notes, with Christoph it is primarily the pauses, the sensitivity for time and space, that makes his playing so compelling.

Consequently, Titz has always found that the shackles of supposedly "pure jazz" are far too restrictive. Even with his first professional band, Scetches, which wowed the international jazz scene from Montreux to Grenoble in the early to mid 90s, Christoph very consciously positioned himself between all styles. While the jazz critics fêted their music as the 1990s reincarnation of the later work of the Miles Davis Group and even sometimes compared Titz with Chet Baker, the contemporary (and completely instrumental) Scetches début, was also being chosen in specialist music magazines like AUDIO as the Pop CD of the Month. In Titz's world there are simply no pigeonholes.

And thus it may be that you have been familiar with the sound of Christoph Titz's trumpet for a long time now but have simply not been aware of it. Why? Because this charming thirty-something has long topped the list of "first-call" studio and live musicians. Whether in the backing group for Marla Glen, providing sensitive musical accompaniment to Reinhard Mey or as part of the critically acclaimed band of Mey's producer Manfred Leuchter, in the musical

line-up of "Catherine", as a celebrated soloist with the, currently hugely popular, Frank Popp Ensemble, or from time to time in the Harald Schmidt Show Combo around Helmut Zerlett – the distinctive sound of our man and his trumpet has long made its mark on this scene.

Making it all the more logical that Titz should with "Magic" finally give us his first album on which he takes the "lead". Naturally the often unwieldy and even more often misinterpreted word "jazz" is used only in inverted commas. Titz and his esteemed line-up (including musicians from the Fantastische Vier and the Stefan Raab Band) take the listener on an impressive journey that moves from a nod to 1970s fusion ("Rotation" by Herb Alpert) through brilliant ballads (" ") up to and including first-class, instrumental pop music, where great instrumental artistry plays as important a role as modern sound design and intelligent programming, including – naturally – the right beat.

And above everything, swings majestically the exceptionally gifted sound of Titz's trumpet. Christoph is at the controls and masterfully so, but at no time does he feel the need to push himself insistently to the fore. The songs on "Magic" allow the other musicians involved to shine as much as their band leader, who never puts himself above it all but blends perfectly into the overall sound of "Magic", thus finally putting his "very personal mark" on the CD.

À propos the overall sound: "Magic" is available as hybrid CD. The much acclaimed super audio format not only affords the listener perfect 5.1 surround quality but also gives the stereo quality produced by "normal" CD players a new sound dimension. And thus Titz' new album really lives up to its name, because it is truly "Magic". Why not listen and decide for yourself?

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