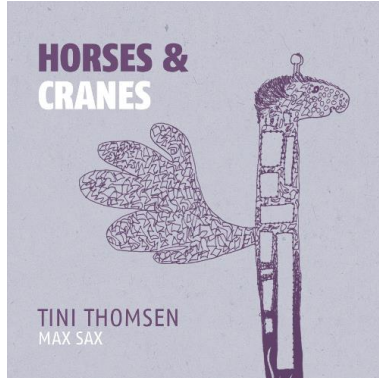




jazzhaus Freiburg GmbH, Glümerstr. 2b, 79102 Freiburg



Tini Thomsen

"Horses & Cranes"

Band: Tini Thomsen

Album: Horses & Cranes

number of catalogue: JHR 195 (CD) & JHR 196 (LP)

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A good piece of rocking jazz, miles away from an academic approach but with a good shot of euphoric guitar and down-to-earth energy instead. Here the band "Tini Thomsen MaxSax" brings its own nuanced, powerfully stylistic sophistication. "Just moving up a gear," says Tini Thomsen. One woman and one saxophone – a match made in heaven! In the hands of Katharina "Tini" Thomsen, the baritone saxophone – a rather massive, heavy instrument, after all – attains a sonic beauty definitely worth listening to. The spectrum ranges from robust, resounding rhythms to versatile melody parts and fast-paced, earthy solos and - occasionally! - on to excursions into the more tender and balladesque. Considering that the instrument is a rarity among male musicians, the combination, Thomsen & "Bari" holds membership - both nationally and internationally - to a small and exclusive group of such "duos". It is even more fortunate that, in Nigel Hitchcock on alto saxophone, she has found the perfect counterpart not only musically, but privately as well.

And horses? Cranes? What's that all about? Tini explains that during the first lockdown at in early 2020, she spent almost all of her time at home in the country where: "There were horses trekking along here every day, and cranes flying overhead." During this time she wrote all of her songs, and so the majority of them were inspired by animals: "Funky Dragon" by her chicken "Dragon", "Song for Molly" by puppy Molly (who, after turning out to be male after all, was re-named "Merlin"), or "Ants" by



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the legions of ants that crawled through the house for a few weeks during the Spring.

In musical terms, this amounts to soul feeling with a hefty shot of blues, raucous rock riffs and fast-paced funk, two saxophones imbedded in a rhythm section grooving firmly "in the pocket". And so the trek in the title tune "Horses & Cranes" could, sound-wise, be a whole herd, cantering across the countryside in heavy beats and with booming bari rhythms, flanked by metallic guitar and bass riffs. And skyward, the cranes glide by from time to time in soaring saxophone leads. "Blue Eye" is a melancholy dialogue of blues-soaked sax lines over a tightly woven rhythm section mesh from which, for a while, a highly polished electric guitar solo emerges.

Guitarist Tom Trapp, bassist Mark Haanstra and drummer Joost Kroon make up the rhythm section. With Hitchcock and Trapp, two further band members have contributed pieces to the repertoire. Hamburg native Thomsen formed the group MaxSax in 2016 in the Netherlands, her home of fifteen years. Through her studies with Ferdinand Povel and her work with artists including Nils Landgren and the Metropole Orkest among others, the music scene there provided her with a fertile, longer-term sphere of activity. A few years ago, Tini moved back home, to the countryside not far from the Lüneburger Heide. She is happy that the band was able to stay together despite the distance. However, in the shadow of the Covid pandemic, some scheduled concerts, as well as the originally planned joint studio recording, had to be cancelled. So what to do now? The fact that most band members have their own home recording facilities proved to be a godsend. Over the course of the summer, they recorded their parts individually, resulting in a constant exchange of music files and associated comments. "It felt like an endless online rehearsal," says the saxophonist, adding that everyone was even more committed than usual during this process: "We were so hungry to make music." Drummer Joost Kroon did the mixing in his Rotterdam studio and the mastering was completed by Sander van der Heide at the



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Wisseloord Studio in Hilversum. About the finished album, Thomsen has only praise for everyone: "They're the ones who made it possible".

Since 2018, the Thomsen-Hitchcock-Baritone-Alto-Duo has also been the core of the saxophone quartet Q4. Their repertoire, documented on their only recording so far (*Uphill Struggle*), moves effortlessly between upbeat jazz-swing and melodic balladry. That Thomsen was drawn to the baritone saxophone at all was a combination of talent and pure chance. As a cheeky 13-year-old, she left the music store with a tenor saxophone rather than an alto, which would have been the normal choice for most beginners. She had just started taking lessons but stuck with this instrument anyway. Moving to baritone was a step suggested by the various ensembles she played with: School and University Big bands, the State Youth Jazz Orchestra - wherever she went, they

were crying out for a baritone! Thomsen quickly developed an affinity for this relatively seldom-played saxophone; she liked the sound and found it uncomplicated to play.

From the music of MaxSax, it's clear that the younger Tini Thomsen was an avid listener to rock music. When it came to the saxophone, she found her role models in modern jazz musicians such as Ronnie Cuber and Michael Brecker. Apart from her own ensembles, the saxophonist has, in recent years, worked with many established international artists as diverse as South African pop singer Lira, U.S. jazz trumpeter Christian Scott, the style-fusing Heritage Orchestra of British musician and conductor Jules Buckley and with Dr. John as a member of his European tour band.

Since her studies at the Hamburg and Amsterdam Conservatories, Thomsen has been intensively involved, not only with playing saxophones and clarinets, but in composing as well. A number of her pieces have received awards at events such as the 2010 State Jazz Orchestra Composer Competition as well as GEMA's German Music Authors Award in the category Jazz/Crossover in 2016. Thus it only follows that writing most of the repertoire for her bands today is just a start - Tini certainly doesn't shy

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away from tackling much larger formations. The HR and NDR Radio Big Bands have played her compositions and she has collaborated with the Swedish Norrbotten Bigband as well as arranging pieces played by the JazzBaltica Ensemble (JazzBaltica All Star Band) at the Jazz Festival of the same name. Under her direction, this formation brought home the IB.SH Jazz Award for young jazz artists in 2015.

Tini Thomsen's Max Sax

"Horses & Cranes"

1. Funky Dragon	3:09
2. Horses & Cranes	5:03
3. Miserable Mushroom Guy	4:31
4. Blue Eye	6:33
5. Birds	3:37
6. Song For Molly	4:13
7. Ants	4:27
8. Georgia	7:03
9. Snooty Kitten	6:22

Track 1,2,5,6,7 written By Tini Thomsen

Track 3,9 written By Nigel Hitchcock

Track 4,8 written By Tom Trapp

Tini Thomsen - Baritone Sax

Nigel Hitchcock - Alto Sax

Tom Trapp - Electric/Acoustic Guitars, Mandolin, National Steel Guitar

Mark Haanstra - Electric Bass

Joost Kroon - Drums

Nils Landgren - Trombone On Track 6

Recorded & Mixed By Joost Kroon At Studio Kroon In Rotterdam, NI

Mastered By Sander Van Der Heide At Wisseloord Studios, Hilversum, NI



Pre-Listening: <https://promo.theorchard.com/jTqiVQTeq3F2i23uhKOE>

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Tini Thomsen's Max Sax - "Horses & Cranes" Tour

- 17.03. DE - Lübeck, CVJM
- 18.03. DE - Kiel, Kulturforum
- 19.03. DE - Husum, Englischer Bahnhof
- 01.04. DE - Hannover, Jazz Club
- 02.04. DE - Oldenburg, Jazzclub Alluvium
- 03.04. DE - Minden, Jazzclub
- 13.04. DE - Kassel, Theaterstübchen
- 14.04. DE - Ingolstadt, Diagonal
- 15.04. DE - München, Unterfahrt
- 17.04. DE - Braunschweig, LOT Theater
- 12.06. DE - Görlitz, Jazztage
- 27.06. DE - Timmendorfer Strand, Jazzbaltika
- 22.08. DE - Bad Elster, 17. Internationale Jazztage

www.tinithomsen.de

Label: www.jazzhausrecords.com

Booking: www.o-tonemusic.de

Promotion GAS: www.uk-promotion.de



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