

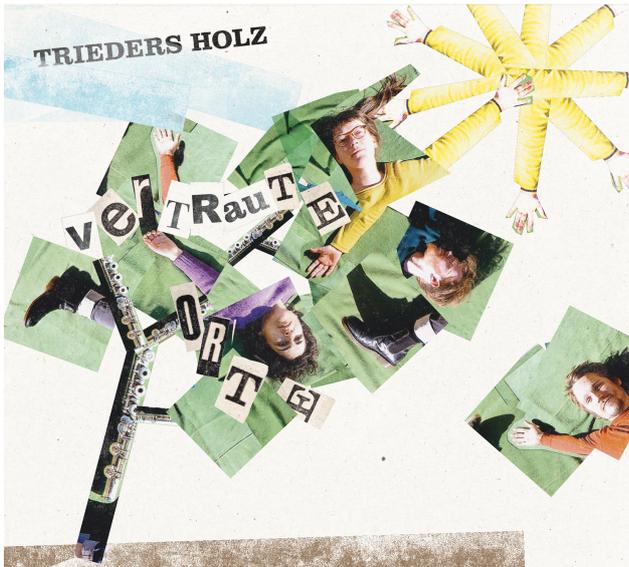


VERTRAUTE ORTE
TRIEDERS HOLZ

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TRIEDERS HOLZ

- VERTRAUTE ORTE

“The flute was still classified under ‘other instruments’ as late as the 1950s.” That’s how the chapter about this instrument begins in Joachim-Ernst Berendt’s well-known book about jazz.

Conni Trieder ist not bothered by this outsider status, on the contrary: she chooses to double the instrument in her quartet 'Trieders Holz', which also features bass clarinet and double bass.

And if you talk to her, it becomes clear she leaves no room for doubt that the flute is at the center of her work.

She revels in the sound of the instrument and can achieve more with it because of her choice to ignore the preconceptions of others. She lists Robert Dick, Jeremy Steig and Clare Chase as role models, as well as Eric Dolphy and Henry Threadgill, and then goes on to rave about the sheer possibilities of the instrument. Besides, the flute was always there.

After completing her Bachelor of Arts (Cultural Studies), she chose to concentrate on the flute; studying in Cologne with Michael Heupel, another flute purist. In his book, Berendt describes the flute in modern jazz as ‘taking a playful, light, triumphant position, similar to the clarinet in the swing era’. Nevertheless, and despite the contributions of Roland Kirk, Herbie Mann, Paul Horn and Frank Wess, successful albums by flautists remain somewhat exotic. Be that as it may, it’s worth considering giving the flute more attention, especially since almost every part of the world has its own way of playing and developing the instrument.

Conni Trieder made her debut as a bandleader in 2021, with the delicate yet confident trio album ‘Brot und Salz’ (Bread and Salt). With her astonishingly convincing new release, she takes the next step, and not just because she adds another flute. “I was very lucky to receive a six-month stipend from the Kunststiftung of Saxony-Anhalt last year, which led to the creation of a cycle of compositions for quartet, inspired by my childhood in Halle. I find the instrumentation fascinating, because of the ways we can combine to function as a rhythm section or as a chordal instrument. Each player is equally featured; taking on the roles of soloist or accompanist as necessary”, describes Conni.

With herself on alto flute, Quentin Coppalle on soprano flute, Leonhard Huhn on bass clarinet and Athina Kontou on double bass, the band highlights the commitment of the bandleader to her repositioning of the role of the flute in improvised music, going further than just adding a few new colours here and there. In utilising this unusual instrumentation, she creates harmony from layers of dissonance; allowing her chamber music-style jazz to blossom in rich tonal colours.

As both soloists and accompanists, they pass the ball between them, sounding like a wilful and well-rehearsed ensemble. Beautiful melodies alternate with free outbursts; sometimes advancing at a fast pace, only to pause again and celebrate the moment.

The two flutes can sometimes be beguiling, but then again powerful and gripping. Conni Trieder has gained self-confidence through the process and describes this as follows: 'In the past, I always wanted to prove that the flute can be more than what people generally expect from it. I no longer care about that, I just make music and the flute is my vehicle for that purpose.'

The transparency of her music is captivating; there is no pretense here, just varied and colourful harmony. It's at no point too ambitious, and the spirit and joy of playing together prevails at all times.

There is something else that makes 'Vertraute Orte' (Familiar Places) so special: the inclusion of spoken word passages, written by Conni Trieder about her childhood in Halle and recited by actress Mareike Hein. Sometimes taunting, sometimes transfigured in the serrated, sepia-tinted rear-view mirror, she finds beautiful images to describe how easy it was in those days to capture happiness.

The adventures of children are evoked in an attic, going down Galgenberg mountain, in the two parts of Brüderstraße, or in the wild, sprawling greenhouse. Whether by foot or bike, the joy of children visiting the trusted places of Halle on the Saale river are no different from those in any other city. Feats of curiosity and daring are described from a youthful perspective, and it is that lightness that served as inspiration for the compositions, helping them to be more than just simple illustrations of the past.

Poetry and music form a unity here that never seems forced. The multiphonics of the flutes can rejoice, revel, whisper but also become loud and angry. The spectrum is broad and colourful.

Lyrics and sounds allow time for each other, stand apart and yet drift into one another, as if each of the elements were an interpreter for the other; enabling the beautiful moments to linger. If it weren't for these moments, the small circle of sunlight on the kitchen wall would have gone unnoticed. But this one moment is precious. This album is full of these precious moments.

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