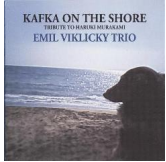


Emil Viklicky Trio - Kafka On The Shore (Tribute To Haruki Murakami) [2011]

Written by bluesever

Wednesday, 08 July 2015 11:36 -

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01. *Afterdark* 02. *Dolphine Dance* 03. *Eleanor Rigby* 04. *Peacocks* 05. *Solitude* 06. *Windmills Of Your Mind* 07. *1Q84* 08. *Double Moon* 09. *The Boy Named Crow* 10. *Kafka On The Shore* 11. *Entering Stone* 12. *Miss Saeki Theme* 13. *Windows* Emil Viclicky - Piano; Josef Fetcho - Bass; Lewis Nash - Drums; Jitka Hosprova - Viola (10); Jana Sykorova - Mezzo soprano (12).

Readers of contemporary fiction will immediately realise that Czech pianist Emil Viklicky's latest release is inspired by a novel by Japanese writer Haruki Murakami, himself connected with Prague courtesy of his having received the Kafka Award there in 2006. The album contains seven Viklicky originals with suitably Murakami-connected titles ('The Boy Named Crow', 'Miss Saeki Theme' etc.) and six non-originals from the worlds of jazz (Herbie Hancock's 'Dolphin Dance', Duke Ellington's 'Solitude', Jimmy Rowles's 'Peacocks') and popular music (Paul McCartney's 'Eleanor Rigby', Michel Legrand's 'Windmills of Your Mind') so tellingly referenced in Murakami's works. It's not strictly necessary, however, to be familiar with the Japanese writer's oeuvre (though it helps) to appreciate the sheer intensity and virtuosity of Viklicky's playing throughout this powerful and affecting album.

Supported by a fiercely interactive rhythm section (bassist Josef Fetcho, drummer Laco Tropp) and guest appearances by viola player Jitka Hosprova and mezzo soprano Jana Sykorova, Viklicky showcases all his considerable pianistic gifts on this rich and varied set: a technical proficiency that has led to his being compared with everyone from Oscar Peterson to Bud Powell, a familiarity with not only the entire post-bop jazz tradition but the sixties rock and pop music whose importance to contemporary Czech politics was chronicled by Tom Stoppard's 2006 play *Rock'n'Roll*, an emotional depth rooted in Moravian folk music which has led to his being called 'the Janacek of Jazz'.

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Dynamic and textural subtlety lie at the heart of Viklicky's greatness, but his irresistible propulsiveness, improvisational fecundity and sheer energy are what immediately impress on this excellent album, which comes strongly recommended. --- londonjazznews.com

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