

## Krzysztof Komeda – Jazz & Poetry (1967)



01. *The Trumpet Player Is Innocent* 02. *Dirge for Europe* 03. *Miserere* 04. *Choral* 05. *Hameln Is Everywhere* 06. *Prayer and Question* 07. *Canzone for Warschau* 08. *No Lovesong at All* 09. *Theme for One and Variations for Another World* 10. *Free Witch and No-bra Queen* 11. *Komeda im Zirkus Ważyk* 12. *Sketches for Don Quichotte* 13. *Waltzing Beyond* Rune Carlsson - Drums Roman Dylag - Bass Krzysztof Komeda - Piano Helmut Lohner - Narrator Zbigniew Namysłowski - Sax (Alto) Tomasz Stańko - Flugelhorn, Trumpet

In this 1967 session, Polish composer and virtuoso pianist Krzysztof Komeda took time off from his insanely busy schedule of composing film scores and touring Eastern Europe with his jazz quintet to record an album of Polish poetry set to his jazz compositions, created especially for these works. His reader, Helmut Lohner, worked with Komeda to create jazz "suites" from one or a series of poems according to (sometimes very abstract) themes. This was recorded as one long track and the spoken word is entirely in German, although it makes no difference because this is a very compelling set. Some of the poets included here were then unknown outside their native Poland; two of them -- Wislawa Symborska and Czeslaw Milosz -- became Nobel Prize winners. The others (Stanislaw Grochoiak, Wladyslaw Sebyla, and many more) are perhaps less known but, given Komeda's standards, are probably brilliant. The quintet features long-time collaborators Tomasz Stanko on trumpet, Zbigniew Namysłowski on alto, Komeda playing piano, Rune Carlsen on drums, and Roman "Gucio" Dylag on bass. With its bizarre titles ("Free Witch and No-Bra Queen," "The Trumpet Player Is Innocent," "Hemeln Is Everywhere," etc.), the set is reminiscent of American poet Kenneth Patchen's experiments with John Cage and jazz groups in the late '40s and early '50s. There is great drama here in both music and voice, especially on the suites entitled "Dirge for Europe" and "No Lovesong at All," where grief and pathos are so prevalent in the score and vocal presentation that they become almost unbearable in their sadness and beauty. This is the black sheep in the complete works of Komeda. Given that most listeners in the United States won't be familiar with the texts or the German language, Lohner's voice becomes another instrument in the intricately woven arrangements and subtle yet pervasive dynamic ranges of Komeda's compositions. A truly wonderful recording. ---Thom Jurek, Rovi

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