

Max Merseny - Everlasting



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Produced by Max Merseny & Claus Fischer
 Recorded by Tom Peschel, Jan 2013
 Mixed by M. Merseny, C. Fischer & .T. Peschel
 Mastered by Stefan Heger at Fisheye Music, Cologne

Recorded and mixed at Downhill Studio, Munich

Max Merseny – alto saxophone; **Matthias Bublath** – organ, keyboards; **Ferdinand Kirner** – guitar;
Claus Fischer – bass; **Felix M. Lehrmann** – drums

Special guests: Illa J., Michael “Patches” Stewart, Alex Han, Roger Reklus, Adriano Prestel, Thomas Merseny, Alfonso Garrido, Till Sahn, André Schwager

1. Different Moods; 2. The Hit; 3. At Midnight; 4. Last Day; 5. Everlasting; 6. Do It Together;
 7. I Can’t Help It; 8. Independence; 9. Can’t Hide Love; 10. Try; 11. Everlasting (Reprise)

„It don’t mean a thing if it ain’t got that swing“ – this song and phrase by Duke Ellington isn’t enough for saxophonist Max Merseny from Starnberg, Germany. He wants it to groove and crackle: “Pure jazz wasn’t my thing”, he says, his music should burst with energy and consequently he embeds his solos and improvisations into a compressed load of soul and funk. Hip-Hop is another element added as Merseny holds. “Whether it’s good hip-hop or not, the guys always succeed to have a solid bang behind it.” Already two years ago Max proved that power of soul with his debut “Thank Y’All”. Now he sets the standards a little bit higher with the successor “Everlasting”.

Max Merseny’s father Thomas Merseny, he is a jazz-guitarist and a singer, was very involved in his sons’ career. “In the age of 14 or 15 he gave me the CD “Pearls” of David Sanborn, the bigband live album with Christian McBride. It was the first time when I thought: Wow! Anytime I listen to that CD I still feel the same.” Starting to be a hobby the alto saxophone has now become the main issue. Thanks to the David Sanborn revelation and good teachers – Ingo Erlhoff, Axel Kühn and Leszek Zadlo – his sound became pretty nice, soon. He was accepted at age 16 already at the Munich Richard Strauss Conservatory. His period of studies was never the less not an easy one. He was still trying to get his bearings and often he missed tolerance by his fellow students. “They thought David Sanborn not a real jazz player, and when it wasn’t the hippest modern jazz that came out of your iPod they looked down at you.

If I had not always met the right kind of musicians it's possible that I wouldn't play the sax anymore."

Like the violinist, pianist and composer Gregor Hübner who forced him in the last phase of his studies to compose himself – bringing to light an enormous talent. Or Till Brönner, Torsten Goods and Michael Riessler in whose project "Big Circle" Max Merseny plays complicated modern music which grooves nevertheless and provides loads of fun. In a self organized study period in New York he met luminaries like Bob Franceschini, Gregoire Maret, Steve Slage and Barry Harris. Most important was the Marcus Miller sax player Alex Han with whom he became close friends. On "Everlasting" he co-composed five of the nine Merseny original compositions. Guitarist Ferdinand Kirner takes co-credit on six titles, Merseny's "oldest" loyal companion and an important point of reference in the band. "You can tell how good he is when checking with whom he plays: Max Herre, Samy Deluxe, Jan Delay, Marsmobil," praises Merseny.

You might begin to praise the others as well: First of all pianist and organ player Matthias Bublath who came on board shortly after Kirner. "Matthias helped already 'Thank Y'All' with his experience learned in the ten years of working in New York. "I wouldn't know anybody else so much in command of the piano, keyboards and the organ", says Max. And last not least rapper David Mayonga (aka Roger Reklless). Hip-Hop was really the first and second big love affair of Merseny ("My first album was anyway by Snoop Dogg") and with Roger Reklless he has found a fellow campaigner who does great freestyle, who has a wide range of expression, who scratches and sings", raves Merseny. The last components of "Everlasting" are the bass player Claus Fischer who not only plays funky as few do but who also brought his wealth of experience as producer into the project. Drummer Felix Lehrmann is the German shooting star of the instrument: at age 3 he sat for the first time behind a drum kit, with eleven he had his first public performances, with 17 he went on the road with Della Miles through Europe, and today the 29 year old plays drums for Aloe Blacc, Nneka, Lena Meyer-Landrut or the Swedish *Flower Kings* – enough said.

From the first tone on "Everlasting" sounds as if a critical mass is ready to explode. Merseny's saxophone grooves on his "The Hit" after funky guitar licks, disturbing organ chords and a scratch intro as on Sanborn's "Run for Cover". The boppish melody of the title song or the turbulent uptempo of "Try" drive ahead. And with the syncopated entrance of "Different Moves" the loudspeakers should be treated cautiously. The title points towards other elements in Merseny's repertoire. Wonderfully soft sounds reminding of George Benson as on "At Midnight" which presents Adriano Prestel's outstanding soul voice, (which is again featured on "Can't Hide Love" doing the back ground together with Thomas Merseny). Or Ferdinand Kirner's unresistably lyrical acoustic guitar solo introducing "Last Day" – light as a summer breeze.

Quite a few who listen to "Everlasting" for the first time will think: Wow! And it is well possible that years later they feel the same way.

-- Oliver Hochkeppel