

Harry Sokal



Foto Francesca Pfeffer f.pfeffer@bluewin.ch

Born in 1954 Harry Sokal is surely numbered among the most important "post Coltrane" saxophonists in Europe. In addition to his collaboration with a great number of major European and American jazz musicians such as being member of the Vienna Art Orchestra since 1977, member of the Art Farmer Quintet from 1978 till 1999, further with Art Blakey, Dave Holland, Terje Rypdal, Daniel Humair, Michel Portal, Mike Richmond, Minu Cinelu, Friedrich Gulda, Idris Muhammad, Joe Zawinul, Harry Pepl, Jene Jackson, Andy Mc Kee among others, he initiates and conducts numerous projects with national and international musicians and of course his own projects (as a leader): Rave the Jazz, Full Circle, Roots Ahead, Voices of Time and his latest project „Depart“.

2005 Harry Sokal received the "Hans Koller Award" in the category „Musician of the Year“.

The playing of Harry Sokal is marked not only by his virtuosity on the instrument, but even more by his lyrical tone and the stylistically clear line he follows, always relating to the character of the piece, proving him to be one of the outstanding musicians of his country. „I try to present as many colours as possible in my music and to combine that with a great spectrum of expression and styles to reach as much people as possible.“

Depart Trailer a "best of " selection from the Concert May 08 at Porgy & Bess...enjoy...also in better Video Quality!

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s-TOb1QQ1J0>

"[He] plays like he speaks, speaks like he plays, plays like he moves, moves like he plays. That's what makes for the quality of his playing...and it can make your skin tingle." (Harald Justin, Jazzthetic, Nov. 2006)

"Following in the footsteps of John Coltrane, a well-rounded player, as ecstatic as he is thoughtful and in full command of jazz technique,

including the most modern.” (Ljubisa Tomic, Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde Wien, April 2005)

“... above which, Sokal knowingly sets spontaneous notes aflight, like a bird flying through the four seasons.” (Andreas Felber, Standard)

“You’re never safe from surprises: At times it’s the rhythm that changes; at others, the emphasis. A special treat for jazz fans.” (Rainer Guerich. InMusic, Nov. 2006)

“What’s in a name? Sometimes nothing more than just that. But in the case of Harry Sokal, it proves to be the key to stirring up the legendary Wiener Blut, for shedding light on jazz and reading the language of the gestures.” (Harald Justin, JazzZeit, Sept.2006)

“Harry Sokal is a happening.” (Harald Justin, JazzZeit, Sept.2006)

“When it comes to the communication between Sokal’s distinctive soprano and tenor sax and the polyrhythmic bass drum, you can only speak in superlatives ... With Depart, you can be sure that full stress is put on the melodic sides of improvisational music.” (FONOFORUM, Oct.2006)

When you’ve got a group of musicians who can nonchalantly -- and with utmost virtuosity -- blow, pluck, drum the most complex grooves, they need a communal outlet. And such is the case with the trio Depart, formed by the Viennese saxophonist Harry Sokal, the rhythmic, Swiss bassist Heiri Känzig and the drummer Jojo Mayer. After a pause of more than 10 years, the jazz-alpine threesome has made a brilliant comeback in the jazz club Unterfahrt. (TZ München, Oct.2006)

“Depart’s Reloaded sounds so exciting that it would seem as if the trio had never taken a time-out.” (FONOFORUM, Oct.2006)

“An acoustic trip into the ideal jazz wonderland.” (JazzZeit, Sept.2006)

“A major trio’s back...virtuoso, explosive, rocking.” (Mittlebayerische Zeitung, Oct.2006)

“An electric, pulsating mix of alpine folklore and downtown New York grooves – of whirring sax hymns and rumbling rhythms.” (Frank von Niederhäusern, Depart CD Review, DRS Radiozeitung)

“And then, saxophonist Harry Sokal takes the various motifs and whips them up into a storm, blowing them through the fast jazz standards, while the others just sit back and wait for their time to shine.” (“Up” Lauda Air, 1993)

Harry Sokal’s company endorsements include: Alexander reeds: <http://www.superial.com/artists.html> and selmer saxophones.