

## INGRID LAUBROCK OCTET ZÜRICH CONCERT SWR NEWJAZZ MEETING

**Ingrid Laubrock:** ss, ts · **Mary Halvorson:** g  
**Tom Arthurs:** tp · **Ted Reichman:** acc · **Liam Noble:** p  
**Ben Davis:** cello · **Drew Gress:** b · **Tom Rainey:** dr, xyl

Recorded December 10, 2011, at Rote Fabrik, Zürich. Recording engineer: Wolfgang Bachner, SWR. Sound engineer: Max Federhofer, SWR. Mixed by Elvin Opswik, mastered by Andrew Tulloch, The Blue Studio, London. Recording production: SWR2 Redaktion Neue Musik/Jazz, Reinhard Kager. Liner notes: Reinhard Kager. Photos: Peter Bastian, Produced by Ingrid Laubrock and Intakt Records, Patrik Landolt.

**Intakt CD 221 / 2014**

The unmistakability of its voices is one of Jazz's greatest virtues. Only the one who stands out of the almost bewildering number of piano players, saxophonists, trumpet players, bassists or drummers through his own characteristic sound has a chance of being recognized on an international level. The tradition of Jazz has shown that developing this kind of characteristic musical language in most cases only works in collaboration with experienced artists in the field of improvisation. While legions of young musicians practice their licks at music school, Ingrid Laubrock chose to leave Germany already at the age of eighteen and head for Great Britain in order to find a broader improvisational playing field in the F-IRE collective in London and an experienced private teacher in Jean Toussaint, a former Art Blakey Jazz Messenger.

This courage has been well worth-while. Nowadays Laubrock can be seen as one of the most significant voices of the younger Jazz players. And, furthermore, as one of the most creative. All this with a kind of music which continuously moves back and forth between the poles of compositional calculation and improvisational freedom: wild and controlled, gentle and enigmatic at the same time, in this respect comparable to the gestures in her playing, driven by an inner energy, which unexpectedly switches between precision and dislimitation. Not uncommonly, this results in thrilling nightmarish scenarios, most notably when Laubrock improvises freely, together with drummer Tom Rainey and pianist Liam Noble, in the trio Sleepthief which, since 2007, has been something of a musical homeland for the musician hailing from the small provincial town of Stadtlohn in the Münsterland region of Germany.

Curiously enough, this distinctive voice in Jazz was hardly known in her native land while in London she was long-since considered an integral part of the rich British improvisation scene and had recorded for the Swiss Intakt label. It was only her performance on the JazzFest Berlin 2007 which aroused the interest of a wider public in Germany. The award of the prestigious SWR Jazz Prize in 2009 was an almost logical consequence.

The result was this particular project for the annual NEWJazz Meeting of the SWR2 Jazz department which culminated in a concert at the Rote Fabrik in Zürich. True to the original idea of Joachim- Ernst Berendt, these "Meetings" in Baden-Baden is where musicians come together who have not worked before in these constellations, and develop a new project within the framework of a week-long workshop which is then presented to the public in the form of a short concert tour. It gave Laubrock the opportunity to bring together musicians from her new living situation in New York, where she has been based since 2009, and musicians from London who had already been members of her first large ensemble "nein". As with her earlier nonet, the trio Sleepthief with the British pianist Liam Noble and the American drummer and percussionist Tom Rainey is part of the Ingrid Laubrock Octet. The other members include cellist Ben Davis and trumpet player Tom Arthurs from London. The new octet is completed by three musicians from the USA: guitar player Mary Halvorson who is also a member of Laubrock's quintet Anti-House, bass player Drew Gress and accordionist Ted Reichman.

This instrumental line up already indicates that for Ingrid Laubrock this project is by no means about standard Power Jazz, but about subtle sound structures. The saxophone player brought eight compositions to the rehearsals in the SWR studio in Baden-Baden, seven of which are to be found on this present CD. With the exception of "Blue Line & Sinker" which is a freely improvised introduction to the composition "Red Hook", some of the pieces are strictly notated and, due to their complexity – as in the case of "Matrix" – were even conducted (by Tom Rainey). Most of the compositions, however, despite their precisely notated formal structures also leave large open spaces for improvisation. Since these improvised passages developed with more and more gusto over the course of the concert tour of the NEWJazz Meeting, Laubrock decided to release the more 'colourful' Zürich live concert on CD instead of the perfect studio recordings. It starts with a medley of three pieces: "Glasses" is a subtle improvisation, played by six of



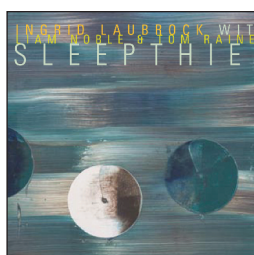
Ingrid Laubrock Octet.  
Photo: Peter Bastian

the eight musicians on tuned water-filled glasses. Out of the tender glass harmonica sounds, in line with the dull winter weather during the concert tour, a melancholic “Novemberdoodle” develops, determined by the sound of the accordion which remains dominant also in the concluding improvisation “Blue Line & Sinkler”. “Chant”, on the other hand, gives guitarist Mary Halvorson an opportunity to play one of her weird distortion solos – which incidentally were totally different on each of the four public performances of the octet.

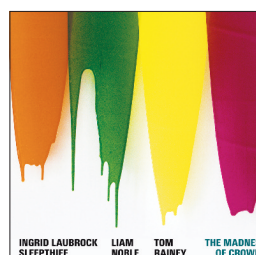
Whosoever feels that these compositions focus too much on sound processes will get their money’s worth in the second, more rhythmically oriented part of the concert. This does in fact begin with finely conceived duets in which the trumpet player Tom Arthurs first plays with drummer Tom Rainey and later with Ingrid Laubrock on tenor, but subsequently leads into this afore mentioned, rhythmically intricate “Matrix”, putting considerable demands on Tom Arthurs, Ted Reichman and Mary Halvorson. It is followed by “Nightbus”, the most ‘groovy’ piece on this recording: a lurching ride through the dark of night, accompanied by a persistently repeating theme. Also the final piece, “Der Zaubenberg”, after an initial passage of glass harmonica, has a rhythmical structure, although it is more reminiscent of Minimal Music than Jazz. And this is exactly what constitutes the strength of Ingrid Laubrock’s music: it is not easily pigeonholed but takes its impulses from the most diverse genres. And this kind of refreshing versatility is exactly what counts in today’s improvised music!

Reinhard Kager. Translation: Isabel Seeberg & Paul Lytton

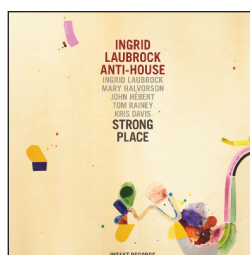
## INGRID LAUBROCK ON INTAKT RECORDS



**INGRID LAUBROCK  
SLEEPTHIEF**  
Liam Noble, Tom Rainey  
Intakt CD146



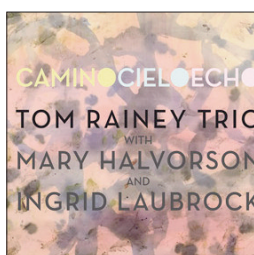
**INGRID LAUBROCK  
SLEEPTHIEF**  
Liam Noble, Tom Rainey  
THE MADNESS OF CROWDS  
Intakt CD189



**INGRID LAUBROCK  
ANTI-HOUSE**  
Mary Halvorson, John Hébert,  
Kris Davis, Tom Rainey  
STRONG PLACE  
Intakt CD 208



**INGRID LAUBROCK  
ANTI-HOUSE**  
Mary Halvorson, John Hébert,  
Kris Davis, Tom Rainey  
Intakt CD173



**TOM RAINEY TRIO**  
Ingrid Laubrock,  
Mary Halvorson  
CAMINO CIEL ECHO  
Intakt CD199



**TOM RAINEY  
feat.**  
Ralph Alessi, Ingrid Laubrock  
Drew Gress, Kris Davis  
OBBLIGATO  
Intakt CD227