

Presseinfo

Caroll Vanwelden: Sings Shakespeare Sonnets

VÖ 12. Oktober 2012
JAZZ'n'ARTS (JnA 6012)
Vertrieb: In-Akustik

Caroll Vanwelden voice, piano
Thomas Siffling trumpet, flughelhorn
Markus Faller drums, percussion
Mini Schulz double bass

1. Sweet Love 2. Two Loves 3. The Marriage Of True Minds 4. How Can I
Then Return In Happy Plight 5. When I Do Count The Clock 6. Those Hours
7. Some Glory 8. Not From The Stars 9. Look In Thy Glass 10. Who Will
Believe 11. So Shall I Live Supposing 12. Weary With Toil 13. What Is Your
Substance 14. O, That You Were Yourself 15. As An Unperfect Actor
16. Forty Winters

Synopsis

Aus Belgien kommt nicht nur köstliche Schokolade. Die charismatische Sängerin und Pianistin **Caroll Vanwelden**, die mit **Sings Shakespeare Sonnets** ihr ungewöhnliches JAZZ'n'ARTS-Debüt gibt, wagt sich mit ihrer kongenialen Musikern **Thomas Siffling** (Trompete), **Markus Faller** (Schlagzeug) und **Mini Schulz** (Bass) selbstbewusst und souverän auf ein neues Terrain. Sie verwandelt Shakespeare Sonette mit ihren eigenen Kompositionen in ein so noch nie gehörtes jazzig-akustisches Gewand voller Emotionalität und Frische. Das Maß an Intensität, das hier aufgebaut wird, ist außerordentlich und verleiht den Worten Shakespeare eine neue Dimension. Caroll Vanweldens Stimme strahlt dabei Sicherheit und Wohlgefühl aus, gepaart mit der hohen Kunst, wie von selbst die richtige Stimmung und Spannung zu erzeugen. Die Künstlerin findet für jedes der von ihr gewählten Sonette eine ganz eigene Präsentationsform: Mal druckvoll, nahezu getrieben, mal relaxt und sanft, dann wieder robust und kräftig oder verspielt und ein bisschen hinterhältig. Wunderbar ausbalanciert zieht sich so der rote Faden durch das Album mit dem Titel **Caroll Vanwelden Sings Shakespeare Sonnets** mit 16 portraitierten Sonetten. Zudem weiß die Absolventin der renommierten

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Londoner Guildhall School of Music & Drama – mit illustren Mitstudenten wie Orlando Bloom, Daniel Craig und Dave Holland – eine Band hinter sich, die in wohldosiertem Spiel der Musik ungekannte Transparenz und Plastizität verleiht. Damit rückt sie den großen Dichter Shakespeare unversehens auch in die Nähe der großen Jazzlibrettisten und transportiert seine Texte in eine Musik unserer Gegenwart mit wundervollen Farben.

Langtext

Wie ungewöhnlich, ja gewagt: Die **Shakespeare Sonnets** (JAZZ 'n' ARTS) der Belgierin **Caroll Vanwelden** – ein Vocal Jazz Album, das sich textlich auf den heiligen Gral der englischen Dichtkunst bezieht. Was hier mutig und erstmalig in einen Jazzkontext gebracht wird, ist ein historisch wahrhaft bedeutsames Material: Immerhin handelt es sich bei den Sonetten von William Shakespeare um die Verkörperung des souveränen Umgangs mit der Sprache – zur Zeit ihres Erscheinens frisch, neu und eine wegbereitende Sensation. Dieselbe Novität und Frische zaubert Caroll Vanweldens Stimme in den altherwürdigen Texten wieder hervor, und bringt sie ein in eine Musik unserer Gegenwart. Feinsinnig

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und voll Emotionalität schlägt die Sängerin und Pianistin eine Brücke über vier Jahrhunderte. Es braucht nur die ersten Töne von Caroll Vanweldens Album **Sings Shakespeare Sonnets**, um zu wissen: dies ist eine Aufnahme der besonderen Art. Die Instrumentalarbeit ist erstklassig, Produktion und Klang transparent. Das Maß an Intensität, das hier aufgebaut wird, ist außerordentlich – und Shakespeares Texte, wie beispielsweise das als *Sweet Love* umgesetzte Sonnet 56 rücken ihn unversehens in die Nähe der großen Jazzlibrettisten. Nichts kommt von ungefähr. Was also verbindet eigentlich Belgien mit dem kulturellen Erbe Großbritanniens? Wer ist diese Caroll Vanwelden, die sich traut, ausgerechnet Shakespeares Sonette, die nun wirklich nicht zum Einfachsten gehören, im Jazzgewand zu präsentieren? Die Feststellung, dass die Künstlerin in ihrer belgischen Heimat eine bekannte Größe ist und sich seit einem Jahr auch in ihrer neuen Wahlheimat Deutschland sehr wohlfühlt, hilft nicht sonderlich weiter. Folgen wir Caroll Vanwelden stattdessen an ihre Ursprünge.

London

Caroll Vanweldens Bezug zum Vereinigten Königreich entstand bereits während ihres Studiums, in dessen Frühzeit sie sich für ein „Postgraduate Diploma“ an der illustren Londoner „Guildhall School of Music & Drama“ bewarb, bekannt für Absolventen wie Dave Holland, Daniel Craig, Orlando Bloom oder den Beatles-Produzenten George Martin. Damals jedoch hatte Caroll Vanwelden gerade erst zwei Jahre Jazzstudium am Musikkonservatorium in Gent hinter sich – drei weniger, als eigentlich für eine Bewerbung vorausgesetzt. Obendrein werden an der Guildhall School nur drei Kandidaten pro Jahr akzeptiert – dennoch gelang es Caroll Vanwelden, aufgenommen zu werden. Sie erklärt heute rückblickend, dieses Jahr sei die „schönste Zeit ihres Lebens“ gewesen – eine „phantastische Schule mit erstklassigen Lehrern und großartigen Musikern“, zu denen sie noch heute viele Kontakte pflege. Und wäre London nicht eine so teure Stadt, meint sie, wäre sie wohl dort geblieben.

Erste Faszination

Das erklärt allerdings noch nicht, wieso Caroll Vanwelden sich für ein Jazzalbum die Sonette von Shakespeare zum Thema nahm. Und auch hier soll eine Geschichte erzählt werden: Eines Tages – das ist noch nicht so lange her –, stieß Caroll Vanwelden auf ein vergessenes Buch, mit dem sie vor dreizehn Jahren gearbeitet hatte. Seinerzeit studierte sie in Zusammenarbeit mit einem iranischen Komponisten ein Projekt mit klassischer Musik ein – auf der Grundlage einiger der Shakespeare'schen Sonette. Dieses Projekt gelangte zwar nie auf die Bühne, Caroll Vanweldens Faszination für Shakespeare hingegen blieb – ebenfalls blieb aber der Eindruck, dass der Umgang mit solchem Material sich als schwierig gestalten kann.

Ein Fund in der Bücherkiste und ein Vorsatz

Der Fund des Buches führte dazu, dass Caroll Vanwelden ein paar der Sonette wieder zur Hand nahm, und deren Zeilen, eigentlich ohne sich um ihre Bedeutung zu kümmern, einfach sang. Ihrer Inspiration und Intuition folgend, setzte sie sich hierzu ans Klavier und spürte den Melodien und Stimmungen nach, welche die Sonette in ihr wachriefen. Das alles nahm sie mit ihrem kleinen Digitalrecorder auf. Einige Wochen verblieb das Material in der Schublade, bis Caroll Vanwelden es neu entdeckte und die Gewissheit spürte, es diesmal schaffen zu können: Musik zu Sonetten von Shakespeare zu schreiben, die aus einem Guss ist, in der Gesang, Text und Instrumente eine Einheit bilden. So nahm sie die Arbeit an diesem Projekt auf – das Ergebnis beweist, wie hervorragend Caroll Vanwelden das gelungen ist.

Von der Emotion zur Abstraktion und zurück

Caroll Vanwelden als emotionaler, äußerst empathischer und lebensfroher Mensch, liebt, wie sie es ausdrückt, nichts mehr, als etwa „barfuß über das erste Frühlingsgras“ zu laufen. Naturverbundenheit, die Wahrnehmung des Erblühens und Verlassens der Pflanzenwelt in den jeweiligen Jahreszeiten,

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stehen bei ihr hoch im Kurs. Folgerichtig, dass sie sich auch in der Musik von Stimmungen leiten lässt, sie die Sonette zunächst in ihrem Wortklang, der Betonung der Worte wahrnahm und umsetzte. Dann aber schaltete sich ihr analytischer Verstand ein – denn bevor sie ihrer Liebe zur Musik folgte und Jazz studierte, hatte Caroll Vanwelden zunächst erfolgreich ein Ingenieursstudium absolviert. Caroll analysierte die Sonette, recherchierte, durchdrang sie bis tief in ihr Innerstes: Diese Verbindung aus mathematischem Verständnis und empathischem Eintauchen erwies sich als kongenial für diese Musik. Denn gerade das lyrisch überfließende Sonett folgt in seiner äußeren Form ja einem straff festgelegten Schema, besitzt also einen abstrakten Aufbau.

Die Musik und die Musiker

Caroll Vanweldens Kompositionen verleihen den Worten Shakespeares über ihren Gesang und ihr Klavierspiel eine neue Dimension der Intensität. Sie weiß zudem in Trompeter **Thomas Siffling**, Bassist **Mini Schulz** und Schlagzeuger **Markus Faller** eine Band hinter sich, die in wohl dosiertem Spiel der Musik ungekannte Transparenz und Plastizität verleiht.

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Für ihre Zusammenarbeit mit **Thomas Siffling**, gleichzeitig Trompeter und Labelchef von JAZZ 'n' ARTS findet Caroll Vanwelden lobende Worte: „Er hat mir sehr geholfen, auch mit den Entscheidungen, die ich musikalisch zu treffen hatte. Und er fügt der Musik wundervolle Farben hinzu.“ Auch der Schlagzeuger **Markus Faller**, so Vanwelden, Sorge „mit jedem Ton dafür, dass ich mich mit seiner Begleitung wohlfühle.“ Bassist **Mini Schulz** schließlich, dessen körperhafter, hol-

ziger Kontrabasston oft den Klang der Stücke prägt, wiederum sei „ein großartiger Bassist, der intuitiv erfasst, was meine Musik ausmacht!“ All dies sind Teile, die sich zu einer großartigen Summe addieren. Es macht **Caroll Vanwelden Sings Shakespeare Sonnets** zu einer einzigartigen, eigenständigen Aufnahme.



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Das Material – abstrakt betrachtet

"Gedichtfolge von William Shakespeare, Erstdruck 1609. Die Entstehungszeit der 154 Sonette, zumindest der Beginn ihrer Abfassung, ist vor 1598 anzusetzen. (...) Im Gegensatz zu den stereotypen Motiven und Situationen der höfischen Sonett-Tradition (unterwürfige Anbetung einer entrückten, platonisch-idealistischen Schönen durch den Dichter), bieten Shakespeares Erweiterung und Modifizierung der Konstellation dem Dichter die Möglichkeit, das gesamte Spektrum von Liebe und Freundschaft auszuloten – von sexueller Hörigkeit bis zu philosophischer Abstraktion."

(Kindlers Neues Literaturlexikon, Band 1, S. 317 ff.)

Caroll Vanwelden über Sings Shakespeare Sonnets:

I wanted to make a new album with my own compositions. One day I found a book back with the sonnets of Shakespeare that I used 13 years ago when I worked together with an Iranian composer who wanted to put Shakespeare on classical compositions. I've always been attracted to Shakespeare, but thought it was too difficult to approach it. So, on that day, I took my book and went through the pages sitting behind my piano and stopped intuitively on lyrics that sounded good to me and inspired me. I didn't try to understand the meaning at that time, but just let the words and sounds of the words inspire me. When I read Shakespeare I hear melodies in my head. The different sonnets led me through different atmospheres and the melodies came very fast, one after the other, really amazing. Accompanying myself at the piano, I always record everything on my little R09, a little stereo recorder. I found the basic melodies in about one week but, as I had no defined idea what to do with them, stored the recordings in my computer. A few weeks later I rediscovered them and thought, "Waw, this could be my new project." It all grew on me very instinctively, but bit by bit I realized that I could do it and write my music on the sonnets. I write very instinctively and always start with the melodies. After having found the right melody I try to find the right bass note that fits with it. When I have both, my songs are basically ready for me. The very hard part is developing the harmonies. I hear them in my head, but it takes a really long time to find the right colours in

the chords. I love to write music and to hear how the bits and pieces come together. Most of the time, the most difficult part for me is writing the lyrics but, with this project, I just had to follow Shakespeare and let me guide through all his little treasures and secrets. My moods and the lyrics with their sound and pronunciation inspired me and led me through this project.

After writing my music on the sonnets, I did a lot of research on them and came to the conclusion that a lot of my songs really reflect what's meant by the lyrics. That was really "spooky". As I use the piano to find melodies and harmonies, a good friend of mine told me that I should try to accompany myself and play the piano on the recordings too. I was very skeptical at the beginning, but he motivated me and I studied a lot at the piano. When I now hear the recordings, I think he was right. It gives me a good feeling to play the piano and sing at the same time and it makes me dive deeper into my music. As a singer you always have to stand in front of the musicians and sing on what they play. Now I have the feeling I'm more part of the music itself. I was very lucky to find the right musicians for my recordings. They are very complementary and really support my playing and singing. Markus Faller tries to make me feel as comfortably as he can by following everything that I do and is a wonderful and friendly musician. Thomas Siffling helped me a lot with the choices I had to make in this project. He adds wonderful colours to my music and gave me the necessary support. Last but not least there is Mini Schulz, what a bass-player! He understands exactly what I need for my music and makes the whole thing fit so well, using different feels and colours. They are all amazing musicians and inspired me to finish this project.

I choose the 16 sonnets based on the words and lyrics that inspired me when I was going through the book. Once you get to understand the sonnets they are all little jewels ready to be discovered. I wanted to bring Shakespeare to everybody. Even children should be able to sing the sonnets and get an understanding of Shakespeare. The more you read the sonnets the more you understand them and the more you have different

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meanings to what you understand. The album is called *Caroll Vanwelden sings Shakespeare Sonnets* because I wanted to make clear that I'm singing the sonnets and not proclaiming or reciting them. You can discover a great scala of emotions and a lot of different styles and colours through the cd, going from very sad, dark and emotional songs to very happy and open songs.

„Music is one big world“
Caroll Vanwelden über ...

... ihre ungewöhnliche Familie:

I grew up in a musical family. My grandmother played the classical piano and I was always sitting under the piano listening to her. My mother also played the piano and sang. We listened to music all the time. My sister played the clarinet and every time at christmas we did a little family concert together. My parents listened to all music styles and had a lot of jazz records. They loved to party and to dance (the golden sixties!!!) and we always had a lot of music and friends in the house. My parents are both entrepreneurs and worked a lot but I never got the impression that I was left alone. My father was tanner and worked in the leather factory of the family and my mother had her own business importing and selling Cookers in Belgium. After school, my sister and I helped a lot when there was a fancy fair. We were always very happy and proud to be able to help. My mother always called me her

„sunchild“ as I was always laughing and in a good mood. I was the eldest one and had to be the reasonable one. After school I made puzzles. I was concentrated for hours behind a table with a lot of pieces but loved it and in the meantime was singing. I loved working in the garden and grow my own vegetables and flowers. I particularly love sunflowers because they move with the sun and you can eat the grains. I have always been fascinated by nature and its colours and still am today. When I was feeling alone or sad I sat behind the piano and played a little bit till I felt better. It is something I still do today. Music has always be my biggest friend and I could always find comfort by playing the piano.

... den Beginn der musikalischen Ausbildung mit sieben Jahren:

I started with the piano, because I saw my grandmother playing on it, and thought it had the most beautiful sound in the world. In Belgium we have a good music educational system. As music academies are free of charge, anybody can learn music if he wants. I started the academy and learned solfeggio and the piano when I was 7. My teacher always told me I was moving to much at the piano and feeling the music to much instead of sitting quietly behind it. I liked to improvise but at the music academy at that time it wasn't allowed. My mother supported me a lot in my music. I wrote little songs myself and played them for her. While I was playing I was inventing melodies with words that didn't exist. I loved to

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... **ihre musikalische Vorlieben als Teenager:**
When I was young, I heard a lot of different styles of music, most of the time it was pop. I also listened to the jazz records of my parents a lot and in the same time loved Michael Jackson, Whitney Houston, Vanessa Williams and everything that was running on the top 30 charts. I remember I recorded the top 30 from the radio every week on Saturday morning with my old tape recorder, sitting there for hours because I wanted only the songs and no speaking or publicity in between. After having recorded it, I transcribed the text of the songs I liked by listening to it bit by bit. When I thought I had the text, I sang it. If you see how easy it is today to get text and songs in one minute via the internet, it sounds crazy doesn't it!? But by doing that I learned a lot. I didn't speak English at that time, so I just imitated the sounds that I heard.

... **ihren Umweg über ein Ingenieursstudium:**

I didn't really know what to study after high school and my parents told me that I had to have a „good“ diploma before I could start to study music or something else. It's true that the music business in Belgium is very small and it is very difficult to be successful, so I could understand their advice. I've always had a very rational part in me and a very irrational part. At that time the rational part took over. I thought that if I prove that I could have a good diploma, that afterwards I could do what I wanted and that would be music then. So I studied very hard and finished my degree of engineering in five years. At the university, I organized events and sang and played at them. As I didn't have a keyboard or a piano during my studies at the university in Brussels, I sang more and more. Although I already sang and invented songs when I was nine years old, I never concentrated on it. Now I wanted to develop my voice as an instrument, hence learned all kind of songs like pop, jazz, salsa, bolero, bossa, world music and every time I had a free minute between the studying I sang. I loved it and sometimes sang 10 hours per day. I have asthma since I'm 16 years old, but when I sing I don't have any asthma, so it is a kind of remedy and makes me feel better. I

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knew already before I started to study that I didn't want to work as an engineer, but I learned a lot as you learn to assimilate a lot in a little amount of time, and you learn to work with a lot of different software, etc. In the end I did it to the ripe inside until I knew what I wanted to do. It's really funny to realize that a lot of good musicians in Belgium, studied engineering or informatics (IT) before they started with music. Somebody told me once that music has everything to do with mathematics.

... die anschließende Selbstfindung im Gesang und im Musikstudium:

After finishing my studies at the university, I was so into singing that I didn't want to play the classical piano anymore, but concentrate on singing. I could bring more emotions with my voice than playing the piano, and that's what I love about singing. It was a saxophonist friend of mine that told me that I had to start the jazz conservatorium in Ghent. He pushed me and told me that I had a lot of talent and that it would be pity not to use it. I thought I would never make it through my entry exam but I did and was accepted. I was so happy that my dream came true, finally I could study music. What I loved about jazz singing, is that I was allowed to invent melodies and words, and that I didn't always have to follow what's written, as in classical music. I felt really free.

... die Zeit an der Londoner Guildhall School of Music and Drama:

After two years of conservatory, I felt I didn't learn fast enough and decided to postulate for a postgraduate diploma in London. I heard it was an amazing school, but normally you have to do five years of conservatory to have enough basic skills to get in. I also knew they accepted only three persons per year, but prepared myself very hard, did my entry exam and was one of the lucky ones to be admitted. This was really the time of my life. The school was amazing, great teachers, top musicians, everything was going really fast, but it was amazing. The postgraduate program is only one year, but at the end you have to write an arrangement for a Big Band from



a self-written piece, which was a major challenge for me. During the week I was going to school and studied, in the evenings I was singing with the other musicians in clubs and in the weekends I worked very hard to write music. I still have a lot of good friends/musicians from that time.

... nach dem Studium:

London is a very expensive city and it is not easy to survive there on your own. The gigs are not well paid because there are a lot of musicians living in London. I could earn more money if I went back home. I missed London and my friend musicians, but shortly after coming back to Belgium, I worked at a project together with the Iranian conductor/composer Alexander Rahbari in Vienna, so everything was going very fast for me again.

... erste intensive Begegnung mit Shakespeare:

Alexander Rahbari wanted me as lead singer for a project around Shakespeare Sonnets. He asked famous classical arrangers to write arrangements on the music he composed on the Sonnets. I worked a lot to learn them, to pronounce them and to sing the music. It was amazing but very complicated stuff. I learned a lot from this project but unfortunately it didn't go through. I kept in my head that it would be really great to be able to write songs on Shakespeare, but I left the idea in the cupboard for many years.

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... weitere Projekte und ihre erste CD:

After this adventure I started having a lot of gigs with different groups and started a band with jazz musicians playing pop tunes in a different way. We had a lot of gigs and everything was running well. In the meanwhile I participated at other different projects. I played at different festivals in Belgium, with different bands and had a great time. I also try to participate yearly at a benefit concert in a modest attempt to improve the world. In the mean time I met my husband Johan and one year later we got our son Frédéric and our daughter Alycia two years afterwards. Being at home more then before and being a lot alone inspired me to start to write my own songs and lyrics again. My first album "Colours" is totally inspired from this period in my life. It took me a long time to finish my songs and lyrics because I wanted my first album to be perfect and I didn't have a lot of time with the two children and the gigs.

... die belgische Jazzszene und das Überleben als Sängerin:

The Belgian Jazz scene is small and is split in the french speaking and the dutch speaking part of the country. Nevertheless there are really great musicians over there. There are not many jazz clubs and they do not pay a lot. I did a lot of work at company events too, that payed really well, but most of the time you can not play your own music. It has to be jazz standards. I always felt like a jazz musician and always played with jazz musicians, but I did a lot of other things too. I did some salsa in London, bolero, bossa, big-band, musical, world music, ethical music, dance, trance and so many other things. I learned a lot in every project that I did. My musicians stayed most of the time the same through the years and I was lucky to be surrounded by great musicians. Most of them are friends since many years. I don't play with people I don't like or I don't feel. As you must know by now I'm very intuitive!

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... die Produktion von CDs:

Recording an album costs a lot of money and is time consuming. For my first album *Colours* I wrote the lyrics and the music myself. It took a long time because it wasn't easy with two children and a husband that is often away. My second album *Cheek to Cheek* was easier, as it was not with own songs but jazz standards from the thirties. The creation of it went faster but also brought a different satisfaction. The album was nominated as "best CD release of the month" on the website „Jazz in Belgium" so I was really proud and had a lot of success with it. *Caroll Vanwelden sings Shakespeare Sonnets* is my third official CD coming out, because the album that I recorded with Tars Lootens wasn't released. We just made it for fun but didn't have any budget to release it. Writing music on Shakespeare Sonnets took me 1,5 year and the producing took another eight months. So it all takes a lot of time and money when you want to write and record your own songs.

... Pop oder Jazz?

My heart is totally going for jazz, but in the first place for good music that touches me, it makes no difference what it is. For me music is one big world and I don't see it as Jazz, Pop, Latin, ...

... musikalische Vorbilder und Lieblingsalben:

Ella Fitzgerald, Joni Mitchell, Richard Bona, Pat Metheny, Elis Regina, Tom Jobim, Noa, Rachel Ferrell, Sting, Eliane Elias. Elis & Tom is one of my preferred albums of all time. I love this album. It is intimate, with a lot of colours, beautiful chords and minimalistic arrangements and an amazing warm voice sound.

Diskografie

- 2012: Caroll Vanwelden:
Sings Shakespeare Sonnets (JAZZ'n'ARTS)
2009: Caroll Vanwelden: Cheek to Cheek
2008: Caroll Vanwelden: Colours

Links

www.carollvanwelden.be
www.jazznarts.de

Tourdaten

Caroll Vanwelden Sings Shakespeare Sonnets

Caroll Vanwelden (v, p), Thomas Siffing (tr), Markus Faller (dr), Mini Schulz (b)

2012

11.10.2012 Stuttgart-BIX
06.11.2012 ENJOY JAZZ Festival-Mannheim Alte Feuerwache

2013

10.01.2013 Brüssel-The Music Village
06.04.2013 München-JAZZ'n'ARTS-Night-Unterfahrt
08.04.2013 Mannheim-National Theater

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