

# Henning Sieverts & Four Tenors

(Nagel Heyer Records 2096)

## Line-up:

Henning Sieverts: bass, cello, composition

Till Martin: tenor-, soprano saxophone, clarinet, bass clarinet

Jason Seizer: tenor saxophone, flute

Hugo Siegmeth: tenor-, soprano saxophone, clarinet, bass clarinet

Ulrich Wangenheim: tenor-, soprano saxophone, flute, clarinet, bass clarinet

Christian Elsässer: piano, fender rhodes

Bastian Jütte: drums

## Band info:

**This band is a double disappointment:** The four tenors do not belt out any opera arias nor do they provide sweaty and bloody "tenor battles", as they used to be fought in the good old days of jazz by musicians such as Coleman Hawkins, Ben Webster and Lester Young.

So what remains after this double dis-illusion? An **entertaining listening experience with a whole woodwind arsenal:** soprano saxophones, flutes, clarinets, bass clarinet - and of course tenor saxophones. There are also a bass / cello, piano and drums. "Henning Sieverts & Four Tenors" is a **septet that combines the colours of an orchestra with the agility of a small combo.**

Also present are the "Four Brothers" from the Munich jazz scene: Till Martin, Jason Seizer, Hugo Siegmeth and Ulrich Wangenheim - all four outstanding and very different tenor saxophonists who usually book Sieverts for their bands as a bass player - a wind section of band leaders so to speak supported by a fine rhythm section including Christian Elsässer (piano) and Bastian Jütte (drums).

They will play ten creative compositions by Sieverts - filled with strong melodies and original ideas: for example, the archaic 12 bars of a blues are connected to a 12-tone row ("Twelve By Four"). A lyric Bossa knots the dancing legs with a 5 / 4-6 / 4-beat ("Fivesix"). A delicate meditation caresses the tone "G" ("Gentle G"). A powerful four-part tenor canon bows to the great Nelson Mandela ("Rolihlahla," Mandela's maiden name). A dreamy melody ("Night Flight") flies over to Sieverts in an atmospheric night flight over South America. In the archaic "Dark Brown Boogie" the four winds almost appear "a capella". And finally a classic by Duke Ellington ("The Mooche") receives a makeover.

**It is amazing how different the four tenor saxophonists sound** – you can undoubtedly recognize each one of them after one or two notes. An inspiring musical quiz! There are - as I said - **no "Tenor Battles" with winners and losers – the only winners are the listeners**, who can enjoy the healthy "athletic" competition, which drives each one of them to musical peaks.

The four master tenors even cut a fine figure with their numerous back-up instruments (soprano saxophone, flute, clarinet, bass clarinet), just as Henning Sieverts on the cello. This **unusual richness of timbres** makes this CD so rich in content, yet it is easily digestible whole food for body and mind!

Another special treat: **"Four Tenors" is Sieverts' CD number 100, the eleventh as a band leader!**

### **Press Review on "Henning Sieverts & Four Tenors":**

# **"A veritable cornucopia of originality and diversity of ideas** - a mixture of tonal richness and playful pioneering spirit whose description is beyond the means of the written word. If you try it anyway, then most likely including phrases like one from the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*: "Phenomenal original compositions, whether wild or rickety, floating in the atmospheric or simply wonderfully heartbreaking, without the slightest trace of banality and kitsch" (*Norddeutscher Rundfunk, CD recommendation "Album of the Week"*)

# **"Powerful sound of the four tenor saxophonists - a pleasing fresh album"**  
(*Hans Hielscher, Spiegel Online*)

# **"This music deserves the – unfortunately not translatable – title "Serious Fun"**. Henning Sieverts weaves strong melodies with polychrome harmonies and when one listens carefully its rolling grooves turn out to be tricky rhythmic puzzles, which swing in every moment. The band sometimes sounds like a little big band, then like a chamber music ensemble, confident in the earthy blues feeling like in the tender folk song jazz, in Brazilian and South African-inspired pieces." (*Beate Sampson, Bayerischer Rundfunk*)

# **"Four Tenors" is a costliness in several ways. As many as four winds cost the bandleader a lot. They also want to be fed with good material, that is with good ideas for composition - Sieverts manages this in an impressive way - and receives beautiful soundscapes in return, on the one hand orchestral, on the other hand moving as you would expect from a small combo "**  
(*Hessischer Rundfunk, hr2-Jazzfacts*)

# **"A colourful, rich collection of orchestral compositions. The four tenors, who "sing" here together, are fortunately excellent saxophonists and not the usual choristers of poplike classical music. "**(*Culture News*)

# **In 10 refined original compositions as well as a song by Duke Ellington Sieverts explores the sonic possibilities of this line-up through different angles and perspectives - not only with the tenor saxophone, but also with a soprano, clarinet and flute"** (*Jazzthetik*)