



Marike van Dijk

The Stenography Project

Brooklyn Jazz Underground Records

2015

Variiegated in both form and feel, Dutch-born, now Brooklyn-based composer and saxophonist Marike Van Dijk's *The Stenography Project* exemplifies the alchemical nature of the

BJUR project. Featuring this 12-piece band with string quartet, the album presents eight diverse compositions that cogently thread together a wide range of influences, including multiple streams of jazz, traditional classical and avant-garde, Latin, folk, and more. Each ambitious blend unfolds with an almost narrative structure, sketching characters and stories, their elusive outlines all the more intriguing because of their implied nature. Equally impressive is the shift between pastoral color and urban angularity. However, for all the deliberative structure, Dijk provides space for her band members to deploy their individual voices. As is often the case, Dijk's methods can be perhaps most easily observed when applied to a known quantity, in this case her reworking of the Beattle's "She's Leaving Home." Here she encases the original in a minimalist avant-garde orchestration and glacial jazz beat. The result is a sinuous example of experimental reframing grounded in the jazz tradition of covering pop tunes, but approached from a very oblique angle. Dijk and her compatriots are testing definitions and while not every moment may hit the mark, the experiment is illustrative, the risk-taking welcome.

Tracks and Personnel

Housewarming

Tracks: Whispering Grass; Light; When He Loved You; Moonlight in Vermont; Decrement; Housewarming; Ghost Story; New Old West Theme; Hymn of Thanks; Lighter than Air; Arise; Everything You Need; I Could Have Danced All Night

Personnel: Jeremy Siskind: piano; Nancy Harms: voice; Lucas Pino: tenor sax, clarinet, bass clarinet; Kurt Elling: voice (tracks 2 & 11), Peter Eldridge: voice (tracks 6 & 8), and Kendra Shank:voice (track 7)

Extension Deadline

Tracks: Extension Deadline; Night Watchman; What Happened Hear?; San Jose; Little B's Poem; Where Angeles Fear; Optimism; Red Flag;

Personnel: Alex Norris: trumpet & flugelhorn; George Colligan: Hammond A-100 organ;
Gary Thomas: tenor sax; Rudy Royston: drums

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Tracks: I Am Not A Robot; 322423; The End; She's Leaving Home; Jean Jaques; Christmas;
22e (To Everyone I miss); Walsje

Personnel: Marike van Dijk: saxophones/compositions; Ben van Gelder: bass clarinet/alto
sax; Alan Ferber: trombone; Anna Webber: flute/tenor sax; Lucas Pino: clarinet/tenor sax;
Sita Chay and Eli Speirs: violin; Eric Lemmon: viola; Manuel Schmiedel: piano; Rick Rosato:
bass; Mark Schilders: drums; Amanda Gookin, Defne Sahin, Ruben Samama: vocals