

Melanie De Biasio - Blackened Cities (2016)

Written by bluesever

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1. *Blackened Cities (24:16)* Melanie De Biasio – Voice, Flute Pascal Mohy – Piano Pascal Paulus - Synth, Backing Vocals Sam Gerstmans – Double Bass Dré Pallemmaerts – Drums Bart Vincent - Backing Vocals

Classically trained flautist and vocalist Melanie de Biasio is often referred to as the Belgian Billie Holiday. She's been described as one of the most exciting artists in jazz by presenter Gilles Peterson. *No Deal*, her successful second album of 2014, was critically acclaimed, whilst her present Facebook page describes her immersive style of music as "space velvet silence purple echo under light".

Blackened Cities, her new composition of twenty-five minutes, will be released on 20th May, 2016 through Play It Again Sam. It's inspired by the raw, harsh and rugged post-industrial landscapes found in cities like Manchester, Detroit, Bilbao and her home city of Charleroi in Belgium. The album cover presents a black and white image of Charleroi by creative photographer Stephan Vanfleteren.

Melanie's adventurous ensemble on this recording are Pascal Mohy (piano), Pascal Paulus (vintage synths), Sam Gerstmans (double bass), Dre Pallemmaerts (drums) and Bart Vincent (vocals). She says of the recording: "I don't think anyone, including me, was expecting a 25-minute piece which wasn't a successor to *No Deal*, or anything other than a collection of new songs. I followed what the music told me, like a gut feeling".

This is tender and emotional jazz with a feeling of hope, spontaneity and simmering orchestration. "Everything or almost everything was there in that collective moment on autumn

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afternoon...”, says Melanie recalling the recording session and her remarks ring true. There’s intimacy, sensuality and a sense of completion to her music. Nothing seems to be missing. Everything is there that needs to be. --- Anthony Weightman, aaamusic.co.uk

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