

Marcin Wasilewski Trio - Jazz Baltica, Salzaau 2008

Written by bluesever

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Marcin Wasilewski - piano Slawomir Kurkiewicz - bass Michal Miskiewicz - drums Salzaau, July 4, 2008

Salzaau, Germany. This edition of Germany's Jazz Baltica Festival was billed as "The Battle of the Big Bands," and included the Jazz Big Band Graz, the Bohuslan Big Band with Steve Swallow, the NDR Big Band directed by Maria Schneider, and The Vanguard Jazz Orchestra. Still, as good as some of their performances were, and some were indeed terrific, the highlights of the event might have been the shows by a couple of small groups: The Hank Jones trio with James Moody and Miguel Zenón Quartet. And their performances stood as perfect bookends, celebrating both the history and, arguably, the future of jazz.

Held in and around the Salzaau castle, a bucolic setting near Kiel in Northern Germany, July 1-5, the Jazz Baltica festival is part of the classical music-oriented Schleswig-Holstein Music Festival. It was started in 1991 as part of a program of cultural cooperation between Baltic states and has since grown into one of the important stops in the jazz summer circuit in Europe.

Because of the programming philosophy, over the years, the programs have been often set up as meeting places for artists from all over the world to work on one-of-a-kind projects with regional bands and players. Some of the musicians who have appeared at Jazz Baltica include Pat Metheny, Herbie Hancock, Wayne Shorter, Chick Corea, David Murray, Charles Lloyd but also Jan Garbarek, Lars Danielsson, Dino Saluzzi, E.S.T., Gonzalo Rubalcaba, Tomasz Stanko and Marcin Wasilewski. It's a long, rich list. ---Fernando Gonzalez, irom.wordpress.com

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