

Piotr Wojtasik □ – Hope (2001)



1 *Hope* 2 *Quest* 3 *Village* 4 *Taurus People* 5 *Rose Tattoo* 6 *Believe, For It Is True!* Double Bass – Clarence Seay Drums – Ronnie Burrage Piano – Leszek Możdżer Tenor Saxophone – Maciej Sikala (track 3) Tenor Saxophone, Soprano Saxophone – David Liebman Trumpet – Piotr Wojtasik

Revelations seldom happen and if they occur they usually get lost in the multitude of loudly advertised events. Only few realize consciously their presence, but the only thing they can do is to bring people's attention to the phenomenon. PIOTR WOJTASIK is a genuine revelation of Polish jazz. No doubt about this. It could also be obvious to those lucky ones who witnessed, or watched on TV, the extraordinary jam session, when Wynton Marsalis and Piotr Wojtasik joined in a prolonged, improvised exchange of calls and responses. Wynton, by that time touring Poland (November '94) with the series of lectures, was visibly delighted to discover such unexpectedly brilliant partner. Ten years ago, the musical personality of Wojtasik, translated into trumpet and flugelhorn sounds, has been taken for granted by the friendly circles at the Katowice Academy of Music, where he'd been studying at the Jazz Department. Nobody called him revelation then. It took Willie Thomas' visit and his open admiration to realize the caliber of Wojtasik's talent. Thomas, the well known jazz clinician and himself an excellent trumpet player, was genuinely surprised and full of praise for the astonishing art of young student. The year was 1986. Piotr was 22 and, besides playing in Academy's big band, he cooperated with such groups like After Action Satisfaction, Rotunda Big Band, Blues Session and already famous Young Power. There was still a long way toward his own LP, so the traces of his playing could be found on Young Power LP only. Admired by fellow students Wojtasik graduated from the Academy in 1987. His diploma was a milestone, marking the beginning of a fruitful period in his musical career. Now he could really spread the wings of his rich and creative musical imagination, backed by virtuoso mastery and magnificent sound. The Academy, realizing his potential, asked him to teach trumpet and improvisation at the Jazz Department, and so he joined the faculty. This step very quickly proved beneficial for his students. Even more important was his joining W. Niedziela's group New Presentation, which also enjoyed the cooperation of the phenomenal vocal Lora Szafran. In the fall of that same year, 1988 the group scored a real triumph during Warsaw Jazz Jamboree. The appreciation for the mastery and moving beauty of

Wojtasik's art was getting wider and wider. The invitations to cooperate and record started to come. First, he recorded two very well received albums with New Presentation, the one CD with Eryk Kulm's Quintessence, then "Ballads" with Jarek Smietana and a CD with the Travelling Birds Quintet. Teaming with Krzysztof Popek (who once led the Young Power group), flutist, composer and producer, brought further successes highlighting the dimensions of trumpeter's possibilities. In the fall of 1992 Wojtasik joins the Volker Greve - Krzysztof Popek Quintet and records "Places". Reviewing this CD in Jazz Forum, Piotr Iwicki states: "Wojtasik reaffirms his superiority in our country; his playing puts him at the very forefront of European jazz". This present CD brings to life Krzysztof Popek's idea of giving Wojtasik the partners, background and setting, his artistry deserves. Above the background of strings created by them, Wojtasik's trumpet and flugelhorn sound floats, taking on various shades and colours and carrying along a wealth of jazz storytelling - drama and tenderness, flashes of strength and subtlety - a truly human message. ---PowerBros, amazon.com

O.k., also this is retro, looking back to the early 1960s, accoustic Herbie Hancock. The compositions have complex, forward driving beats and sharp phrases. The first 10 seconds, opening with drums, signal what will happen during the next 42 minutes. Excellent craftsmanship of the players:Piotr Wojtasik trumpet & fluegelhorn, well known David Liebman tenor sax, Leszek Mozdzer piano, Clarence Seay bass and Ronnie Burrage on drums, all playing to the point. Not for nothing this CD was the Jazz Record of the Year in 2003 in Poland, one of the few great Jazz nations in Europe. ---Klaus Mueller, amazon.com

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