

Trigg & Gusset – Adagio For The Blue (2015)

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Środa, 29 Listopad 2017 15:42 -

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1 *Intimate* 5:54 2 *Cook* 5:55 3 *Madagascar* 4:04 4 *Vanishing Gold* 7:16 5
Rhododendron 4:03 6 *The Vault* 3:40 7 *Tortuga* 4:40 8 *Cardium* 6:20 9 *Promenade* 4:31
10 *Primrose Path* 6:14 Trigg & Gusset are: Bart Knol – Piano, Fender Rhodes, Electric
Guitar, Synths, Beats, Samples Erik van Geer - Tenor Saxophone, Bass Saxophone, Flute,
Bass Clarinet + Dominique Bentvelsen - Double Bass (1,9) Midas Ghijssels - Acoustic Guitar,
Flamenco Guitar (1,7) Just Lavooij - Double Bass (2,5) Coen Hamelink – Trumpet (3,5,10)
Matthijs Blom - Electric Guitar (10)

Trigg & Gusset traffics in a deeply aromatic blend of noir-jazz on its sophomore effort *Adagio for the Blue*, the title itself a succinct encapsulation of the album's tone. In contrast to the improv-based character of the group's 2013 debut outing *Legacy of the Witty*, the new one's rooted in formal compositional structures that still allow for soloing and improvisation. Though Trigg & Gusset is comprised of Bart Knol and Erik van Geer, it's Knol who's the more dominant contributor, given that he arranged and produced *Adagio for the Blue*'s material and is credited as the sole composer on five of the ten pieces (the others are credited to both members). Yet while the multi-instrumentalist contributes keyboards, synths, beats, electric guitar, and samples to the recording, it's van Geer's woodwinds (flute, bass clarinet, tenor saxophone) that often take the lead.

The two do a commendable job of simulating a live jazz quartet, given the fact that Knol assumes the role of pianist and drummer on most tracks. As a pianist, his light touch calls to mind someone like Ahmad Jamal, and it's an approach that complements the late-night feel of the material. While “*Vanishing Gold*” and “*The Vault*” feature the duo only, the typical album track features the two augmented by others: the group's smoky music is never more compellingly presented, for example, than on the opening “*Intimate*,” an aptly titled exercise in late-night melancholia that sees the leaders' bass clarinet and piano ably supported by double bassist Dominique Bentvelsen and acoustic guitarist Midas Ghijssels. As silky and enveloping as the backdrop is, however, it's van Geer's haunting lead playing that's the most striking

component (Ghijsels is later given his own moment in the spotlight when his Flamenco guitar playing is featured on “Tortuga”).

Much of the album is downtempo, but there are livelier tunes, too, among them “Madagascar,” whose comparatively spirited acoustic jazz groove receives a spike of energy from the playing of trumpeter Coen Hamelink, and there are moments on “Rhododendron” that evoke the laid-back splendour of Kind of Blue, especially when the front-line consists of van Geer's tenor sax and Hamelink's trumpet. An occasional classical influence also seeps into the album, a case in point the brooding, Satie-like piano figure Knol threads into the ponderous rumination “The Vault,” and with Knol's electric guitar conjoined to van Geer's tenor sax, the slinky groove of “Promenade” oozes an undeniable Badalamenti vibe. Such moments indicate that Adagio for the Blue should interest those whose taste runs to The Kilimanjaro Darkjazz Ensemble and Dictaphone. --- textura.org

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