



MAX PETERSEN

LiberA

Release date: 27 October 2021

Distribution: Bandcamp

MAX PETERSEN – COMPOSITION, PIANO, HARPSICHORD

SONG YI JEON – VOCALS

KOLJA LEGDE – DOUBLE BASS

FABIAN ARENDS – DRUMS, MODULAR SYNTH

COSIMA BODIEN – VIOLIN

ISABEL GEHWEILER – CELLO

PRODUCED BY VALENTIN LIECHTI

The forthcoming full-length release from German-Australian pianist/composer Max Petersen is titled *LiberA*. This fusion of the feminine and masculine aspects of the Roman god of freedom is very telling. It evokes the notion of pursuing freedoms: personal, civil, musical, and creative. It also speaks to an active engagement with the synthesis of apparent opposites: jazz/classical, synthetic/acoustic, formally restrictive/improvisationally unbound.

Most of this material was written for different configurations that together form an ensemble, called “Double-Trio”: i.e. a formal fusion of Petersen’s classical (piano, violin, cello) and jazz piano trio (piano plus rhythm section). The result is not only a highly nuanced interpolation of genres, but a tension-producing interplay between distinct musical traditions, languages and approaches to composition and performance. At the level of instrumentation, additional colors were added; vocals were introduced (through the works of Korean Singer and Composer, Song Yi Jeon) and the acoustic-only soundscape was embellished by the addition of modular synthesis.

The compositional work for the record started in the summer of 2020. Most of the material was recorded in a series of sessions in the first quarter of 2021, under the guidance of producer Valentin Liechti. All of the instrumentalists involved were given the freedom and agency to participate in actively shaping the material, which allowed it to mature organically. The post-production, which leaned heavily into sound design and detailed work with electro-acoustic elements, took place in late spring/early summer of 2021.

LiberA is a very personal record, one full of vivid macro and micro snapshots of life, each rendered through a prism of an intimate dialogue with the players involved. It features a tender eulogy (*Thilo*), a tribute to progressive politics (*Pete Buttigieg*) and a vignette of life in a commune founded in the Swiss Jura (*Crémines Open*). The album also features songs about nature and shamanism (*Song and Stars*), family, love, and memory (*Ocean*), exorcising your demons (*Get Out of Me*), the thrill of running through your favorite forest (*Eschenwald*), and the freedom that comes with dropping out of social media (*No SM*). There is also a song which was written as a commission for a collaborative dance piece (*Trio for Zoë*).

LiberA is an exercise in freedom. *LiberA* is the cohesive eclectic. *LiberA* is both utopian and realistic. *LiberA* is a choice.

www.max-petersen.com | bit.ly/libera-epk

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