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CD Release Tour
in Europe

NEW ALBUM JANUARY 2018
SAMUEL BLASER TRIO
AT TAKTLOS 2017

With a history of work in Switzerland, NY and Berlin, trombonist Samuel Blaser brings his multi-national trio with avant improvising guitarist Marc Ducret and Dutch drummer Peter Bruun to the stage of the Taktlos Festival in Zurich, Switzerland in 2017 for a set of extended improvisations, all three players displaying a unique language of incisive and fascinating free jazz.

"Parsed into four discrete pieces, the Taktlos performance is a fluid exercise in revolving roles from the jump. Ducret trades in jagged punctuations, mercurial arpeggios and swollen drone bursts on Stoppage, the first and longest. Blaser reacts as balm, his lubricious lines drawing a direct invisible lineage back suave and soothing bop purveyers. A reversal and it's Blaser with low brass growls as Bruun colors the corners and edges keeping a rhythmic presence which bolsters and ornaments without drawing attention away from the colloquy of his colleagues. A drum solo filled with fluid, frothing beats works as both palate cleanser and reset into an ambling blues. Later, a froggy brass ostinato serves a similar purpose signaling first clean picking from Ducret and then feral, sharp-fanged blasts of distortion."

-Derek Taylor,

Listen & Download "At Taktlos 2017" www.samuelblaser.com/sbt

Line Up

Samuel Blaser (trombone)
Marc Ducret (guitar)
Peter Bruun (batterie)

4 Titres / 56 minutes

01. Stoppage
02. Fanfare/Useless
03. Jukebox
04. How to Lose



"Blaser is one of the most globally recognized performers on his instrument." - Berliner Zeitung

At a time when more musicians are trying to be heard than ever before, rare gems like Samuel Blaser seem, paradoxically, rise above it all. Since his 2007 debut as a leader, *7th Heaven* (Between the Lines), Blaser has grown at an almost incomprehensible rate, from a straight-ahead hard bopper in his mid-twenties to an innovative free player and ever-searching composer and bandleader in his early thirties - one whose improvisational strength has received high praise from media the world over.

Born and raised in La Chaux-de-Fonds, Switzerland, Blaser lived in New York City for many years before relocating to Berlin, where he currently resides. He began trombone lessons at the age of 9, and his early interests ranged from Swiss folk music to American R&B and jazz. He entered the local conservatory at 14 and graduated in 2002 after being awarded prizes in both the jazz and classical spheres, including the 2000 *Benny Golson Prize*. Participation in the heralded Vienna Art Orchestra and European Radio Big Band eventually led to a Fullbright Scholarship, facilitating studies in the United States at the Purchase College Conservatory of Music.

In his relatively short career, Blaser has worked with Swiss percussion legend Pierre Favre, pianist Hal Galper, drummer John Hollenbeck and saxophonist Michael Blake, and has worked with *Grammy Award*-winning producer Robert Sadin, and more recently with Daniel Humair and Michel Portal.

2018 will see Blaser touring with his trio featuring French guitarist Marc Ducret and Danish drummer Peter Bruun. Blaser is also back on the road with his original quartet to promote *Early in the Morning*, an homage to the Blues with Russ Lossing on piano, Masa Kamaguchi on bass, drummer Gerry Hemingway, Wallace Roney on trumpet and Oliver Lake on alto saxophone. Samuel Blaser is a XO Sophisticated Brass Artist



UPCOMING SHOWS

JUNE 2018 / CD RELEASE TOUR US + CANADA

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KEY POINTS

- Born in Switzerland in 1981, studied at the Conservatoire de musique in La Chaux-de-Fonds.
- Fulbright Grantee - SUNY Purchase University - 2007 Master in Music. 2006 "Honorable Mention" - J.J Johnson competition.
- Tours world-wide as a leader, performs regularly as a sideman with Michael Blake, Marc Ducret, Pierre Favre, Russ Lossing and Billy Mintz
- +100 concerts per year
- Holder of O1B-Visa (3 years)
- Nine albums as a leader:

18 monologues élastiques, (audio-book, 2017)

Spring Rain, Whirlwind Recordings, 2015

A Mirror to Machaut, Songlines, 2013

As The Sea, Hat Hut, 2012

Boundless, Hat Hut, 2011

Consort in Motion, Kind of Blue Records, 2011

Pieces of Old Sky, Clean Feed, 2009

Solo Bone, Slam Productions, 2009

7th Heaven, Between The Lines, 2008

- **Publications:**

Big Mama Trombone (Audio-Book)
Ed. Little Village/harmonia mundi, 2016

- **Commercial highlights:**

Performances with Paul Motian, Jimmy Heath, Clark Terry, Phil Woods, Lee Scratch Perry, Buddy de Franco, New York Voices, Vienna Art Orchestra

- **Awards & Honors:**

Downbeat Critics Poll, USA, Rising star trombonist, #4 in 2016, #4 in 2015, #7 in 2013; Rising star composer, #13 in 2015
Académie du Jazz, France, Nominee in 2015 & 2016 & 2017

New York City Jazz Record, USA, Musician of the year, 2014

- 13 commissioned works for contemporary orchestras, theaters, ensembles from 2002-2016 (Conspiration du Syphon, Nouvel Ensemble Contemporain, Songlines, Harmonipan, Whirlwind).



Samuel Blaser with Marc Ducret & Peter Bruun – Taktlos Zürich 2017

One of the enduring pleasures of improvised music is the ceaseless manner in which seemingly disparate players can at once glean common musical footing and yet remain reliably and completely themselves in ensuing exchanges. Swiss trombonist Samuel Blaser and French guitarist Marc Ducret certainly fall under this meritable mantle with a mutability of expression that can accommodate virtually any spontaneous context. Nearly a quarter-century separates them in age, but the music-making language they speak together as peers preserves the fulcrum of improvisation at its forefront.

Ducret's most prolific partnership is with American Tim Berne as represented by well over a dozen recordings and innumerable concerts with saxophonist's numerous bands. Occasional and erroneous comparisons to Pat Metheny remain hopelessly reductionist and deficient in describing the diversity of his fret-centered tool box. Blaser's associations include formative projects with the late Paul Motian and fellow Hat recording artists Russ Lossing and Gerry Hemingway. Blaser and Ducret's professional relationship dates to the dawn of the last decade and includes several earlier albums for Hat (*Boundless* (2011) and *As the Sea* (2012)) alongside a schedule of touring.

Duo became trio after a downtime poolside dialogue between Blaser and Ducret in Cabo Frio, Brazil on one such itinerary. Danish drummer Peter Bruun seemed like a felicitous fit and beginning with an inaugural gig in May of 2013 at the Jazzdor Festival in Berlin the three players began extensive tours of Europe, Asia and South America. Blaser estimates roughly 120 concerts over the ensuing years, no meager feat considering the band had yet to cut a commercial recording. Radio broadcasts and YouTube footage served well as marketing materials instead and Blaser found the flexibility of 21st century means for regional and global promotion refreshing, although the itch to release a formal document remained a persistent concern.

Three days prior to the Taktlos gig chosen toward that end and presented here, bad luck befell the band and Blaser was involved in a bicycling accident in Berlin. The wheels of his conveyance became ensnared in the tracks of a tramway and the outcome was an assemblage of scrapes and bruises and more seriously, a broken rib. Patched up and fortunate that his injuries weren't more serious, a prescription of pills helped assuage the pain. Blaser jokes that the steady diet of medication doesn't seem to have impacted the music in any invasive or adverse way.

Visually from the Taktlos stage, the trio echoed their surface stylistic differences. Ducret, often hunched or bobbing and weaving to the implicit

ensnaring rhythms, bedecked in sunglasses, skullcap and cape scarf, affects the itinerant air of a punk rock bedouin. Bruun is lanky and long-limbed, black dinner jacket and white t-shirt suggesting a smirking nod to the usual attire-bound trappings of a concert performance. And then there's Blaser, spectacled and clean-countenanced, in a snug-fitting dress shirt, jeans and Chukka boots. Throughout, he shows no signs of peripheral pain in the graceful movements of slide and mute which facilitate the myriad sounds loosed from the bell of his horn.

Parsed into four discrete pieces, the Taktlos performance is a fluid exercise in revolving roles from the jump. Ducret trades in jagged punctuations, mercurial arpeggios and swollen drone bursts on the first and longest. Blaser reacts as balm, his lubricious lines drawing a direct invisible lineage back suave and soothing bop purveyors like J.J. Johnson and Eddie Bert. A reversal and it's Blaser with low brass growls as Bruun colors the corners and edges keeping a rhythmic presence which bolsters and ornaments without drawing attention away from the colloquy of his colleagues. A drum solo filled with fluid, frothing beats works as both palate cleanser and reset into an ambling blues. Later, a froggy brass ostinato serves a similar purpose signaling first clean picking from Ducret and then feral, sharp-fanged blasts of distortion.

The three shorter pieces delve into different combinations. Bruun's mallets and brush work frames an opening of high fret-picking and metallic, slide-tempered smears. Ducret deploys some bass-associative techniques including string-slapping and tapping as the piece shifts into a somber reverie section steeped in legato trombone patterns, rich in pathos and tonal purity. Blaser brings corpulent multiphonics fully to bear against a faint accompaniment from Bruun as Ducret skulks around the edges, gaining velocity for a solo stacked with tightly deployed clusters. Riffs materialize and dissipate with regularity over variable speeds and the in-the-moment error of an audibly dropped stick is folded purposefully into the performance.

For the final piece, launching as a loosely-structured dirge, luminous overlapping tones, bowed metal, muted brass murmurs and crunchy guitar effects all converge and diverge in the service of keeping the audience guessing. Frenetic mallets and a serrated guitar drone land on another ostinato from the leader, shifting the focus to fractured funk. The delicate, madrigal-like dénouement that drifts into silence on the agency of Ducret's strings couldn't be more different from the aural sketches that preceded it. Accidents and injurious outcomes are among the possible perils for a trio on tour, but Samuel Blaser proves unequivocally in the company of comrades Marc Ducret and Peter Bruun that unforeseen circumstance can't keep an indefatigable improviser down.

