



PIROUET
P R E S S R E L E A S E

PIROUET Records

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JOCHEN RUECKERT CHARM OFFENSIVE

MARK TURNER
ORLANDO LE FLEMING
MIKE MORENO



Jochen Rueckert
Charm Offensive

Release date: September 2, 2016

Pirouet Records · PIT3095

Distribution: Believe Digital | USA, Canada: NRW Distribution · Europe (except GB): NRW Distribution · GB: Discovery Records · Japan: Gats Production

Mark Turner · tenor saxophone

Mike Moreno · guitar

Orlando le Fleming · bass

Jochen Rueckert · drums

- 1. Stretch Mark 2. 5-Hydroxytryptamine
- 3. Aussenposition 4. Parasitosis 5. Eunice Park
- 6. The Alarmists 7. Purring Excellence
- 8. Charm Offensive

Press release

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Charm Offensive—The Attraction of Opposites

Drummer Jochen Rueckert is one of a group of exceptional German jazz musicians who migrated to New York City in the 90's and found a home in this jazz musicians' mecca. His participation in such leading groups as the Marc Copland Trio, Nils Wogram's Root 70, the Kurt Rosenwinkel Group, and the Mark Turner Band has catapulted Rueckert into the front row of the Big Apple's premiere musicians. On ***Charm Offensive***, Rueckert's second Pirouet CD, some of the most inventive and successful players on the NY scene join up as Jochen, tenor saxophonist Mark Turner, guitarist Mike Moreno, and bassist Orlando le Fleming conduct a captivating musical foray into transformed musical territory.





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For all his success as a sideman, Jochen Rueckert has also won acclaim for his own groups and compositions. *Jazz Times* wrote of his debut Pirouet CD *Somewhere Meeting Nobody*, “Rueckert’s first as a leader for Pirouet after many sideman appearances for the label ranks as one of 2011’s best releases yet”, and *Jazz Thing* lauded, “pure poetry drips from every note...” *NPR* tagged tenor saxophonist Mark Turner as “...probably the most influential tenor man of his generation.”

Jochen and Mark first met over 20 years ago. Since then they have worked together in various bands, including guitarist Kurt Rosenwinkel’s, and Turner has been playing in Rueckert’s quartet since its inception some 7 years ago. *Downbeat* counts Mike Moreno as “One of the most compelling guitarists in jazz today”. Mike and Jochen have been playing together since Moreno first moved to NYC around 1999. “We did a lot of playing in the fairly incestuous bands of his own and Aaron Parks’, often with the same people.”

Jochen met bassist Orlando le Fleming playing in Will Vinson’s band about eight years ago. “I picked these musicians, apart from the obvious reasons of Mike and me having worked on the Indian stuff, because I feel very comfortable in any setting with them, and because we have been developing a common language over the years.”

The afore-mentioned ‘Indian stuff’ refers to three pieces on the album. “Mike and I have been messing around over the last few years with some adaptations of carnatic music, one of the genres of Indian classical music; he was playing a type of modernized electric *Veena*, a kind of South Indian lute, and I had been studying the *pakhavaj*, a two-headed barrel-shaped Indian drum. We would take some traditional forms and ragas and alter some of the rhythm and add Western harmony. I always suspected Mark’ interest in vegetarian Indian food and the sweeping selection of sherwanis he wore hinted at a deeper interest in the area’s culture and when we decided to bring this music to him, we discovered his vast knowledge of South Asian music. So we went ahead and adapted some of these compositions to fit Western tempered tuning. Mike devised a system to assimilate the original micro-tuning to a standard guitar and I transcribed some of the *pakhavaj* patterns for the drum set. Finally, we changed the melodies even more and ended up with *Charm Offensive*, *Parasitosis* and *Purring Excellence*. These titles are a result of phonetical imitations of anagrams of the underlying composition, as a nod to the original raga. ▶





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► *Charm Offensive* stuck as an album title, as it embodies two polar opposites. *Dichotomy* has always attracted me and is clearly reflected in the compositional modus operandi here.” The other six pieces on the CD all emanate from Jochen’s very personal perspective on life’s vagaries. There is a disarming juxtaposition of the relaxed samba-esque theme and the disquieting interludes on *5-Hydroxytryptamine*: “I composed half of the song while on antidepressants, and the other half while discontinuing the use of

said antidepressants. Interestingly, the more soothing section is the result of the discomforting time of tapering off the drug—a clear rebuttal of traditional interpretations of correlations between a composer’s mindset and their output.”

Short and without improvisation, “*Aussenposition* was conceived on and is dedicated to the infamous bus transfer to and from aircraft at Frankfurt airport. The three notes repeating in the melody correlate to a chart of interactions ►





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► I recorded between the bus driver and the purser of the aircraft's crew, many times indicating but never resulting in the hoped-for action (i.e. bus departing). The whole song is an exercise in patience and prolonging discomfort."

The lyrical, flowing *Eudynoa* features a warm-wooded bass solo, Turner's conversational tenor solo, and the drums' inventive play over the changes.

"*Eunice Park* is a character in a Gary Shteyngart novel, the love interest of the protagonist in a near future totalitarian version of New York. Conditions of society have evolved to be not dissimilar to the ones imagined in this novel, which compelled me to name this song. It is the piece that is most rooted in jazz tradition, in a semi-sarcastic way."

"*Stretchmark*'s melody is a musical approximation of some

of the first gurgling "words" my son made when he was around eight months old. One particular phrase stuck and became the A section. At the time I was impressed by the rapid growth of his thighs, with the skin not being able to keep up, hence the title."

The ascending chords on the ballad *The Alarmists* lends tension to the haunting theme, with an ending that leaves the piece seemingly unresolved.

There's an autobiographical feel to Jochen Rueckert's music, a mixture of playfulness and profundity, a dry humor coupled with a depth that emanates from musicians playing off the same intellectual and emotional guidelines; *Charm Offensive*—an alluring musical assault that stirs up the listeners' sensibilities. ■

CD Release Tour: Jochen Rueckert Quartet live

- 09/08/2016 Frankfurt (DE)** · Romanfabrik
- 09/09/2016 Esslingen (DE)** · Jazz Festival
- 09/10/2016 Villingen-Schwenningen (DE)** · Jazzclub
- 09/12/2016 Cologne (DE)** · Stadtgarten
- 09/13/2016 Munich (DE)** · Unterfahrt
- 09/14/2016 Oslo (NOR)** · Herr Nielsen
- 09/15/2016 Helsinki (FI)** · Koko Theatre
- 09/17/2016 Warsaw (PL)** · 12on14
- 09/18/2016 Hilden (DE)** · QQTEC (WDR Aufzeichnung)
- 09/19/2016 St. Gallen (CH)** · Gambrinus/1733
- 09/20/2016 Rome (IT)** · Agus (TBC)
- 09/22/2016 Heilbronn (DE)** · Cave
- 09/22/2016 Berlin (DE)** · ZigZag
- 09/24/2016 Essen (DE)** · Grillo Theater





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Discography

Jochen Rueckert on Pirouet Records



As leader

- 2016 Jochen Rueckert: **Charm Offensive** (Mark Turner ts, Mike Moreno git, Orlando le Fleming b, Jochen Rueckert dr) · **PIT3095**
- 2011 Jochen Rueckert: **Somewhere Meeting Nobody** (Mark Turner ts, Brad Shepik g, Matt Penman b, Jochen Rueckert dr) · **PIT3055**

As sideman

- 2016 Henning Sieverts: **Double Quartet** (Loren Stillman, as, ss · Silvain Rifflet, ts, cl · Florian Weber, p · Pascal Schumacher, vib · Françoise Thuillier, tuba · Henning Sieverts, b, cello · Jochen Rueckert, dr · John Hollenbeck dr) · **PIT3092**
- 2012 Marc Copland: **Some More Love Songs** (Marc Copland p, Drew Gress b, Jochen Rueckert dr) · **PIT3062**
- 2008 Tim Hagans: **Alone Together** (Tim Hagans tp, Marc Copland p, Drew Gress b, Jochen Rueckert dr) · **PIT3030**
- 2006 Thomas Rückert: **Blue in Green** (Thomas Rückert p, Matthias Pichler b, Jochen Rueckert dr) · **PIT3020**
- 2005 Marc Copland: **Some Love Songs** (Marc Copland p, Drew Gress b, Jochen Rueckert dr) · **PIT3015**
- 2004 Thomas Rückert: **Dust of Doubt** (Thomas Rückert p, Matt Penman b, Jochen Rueckert dr) · **PIT3010**
- 2004 Jason Seizer: **Serendipity** (Jason Seizer ts, Marc Copland p, Henning Sieverts b, Jochen Rueckert dr) · **PIT3008**

