

The New York Second

After The Hours, The Minutes

Style of music: Piano Jazz (Trio)

RELEASE DATE: 07.07.2023

(Own label)

Total playing time: 66:31

Score: 18/20

<https://haraldwalkate.com/>

It was the year 2022 when I came across an excellent production, the band The New York Second released an album titled *Music At Night (And Other Stories)*. I already pointed out that the Dutch pianist and composer Harald Walkate was behind this project. He chose this band name to realise his compositions; on the aforementioned album he worked in septet format, after recordings as a quartet and quintet. Now, with the fourth release, the protagonist reduces the group to a trio. The Dutch drummer Max Sergeant is back and the bass is now plucked by Lorenzo Buffa from Italy.

In the enclosed booklet, Harald Walkate explains what was important to him in the compositions of the twelve songs. They were all inspired in some way by the passage of time, based on an essay by the Dutch writer Paul van Tongeren. Harald explains this in more detail, and I recommend you read it, as it brings you closer to the music and helps you to understand it. In addition, there are detailed explanations for each of the songs, which illuminate the respective background. Stories that life wrote, for example about "Moon, 2018", which is connected to a photograph by the Dutch photographer Ilona Langbroek, at the time a gift from his wife for his birthday, or many philosophical explanations, which each of us could certainly continue to explain individually. And "Allez Les Bleus" has its background in a visit to the South of France, to a village called Lorgues, in Provence. Here, too, one should take a look at the descriptions of the history of origins.

But now I am actually distracting myself from the music, which however inspires my thoughts from the background. The rather lush sound of the previous album has now given way to a more introverted mood, but one that leaves plenty of room for emotional associations. Piano trios have increasingly taken a different direction in recent years compared to those days when, for example, the Oscar Peterson Trio was something of a reference. So I see the current The New York Second more situated in the direction of the music I have recently experienced from formations like the Helge Lien Trio, Vein or Volker Engelberth's trio.

That means collective trio work, really making music together, creating together, somnambulist collaboration with the result of a powerfully shaped music that penetrates outwards from within the players to hit listeners deep within. Here, of course, "collaboration" counts, because you have to let yourself go in order to experience and enjoy. And again, it is a kind of mind cinema that can be more or less triggered by some songs. Despite a certain intellectual demand of the music, it seems very emotional, often very romantic, sometimes with a little trace of melancholy. Yes, you can quickly lose yourself in this sea of sound and float along, or swim along. This jazz is modern, rather typically European, with chamber music aspects and of a high standard.