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« **Rendez-vous Russe** »

Works by Shostakovich, Scriabin, Prokofiev, Rachmaninoff & Gubaidulina

Eva van Grinsven, saxophone
Helena Basilova, piano
Maria Milstein, violin
Lars Niederstraßer, saxophone

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Soulful Touch

Eva van Grinsven's *Saxofolk* debut album with the Berlage Saxophone Quartet was a spectacular success. On *Rendez-vous russe* the young Dutch saxophonist now sets out in quest of the "Russian soul," famous for its deeply felt emotionality and enthralling melancholy. Her saxophone and its marvelously versatile tone blend with the instruments of her chamber music partners, and the fine articulation so incredibly similar to the human voice produces a unique impact.

Vocal Talent

This of course applies in special measure to the songs of Sergei Rachmaninov. If his instrumental music goes straight to the heart, then his songs are universally spellbinding. His search for melancholy texts led him to symbolism and to compositions for the star Ukrainian vocalist Nina Koshétz, who also functioned as the Muse par excellence for Alexander Scriabin and Sergei Prokofiev. Her voice's fascinating appeal continues to be a vivid presence in Eva van Grinsven's transcription for saxophone.

Special Transparency

No less fascinating: the result of what initially seemed to be a very bold experiment. The saxophone assumes the cello part in Dmitri Shostakovich's Piano Trio, a posthumously published work of youthful mastery, and its enormous dynamic capabilities lend this work an unprecedented transparency. In the duet with the violin it is shown how adaptable the saxophone truly is when it is played by a genuine expert. In Shostakovich's five pieces we do not miss the second violin for a single moment.

Virtuoso Team

Two saxophones join forces for a contemporary encore. The reminiscences of Russian Orthodox sacred song create a striking effect in Sofia Gubaidulina's Duo Sonata. The fact that Lars Niederstraßer, another Berlage instrumentalist, is involved produces an especially harmonious combination of these two instruments and perfectly renders the sacred illusion on this finely balanced, three-dimensional Super Audio CD.