

céline rudolph pearls

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CÉLINE RUDOLPH PEARLS

(Obsessions)

Pearls – the mere word can reel off a movie in our imagination. Depending on character or experience, this feature may turn out to be a drama, a comedy or the documentary of a passionate affair. One of us thinks of pearls as jewelry, another may be reminded of a particularly tropical deep sea dive, a third, who may just happen to be a biologist, of the calcareous concretions of a shelled mollusk. The fact that Céline Rudolph, herself „a jewel of European jazz vocals“ according to the French radio station TSF, most likely thinks of the poetic and philosophical aspects of „Pearls“, is made clear in the title track of her new album, her eighth long-player overall. She sings gently and sensually of the pearls that inhabit her mind, calling them souvenirs that she carefully preserves – in subtly layered harmonies, strong verses or exciting improvisations. Typical of the sound of the whole album are the sparkles of the Wurlitzer and the warm Fender Rhodes, the energetic drums and the earthy bass lines, plus the acoustic guitar. Céline’s instrument of choice ever since her childhood. The pearl fisher from Berlin sailed to Brooklyn for this recording/co-production with drummer and producer Jamire Williams, whose musical résumé boasts names like Herbie Hancock, Solange Knowles, John Mayer, or Robert Glasper. The resulting „Pearls“ make up a complex and beautiful album, somewhere in between all of these musical poles, always intriguing and captivating, never a dull moment.

CÉLINE RUDOLPH voice,
acoustic guitar, string arrang.
LIONEL LOUEKE guitars, voice
LEO GENOVESE piano, keys
JOHN ELLIS bass clarinet
BURNISS TRAVIS bass
JAMIRE WILLIAMS drums

Produced by **CÉLINE RUDOLPH**
& **JAMIRE WILLIAMS**

„When I make music, I am right there, completely in the here and now,“ says Céline Rudolph. „Every tone holds my whole life. So I celebrate existence, and at the same time you will hear how much this existence hurts.“ The vocalist clearly lives in the moment and simultaneously experiences it as music. As when she heard drummer Jamire Williams for the first time in a club in Berlin a couple of years ago. „ He was the sideman that night, but I was centripetally drawn into the energy that emanated from Jamire – such enormous power, a thundering whirlwind. It electrified me and stirred my own inner whirlwind. „ As curious as she is, the vocalist started looking for more music from Jamire that very night and soon listened to his band Erimaj on repeat. When she found out that this group was on tour a little later, Céline booked a flight to Paris, watched their set and spoke to the drummer afterwards. The enthusiasm is mutual. After some talk and lots of listening, Jamire joins the project as producer. „We met in London in January in the smallest backstage area in the world, “Pizza Express”, and listened to demos of my songs. After two hours of intense listening in these 15 square feet, we selected the songs. Only a month later, we booked the

session in the Brooklyn Recording studio, a place full of a huge variety of keyboards – Wurlitzer, Fender Rhodes, Ace Tone Organ, Moog.“

Also in the band are Argentine pianist and keyboarder Leo Genovese from the Esperanza Spalding group, bass player Burniss Traviss, known for collaborations with rapper Common or pianist Jacky Terrasson, Ellis Marsalis disciple John Ellis on saxophone and Céline’s longtime colleague and partner Lionel Loueke, with whom she also recorded her last album „Obsession“, on guitar and vocals. Together with the singer-songwriter Josh Mease she adds new lyrics to her own songs in Brooklyn. „I tell stories and paint pictures. Josh dives into my world and together we write the lyrics to „Aumbaeleo“ and „Be With You“. It is important to me that the songs do not change with new lyrics. My melodies, sung without words up until then, already had a certain sound, which I wanted to keep alive in the new lyrics. In addition, in Brooklyn I wrote new chords to „Pearls“, which shine just a little more brightly to me. The same applies to the ballad „La Caravane“, which is now framed by asymmetrically arranged chord progressions. The new environment inspires me.“

During rehearsals near Times Square in Manhattan, the enthusiasm of the musicians is palpable. Complex compositions are transformed into living and breathing music. „It was crazy, but in the best possible way,“ says Jamire Williams. „I’ve never heard anything like Céline’s music, she writes in such a unique way, and her vocal sound is second to none. Her vibes and flow in connection with what our band has created make this production so special.“ From November to February, everything is in rapid progress, and soon the musicians are in the aforementioned Brooklyn Recording Studio in Cobble Hill for three days and nights. In addition to the songs, they also just go ahead and jam. One night, sound engineer Andy likes what he hears so much, he just presses record. „Leo and I join in, and we fly across different landscapes while Andy drops in live effects on my voice. That’s how „Dim Lights“ is born. The mood in the studio is intense, we inspire each other and play with great respect and dedication.“ Like this, as if in flight, eleven songs and a few improvised tracks are produced, which can now be heard on the present album. They are pearls that continue to inspire our imaginary movie, sometimes poetic, sometimes dramatic, always passionate and extraordinary, just the way we’ve come to know and expect from Céline Rudolph.

Céline Rudolph

Vocalist and composer Céline Rudolph glides between Berlin, São Paulo, Paris and New York, between tongues and genres, always landing in the very heart of music. „Music is like breathing, it was there ever since I could remember“ Céline Rudolph says and recollects how her father always played a break when jamming on the guitar, so that there was a space for his children to create improvised lines or percussive fills. Born in Berlin and raised with her parents’ rich record collection, the daughter of a Frenchwoman from Bordeaux and a cosmopolitan musical enthusiast from Berlin, started singing along with an LP from João Gilberto performing the Brazilian classic „Rosa Morena“ at the age of five. Her mother was singing French chansons to her at home, while Céline learned to play Nat Adderley’s „Work Song“ on her recorder. She picked up the piano and started composing as an autodidact, then started writing French songs on the guitar, which became her main tool of expression. In short: multi-path orientation was on the cards from the very beginning. After university studies of rhetorics and philosophy, she realized that music exerted a much stronger pull, so she switched to a degree in vocal jazz and composition at Hochschule der Künste Berlin with mentors David Friedman, Jerry Granelli, Kirk Nurock and Catherine Gayer. Soon, she plunged into African music and studied with the percussionist Famoudou Konaté in West Africa. Her love of Brazilian music led her to São Paulo where she met Rodolfo Stroeter who produced three of her albums and four tours across Europe and Brazil so far: The albums are BRAZAVENTURE, METAMORFLORES (enja records) and SALVADOR (Verve, Universal).

CREDITS

01 PEARLS (Céline Rudolph) SINGLE 19 APRIL	6:02
02 ON THE WAY (Céline Rudolph) SINGLE 03 MAY	5:04
03 LA CARAVANE (Céline Rudolph)	4:40
04 BE WITH YOU (music C. Rudolph, lyrics C. Rudolph & Josh Mease)	2:31
05 C’EST UN LOVE SONG (Céline Rudolph) SINGLE 31 MAY	5:29
06 WHERE SHALL I GO (Céline Rudolph)	4:30
07 I’M OLD FASHIONED (lyrics Johnny Mercer/ Jam)	2:00
08 O SILENCIO DAS ESTRELAS (Lenine & Dudu Falcão)	5:08
09 IN BETWEEN (Jam)	0:38
10 AUMBAELED (music C. Rudolph, lyrics C. Rudolph & Josh Mease)	6:26
11 LE VENT DU NORD (Céline Rudolph)	6:09
12 SONG FROM THE IN-BETWEEN (lyrics Céline Rudolph/ Jam)	1:34
13 L’ASCENSEUR POUR L’ÉQUINOXE (Céline Rudolph)	5:24
14 DIM LIGHTS (Jam)	7:08
LÉKÉ IN BETWEEN (Jam)	0:56
THE DAY THE SUN ROSE TWICE (Jamire Williams/ Corey King)	4:32
C’EST UN LOVE SONG (radio edit)	3:28
ON THE WAY (radio edit)	3:50
DIM LIGHTS (Aumbaeleo rmx)	6:49

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Since 2015 she is collaborating with New York based Beninese guitarist Lionel Loueke, having recorded the duo album OBSESSION and then playing together at 12th Jarasum Int. Jazz Festival in South Korea. „This is a very unique project because there are no boundaries. I knew from the start that we are kind of from the same tribe,“ says Lionel Loueke. Since then, the duo toured Europe, Asia and Africa (including a tour to West Africa on behalf of the Goethe Institute). The album OBSESSION reached the annual list of the German Critics Award „Preis der Deutschen Schallplattenkritik“, and won Céline Rudolph the prestigious German Jazz Award ECHO JAZZ 2018 for best jazz vocalist.

Now, praised as „a jewel of European vocal jazz“ by the French radio station, TSF, having recorded numerous albums with many wonderful musicians including Gary Peacock, Bob Moses, Naná Vasconcelos, Diego Figueiredo and Marcos Suzano, and esteemed by colleagues like Bobby McFerrin, Lee Konitz or Jay Clayton, the adventurous pearl fisher sailed from Berlin to Brooklyn for her new album PEARLS (out 21st of June 2019). Co-producer Jamire Williams: „I’ve never heard anything like Céline’s music, she writes in such a unique way, and her vocal sound is second to none. Her vibes and flow in connection with what our band has created make this production so special.“

Besides performing with Lionel Loueke and PEARLS, Céline Rudolph started a solo programme combining loops, effects, percussion and guitar.