

material records presents:

***Siawaloma***

**Lisette Spinnler**

MRE028-2



Lisette Spinnler, vocals  
Alex Hendriksen, tenor saxophone/flute  
Colin Vallon, piano  
Patrice Moret, bass  
Michi Stulz, drums

*Release:* January 15, 2010

*Tracklist*

1. Durban's Township (Pat Moret) 3:49
2. L'hiver d'après (Colin Vallon) 5:30
3. Peace Piece (Siawaloma) 6:13
4. You (Lisette Spinnler) 4:23
5. Kothbiro (Filmmusik) 5:31
6. Namaste (Michi Stulz, Siawaloma) 4:58
7. Breeze (Alex Hendriksen, Lisette Spinnler) 5:15
8. Siawaloma (Colin Vallon) 10:18
9. Burasi Mustur (Türk. Volkslied) 5:14

*Credits*

vocal arrangements by Lisette Spinnler  
produced by Lisette Spinnler  
recorded, mixed & mastered: Daniel Dettwiler  
recorded at Volkshausstudio, Basel, August 11-14, 2009  
mixed, mastered and additional recordings at Idee und Klang Studio, Basel  
assistant engineering: Jonas Prina

## **Siawaloma**

*Roots of a large summer tree*

*On a rock*

*Extend in all directions.*

*Kyoshi Takahama (1874-1959)*

The charismatic jazz singer from Basle and her band Siawaloma celebrate an organic and vital style of music that appears to keep time with the ebb and flow of nature. Even when they up the tempo, their music is neither hectic nor erratic. It takes time to conjure up and become immersed in an atmospheric ambience.

From time to time, the vocals take centre stage, soaring above the ensemble behind and showcasing the singer's original musical voice, much like a bird breaking free from a ray less forest into the bright blue sky.

Siawaloma means community and that is exactly what Spinnler's band is. There is an inextricable link which binds all five members. This is a real community. It is not a collective led from above but a voluntary union of five independent individuals who realise that together they can scale even greater heights.

*Lisette about Siawaloma:*

"Of all music genres, I believe that jazz has the greatest immediacy. Most jazz music is a product of the present, is born of the moment", declares artist Lisette Spinnler, one of the most remarkable female vocalists to come out of Switzerland. Together with her band "Siawaloma", she has recorded an album of the same name on Wolfgang Muthspiel's material records label, which hooks the listener with the virtuosity, expressivity and versatility of her silky, erotic vocals and the interplay between the quartet as a whole.

"Siawaloma" is a Burkina Faso word meaning community. "I spent a few weeks there with a music group: people spent the entire day playing music, dancing and eating together – they have neither jobs nor anything else to keep them busy. Everyone relies on one another, which is why the community feeling is so pronounced there." It is exactly "Siawaloma" that Lisette has with the exceptional musicians that make up the quartet – Colin Vallon (piano), Alex Hendriksen (saxophone), Patrice Moret (bass) and Michi Stulz (drums). "Each one of us has high regard for music that is created by a collective". Lisette is especially renowned for her scat and singing in languages that she herself has invented. Yet, something else sets her apart, namely her ability to ensure that her voice is on a par with the other four instruments. Siawaloma is not a simple case of a singer and her backing band, but rather a group of five improvisers who let the music take shape and develop organically.

"We try to produce music without relying on set arrangements. The goal is to plumb the depths, to stir emotions. We often start with a basic song structure, which we play around with and provoke different reactions... spin a thread, wind it, unwind it and let

it guide us. This always leads to the creation of music that is new to us and that quickly reaches and strikes a chord with the audience. Anyone who comes to our concerts embarks almost automatically on a journey with us, which in turn makes our music a shared adventure". For Lisette Spinnler and her quartet, it is not about chasing a foreseeable goal and definitely not about a specific style. What counts is ensuring the quality of the entire musical process. This results in the unmistakable Siawaloma sound. "During this process my voice offers so many opportunities to transform myself into an instrument, but virtuosity per se is not the actual goal. Instead, it acts as an aid for me to express myself, my emotions, and is ultimately the product of my experiences."

Inspired by the Italian mezzo soprano Cecilia Bartoli, Lisette Spinnler spent four years studying to be classical singer, before being bitten by the jazz and improvisation bug which suited her temperament and abilities perfectly. "Improvisation is a creative process which, when it emerges completely spontaneously, preferably honestly and without premeditation, gives rise to totally surprising and absolutely uplifting moments." Her lecturers at the University of Music in Basle included Sandy Patton and Susanne Abbuehl. Now a lecturer herself at her alma mater since 2006, Lisette Spinnler declares that "I too learn so much by teaching and I love working with the students. Passing singing on to others is a delicate and emotional undertaking. Like creating music, it requires a strong presence and a knowing engagement with the voice, sound and body". She cites Bobby McFerrin, Cassandra Wilson, Dianne Reeves, Miles Davis and Ella Fitzgerald among her musical heroes.

## **Live dates**

*2009*

December 22 with Jean-Paul Brodbeck's Boutique, Helsinki, Zürich (CH)

*2010*

February 09, Siawaloma, Porgy & Bess, Wien (A)

February 11, Siawaloma, Essebar, Winterthur (CH)

February 12, Siawaloma, Mahogany Hall, Bern (CH)

February 18 with Christoph Stiefel, Jazzclub Uster, Uster (CH)

February 26 with Christoph Stiefel, Luxembourg

March 01, Siawaloma, Isebähnli, Baden (CH)

March 02, Siawaloma, Birds Eye, Basel (CH)

March 03, Siawaloma, Birds Eye, Basel (CH)

March 05, Siawaloma, Jazzclub Chur (CH)

March 12, Siawaloma, Jazzclub Luzern (CH)

March 13, Siawaloma, Kulturscheune Liestal (CH), album release party

April 16 with Cojazz (with Andy Scherrer), Birds Eye, Basel (CH)

April 17 with Cojazz (with Andy Scherrer), Birds Eye, Basel (CH)

April 24 with Ladybirds, Jundthaus, Gelterkinden (CH)

More dates to come...

## **Journalists on Lisette**

What makes Lisette Spinnler such a special artist is her "childlike" enthusiasm, directness and occasional playfulness, combined with a natural, yet incredibly refined ease and superb ability to shift seamlessly from one key to another. (...)

Unlike many of her contemporaries who seem to be there more for their glamorous looks than any real discernible musical talent and who allow even the most anodyne rhythm section to shine, Spinnler sees herself as one of the band, as one improviser among many. As the title of her debut album "In Between" proclaims, her musical style straddles classic jazz singing with her own personal twist and scatting. Yet, unlike Fitzgerald and the third-rate Fitzgerald wannabees, improvisation for Lisette Spinnler is not an opportunity to embark on a virtuoso ego trip.

*Peter Rüedi, Weltwoche, November 2004*

Lisette Spinnler and her Siawaloma quintet brought a touch of Africa to the stage. Yet, this is only a fraction of the musical range covered by these musicians. What really gives this spirited and versatile vocalist the edge is her highly original scatting. Teasingly, her vocals seem to come from an imaginary voice. As her hand flutters, she punctuates her performance with the spoken word, with whispers, with clicks. The band follows her through jazz standards like Hancock's "Maiden Voyage" and Dave Holland's "Mazad", before segueing into the high drama of a flute-flecked Turkish folk song. The African vibe in Spinnler's performance is somewhat subliminal – a feverish bass riff or a meditative-dreamlike evocation of a landscape.

*Stefan Franzen, Basler Zeitung, May 2009*

Not only the eyes but also the ears of the audience bear witness to an almost mystical happening...after only a couple of beats the diffident and quiet young woman before them is transformed into a shaman, into an otherworldly medium that comes from deep within which finds expression in the sinuous movements of her hands. When she sings, Lisette Spinnler is firmly in the here and now, her entire body becoming an instrument that begins to sway and quiver, constantly changing like the voice itself: a voice which is tender yet plangent, a voice which at times breaks into a playful cackling or the mock-serious shrillness of a fishwife, a voice which Lisette Spinnler uses to convey the vibrant polymorphic nature of life itself.

*Selma Mahlknecht, Ostschweizerinnen.ch, February 2008*

## **Biography**

*Lisette Spinnler*

Born 1976, grew up in Wittinsburg, lives in Basle. Ten years of piano lessons. At 17, began singing lessons. University of Music, Basle (Sandy Patton and Susanne Abbühl). In 1999 awarded a scholarship from the Friedl Wald Stiftung (jury member: George Gruntz) and forms her first band. In 2001 named best solo artist at the Montreux OFF Festival (jury member: Thierry Lang). Lecturer in the Jazz Department of the University of Music, Basle since 2006. Has toured extensively in Switzerland and overseas with, among others, the European Jazz Youth Orchestra, Cojazz (Andy Scherrer, Stephan Kurmann, and Peter Schmidlin), BraffOesterRohrer, Theodosii Spassov, Christoph Stiefel, Adrian Mears (Requiem Op. 48, Der Berner Totentanz), Jean-Paul Brodbeck, Fabian Gisler, Domenic Landolf, Thomas Moeckel, Franz Hellmüller, Rafi Woll.

[www.lisettespinnler.com](http://www.lisettespinnler.com)

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