



PARADOX
JASPER
JAZZ STAPS
ORCHESTRA

REMEMBERING
THE SKYMASTERS

Het jaar dat ik afstudeerde aan het Koninklijk conservatorium in Den Haag (1997), was ook het jaar dat the Skymasters na meer dan 50 jaar ophielden te bestaan. Hierdoor heb ik ze nooit live kunnen ervaren en heb alleen maar de verhalen gehoord. De verhalen over hoe goed die band was, hoeveel energie ze hadden en hoe goed ervoor geschreven werd.

Omdat het orkest zich voornamelijk voor radio en tv producties leende was er dus ook niet veel muziek door hen uitgebracht. Slechts een handjevol lp's die niet meer in uitgave zijn. Hierdoor begon hun muziek soms mythische vormen aan te nemen. Er zwierven cassettebandjes rond van fans die elke maandagavond naast de radio zaten om het programma AVRO Swingtime op te nemen. Die bandjes werden gedigitaliseerd en ondanks de slechte kwaliteit van de tapes door het vele luisteren had ik ineens enorm veel opnames, zij het in een erbarmelijke kwaliteit, waar de power vanaf sprong!

Vanaf dat moment voelde ik dat ik er iets mee moest. 'Waar zijn die arrangementen?', was het eerste wat in me op kwam. Gelukkig is de hele bibliotheek bewaard

In 1997 was not only the year that I graduated from the Royal Conservatory in The Hague, but also the year that the Skymasters ceased to exist after more than 50 years.

Due to their demise, I have never been able to see them play live and have only heard stories. The stories about how great they were, how much energy they had and how magnificent the musical scores were.

Because the orchestra mainly performed for radio and TV productions, not much music was actually released by them. Only a handful of LPs were ever released and they are not available anymore. As a result, their music has sometimes taken on mythical forms. Cassette tapes floated around from fans that religiously sat next to the radio to record the AVRO Swingtime programme. Some of those tapes have been digitized and despite the poor quality of the original tapes, which were listened to over and over again, I suddenly had a lot of recordings, albeit in a terrible quality. One thing stood out, they exuded the mythical power from the Skymasters!

At that moment I felt I had to do something with it. 'Where are those musical scores?'

gebleven en kon ik op bezoek gaan bij Jan Jaap Kassies, bibliothecaris van de Stichting Omroep Muziek om de partituren in te zien. Alles uiteraard handgeschreven, met een hoop aantekeningen over aantekeningen waardoor veel partijen zeer slecht leesbaar waren. Ik heb mezelf toen opgeworpen en besloten de beste arrangementen digitaal in te voeren zodat ze ook weer echt speelbaar waren. Het feit dat de corona pandemie langer en langer duurde had voor mij het positieve effect dat ik steeds meer arrangementen 'gered' had van de vergetelheid. Naast dat het fantastisch studiemateriaal is kunnen wij nu allemaal genieten van deze opnames. Ik hoop dat het niet blijft bij enkel dit album. Er is genoeg materiaal voor nog zeker vier albums met dit Nederlands cultureel erfgoed.

Jasper Staps
Muzikaal leider en oprichter PJO

was the first thing that I asked myself. Fortunately, the entire collection has been preserved and I arranged to visit Jan Jaap Kassies, librarian of the Stichting Omroep Muziek, to view the scores. Everything is handwritten, of course, with lots of notes about notes, which makes them very difficult to read. I then jumped in and decided to digitally recreate the best arrangements so that they could be played again. The corona pandemic lasting longer and longer had a positive side-effect for me, as I was able to 'save' more and more arrangements from oblivion. Apart from the fact that it is fantastic study material, we can now all enjoy these musical scores and recordings. I hope it doesn't end with just this one album. There is enough material for at least four more albums, so we can preserve this Dutch cultural heritage.

Jasper Staps
Musical leader and founder of PJO

Een afgeladen jazzcafé, tafeltjes vol glazen, veel muzikanten op een te klein podium, spanning en ingehouden opwinding bij muzikanten en publiek over hetgeen te gebeuren staat...dat was de zinderende sfeer van de legendarische uitzendingen van de Skymasters 'live vanuit Nick Vollebregt's Jazz Café in Laren'.

Diezelfde *ambiance* viel ons ten deel bij de concerten van het *Paradox Jazz Orchestra* in jazzpodium *Paradox*. Hoe vanzelfsprekend is het dat deze eerste cd van het *PJO* gewijd is aan die roemruchte bigband op zijn hoogtepunt.

Het ***Paradox Jazz Orchestra*** is in 2019 opgericht door bandleider, arrangeur en saxofonist *Jasper Staps* en trompettist *Teus Nobel* met als doel de rijke Nederlandse en internationale 'bigband heritage' levend te houden en onder de aandacht te brengen, ook voor een nieuw en jong publiek. De band bestaat uit jongere zowel als gevestigde Nederlandse en Belgische musici. Juist die mix hadden de oprichters voor ogen om niet alleen het repertoire maar ook de kennis, ervaring, traditie én de passie van grofweg 100 jaar bigbandhistorie door te geven.

Thuisbasis en broedplaats is het Tilburgse

A packed jazz café, tables full of glasses, a small stage overcrowded by musicians, tension and restrained excitement among both musicians and the audience in anticipation of what is about to happen... It perfectly describes the sizzling atmosphere of the legendary broadcasts of the Skymasters 'live from Nick Vollebregt's Jazz Café in Laren'.

We were treated to the same *atmosphere* at the *Paradox Jazz Orchestra's* concerts in jazz stage *Paradox*. How fitting that this first *PJO* CD is dedicated to that illustrious big band when it was at its peak.

The ***Paradox Jazz Orchestra*** was founded in 2019 by band leader, arranger and saxophone player *Jasper Staps* and trumpet player *Teus Nobel* with the aim of keeping the rich Dutch and international 'big band heritage' alive as well as getting it noticed again, also by a new and young audience. The band consists of musicians at the start of their career as well as established Dutch and Belgian musicians. It was precisely this mix that the founders had in mind to pass on the repertoire as well as the knowledge, experience, tradition and passion of roughly 100 years of big band history.

The jazz stage *Paradox* in Tilburg is the

jazzpodium *Paradox*. Daar werden in 2020 de eerste uitverkochte concerten gegeven waarin toonaangevende componisten en bands zoals de Buddy Rich Big Band, Duke Ellington Orchestra, Thad Jones/Mel Lewis en de Skymasters centraal stonden. Artistiek leider Jasper Staps beent onvermoeibaar door op dit pad en de volgende projecten stonden al op de lessenaar, ware het niet dat Covid-19 daar een groot ‘tacet’ boven plaatste.

Gelukkig bleek het mogelijk om op het vertrouwde podium deze cd op te nemen. Weliswaar zonder publiek, maar de kick om weer samen te spelen en de geweldige arrangementen zorgden voor zo’n inspiratie en energie alsof we voor een uitverkochte zaal speelden.

De **Skymasters**, in 1945 in opdracht van de AVRO opgericht, werd enorm populair door hun twee- of driewekelijkse radio-uitzendingen met swingende bigband muziek en Nederlands vocaal repertoire. Ook namen zij platen op en hadden een aantal hits, zoals ‘Bloesem van Seringen’ en ‘In de bus van Bussum naar Naarden’. Met het radioprogramma *Swingtime* (van 1978 tot 1986) vestigde het orkest zijn reputatie als één van Europa’s ‘leading’ bigbands. In

homebase and breeding ground where in 2020, the first sold-out concerts were held. Leading composers and bands such as the Buddy Rich Big Band, Duke Ellington Orchestra, Thad Jones / Mel Lewis and the Skymasters were the focus.

Artistic director Jasper Staps continued tirelessly and follow-up projects were already on the lectern, were it not for the fact that Covid-19 placed a big ‘tacet’ above it.

Fortunately it turned out that recording this CD on the familiar stage was still possible. Although there was no audience, the thrill of playing together again and the great scores provided such inspiration and energy that it felt as if we were playing in a sold-out venue.

The **Skymasters**, founded in 1945 on behalf of the AVRO, became extremely popular due to their two or three weekly radio broadcasts featuring swinging big band music and Dutch vocal repertoire. They also recorded albums and had a number of hits, such as ‘Bloesem van Seringen’ and ‘In de bus van Bussum naar Naarden’. With the radio program *Swingtime* (from 1978 to 1986) the orchestra established its reputation as one of Europe’s

het door producer Joop de Roo ontwikkelde programma waren wekelijks Nederlandse en internationale jazzmusici te gast bij het orkest, live uitgezonden op maandagavond vanuit 'Vollebregt'. Voor hen en voor de solisten van het orkest werd steeds nieuwe composities en arrangementen geschreven, veelal door de huisarrangeurs Jerry van Rooyen, Rob Pronk en Kenny Napper. Bandleider was Tony Nolte, en de lijst van gastsolisten is indrukwekkend. Om er een paar te noemen: Mel Lewis, Mark Murphy, Blossom Deary, Greetje Kauffeld, Bob Brookmeyer, Toots Thielemans, Clark Terry, Phil Woods, Chet Baker, en natuurlijk uit eigen geledingen o.a. Ferdinand Povel, Bart van Lier, Rob Franken, Ruud Brink, Wim Overgaauw en Ack van Rooyen. We zijn apetrots dat Ack als solist op deze cd meespeelt. Ack, levende legende, ontzettend veel dank!

leading big bands. In the program developed by producer Joop de Roo, Dutch and international jazz musicians were invited as guests to play with the orchestra every week, the shows being broadcast live from 'Vollebregt' on Monday evenings. New compositions and arrangements were constantly being written for the orchestra as well as for the soloists, mostly by house arrangers Jerry van Rooyen, Rob Pronk and Kenny Napper. Band leader was Tony Nolte, and the list of guest soloists is impressive. To name a few: Mel Lewis, Mark Murphy, Blossom Deary, Greetje Kauffeld, Bob Brookmeyer, Toots Thielemans, Clark Terry, Phil Woods, Chet Baker, and of course from their own ranks Ferdinand Povel, Bart van Lier, Rob Franken, Ruud Brink, Wim Overgaauw and Ack van Rooyen. We are extremely proud that Ack is playing on this CD as a guest soloist. Ack, living legend, thank you very much!



ACK VAN ROOYEN

SO HERE YOU ARE!

**COMPOSED AND ARRANGED BY ROB PRONK / SOLOISTS: TEUS NOBEL FLUGELHORN /
DANIËL DAEMEN SOPRANO SAXOPHONE / JOS MACHTEL DOUBLE BASS**

This blues by Pronk has a different scheme compared to a normal 12 bar blues. It is a 14 bar blues containing a 4 bars tag. This is especially evident in the solo schedules. Although there is a clear line, the piece does not really have a fixed theme. The tough dissonances in the beginning are in stark contrast with the unison lines after the hip sax special, to bang to the end in full 'Basie style'.

BASIN STREET BLUES

**COMPOSED BY SPENCER WILLIAMS / ARRANGED BY JERRY VAN ROOYEN /
SOLOIST: ROBIN ROMBOUTS FLUGELHORN**

This Jerry arrangement excels in craftsmanship. The original performance was by his brother Ack van Rooyen and is a beautiful dialogue between the strong harmonic block of the wind section and the intimacy of the solo bugle, now played by Robin Rombouts. In the middle is a special that is reminiscent of George Shearing's harmonization techniques, where the trombones in 'block chords' are doubled, one octave lower, by the tenor saxes.

67957

67957

AVRO

VARA

4.30"

ZENDGEMACHTIGDE:

NAAM PROGRAMMA:

REPETITIE/OPNAME DATUM:

24/3/78

ORKEST:

VARA - DANCE ORKEST

SOLIST:

(Charly Nederpelt)

TOONSOORT:

Bill Ramsey

TITEL:

UIT:

(opera, operette, musical, film e.d.)

BASIN STREET BLUES



KOMPONIST:

TEKSTDICHTER:

ARRANGEUR:

Spencer Williams

Jerry van Rooyen

UITGEVER VAN DE OORSPRONKELIJKE VERSIE:

JAAR VAN UITGAVE:

JAAR VAN COPYRIGHT:

f-40

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Skymasters



NEMUM TALVEZ

Comp: HERMETO PASQUAL

APR: ROB PRONIC.

Scholar: CHARLES MARIANO - alto sax

TOUGH CUSTOMER

COMPOSED AND ARRANGED BY RIK ELINGS / SOLOISTS: TIM LANGEDIJK GUITAR /
REMBRANDT FRERICH'S PIANO / JO HERMANS TRUMPET / DANIËL DAEMEN ALTO SAXOPHONE
/ GUIDO NIJS TENOR SAX / NIEK DE BRUIJN DRUMS

Rik Elings was one of the 'new' arrangers with the Skymasters. His contribution was mainly audible in the more Latin and pop oriented pieces, but this rhythm arrangement also contains plenty of fireworks. The theme has a 'boppy' feel to it, with a nod to the 1940s-50s. Each soloist is launched in his or her own way, so that the piece continuously features new elements.

NEM UM TALVEZ

COMPOSED BY HERMETO PASCOAL / ARRANGED BY ROB PRONK /
SOLOIST: ACK VAN ROOYEN FLUGELHORN

This feature was initially arranged for Charlie Mariano by Rob. After that it was a feature for Ferdinand Povel, but we thought it would be a great piece to let Ack van Rooyen steal the limelight. He gives the piece an enormous depth. This living legend defines jazz! With this feature, Ack symbolically passes on the music of the Skymasters to next generations.

SAMBITA

COMPOSED BY JOE GALLARDO / ARRANGED BY ROB PRONK /
SOLOISTS: MARTIJN SOHIER TROMBONE / REMBRANDT FRERICH'S FENDER RHODES

This composition by Joe Gallardo, himself a trombone player, was played when he was a guest in Nick Vollebregt's jazz cafe during AVRO swingtime on January 19, 1981. This was followed by Bart van Lier who interpreted the piece in his own virtuosic way. Martijn Sohier, who played with the Skymasters, plays his own melodic version on this cheerful samba.

NO MORE

COMPOSED AND ARRANGED BY ROB PRONK / SOLOIST: JASPER STAPS - ALTO SAXOPHONE

A drama unfolded on November 26, 1978, when the world-famous trombonist Frank Rosolino first killed his two sons and then took his own life. The whole jazz world was in turmoil which inspired Rob Pronk to create this composition. He dedicated the piece to Rosolino, the first performance was by Lee Konitz.

FRED MY PAL

COMPOSED AND ARRANGED BY ROB PRONK / SOLOISTS: DAVE VREULS TRUMPET / REMBRANDT FRERICHs PIANO

This piece is arguably one of Rob Pronk's strongest compositions. It wouldn't look out of place on a Count Basie album, because Rob's writing style mimics the great American composers and arrangers of the era. A simple but powerful melody, creamy chords and an ending that is not what it seems at face value.

THE MOMENT OF TRUTH

COMPOSED BY FRANK SCOTT & TEX SATTERWHITE / ARRANGED BY ROB PRONK / SOLOISTS: JESSE SCHILDERINK TENOR SAXOPHONE / NIEK DE BRUIJN DRUMS

This relatively unknown swinger was first recorded by Tony Bennett in 1963 and has rarely been recorded since. Jesse puts all traditions aside and interprets the solo with a brutal force of persuasion that puts everyone on edge.

OCTOBER BALLAD

COMPOSED AND ARRANGED BY KENNY NAPPER / SOLOISTS: TEUS NOBEL FLUGELHORN / REMBRANDT FRERICH'S PIANO

Kenny Napper is perhaps one of the least known composers and arrangers, not only among jazz musicians. Completely unjustified, because this ballad is a gem, both melodically and harmonically. It gives you the feeling of being thrown from one key to another, but the seemingly simple diatonic melody keeps everything together. Teus then gives that melody so much individuality that you can't help but keep listening right to the last sounds.

BIRCH AND THE BLUES

COMPOSED AND ARRANGED BY ROB PRONK / SOLOISTS: MARTIJN SOHIER TROMBONE / NIEK DE BRUIJN DRUMS

It was customary that during the AVRO Swingtime broadcasts compositions of guests were arranged for the Skymasters as was this piece. The American trombonist Birch Johnson brought this piece which was then masterfully arranged by Pronk. The theme starts intimately with trombone and double bass, after which a true fugue emerges. Different melody lines dance around each other to arrive at an impressive 'a capella' special. After the solos everything returns in reverse order.

NO MORE



Comp. }
all. } ROB FRANK.

(FOR FRANK Rosolino)

Shot: LEE KONITZ

Old - sax.

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REMEMBERING THE SKYMASTERS

PARADOX
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- 03 TOUGH CUSTOMER 7:10
- 04 NEM UM TALVEZ (FEAT. ACK VAN ROOYEN) 5:12
- 05 SAMBITA 6:15
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- 08 THE MOMENT OF TRUTH 4:28
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