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| 1. The Sweetest Sounds
(Richard Rodgers/Oscar Hammerstein II) | 5:00 |
| 2. Chelsea Bridge (Billy Strayhorn) | 8:33 |
| 3. How Deep Is The Ocean? (Irving Berlin) | 6:23 |
| 4. Echoes Of Duke (Enrico Rava) | 5:23 |
| 5. Infant Eyes (Wayne Shorter) | 4:41 |
| 6. Dig (Jackie McLean) | 4:19 |
| 7. Basin Street Blues (Spencer Williams) | 4:58 |
| 8. Isfahan (Billy Strayhorn/Duke Ellington) | 5:48 |

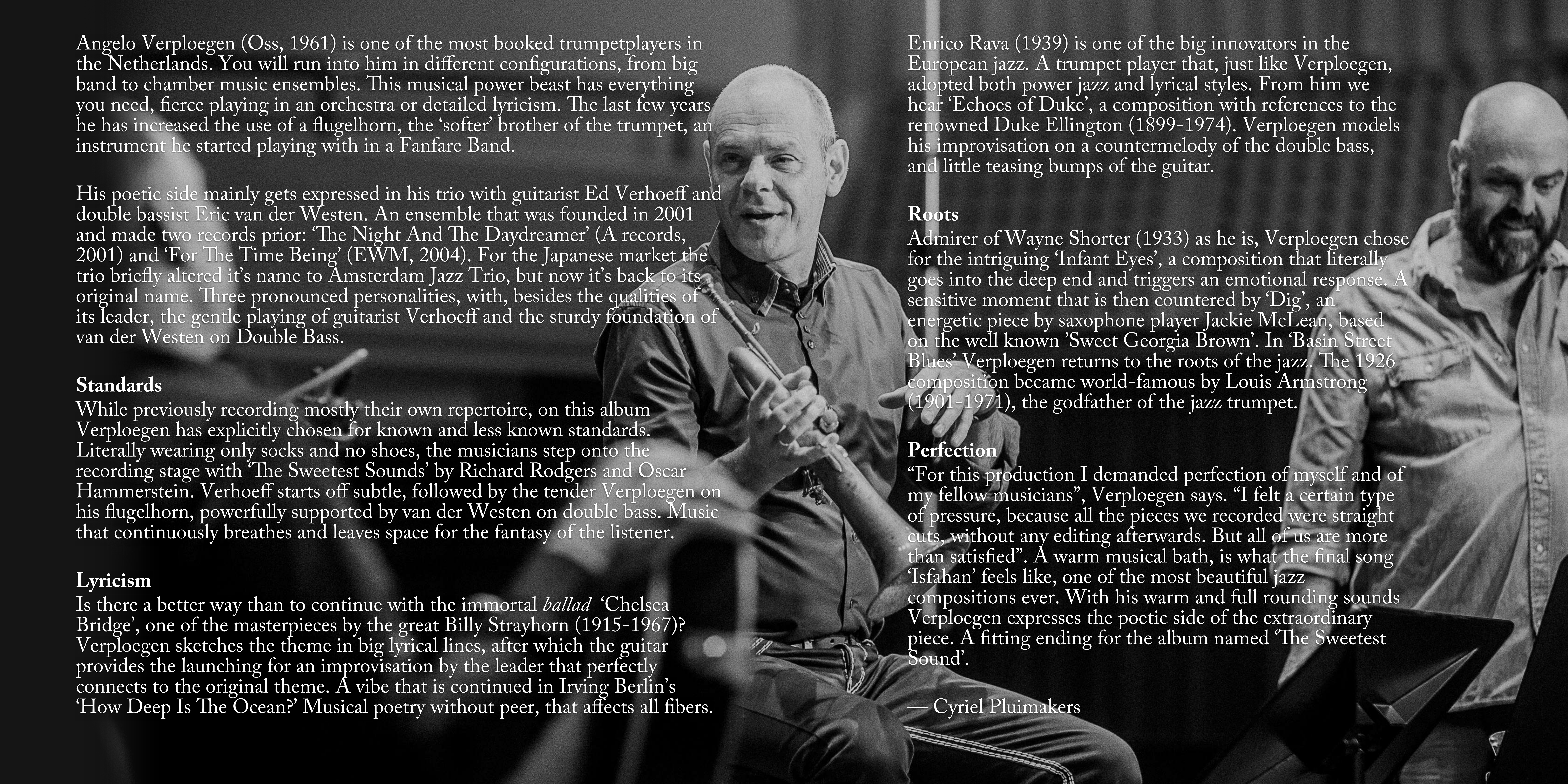
THE SWEETEST SOUND

ANGELO VERPLOEGEN ~ FLUGELHORN

ED VERHOEFF ~ GUITAR

ERIC VAN DER WESTEN ~ DOUBLE BASS

Angelo Verploegen plays a Hub van Laar Flugelhorn, model 3B
Ed Verhoeff plays a 1951 Gibson ES-175 Electric Guitar
Eric van der Westen plays a 7/8 scale Père Pillement Double Bass from the early 1800's



Angelo Verploegen (Oss, 1961) is one of the most booked trumpetplayers in the Netherlands. You will run into him in different configurations, from big band to chamber music ensembles. This musical power beast has everything you need, fierce playing in an orchestra or detailed lyricism. The last few years he has increased the use of a flugelhorn, the ‘softer’ brother of the trumpet, an instrument he started playing with in a Fanfare Band.

His poetic side mainly gets expressed in his trio with guitarist Ed Verhoeff and double bassist Eric van der Westen. An ensemble that was founded in 2001 and made two records prior: ‘The Night And The Daydreamer’ (A records, 2001) and ‘For The Time Being’ (EWM, 2004). For the Japanese market the trio briefly altered it’s name to Amsterdam Jazz Trio, but now it’s back to its original name. Three pronounced personalities, with, besides the qualities of its leader, the gentle playing of guitarist Verhoeff and the sturdy foundation of van der Westen on Double Bass.

Standards

While previously recording mostly their own repertoire, on this album Verploegen has explicitly chosen for known and less known standards. Literally wearing only socks and no shoes, the musicians step onto the recording stage with ‘The Sweetest Sounds’ by Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein. Verhoeff starts off subtle, followed by the tender Verploegen on his flugelhorn, powerfully supported by van der Westen on double bass. Music that continuously breathes and leaves space for the fantasy of the listener.

Lyricism

Is there a better way than to continue with the immortal *ballad* ‘Chelsea Bridge’, one of the masterpieces by the great Billy Strayhorn (1915-1967)? Verploegen sketches the theme in big lyrical lines, after which the guitar provides the launching for an improvisation by the leader that perfectly connects to the original theme. A vibe that is continued in Irving Berlin’s ‘How Deep Is The Ocean?’ Musical poetry without peer, that affects all fibers.

Enrico Rava (1939) is one of the big innovators in the European jazz. A trumpet player that, just like Verploegen, adopted both power jazz and lyrical styles. From him we hear ‘Echoes of Duke’, a composition with references to the renowned Duke Ellington (1899-1974). Verploegen models his improvisation on a countermelody of the double bass, and little teasing bumps of the guitar.

Roots

Admirer of Wayne Shorter (1933) as he is, Verploegen chose for the intriguing ‘Infant Eyes’, a composition that literally goes into the deep end and triggers an emotional response. A sensitive moment that is then countered by ‘Dig’, an energetic piece by saxophone player Jackie McLean, based on the well known ‘Sweet Georgia Brown’. In ‘Basin Street Blues’ Verploegen returns to the roots of the jazz. The 1926 composition became world-famous by Louis Armstrong (1901-1971), the godfather of the jazz trumpet.

Perfection

“For this production I demanded perfection of myself and of my fellow musicians”, Verploegen says. “I felt a certain type of pressure, because all the pieces we recorded were straight cuts, without any editing afterwards. But all of us are more than satisfied”. A warm musical bath, is what the final song ‘Tsfahan’ feels like, one of the most beautiful jazz compositions ever. With his warm and full rounding sounds Verploegen expresses the poetic side of the extraordinary piece. A fitting ending for the album named ‘The Sweetest Sound’.

— Cyriel Pluimakers

The Sweetest Sound

Over the last decade or so I find myself leaving the tempting and obvious juvenile trumpeting bravura more and more behind me and returning to my musical starting point: the flugelhorn. Although generally the instrument is considered to be a trumpet with a 'softer' sound, and in my opinion all too often treated like that by many trumpeters, the flugelhorn actually stands firmly by itself with all of its own characteristics and specifications.

Literally being brought up with the flugelhorn, I feel at ease with the way the horn requires it's own approach of phrasing and articulation. This enables me to reach the level of lyricism and intimacy I'm looking for in my playing. So when Just Listen invited me to do a recording for the label at their specific terms (play live, in balance, no post-mixing, no editing, just capturing the live music as it is with the best possible equipment at the best suitable venue) it was obvious for me to return once more to my first love - the flugelhorn.

The Sweetest Sounds

Having done numerous (sometimes over-)organized recording sessions with mostly originally composed and arranged repertoire I now felt the need for a lush approach. More like a gathering of old friends, sharing each other's life stories and experiences. That led me automatically to my old-time soulmates guitar player Ed Verhoeff and bassist Eric van der Westen. 17 years ago we started off as Verploegen, Verhoeff & van der Westen, performing a lot and recording our critically acclaimed debut-album *The Night And The Daydreamer*. Later on we changed the name into Amsterdam Jazz Trio for a Japan tour and released another album *'For The Time Being'*. And then, what often happens after a number of years of extensive work, we went our own ways...To be reunited for this unique recording project!

As for the repertoire, I simply picked 'standard' tunes I grew fond of over the years, looking for a certain degree of variety in melody, harmony, formal structure, keeping the the drum-less trio sound in mind, allowing it to flourish, creating a casual, lush and intimate atmosphere. Hope you enjoy!

— Angelo Verploegen





ED VERHOEFF

Guitar player Ed Verhoeff (1966) is one of the leading jazz guitarists in the Netherlands. Ed started out playing guitar in various pop and blues bands. He then studied at the conservatories of Utrecht and The Hague where jazz music really sparked something in him. The continuous challenge of this boundless music has always kept his fascination and is still growing up until now. Today Ed finds himself in the jazz and world music circuit.

For more than two decades as a sideman Ed Verhoeff developed the style which De Gitarist in May 1999 described as 'phenomenal technique, a beautiful sound of his own and harmonic depth. Besides that he is incredible versatile. (...) He knows how to combine pop, jazz and rock and make it sound like a coherent whole.'

He started his own projects where he realizes his own musical ideas or shares the similar ideas with other musicians. And it is never mind whether he is looking for the more intimate, chamber-like sound full of melodies and sensitive playing as in the Duo 'Up Close' (Ed Verhoeff/ Paul Berner bass) or the more powerful and intense sounds as in the Ed Verhoeff 4tet.

Those features makes him a wanted musician in jazz, pop clubs and theaters. He played with such musicians as John Abercrombie, Philip Catherine, Hein van de Geijn, Adam Nussbaum, Gerard Presencer, Rick Margitza, Ivan Lins, Lincoln Goines, Alex Acuna, Andy Narell, Martin Verdonk, Arthur Verocai and the Metropole Orchestra; In the theatre world with Izaline Calister, Mathilde Santing, Ramses Shaffy and Julya Loco. Ed has recorded over 50 Cd's. Which include 7 as a leader/ co-leader.



ERIC VAN DER WESTEN

Eric was born in Zierikzee (Zeeland) in the Netherlands on August 29 1963. At the age of 10 he started to play guitar, switched to bass and as a teenager, formed his own pop bands playing hard rock and new wave in the late 70's and early 80's. He received first serious music education at the age of 19, after quitting his psychology study at the University, when he decided to become a professional musician. It was then that he picked up the double bass. After half a year he enrolled Sweelinck Conservatory in Amsterdam where he graduated in 1990.

During the latter part of his study he started to play with Dutch jazz legends like Willem van Manen and Paul van Kemenade, in whose band he would remain for 14 years. In the passing of time he became a solid but creative workforce in many bands with musicians like Jasper Van 't Hof, Bob Malach, Kenny Wheeler a.m.o.

He developed a career as composer of modern crossover improvised music in which his band Quadrant played a pivotal role. He recorded 6 albums under his own name and numerous more as a side man. During the 90's he took a serious interest in African music which brought him all over Africa and resulted in concerts with a wide range of musicians like Habib Koité, Louis Mhlanga, Winston Mankunku, Paul Hanmer, Minyeshu & Les Frères Guissé.



ANGELO VERPLOEGEN

Angelo was born on December 22, 1961 in Oss. It all starts in this small town in the south of the Netherlands, when he joins the local brassband playing the flugelhorn at the age of 11. A few years later he gets so excited about Big Band Oss that he switches to trumpet to be able to join them.

In 1980 Angelo moves to Amsterdam to study musicology at the Amsterdam University and trumpet at the Jazz Department of the Amsterdam Sweelinck Conservatory. The extremely vivid and diverse Amsterdam music scene is a true hall of fame for a young, curious and eager trumpeter. In these roaring 80's Verploegen plays salsa with Ruben Salas, Evolution 2000, Salsa d'Amsterdam, big band with Maiden Voyage and the Frank Grasso Big Band, gets involved with the theatre (Haagse Comedie, later on with Orkater, ZT Hollandia, de Veenfabriek), plays lead-trumpet in the musical Cats and gets acquainted with the improv scene, working with Jaap Blonk, Micheal Moore, Larry Fishkind and many more.

In 1986 Angelo starts playing with guitarist/composer/bandleader Corrie van Binsbergen. Her musical versatility and persistence are of great influence on Verploegen's approach and further development. In '87 producer Gert-Jan Blom asks him to put together a jazz band as part of the traveling music and theatre festival Boulevard of Broken Dreams: sextet The Houdini's is born to live a long and fruitful life. The unheard-of collective hyper-energetic chemistry of these six youngsters makes them tour through Europe, the USA, Canada, and Australia, record numerous CD's (two of them by the legendary Rudy Van Gelder) and perform/record with Amsterdam Sinfonietta, Asko/Schönberg Ensemble, John Adams, Louis Andriessen, JacobTV, Trijntje Oosterhuis.

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After 10 years of running The Houdini's, Angelo is ready for a change. In '97 he challenges himself by playing trio with just bass and drums: the critically acclaimed trio Toi's releases two cd's, provides music for dance company Blok & Steel and for the Dutch movie Wilde Mossels. At the same time he starts producing recordings for Challenge/A-Records and initiates the sublabel BUZZ Records for new music. In that capacity he works with Denise Jannah, Benjamin Herman, Leny Andrade, Lisa Michel, Maarten van der Grinten & Jesse van Ruller, Wolfert Brederode-Eric Ineke Quintet, Kenny Wheeler with the UMO Jazz Orchestra, Misha Mengelberg, Nimbus with Dave Liebman, Sven Ratzke and many others.

A few years later he forms the Amsterdam Jazz Trio with guitarist Ed Verhoeff and bassist Eric van der Westen. With this intimate chamber-jazz configuration Verploegen finds his way back to the lyrical flugelhorn. All in all a sweet return. Focusing on the flugelhorn again feels like a homecoming. Other 'flugelhorn-groups' will follow: Soo Cho Quartet, Marc Scholten's The Blindfold Test, Paul van Kemenade's Three Horns and a Bass, trio with Japanese pianist Atsuko Kohashi and Dutch bassist Tony Overwater, trio with Curacao singer Izaline Calister and again guitarist Ed Verhoeff.

In 2001 Verploegen begins his teaching career at the Jazz & Pop department of ArtEZ Conservatory Arnhem and the Utrecht Conservatory HKU. Around this time time he starts touring and recording with Michiel Braam's Bik Bent Braam. In 2005 the Amsterdam Bimhuis grants him a carte blanche. For this occasion he invites Japanese trumpet-piano duo Natsuki Tamura en Satoko Fujii together with Dutch pianist Misha Mengelberg to team up as a free improv double-duo and he introduces his new quartet Executive Lounge. In 2006 he joins Egon Kracht & The Troupe for many (semi-theatrical) music productions to follow.

Angelo Verploegen's The Ballad Album is released in 2011 and nominated for an Edison Award. Besides all of his small-group work as a flugelhorn player, Angelo is also a much in demand section- and solo-trumpeter to be heard with Jazz Orchestra of the Concertgebouw, David Kweksilber Big Band, New Rotterdam Jazz Orchestra, Metropole Orchestra as up to this date.



PRODUCTION CREDITS

NativeDSD Music, Just Listen Records

PRODUCERS

Jared Sacks, Jonas Sacks, Angelo Verploegen

COPRODUCER

Cyriel Pluimakers

RECORDING ENGINEER

Jared Sacks

MASTERING ENGINEER

Tom Caulfield

SESSION & COVER PHOTOGRAPHY

Wouter Jansen

GRAPHIC DESIGN

Jonas Sacks

LINER NOTES

Cyriel Pluimakers

RECORDING LOCATION

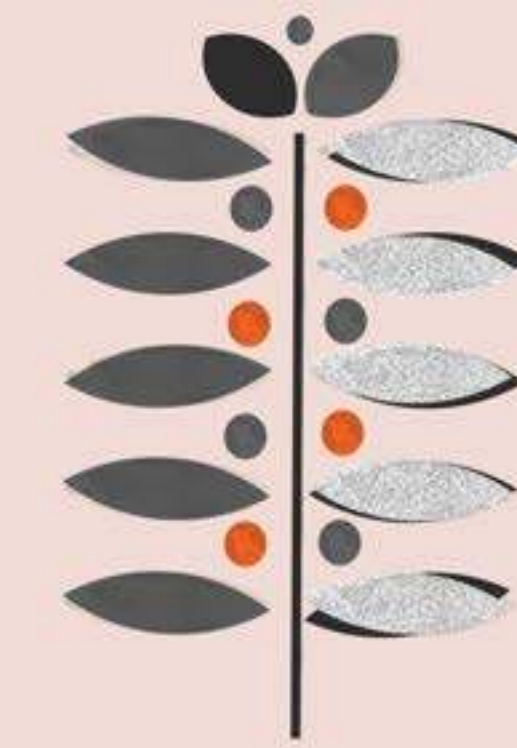
MCO, Hilversum the Netherlands

RECORDING DATE

June 2018

SPECIAL THANKS

Floor van der Holst, Ted Brady, Brian Moura, Bill Dodd



Just Listen
Records

JL009

DSD
Direct Stream Digital

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

MICROPHONES

Bruel&Kjaer 4006, Schoeps, AKG

DIGITAL CONVERTER

DSD256 Horus, Merging Technologies

SPEAKERS

Audiolab, Holland

AMPLIFIERS

Van Medevoort, Holland

CABLES

van den Hul

MIXING BOARD

Rens Heijnis, custom design

EDITING SOFTWARE

Pyramix, Merging Technologies

MASTERING ROOM SPEAKERS

Grimm LS1