



Triband *So Together*

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No matter where you file the album of this quartet from Berlin, it will always be an alien in its category. You could file it under jazz, if it wasn't for those almost cinematographic sounds and Sandie Wollasch's incredibly tender voice. You could file it under rock music, but it's too intelligent for that, for pop it's not happily superficial enough, for soul music there's too little tragic.

But still you will not sense a shortcoming as **Triband** present "**So Together**", their beautifully fickle new album. It feels a bit like finding an old box in the attic and losing all sense of time and space while rummaging around - until you're suddenly startled. Like in "**Miss Baby Light**", the single, when there is a lovely erotic slow motion mood; or in "**Smoking**", when **Sandie Wollasch's** smooth voice takes a walk in foggy string sounds and is brought to a screeching halt by an electric guitar. Keyboard and trumpet player **Sebastian Studnitzky** chuckles: "The best thing is: there is no guitar in this song. It's my trumpet, slightly distorted." This little stroke of genius is due to the rather unorthodox methods Studnitzky and his colleagues use to get from an idea to their aim.

"In this band", says the musician, "nobody sits down at home to write songs and play them to the others the next day. We write together, everyone takes their instruments and we start jamming." Sounds a little like the 1960s, when bands like Cream spent months in the studio. Studnitzky says: "But we usually have a song after half an hour." **Triband** avoid the shiny perfection of expensive Hollywood-style production - which is a luxury they can afford. "We all play our instruments pretty well", says Studnitzky, "and our singer usually does her lines at the first take. That allows us to walk the fine line and not correct every track for ever. If we have a fun idea like the trumpet on "**Smoking**" and all of us like it, then we leave it that way. Just like we sometimes use instruments that happen to be in the studio and fit in at some point. These little adventures sometimes open doors to soundscapes that we might otherwise never explore."

And wouldn't that be a shame? What Studnitzky, Sandie Wollasch, drummer **Tommy Baldu** and bass player **Michael Paucker** have chiseled into 12 songs is mostly a commitment to being different, a declaration of love to diversity. A friend who in the 1980s gave the same answer to all questions about what he listened to when he felt like pop, rock, reggae or alternative music - it was the Clash's triple album "**Sandinista**" - might do with one single album today, with **Triband's "So Together"**. As of yet there is no reggae side trip by **Triband**, but on the next LP that might very well be the case. "Our little cosmos unites very different tastes", says Studnitzky, "our record collections go from Miles Davis and Johnny Cash to the

Beatles. And we all have great respect for the tastes of our partners."

Which is obviously also true for artists outside the band. This brings us to the final, very extravagant track "In the Rosegarden" of this unusual album: for more than 14 minutes, guests like Christina Lux, Laith Al-Deen, Edo Zanki, Laura Lopez Castro, Don Phillippe, Magum Coltrane Price, David Maier, Nikolai Tomás, and Hrund Osk Arandóttir sing in a recurrent 40 second-loop. "We spent 30 minutes jamming in the studio", says Studnitzky, "then we recorded this track. Our goal is to keep extending it until it's 30 or 40 minutes long." This might seem like a strange idea, but for Triband it's a normal procedure. Even if the word "normal" can't really be applied to this band.

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