

Takeshi Asai is a Japanese pianist who has come a long way to become a professional musician, touring the world, recording his own albums, running his own recording studio, and devoting himself to teaching. "I learned music by listening to The Beatles, Bach and Chopin," - recalls the pianist. "I was hugely influenced by Keith Jarrett. There is also a whole range of great jazz pianists, such as Bill Evans, Oscar Peterson, Herbie Hancock, Red Garland, Fred Hersch and Brad Mehldau. I also loved Takemitsu, Messiaen and Poulenc. I am inspired by Broadway musicals as well as Taylor Swift's hits".

The discography of the Japanese pianist and composer ranges from jazz albums filled with solo piano music, to albums recorded as a duo (with pianist Catherine Schneider and vocalist Laura Noejovich) and sessions realized within the proprietary New York Trio (with Daniel Ori and Rob Garcia) and French Trio (with Pascal Combeau and Maxime Legrand). Takeshi Asai is also an excellent creator of film and theater music as well as numerous multimedia projects.

With "Trio Vol.VI" the pianist once again returns to his favorite format: together with his trio he plays out classical jazz standards in a highly suggestive and virtuosic fashion and, while remaining faithful to the iron rules, subtly and romantically presents his own references to classical music. Thus, on the one hand there is a captivatingly beautifully rendered tribute to John Coltrane ("Blue Brain") and Wayne Shorter ("CA/Db"), on the other hand there are etudes dedicated to J.S. Bach ("Air on the White Keys") and Franz Schubert ("Ave Maria" classical version).

Add to that the author's compositions, driven by romantic elation, and the bravura playing of the trio: the velvety and restrained, but impeccable double bass player Bob Gingery, the drummer Brian Woodruff, pulsing with subtleties of rhythm, and the pianist Takeshi Asai, virtuoso in reading his creative intentions.

Dionizy Piątkowski