

In 2013, after very warmly received concerts in France together with Pascal Combeau (double bass) and Maxime Legrand (drums), the French trio of pianists in two days recorded material that appeared on the studio album "French Trio, Vol.1" (2013). In 2015, we finally saw the phonographic follow-up of the project in the form of a CD with the songs recorded during two concerts in Santes and Verines ('French Trio, Vol.2', 2014).

Another record of Asai-Combeau-Legrand trio is consistently titled 'French Trio Vol.3' album recorded in the coastal Fouras. In addition to new compositions of a Japanese virtuoso, one will also find an interesting version of the 'Nardis' theme by Miles Davis on the CD. With several years of cooperation abounding in numerous concerts and sessions, the musicians present themselves a proven and well-chosen jazz composition and each of the themes on the album is a true pearl of jazz.

Opening the entire beautiful ballad 'Moonlit Night' composed by the pianist back in 1999, we have already learned in the solo version released a few months before the album 'Live In New York' (2016). However, in this case, rhythmically framed by Combeau and Legrand this impressionistic nocturne took on a completely new character and yet losing its original airiness and spirituality.

A similar mood accompanied us in the course of the equally captivating ballad 'Eb+'.

'Tell Me There'll Be Better Days' is the only double bass composition by Pascal Combeau on the CD. Set on a distinct rhythm form of a clear melody it has the flavour of Latin music and blues. Based on a vigorous backing, Asai probably wins the most virtuosic parts of the album and the double bass song solo and drums placed in the middle are a unique decoration theme. The 10-minute crowning finale is a kind of raging musical fiesta. It got really hot.

Relaxation is brought by the reflective theme 'ABC' inspired by Imogen Heap, an English singer. The ballad previously placed on the 'New York Trio, Vol.1' (2012) took on an additional honing while becoming the new version extended to a 12-minute song, which is really hard to break away from.

While the musical beauty is limited by boundaries, a wonderful ballad 'When You Feel Sad' far exceeds them. Based on a simple, uncomplicated melody in accordance with its message the composition can push back any frustrations and worries. Just simple and unsophisticated shape will determine the strength of this song. In the era of constant exploration and experimentation, Asai proves that you need not try on unconventional solutions to create a real small musical masterpiece.

An interesting idea turned out to be reaching for the 'Nardis' by Miles Davis, the theme in which each of the three musicians has a lot to say (see Play). Colourful harmonic and rhythmic solution, powerful double bass solo, and percussion syncopation make the recording of this composition one of the best in recent years I was given to listen.

Many of Takeshi Asai's compositions evolve over the years taking completely new shapes. This also happened with the song '(Not So) Little Waltz' recorded in 2012 which over time strayed so far away from the original that on the 'French Trio Vol.3' a pianist made its prequel in the form of an airy waltz 'Very Little Waltz'.

'Macka'(Feeler) concluding a nearly 80-minute meeting with the French music Trio is an expressive rhythm and full of insane tempo melodies, which the undersigned will always associate with feline performance and agility (explanation in P.S.)

French Trio of a Japanese pianist gives the impression of a single musical organism by merging a personality and individual perception of the sound of each of the musicians. The extraordinary perfection of the instrumentalists accompanied at the same time a huge feeling of freedom and a passionate joint creation of musical landscapes. Asai's compositions captivate beauty and elusive lightness, which is associated with classical piano pieces. Few pianists can play with

mood so brilliantly. There are not many compositions like these. May we live to see the album 'French Trio Vol.4'.

The album was released in December 2016.