

wibutee biography

Wibutee, one of Norway's most noted electrojazz groups, have been receiving an expanding international audience, consisting of a public and critics who are not confined by the traditional expectations of the form. One of the most exciting sounds to emerge from the Norwegian electro-jazz scene, Wibutee has evolved and grown into musical expression uniquely their own. From the jazz and electronica underground which gave them their beginnings, they are quickly emerging as a group with their own style and their own definitive experience of new musical sound. Now with the release of their third album, **Playmachine** (Jazzland Recordings, 2004), Wibutee opens the doors to a wider sonic world enticing the listener to give up their pre-conceived notions of two seemingly opposed genres of music.

Created in Trondheim, Norway, in 1996 by **Håkon Kornstad** (saxes, flutes, programming), **Per Zanussi** (bass, programming), and **Wetle Holte** (drums, programming), their initial aim was to create a band that fused electronic music and contemporary jazz. Heavily influenced by the club scene and the mixes of DJ's, where jazz samples were mixed with new beats to create a fresh result, together Wibutee began to gain the attention of both clubbers and jazz critics alike.

In 1998, the band was joined by singer **Live Maria Roggen** and Fender Rhodes-player **Erlend Skomsvoll**. **Jazzland Recordings**, a label then recently formed by keyboard guru **Bugge Wesseltroft**, signed the band and released their first recording, "**Newborn Thing**" (1999). This firmly established the band and one of the most vibrant and exciting visions within the growing Norwegian electro-jazz scene. That year also saw that line-up of the band begin to tour, bringing them to various festivals in Norway and across Europe. Joined later by **Gulleiv Wee** on live electronics, they continued throughout 2000 touring extensively.

In 2001, Håkon, Per and Wetle decided to refocus their musical direction, and to pursue an instrumental approach. They were joined by **Rune Brøndbo** (a.k.a. **Sternklang**), an electronica musician with an already established name on that circuit, for their second recording "**Eight Domestic Challenges**" (2001, **Jazzland Recordings**). The combination proved so successful, that Brøndbo was asked to become a full-time member. As the title implies, "**Eight Domestic Challenges**" is almost an entirely home-made album. The basic material consisted of raw performances captured and created during Wibutee's touring of France and Germany in 2000-2001, with improvised dubbing later being recorded at Wesseltroft's studio. The band members constructed, de-constructed and sought to define the actual compositions and final sound of their new freestyle jazz improvisations. "*One of the pitfalls of decomposing and producing your own recorded music is throwing away too much of the spontaneity, because when you've listened through each tune a thousand times you can easily end up bored with your own playing and ideas. We tried to keep as much of the actual forms and melodies intact, concentrating on beats, the programming and samples*", the band states. The album reveals the band's sonic progression, and growth through the many eclectic influences they have each brought with them.

Each member of Wibutee also has established themselves as vital independent forces in the jazz arena. **Håkon Kornstad** is one of the most expressive young saxophonists, also well

known for his **Kornstad Trio** and **LO-KO** (a duo with Paal Nilssen-Love). He has performed also with Bugge Wesseltoft's **New Conceptions of Jazz** for five years until recently.

Per Zanussi also has his own band, **Zanussi 5**, which has been gaining a considerable amount of attention in Norway. The music which he composes for this orchestra is influenced by Klezmer and Circus music, among others. He also composes for theater and film, and is one of the most highly sought-after bass players, working with such varied acts as **Morten Abel**, **Bugge Wesseltoft** and **Wunderkammer**.

Wetle Holte also perform in with other acts such as **Bugge Wesseltoft**, **Nils Petter Molvær** and **John Scofield**, and is considered an influential forerunner in combining elements of jazz with electronic music. When he isn't producing and performing with **Eivind Aarset's Electronique Noire**, he composes for Wibutee.

Rune Brøndbo, also known as "**Sternklang**", has under that name released three critically-praised albums in the electronica genre. A fore-runner in that field, in Wibutee he performs on self-created synths, samples and loops.

Wibutee have toured extensively internationally, bringing one reviewer to recently write on their show in Tampere, Finland: "*Now the music reaches beyond dancing, beyond listening and becomes, in the richest sense of the word, an experience.*" (*Matthew Wuethrich*). For their live shows they have collaborated with the Norwegian experimental designer **Amoeba (a.k.a. Marius Watz)** to create stunning visual backdrops and live video footage on stage.

Wibutee reveal their third album for Jazzland Recordings, titled **Playmachine**. The title receives its name from when the band gathered for a listening session and were overwhelmed by surprising sounds they recorded flowing from the speakers – sounds which seemed to be created through the actual recording moment, almost unconsciously. They quickly realized they had achieved their goal to create the "*unheard sound*". Where *Eight Domestic Challenges* was dreamy and surreal, **Playmachine** is an absolutely "in-your-face" experience. Instruments change functions rapidly, from a solo spot to a rhythm instrument, and before you know it, you are grappling with trying to decide if you hear loops or actual recordings. Inspired by the roots of jazz-rock, the funky has become funkier, the hard even harder. And then beautifully sweet and light. Music crossing boundaries, defying categories. Pure Wibutee.

For more information:

www.wibutee.net

www.jazzlandrec.com

April 2004