



SANTA DIVER

Blue Horizon is the 4th album of the Hungarian band Santa Diver, who were formed in 2006, and it is done by the trio of by Luca Kézdy on violin, David Szesztay on bass and David Szegő on drums.

“The latest album of the trio is well-structured and includes compositions with a great dynamic range as well as meditative pieces arranged side by side, altogether adding up to an extraordinarily rich musical material, which features virtuoso playing and exceptional finesse of composition. Luca Kézdy is elemental while sensitive, her dynamic variations and mood registers dominate the album, with her worthy companion David Szesztay, whose effected bass music is counterpointing the violin parts. The precise, playful and smart drum playing of David Szegő makes the whole picture even more exciting. This is real fusion music, where the individual compositions have been built on the ground of improvised jazz, several kinds of exotic styles and sometimes the good-old trusted blues-based rock. (...) As we go on with the mostly big-picture-like songs filled with sounds, compositions (just to mention the tight and dramatic Wintersong and the almost epic-like E.S.D., which blend different styles in a very fluent way, it becomes all the more obvious that this well-respected concert band recorded one of the most powerful Hungarian jazz albums of 2020.” (Zoltán Barotányi, Magyar Narancs, 2020 March 12)

Like in the previous albums, most of the tunes were written by Kézdy, but this time she composed them solely on the piano. *Izland* was written by Szesztay, while *68* was co-written with Kézdy. The last tune is a bonus track, a piano epilogue which allows the listener to get a glimpse into this quasi-new way of songwriting process for the trio.

“With the smart use of lots of colour, tiny tone shifts and brilliant moments, Szesztay provides the foundation, working together with Szegő in a complex way, while Kézdy is obviously the protagonist, without dominating the game stream despite her huge playing field. The reason for this is the very exciting, attention grabbing way of playing, which pulls you along even during the more meditative episodes. (...)

I admit until now I had some doubts about Kézdy’s violin sounds, partly because I thought it was hard to come up with something new after Jean-Luc Ponty. But now I can hear a completely new sound, filled with passion (...) something has been accomplished, the autonomous passion of creation made way for itself and the result is the best album of Santa Diver so far.” (Zoltán Végső, Élet és Irodalom, 2020 February 28)

“...the impressive young trio Santa Diver featuring a star in the making with astonishing violinist Luca Kézdy...” ([Jazzwise Magazin 2015](#))



“The association of Hungarian music with cimbaloms, guitars and especially violins is a quite familiar one and not especially surprising. The way Luca Kézdy used her electrified violin in the next performance, however, was. She strummed it like a rhythm guitar or, aided by electronics and pedals, produced a screaming solo like on the electric guitar. However, the core of her trio’s playing were not these kinds of effects. Rather, it was the fundament violinists as Jean-Luc Ponty or Michal Urbaniak built in the past that she extended. She extended and recombined the possibilities her forerunners created.

There are a lot of good violinists around nowadays. The performance of the trio was testimony that Kézdy has found and established her and her trio’s very own place and profile. To make and keep it interesting and captivating an interlocking of simple pattern and elaborations has to be figured out and set into motion. It was captivating and exhilarating what she did with her trio of bass guitarist Dávid Szesztay and drummer Dávid Szegő. The trio toured neighbouring countries and New York recently, joined by leading figure of free improvisation István Grensó— a combination that would and could make a lot of sense.” ([All About Jazz 2015](#))

“Luca Kézdy is on the right track to get known by a wider range of audience because of her unique talent. She takes very seriously what she took upon herself, every note she plays is extremely important for her and she’s behind them 100%.” (Csaba Deseő, JazzMa, 2013)

“Kézdy has become the soloist of the band for sure, these musical structures are based on her very emotional melodies with a wild range of dynamics in them, which are sometimes separated into different chapters as part of a specific piece. The tight and significant rhythms of Zsolt Sárvári Kovács are making the others to go with them, his sound is like what can be heard recently by modern American drummers. With such a complex, but very direct playing, without any self-assertiveness is very rare in our musical scene. Szesztay brings the grooves basically, there's no doubt the bass is the part of the rhythm section, but in the meditative parts there are melodies which are sometimes transformed into more complex bass themes.” (Zoltán Végső, Élet és Irodalom, 2013)

“For the violin-bass-drum trio there are no well-threaded paths like when the solo instrument is a guitar or piano, but Luca Kézdy, Dávid Szesztay and Zsolt Sárvári Kovács don’t even hold onto the ropes which they had created earlier for themselves. We have the feeling all the time that they play with a wide range of freedom, although the landmarks are well-created. Much serious game in there.” (Barbara Bércesi, Gramofon, 2013)

“... Santa Diver (a name derived from a Japanese, scuba-version of Kris Kringle) is one of the most promising music acts in Budapest: its technoid musical approach and beat, combined with melodies inspired by different folk music and jazz create what is not just beautiful music, but something very apt for the turn of the century.” [Sirály blogspot](#)