

## **Reviews Eric Boeren 4tet – Song for Tracy the Turtle Live at Jazz Brugge 2004 (CF 186)**

Dutch musicians are often described as being witty and whimsical, and quartets that have a cornet, alto sax, bass and drums are often described as being influenced by Ornette Coleman. I know because I've done it myself. But I swear it's true with regard to cornetist Eric Boeren's quartet. They (the "they" are Boeren, Michael Moore, Wilbert de Joode and Paul Lovens) sure sound like they're having a lot of fun. And they do, in fact, do a couple of Ornette Coleman pieces. What can I say? Check them out when they come to Montreal next week. You'll have fun too, I can almost guarantee it.

**Mike Chamberlain, June 17th, 2010**

When Eric Boeren's 4tet isn't playing the music of Ornette Coleman, they are playing the music of Ornette Coleman. That is to say, with a Dutch swing. The leader and cornetist began playing covers in the early 1990s, releasing several quartet recordings of Coleman's music with Cross Breeding (BVHaast, 1997), Joy Of A Toy (BVHaast, 2001), and Soft Nose (BVHaast, 2001). And while this album Song For Tracey The Turtle only refers to two Coleman tracks directly, the influence is quite palpable. Without direct allusion to the original Coleman quartet or the later Old And New Dreams band of Don Cherry, Dewey Redman, Ed Blackwell, and Charlie Haden, Boeren along with saxophonist Michael Moore, bassist Wilbert de Joode and drummer Paul Lovens present music that Ornette Coleman circa 1960 would easily recognize and the 2010 Ornette might love. This disc was taken from a 2004 concert broadcast by Belgian radio and not heard by Boeren until 2008. His quartet is in fine form, frolickingly playing with extended technique to broaden the seemingly simple music Boeren wrote with Coleman in mind. The music is arranged to allow each player plenty of space. Michael Moore and Wilbert de Joode are featured on "Charmes," speaking hushed lines to each other. It's almost as if they're aside, especially when Boeren takes off with some licks and Lovens whips up the energy. The 4tet seems to have a sense of how to shred a composition, only to reassemble it without a mark. Even their "Free" piece maintains the quartet's logic. The gentle "Memo" at barely over a minute segues into Eubie Blake's "Memories Of You," played straight by Moore's clarinet and Boeren's muted cornet with all the sentiment and attitude the song deserves. The disc ends with the 10-minute "Squirrel Feet/The Legend Of Bebop," a part Coleman/part Boeren creation which pulls music from Coleman's The Art of the Improvisers (Atlantic, 1961) recording, but builds upon a 21st century band concept with 20 years of experience. The quartet is unflappable, assembling the melody before breaking it into several pieces to be reconfigured into a blues swing. Smile, Ornette, smile.

**By Mark Corroto, June 16, 2010 ([www.allaboutjazz.com](http://www.allaboutjazz.com))**

"In jazz and improvisation, no two performances are alike. And if there's no recordings of a particularly good concert, only memory can vaguely testify what happened on stage – something more easy to maintain by the audience than it is for the musicians themselves. Musicians are so involved that it is hard to distance themselves from the music played. Knowing this, Dutch cornetist Eric Boeren had a wonderful surprise when a friend showed him a tape of the radio transmission of a gig he played with his quartet (with Michael Moore, Wilbert De Joode and Paul Lovens), in 2004, during the Jazz Brugge Festival in Belgium. Eric got excited with the quality of both the music and the recording, and that document is finally available to everybody interested. Six years after it sounded to all those presents in Brugges' Concertgebouw. "Song For Tracy The Turtle" shows us a quartet molded in the

Ornette Coleman concept (two of the 10 tracks included are compositions by the author of "Shape of Jazz to Come". One is a mix of Boeren's and Coleman's writings), but distinctively with a clear European approach. The music is energetic, sometimes even quite abstract, with lots of swing.. Intentionally playful and, when decisions have to be made, always with a "stream-of-consciousness". Note their tricky counterpoints. Boeren and Moore may be acting in the place of Don Cherry and Ornette, but in no way this is a mere copy of things previously done by both masters: they're not followers, but heirs of a particular understanding of music. In truth they add something more to it. And if Michael Moore is one of the best reedmen available for this job, the rhythm section of De Joode (double bass) and Lovens (drums) is something created in heaven. You must have this."

review May 2010

Dutch cornetist Eric Boeren's Song for Tracy the Turtle – Live at Jazz Brugge 2004 is a disc that fairly wallows in its Ornettitude, and that's a good thing. You have to go back to Old and New Dreams to find a band as imbued with the spirit of the pre-Dancing In Your Head Coleman units as Boeren's 4tet. Not only do they cover four, count 'em, four classic-but-not-overdone O.C. compositions ("Mr. and Mrs. People," "Free," "Moon Inhabitants," and "The Legend of Bebop"), they also essay Ornettish originals, replete with hummable, bluesy unison heads, like "A Fuzzphony" and "Soft Nose." Boeren individuates most when he blows a muted horn, while Michael Moore shines on both alto and Eb clarinet. Departures include the amorously open-ended title track (which kicks off the set), and the lovely laments "Memo" and "Memories of You" (the latter a Eubie Blake composition, of all things). I'll also admit to being a sucker for CDs with pictures of turtles on the cover, especially when executed as exquisitely as Clean Feed's sleeves always are.

**Stash Dauber, June 7, 2010**