



Digital release dates: **September 22, 2023**

Label Art Melodies EOS100

www.artmelodies.fr

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Saso Popovski

Steps

On his first album for Art Melodies, guitarist **Saso Popovski** refines his concept of a trio project built on constant variations of melodies, emphasizes sound, textures, interaction and space by introducing color and contrasting musical thought collaborations with guest musicians.

The compositions are organized around a beautifully derived, clear and appealing melodious lines.

Steps is a seven-track multi-cultural music of pure lines, exotic motifs, concluded structures and lush imagination, in which the author consciously leaves room for development and moving sound barriers through the different character of the instruments as well as the unpredictable sensibility of the musicians.

On this album, **Saso** is accompanied by his long-time collaborators **Ivan Bejkov** and **Viktor Filipovski**, as well as master musicians who come from diametrically different musical worlds and influences.

With such strong players for the session and in different group formations, the compositions allow for an intimacy and a space that give all the musicians an equal musical presence. The transparency of the sound enhances this sense that each musician takes an equal role in shaping the character and mood of the tunes. It also reveals a deep aesthetic affinity between the musicians.

Each musician finds something very different and unique to contribute to each tune, creating out of each one a very different musical landscape.

The musical image is defined through the authenticity of the compositions, the arrangement is set in the direction of complete

musical conversation, and is constantly evolving unobtrusively rich with colors.

From effectively quiet to extremely dominant and refined musical motifs, improvisations with velvety sheen and ornaments that culminate repetitively in the musical space, the basis of this edition is the common language that the members of this group have mastered to perfection.

The ambience of this release is different in each composition from happy and shining to slow and mystical, from African up beats to 6/8 dreamy waltz, the expression is rich and characteristic with a clear dominance by the different sound colors, which is a concrete step forward of the author in relation to his musical taste and perception.

“Composing music in the middle of a pandemic, in a time full of uncertainty and unpredictability, is a challenge in itself. The concern for the current situation, as well as the longing for a better and more secure tomorrow lives from the first introductory phrase to the last note in this release. I am happy that such a large and highly professional team was involved in the creation of this album from its earliest stages to the final product.”

Saso Popovski, January 2023

Many influences are present, from the musical language of great contemporary jazz artists such as **John Abercrombie**, **Bill Frisell** and **John Zorn**, through the velvety Mediterranean sounds, to his native and traditional Macedonian musical roots. The dazzling light that permeates the complete release carries a sense of discovery mixed with mystery, clearly defining **Saso Popovski's** character, energy and unique colorful stamp that solidifies him even further forward on the global jazz scene.

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Photo by Daniel Gjurchinovski

Compositions

1 - Steps	4'54
2 - Night in the desert	6'46
3 - Change of heart	5'09
4 - Poem for Teo	6'49
5 - Behind the time	5'37
6 - Windflow	6'42
7 - Lava	6'02

Members

- Saso Popovski, guitar
- Ivan Bejkov, bass guitar
- Viktor Filipovski drums & percussion

- Olivier Samouillan, viola
- Vasil Hadzimanov, piano
- Kiril Kuzmanov, flute & saxophone
- Aleksandar Sekulovski, percussion
- Ratko Dautovski, percussion

Info credits

All music written and arranged by **Saso Popovski**
Recorded on 17 and 18 January 2022 by **Alen Hadzi-Stefanov**
Mixed by **Alen Hadzi-Stefanov, Saso Popovski, Ivan Bejkov**
Mastered by **Alen Hadzi-Stefanov, Angel Kjosev** at "The Basement Studio"

Music producers **Ivan Bejkov, Saso Popovski**

Design and photo by **Daniel Gjurchinovski**

Published by **Art Melodies**

Thanks to **Toni Kitanovski** for his great support and to all my family and friends.

Press reviews

« *Steps* is the most interesting and engaging contemporary jazz album I've had the pleasure to preview to date. »

- George C. Glasser, *Jazz Syndicate Magazine & Promotions*

« *This music is at the crossroads of genres, relaxing and mesmerizing at the same time. »*

- Marek Romański, *Jazz Forum*

« *Prepare to be captivated by this beautiful piece of work, where melancholy and wistfulness intertwine. »*

- Nenad Georgievski, *All About Jazz*

« *With Steps* Saso confirms his ability to assimilate multicultural techniques and exotic melodies to give new polish and a strong personalization to jazz. »

- Mario Ferraioli, *Jazz In Family*

« *An absolutely likable and masterful album. »*

- Ljupco Jolevski

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