



Live in Vienna
Miroslav Vitous

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The ending credits call this {^Bass Encounters Live In Concert: Miroslav Vitous Solo with Symphonic Orchestra Samples} while the back cover claims {\$John Hollenbeck} appears on drums and {\$Fritz Pauer} on piano. Solo it is indeed with the pianist and drummer from {\$Rufus Reid}'s {^Live In Vienna} disc probably off playing with him. On a superb recording of fifty-five minutes of bass playing genius (the p.r. claims 75 minutes but that's incorrect) it is one frustrating aspect of this series and producer {\$Barbara Weissenbeck} should admonish those in charge of her work as it is truly deceptive to claim there's a trio interacting on a solo performance.

It's {@Quantum Leap} executive producers {\$Kim Lyon} and {\$Gary Peet} - the pair that gave us a video allegedly from {\$The Shirelles} which turned out to be a 1988 concert by former {\$Shirelles} singer {\$Doris Kenner-Jackson} (formerly {\$Doris Coley}) back in action and in need of a proof reader (Lyon actually takes credit for the inlay concept). Girl Group fans and jazz aficionados have something in common - a great attention to detail, so giving the people what they want is a necessity. These concerts recorded at {~Porgy & Bess Jazzclub} in Wein (Vienna, Austria) are part of the "Bass Encounters" series sponsored and organized by the {@Thomastik-Infeld String Company} of Vienna. {\$Martin Vettters}' audio recording is excellent, and the camerawork by {\$Marcel Lehmann}, {\$Bernhard Mehl} and {\$Roman Bagner} is also fine. It's a dark club and there's one sole figure and his bass to capture on this {\$Barbara Weissenbeck} film - and the staff does an excellent job of doing just that. The eight pieces from double bassist {\$Miroslav Vitous} were taped on February 17, 2005 and he's at the top of his game. The four minute interview with Vitous is much too short, he speaks as if answering questions with no interviewer appearing on audio or video and along with the color image of Vitous talking are black and white stage shots which are very effective. An hours worth of interview footage would've been as compelling as the concert itself and maybe on a reissue fans can look forward to that. As the soloist explores his instrument it is hard to figure out that you are listening to {\$Victor Young}'s {&"My Foolish Heart"} - the point of the artistry at play is the bassist's approach to the instrument and the dance of his fingers as they generate his sound. And only a true connoisseur would realize when Vitous arrangement and variations of {\$Antonin Dvorzak}'s Cello Concerto in B minor or {\$Miles Davis}'s {&"Milestones"} are emerging from the stage, but with the aid of his synthetic strings the double-bassist truly brings these soothing sounds into the world of "space age bachelor pad music", and executive producers Peet and Lyon would be well advised to direct these sounds and images to that audience.

There's a three page text biography on the disc, a two page selected discography with the virtuoso's work on {@Arista}, {@Warner Brothers}, {@CBS}, with {\$Weather Report} and other releases, the obligatory text pages on the DVD with information on {\$Thomastik-Infeld}, the maker of the strings used by the musicians on this series, as well as a "Propaganda" page from the {@Quantum Leap} company on their jazz releases, opera and the arts along with the company's "classic rock" trailers. The DVD contains six regions with four of them pertaining to the work of {\$Miroslav Vitous}.

- Joe Viglione