



## DVD: Live in Vienna - Miroslav Vitous (2004)

**Review Rating:** Very Good

**Label/Studio:** Quantum Leap / MVD Visual

**Catalog #:** QLDVD-6841

**Region:** 0 (NTSC)

**Released:** May 15, 2007

**Genre:** Jazz Concert

**Synopsis:** A night with legendary bass player Miroslav Vitous at the Porgy & Bess jazz club in Vienna, Austria.

**Directed by:** Barbara Weissenbeck

**Screenplay by:** n/a

**Music by:** various

**Produced by:** Barbara Weissenbeck

**Cast:** Arni Egilsson, Niels-Henning Oersted Pedersen, Wayne Darling, John Hollenbeck, and Fritz Pauer.

**Film Length:** 56 mins

**Colour:**

**Languages:** English Stereo 2.0

**Subtitles:**

**Process/Ratio:** 1.85:1

**Anamorphic DVD:** Yes

### Special Features :

Interview with Miroslav Vitous (4:04) / Text Biography & Discography

### Comments :

The latest volume in the Live in Vienna series has bassist Miroslav Vitous performing solo at the Porgy & Bess jazz club, sometimes accompanied by his laptop computer, where the musician cues short orchestral synth arrangements that are pretty reminiscent of Gil Evans classical/jazz arrangements for brass and strings.

Piano or violin might be the most popular instruments for solo performances, but in his first piece, "Free Improvisations," Vitous reveals the bass' other attributes that give us more than bowed and plucked sounds. Going beyond mere rhythmic patterns, Vitous taps and raps various sides of the instrument (much in the way Dave Grusin used the keys, chassis, and physical innards of his piano to provide the thematic, romantic, and chase music for **The Firm** soundtrack), and the short synth samples are connective bridges which Vitous plays off by performing warm, soothing tones and reverberations. (Vitous also returns to the synth samples in "Variations on Dvorkis Cello Concerto in B Minor," the rather morose and dirge-like "Jewish Psalm," and "Opera," playing against chorales, synth horns, and timpani hits.)

"Beethoven" is more introspective, and Vitous uses low, brooding whole notes to support some

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furious fingering in a composition that captures the shifting moods of an obsessive personality. Sometimes melancholic, Vitous stays within a loose meter so he can alternate between his impressions of the creative frustration a composer experiences as he searches for the most precise musical idea, and the relief that comes from its shaping and refinement.

Vitous also tackles Miles Davis' classic tune "Milestones," delivering a pretty groovy version as he switches between the percussion and melodic parts for six minutes. The veteran bassist then closes the intimate concert with "Bamboo Forest," a meditative, free-flowing work that conveys soothing tenderness through low bass pulses, and harmonic arches.

A short interview is included on this cleanly mastered DVD, with Vitous talking about his early influences, and his 'direct and very clear' classical-jazz style - a fusion which he feels is the only area where jazz can go after decades of exploration, experimentation, and improvising. That statement is further qualified by Vitous' rapid and detailed verbal descriptions - certainly on par with his vibrant performance style - and while jazz purists may balk at his somewhat finite view of 'pure' jazz as a nearly exhausted art form, this DVD presents some of his efforts in marrying the components that separately comprise classical, and jazz music.

DVDs in the **Live in Vienna** series include Barre Phillips, Rufus Reid, Duncan McTier, [Arni Egilsson/Niels-Henning Oersted Petersen/Wayne Darling](#), and Miroslav Vitous.

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