



PRESS RELEASE



EUGEN CICERO TRIO
LULLABIES
IOR LP 77154-1



Side A

1. Lullaby Of Birdland (5:03)
2. Guten Abend, gut´ Nacht (4:58)
3. Schlaf, Kindlein, schlaf (4:21)
4. Berceuse (5:50)
5. Auf dem Berge, da wehet der Wind (3:26)
6. Schlafe, schlafe, holder, süßer Knabe (3:17)

Side B

1. Heidschi Bumbeidschi (4:32)
2. Schlummerlied (3:57)
3. Christiana´s Song (5:38)
4. Sandmann, lieber Sandmann (4:43)
5. Wer hat die schönsten Schäfchen (5:14)

Eugen Cicero - piano
Decebal Badila - bass
Ringo Hirth - drums

EUGEN CICERO TRIO LULLABIES

(IN+OUT Records)

IN+OUT Records has unearthed another treasure of Eugen Cicero: „Lullabies“, a trio studio recording from 1995 with Decebal Badila on bass and Ringo Hirth on drums. This album was originally only released for the Japanese market and is now available worldwide for the first time.

When a new album is released some 30 years after the demise of a musician, it certainly requires some explanation: Eugen Cicero already was a popular pianist in Japan in the early 1970s. While the music of Jacques Loussier was already known under the term „Play Bach“, Cicero’s piano style was simply referred to as „Rococo Jazz“. While Jacques’ interpretation of Bach was more academic, Eugen, who rebelled musically against the nomenclature of his then communist homeland Romania, was more rooted in jazz. This is because his fellow musicians were great performers such as Charly Antolini, Niels Henning Ørsted-Pedersen, Tony Inzalaco, Billy Higgins, Ack van Rooyen and Aladár Pege.

After Eugen made his first groundbreaking records with MPS in the 1960s, he changed labels to Intercord and finally to Timeless Records in Holland in the 1980s. Director Ria Wigt introduced him to the Japanese producer Makoto Kimata (1938-2016). As a result, his record sales in Japan greatly increased and due to the wide range of his repertoire, his popularity grew even stronger.

Eugen Cicero enjoyed cult status in Japan. The Japanese love jazz and classical music equally, and do not tend to differentiate, as is the case in Europe, especially in Germany.

Eugen toured Japan with different trios in 1972, 1987 and 1993. His fourth Japan tour was already planned for 1998, but never took place due to his untimely demise in 1997.

In the early 1990s, Makoto Kimata repeatedly asked Eugen to record the lullaby „Berceuse“ by the French composer Benjamin Godard (1849-1895) for his grandson. This is how the „Lullabies“ project started. Since it was

not possible to record in Japan, Eugen Cicero rented the radio studio of the former SWF in Mainz, Germany.

Here, he recorded twelve lullabies within three days together with Ringo Hirth on drums and Decebal Badila on bass. It was to become the last studio recording of his career. However, the „Lullabies“ were only produced for the Japanese market.

After the release of the DVD „Cicero – Zwei Leben, eine Bühne“ in 2022, I continued to search for his hidden recordings. As a result, I discovered the live concert in Bucharest 1994 and finally the Japanese Lullabies recorded in 1995. When one speaks of lullabies, jazz enthusiasts immediately think of „Lullaby Of Birdland“ by George Shearing. The classically educated music lover, however, will have the songs of Brahms, Mozart and Schubert in mind. Well, you may find both genres combined on this album.

From the repertoire of the „Lieder“, some German music lovers may miss the well-known cradle songs such as „Der Mond ist aufgegangen“ or „Weißt du wieviel Sternlein stehen“. May we forgive Eugen, as he contributed an own melody that he composed in the occasion of the birth of his daughter „Christiana“ in 1994. This melody („Christiana´s Song“) doesn’t necessarily have lullaby character, but it captivates the spirit and hope of a new born life, which is mostly dreamt of in the night...

Just as „Brahms` Lullaby“ („Guten Abend, gut´ Nacht“) still enjoys worldwide hit quality, you might also appreciate the melodies of Schubert and Schumann, which are full of peace and awe.

While many people do find their nightly rest with sleeping pills, head phones or iPhone in hand these days, I hope this music gives you an attractive alternative.

Thomas Blaser, August 2023