

LAIKA RECORDS



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Air, the new album by bassist Martin Wind, presents the double bass in an entirely new way: making it the center of the action. Wind, born in Flensburg, Germany, emigrated to New York a quarter of a century ago to seek his musical fortune in the world capital of jazz, and found it. Now, on *Air*, he introduces us to his **New York Bass Quartet**.



The idea of forming an all-bass ensemble came to Wind about ten years ago when he began teaching at Hofstra University. *"For this group I wanted to gather students from different stylistic backgrounds and expose them to a wide repertoire of pieces - from Bach chorales to pop songs to jazz adaptations. And because I didn't want the material to be repetitive week after week, my students and I started writing arrangements,"* Wind recalls.

On *Air*, Wind documents eight of these arrangements with the support of several of New York's world-class musicians. They include **Jordan Frazier** (principal bass with the renowned Orpheus Chamber Orchestra), **Gregg August** (2020 Grammy nominee in the "Best Large Ensemble Jazz Recording" category), and **Sam Suggs**, who at 30 sounds "outrageously mature," as Wind puts it.

"I consider them the A-Team for this kind of a project. Thanks to their versatility and perfect bowing technique, I was able to explore the immense tonal possibilities of the instrument, as

well as the entire scope between classical, rock and jazz."

The result delivers numerous moments of surprise while covering a sonic range of over four octaves. On the title track "**Air**," the ensemble starts off measured and close to the original by Johann Sebastian Bach. "**(Give Me Some) G-String**" also seems similar at first, before completely spinning into a different direction. Here, drum legend **Lenny White** ("Return to Forever") and **Gary Versace** on the Hammond B3 ensure that the piece grooves mightily. On the Weather Report anthem "**Birdland**," White again puts his stamp on the arrangement with his uncompromising backbeat.

With his Beatles medley, Martin Wind demonstrates why he's been making a name for himself as an arranger, as well. He weaves "**The Long and Winding Road**," "**Here, There and Everywhere**," "**She's Leaving Home**" and "**Lady Madonna**"

NEW YORK BASS QUARTET

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into a polyphonic work of art. The starting point for Wind's adaptation of Charlie Haden's "Silence" is a chord progression of only eight measures, from which Wind creates an eight-minute opus. *"Starting with a musical cell and expanding it - that's something that particularly appeals to me,"* reveals Wind, who n achieves a special coup with *Air* - both musically and in terms of personnel.

The liner notes by **Ron Carter**, who played bass for Miles Davis, reflect respect and admiration: *"Imagine an album on which four bassists and some guest musicians dare to play exceptionally difficult arrangements - and succeed thanks to their outstanding skills. Well - stop just imagining it. Because this album is the sounding proof that it can succeed."*