

# WAS NUN NEW RELEASE INFO SHEET

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## WAS NUN | Voyage

Progress and consistency are often at odds with one another. But bringing these two seemingly opposing principles together can lead to greatness. Germany's smallest big band Was Nun achieved just that with their second album, titled "Voyage". Positive feedback for last year's debut still echoes, but the sextet is already focused on their next venture.

Original as the band name Was Nun (what's next) may be, it doesn't fully suit the band; with "Voyage", they know exactly what they are doing. Saxophonist Moritz Aring, trumpeter Marvin Zimmermann, trombonist Jan Frederik Schmidt, pianist Tony Williams, bassist Marcus Lewyn and drummer Erik Mrotzek further cultivate the first album's distinguished sound, staying rooted in jazz tradition but confidently striding into the future. The arrangements for the three horns and rhythm section are so sophisticated and precise that it is often difficult to believe that only six musicians are playing.

But the six friends are far too ambitious to remain content with past achievements. They used the first album as a starting point but simultaneously reflected on possible changes. With extensive experience in theater projects, the band is used to long-term thinking. For the second album they decided to live in the moment. They celebrate this spontaneity with concentrated energy. While “Labyrinth” tells a story of where the six travelers come from, “Voyage” shows where they are now. Every song on the album expresses this leap into the present in its own way. While other bands mature as they grow older, Was Nun has gained experience while becoming more youthful and exuberant, all without losing the authenticity of their sound.

The sextet’s songs tell stories from the lives of each band member. Reminiscing about long-lost times and places, friends who have passed too soon and collective experiences of the entire band, the individual voices which come together into a common language permeates from the first to the last note. *“Some events only affected a few of the band members, but over time they became shared experiences for all of us,”* reflects trombonist Jan Frederik Schmidt. *“This happens naturally because we spend so much time together. Our private, professional and musical lives come together into one big story.”*

Was Nun’s new style also comes from a newfound focus on the rhythm section. While bass, drums and piano, though still prominent, stayed mostly in the background for “Labyrinth”, they found their own voice on “Voyage”. Through this, the band’s sound gains in contour and depth. Big parts become even bigger, small parts much smaller, with all six musicians working together to produce these contrasts. Bassist Marcus Lewyn thinks that this was not a conscious decision, but saxophonist Moritz Aring says that one goal of the album was to pre-arrange less of the music. This opens up more space for the spontaneous development of ideas, and the rhythm section fills the space masterfully.

Creative impulses are spread evenly throughout the band. Was Nun’s signature sound from “Labyrinth” is unmistakable, but the travelers become less predictable on “Voyage”, both over the course of the album and in individual songs. *“This album may seem like a collection of unconnected short stories,”* says Aring, *“but all the stories tie into each other. That’s why we decided on the name “Voyage” for the album. What have we experienced together, and what awaits us beyond the horizon?”*

To travel always means leaving the known behind to discover something new. The magic of letting go becomes a theme in the album, weaving the songs together and uncovering new connections with each listen.

Apropos signature sound: one of the band's biggest strengths is its brilliance. Can the fifteen or more voices that we seem to hear really come from six musicians? The six voices combine into a calculated "meta voice" and create the illusion of many more for the listener. *"We just know each other much better than when we were recording the first album,"* pianist Tony Williams elaborates. *"We play to our strengths. When I write a song for Was Nun, I have a good idea of how everyone will play it. I can give my bandmates voices that fit exactly to their personality, or voices that go against their personality. We know when to support and when to challenge each other to keep moving forward."*

In the 1800s the Grimm Brothers were already talking about "How Six Made Their Way in the World". And so the journey continues. A band reimagines itself while staying true to itself. Was Nun takes the listener on an entertaining and eventful trip from the known into the unknown, sometimes inviting us to reflect, sometimes to linger, but always to keep moving forward.

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