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## Veronika Harcsa - Bálint Gyémánt Lifeloover

Veronika Harcsa: vocals  
Bálint Gyémánt: guitar

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### Links:

Veronika Harcsa <http://harcseveronika.hu>

Bálint Gyémánt <http://www.gyemantbalint.eu>

Video Lifeloover: [http://youtu.be/EbkL0ub8\\_O4](http://youtu.be/EbkL0ub8_O4)

## Veronika Harcsa - Bálint Gyémánt | Lifeloover

Clarity is a rare asset in jazz. So rare, that it attracts attention straightaway, when an artist has the courage to have absolute transparency. Veronika Harcsa is a Hungarian singer and songwriter, whose greatest strength lies exactly in this clarity, which enchants and bedazzles instantly. She reaches the listener without any detours, gets by without any mysticisms and her voice knows only the most direct way from the soul into the ear. Her unmistakable combination of timbre, structure and responsiveness consistently result in this rare trait: clarity.

The setting on "Lifeloover" is very simple. Veronika Harcsa sings, Bálint Gyémánt plays acoustic guitar. Here and there they loop some things and work with additional tracks; done! Also beyond the tonal attribution the roles are clearly defined. Veronika Harcsa is responsible for the tender, emotional level. Bálint Gyémánt assumes the abstract, cooler part. And still the intentions of the two musicians interfuse to such an extent, that they seem to merge to a single artistic personality. Chance never stands in the way of the clarity of the concept of the two Magyars. "We have worked extensively on how we can make our sound interesting throughout a concert of 90 minutes or for a whole album of 50 minutes", Veronika Harcsa explains. "We have nothing available besides voice and guitar. How far can we go with these means? Sometimes we have worked with overdubs very carefully, but usually we decided on the opposite, namely cleaning up our songs

and playing as little as possible. We have tried maximizing the sound as well as reducing it, to shape it as clear as possible.”

Although she is still young, “Lifelover” is not the first album the singer is presenting. The journey that has brought her to this point was intensive and accompanied by many decisions and junctions in her path. As a child she was already engaged in music, initially learned the saxophone and came into contact with jazz. But after graduating from high school she studied mathematics at first. Then she began to get into classic jazz singers like Ella Fitzgerald or Carmen McRae and just wanted to try singing some standards herself. At the age of 21 she was assailed by the feeling that she had to come to a decision and so she switched to the jazz department of the music academy in Budapest. Ever since, she puts all of her energy into the expansion of the expressive possibilities of her voice.

On her first CD, Veronika Harcsa still contented herself with singing standards, but throughout four more albums she has acquired a very original, independent repertoire. The Hungarian likes calling herself and her companion “conscious musicians”, who think and talk a lot about their art. Precisely her connection to natural science helps her to profess the above noted clarity again and again and to modestly handle sounds and words. Exorbitance, exhibitionism or any form of musical boasting are non-existent in her music. For Veronika Harcsa it is the most natural thing in the world. “During my studies I was already surrounded by many people, who were engaged in mathematics and music simultaneously. Apparently there is a strong connection there. Both are based on structures. Through mathematics I learned to think structurally. Even when I improvise I definitely think in structures.”

Veronika Harcsa doesn’t like her music to be categorized. The harmonies and improvisations suggest a certain proximity to jazz-ancestry, but she also has a strong correlation to pop, to experimental singers like Meredith Monk or Sidsel Endresen or to modern classical music from Charles Ives to Morton Feldman. All of these influences condense in her songs to a genuine unity, which makes you forget each individual source.

Not only their work as a duo, heard on “Lifelover”, connects Veronika Harcsa and Bálint Gyémánt, but also the band Bin-Jip, where they produce experimental electronic music together with Andrew J. Although Bin-Jip, on the one hand, is in stark contrast to the purely acoustic duo of the two Hungarians, there are still some similarities. “I learn a lot from electronic music, because I like its monotonous approach,” the singer states. “I also like the many effects, that are used in electronic music, and by that I don’t even mean the prominent things like reverb and delay. I’m fascinated by those unique sounds, that have no recognizable relation to any acoustic instrument or that extremely alienate the sound of acoustic instruments. Even though our duo is completely acoustic, we use loops, but these too are based on acoustic sounds. Our fascination for interesting sounds definitely comes from our electronic side.”

The album “Lifelover” is full of surprises. In every song, new commitments are made among the sounds, intentions, levels of abstraction and denseness. The listener can let himself go. There are no breathers for him however, because intellectual attention is called upon just as strongly as emotional association. Harcsa and Gyémánt unswervingly play together, so that they constantly further develop and “Lifelover” is only a stopover. But what can be more exciting than to partake in the continuous metamorphosis of two artists betwixt clear planning and bold visions?