

## TOMASZ STANKO

### *Dark Eyes*

*Lyrical, fragile, hypnotic, but also harsh and inscrutable - we can describe Tomasz Stanko's music. The Polish trumpeter is one of those musicians, which can be recognized with the first note.*

(part of the review of the album 'Dark Eyes', [visionae.de](http://visionae.de))

Tomasz Stanko, a jazz trumpeter, composer and bandleader of international fame. His trumpet's one and only sound may be heard at the most prestigious venues throughout the world and on records produced and released by renowned, Munich-based ECM Records. Tomasz Stanko's music has been honored with many awards, recently including the 2002 European Jazz Award, the 2004 and 2005 Australian Bell Awards for the Best Jazz Album of the Year for *Soul of Things* and *Suspended Night*, the Polonia Restituta Commander Cross for the whole body of work, and the Gloria Artis Medal of Merit for Culture. He is one of a few European jazzmen greatly appreciated in the USA, the cradle of jazz. In 2005, 2007 and 2008 Tomasz Stanko was voted the sixth best trumpeter by the world's leading US *Down Beat* magazine.

While critics often compare him to Miles Davis and Chat Baker, Tomasz Stanko has developed his own unique artistic language. The lyrical, piercing tone of his trumpet, magical and mesmerizing mood of his music, and extraordinary charisma of his leadership and personality are the cornerstones of Tomasz Stanko's mystique.

After a decade of working with Tomasz Stanko Quartet almost exclusively, Tomasz Stańko was recently experimenting with various lineups. As Stanko said: *After long time of quartet I begin new searching period now. I'm composing intensely and I am curiously looking forward to what the time brings.*

Tomasz Stańko Quintet is his new band that in late April had cut a new album for ECM Records. Enigmatically entitled *Dark Eyes*, it offers Stańko's beautiful and new music that will certainly surprise once again with its original and fresh sound. The album's ten selections include some newest tunes written by Stańko already settled down in New York City. Living in NYC is an inexhaustible source of inspiration for Stanko, who loves the city's rhythm, pulse, colours, life, and richness of the art. He's entitled one of the tunes *The Dark Eyes of Martha Hirsch* and quotes Oskar Kokoschka's painting and a mysterious Martha Hirsch's dark eyes as its inspiration.

Tomasz Stanko's smoldering improvisations and grainy-toned trumpet find a new context on "Dark Eyes". Like Miles Davis (a major influence) before him, the Polish jazz master also has an impressive record as talent scout and mentor, and his latest ensemble pools young players from the North of Europe. Tomasz has had strong connections to Finland in particular since the early 1970s when he was part of Edward Vesala's creative circle. Now he welcomes two prodigiously gifted Finns into his group, pianist Alexi Tuomarila and drummer Olavi Louhivuori, both expressive and imaginative players. On "Dark Eyes", Jakob Bro, the young guitarist heard on ECM on Paul Motian's "Garden of Eden" is cast most often in the role of subtle colourist, while fellow Dane Anders Christensen, on electric bass throughout, provides the band's throbbing pulse.