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LUBOŠ SOUKUP RECORDED HIS NEW ALBUM *ZEMĚ* (EARTH) WITH GUITARIST LIONEL LOUEKE



The young saxophonist and composer **Luboš Soukup**, an exceptional talent on the Czech Jazz scene has been representing Czech music in Denmark for several years. Following his studies in Copenhagen, he has been living and working in Denmark and earlier this year he received the prestigious "Music Talent" Award from the Danish Music Union (Dansk Musiker Forbund). In his home country he is known above all as member of the Czech-Polish quintet Inner Spaces (whose album *Light Year* received the "Anděl" Award for the jazz Album of the Year in 2012) and the progressive big band "Concept Art Orchestra" (whose album *The Prague Six* received the "Anděl" Award for the jazz Album of the Year in 2015). He is also a member of the Points band and various other projects; this

year, for example, he took part in the recording of Jaromír Honzák's new album. In Denmark Soukup has performed with the MAdHAs group and, not least, with his own quartet founded in 2012 and whose current members are the German pianist **Christian Pabst**, Danish drummer **Morten Hæsum** and, most recently, the double bassist **Morten Haxhlom**, also from Denmark. It was in Denmark two years ago that Soukup met with the brilliant Beninese guitarist **Lionel Loueke** best known for his collaboration with such luminaries as Herbie Hancock, Dave Holland, Chris Potter, Sting, Cassandra Wilson, Santana, Marcus Miller and Terence Blanchard. Soukup first met Loueke at the jazz workshop for professional jazz musicians in Vallekilde. They then continued their collaboration during the tour of Soukup's quartet in 2017 on which Loueke appeared as a special guest and which resulted in the recording of the **ZEMĚ** (Earth) album at the Danish studio The Village.



The album comprises eight new compositions by Soukup and a Czech folk song "On the White Mountain" in an original arrangement. Soukup's compositional style is marked by a wide range of moods colours and he makes ample use of the presence of his special guest. The album is more chamber-like than Soukup's previous projects and the concept is most accessible and pleasing to the ear. The harmony between the musicians is unshakeable and enables a number of novel musical interactions: Loueke's guitar and vocal parts add a new dimension to Soukup's music;

thanks to Loueke's contribution, the Czech folk song "At the White Mountain" has an almost African sound. The title composition, arranged in an African tone, was written with Loueke in mind, explains Soukup as he comments on the theme and collaboration: *"We live in an era, when the humans are giving the planet a really hard time. I wish people would live in a closer contact with nature. It seems*

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that our life-style in the future will have to be a lot simpler, which is not going to be easy considering the wonderful possibilities that we have today. It was only in hindsight that I realized there were parallels between our album and Lionel's album "Gaïa". This word also means "earth" in Greek mythology and the message of his recording is similar to that of my album. Indeed, Earth is our home and that's why we should take proper care of it."

The **ZEMĚ** album is released both on CD and digitally as part of the all-year-round edition Animal Music 2017 which has been supported by a grant from the City of Prague. The album is distributed by Supraphon.

The launch of the album will take place on 3 December 2017 in the Prague Jazzdock club, starting at 9 p.m., where Soukup and his quartet will be joined by David Dorůžka on the guitar. The next performance with Lionel Loueke in the Czech Republic has been planned for 8 February 2018 as part of the Jazzinec festival in Turnov.

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