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## A JAZZ TRIO WITH A UNIQUE INSTRUMENTATION RELEASES THEIR DEBUT ALBUM



The eponymous debut by the jazz trio **TREETOP** is out on the 10th of September. The group, with its unusual instrumentation, was established by the Czech Berlin-based accordion player **VOJTA DRNEK**, Prague-based trombonist **RICHARD ŠANDA**, and double bass player **MICHAL ŠELEP**, a native of Bratislava. Most of the album features original material developed over the course of the last three years, during which time they performed on several tours in Central Europe (Czechia, Slovakia, Poland, Austria, Bulgaria), though it also includes arrangements of pieces by Edvard Grieg and Béla Bartók, Charlie Haden, and one folk song. Their unusual instrumentation – accordion, trombone, and double bass – allows them to include many influences in their music: jazz, folk music, classical music, and the compositional techniques of contemporary music. All the members of the group are active in projects in a broad range of genres, connecting their experience and inspirations in this group into a unique whole

with original sound colours and excellent interplay.

Vojta Drnek says of the album: *“I am extremely grateful that we could make this album, especially due to the difficult conditions determined by the pandemic. Most of all, though, I’m happy that we managed to record the music we have been working on together as a trio for several years now. You will hear songs that have been with us since the band started, as well as tunes that were born a week before the recording session. This is our musical manifesto on life, which keeps surprising us, which is full of changes, sarcasm, joy and disappointment, beauty and ugliness, love in many forms.”*

Along with the album, Treetop are also putting out a music video for *Flower She Loves the Most*, a composition by Richard Šanda. The video is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M3TTnFwrGpg>

The recording, mixing, and mastering process took place in collaboration with producer Petr Ostrouchov and sound engineers Adam Karlík, Milan Cimfe, and Pavel Karlík at the Sono Records studios. The graphic design is the work of Iveta Bláhová from Studio Najbrt, the photographs are by Dušan Tománek.

**Treetop** is out on **September 10th 2021** on CD and digital formats MP3 and WAV, distributed by Supraphon and available on the Animal Music e-shop at [www.animalmusic.cz](http://www.animalmusic.cz).

The album launch will take place on the 10th of September at Jazz Dock and on the 2nd of October at the Melomania Festival in Boskovice, two of the stops on Treetop’s autumn tour:

- 10.9. Jazz Dock, Prague (album launch)
- 1.10. Donau115, Berlin
- 2.10. Festival Melomania, Boskovice (album launch)
- 3.10. Ponava, Brno
- 4.10. Vienna (TBA)
- 5.10. T3, Bratislava
- 6.10. Opus, Budapešť



# ANIMALMUSIC

- 22.11. Palác Akropolis, Prague
- 23.11. B-Flat, Berlin
- 24.11. Jazz club Evžen, Opava
- 25.11. Rosenfeldov Palác, Žilina
- 26.11. Festival Hudební Současnost, Ostrava

**VOJTA DRNEK** studied classical accordion at the Ostrava Conservatory and jazz accordion at JAMU in Brno. He also studied at the Anton Bruckner Privatuniversität in Linz, where he met and worked with Peter Herbert, Aydin Esen, Stephan Braun, and others. As a performer and improviser, he works in a broad range of genres, including modern jazz with Treetop, swing in Hot Brew, or contemporary improvisation in his solo project. He works as a sideman in groups including the Czech-Norwegian NOCZ & choir, Ensemble Opera Diversa, the Orchestra of the Janáček Opera in Brno, or Marian Friedl, with whom he recorded the album *11 podob lásky* (Indies Scope, 2020). Last year, he co-founded Ma Records, a label focused on jazz, improvised and experimental music, and he also works as an intern at the Berlin-based label Heartcore Records, run by the legendary guitarist Kurt Rosenwinkel.

Trombonist **RICHARD ŠANDA** graduated from the jazz department at JAMU in Brno, spending part of his studies at the Conservatorium van Amsterdam. He is a highly sought-out studio player, active in leading Czech and Slovak big bands: Rozhlasový orchestr Gustava Bromy, Jazz Dock Orchestra, Concept Art Orchestra, and others. In 2016, Czech Radio nominated him for the Euroradia Jazz Orchestra. In 2019, he was selected to take part in a European tour of the JM Jazz World Orchestra, led by Luis Bonilla. He has also played with Lionel Loueke as part of Luboš Soukup's ensemble. Other significant collaborators include Bob Mintzer, Miroslav Vitouš, Ed Partyka, Ben Wendel, Bart van Lier, Tommy Smith, David Dorůžka, and others.

**MICHAL ŠELEP** began playing the bass guitar at age sixteen. He was self-taught, and through the internet, YouTube videos, and playing with friends in rehearsal rooms and churches, he improved enough that in 2011, he was able to begin studying bass guitar and music theory in Anthony Wellington's Bassology school – Wellington is a world-famous bass guitar teacher and bass player in the Victor Wooten group. In 2014, he became the first recipient of the Fodera Compito scholarship at Victor Wooten's prestigious Bass/Nature Camp in Nashville, where he studied with musicians including Victor Wooten, JD Blair, Futureman, Steve Bailey, Chuck Rainey, Danny Gottlieb, and others. After his return to Slovakia, he began studying with the legendary guitarist Andrej Šeban, finished his degree in psychology at the Komenský University in Bratislava, and graduated from the jazz department at JAMU in Brno. Michal regularly works with artists including Peter Lipa, Zuzana Mikulcová, Sima Martausová, Ester Wiesnerová, Katarína Máliková, Modré Hory, and others.

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Treetop:

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