

Biography of Jazz vocalist ESTHER KAISER www.estherkaiser.de

"Esther Kaiser's artistry lies in her ability to make something grave sound light and playful."
(Nürnberger Nachrichten)

"As soon as she enters the stage, the sun comes up. Vocalist Esther Kaiser has the kind of charisma that can brighten gloomy days." (Hessische Niedersächsische Allgemeine Zeitung)

Esther Kaiser, born in Freiburg i. Br. (Germany) in 1975, has been one of the country's most versatile and genre-bending representatives of contemporary German vocal jazz for several years. As a recording artist, jazz professor at the „HfM Dresden“ and live performer who is involved in a variety of projects, she constantly seeks to merge jazz and improvisation with different musical styles.

The beginnings

From 1996-2001 Esther Kaiser studied with Jiggs Whigham and Judy Niemack (among others) at the Hanns Eisler School of Music in Berlin, where she already began to make a name for herself as a founding member of vocal group „Berlin Voices“, who have collaborated repeatedly with the big band of the Hessische Rundfunk (Hessian Radio Broadcasting), including tours overseas and CD recordings.

From 1998-2000, Esther Kaiser was a member of the BuJazzO (National Youth Big Band) conducted by Peter Herbolzheimer.

The first three albums

In 2004, Esther Kaiser debuted with her album "Jazz Poems" (Double Moon Records) as the first artist to be featured in the renowned "Next Generation" series published in the "Jazzthing" magazine.

Her second CD, "The Moment We Met" (Minor Music) was released in 2006, followed by "Cosy in Bed" (GLM) in 2009.

These three albums set the tone for a characteristically idiosyncratic treatment of instrumentals as well as pieces from classical works and popular music in addition to original songs and lyrics, especially on "Cosy in Bed". Many live concerts and tours throughout Germany and overseas have followed since, including a South East Asia tour in 2005 and a performance at the International Jazz Festival Ankara in 2006.

Old songs, new arrangements

Since 2011, Esther Kaiser has been a member of "chamber jazz" duo [*sternklar](#) (joined by Berlin-based pianist Claus-Dieter Bandorf), which is dedicated to giving traditional German folk songs a modern twist encompassing jazz and pop. The self-titled album "**sternklar" was released in May 2012 on the HGBS (formerly MPS) label.

The Abbey Lincoln project

Esther Kaiser sees herself as a singer of jazz songs and a storyteller.

This philosophy connects her deeply to jazz vocalist and composer Abbey Lincoln, who inspired Esther Kaiser to finally dedicate a full album to her "spiritual sister" after being immersed in a multitude of projects as a songwriter and lyricist.

The album "Learning How To Listen - the Music of Abbey Lincoln" (to be released in January 2015) was deemed as a grant-worthy studio project by RBB (Berlin-Brandenburg Radio Broadcasting) jazz authority Ulf Drechsel. It was subsequently recorded and produced by the RBB.

On this album Esther Kaiser approaches the music of the exceptional Abbey Lincoln, who passed away in 2010, in her own, unapologetically unique way. Effortlessly transcending categories and displaying a great deal of freshness and creativity, her heartfelt respect and admiration for the grande dame of American jazz is palpable.

Accordingly to Esther Kaiser this album clearly paved the way for the upcoming CD „Songs of Courage“

The new album: Songs of Courage

“Courage is a matter of the heart, of the core of a person, therefore one can use courageous as a synonym for brave (the French and English word courage is derived from coeur).”

(From: Paul Tillich “The Courage to Be”)

Jazz singer Esther Kaiser understands the term courage as a matter of the heart in her new program “Songs of Courage” and would like to combine worlds on her new album, with the goal to find a common musical language for the topics of our time. Jazz sounds meet oriental sounds, Berlin jazz musicians meet refugees from Syria and Iraq.

“I was looking for ways to express social issues through my medium, the music. And to open my mouth – in the truest sense of the word. This is important to me, right now, with the current issues, the mood in our society and this sometimes irreconcilable split between people and opinions. Nina Simone once said “An artist’s duty is to reflect the times” – I see it very similar “- Esther Kaiser replies to the question about the motivation for the new album.

The musical result deliberately does not want to get stuck in a stylistic drawer – and moves somewhere between jazz, urban songwriter pop, improvised and oriental world music. And when the exceptional vocalist Esther Kaiser then resorts to exotic instruments such as the Kalimba and the Indian shrutibox, one does not even think about such musical assignments anymore.

Discography

"Esther Kaiser - Jazz Poems", 2004 (Double Moon Records)

"Esther Kaiser - The moment we met", 2006 (Minor Music)

"Berlin Voices - States of Mind", 2007 (VanDyckRecords)

"Esther Kaiser - Cosy in Bed", 2009 (GLM/ Fine Music)

"Berlin Voices - About Christmas", 2010 (Hännsler Classic)

"*sternklar" - Deutsche Volkslieder, 2012 (HGBS)

"Learning how to listen - the music of Abbey Lincoln", 2015 (GLM/ Fine Music)

„Songs of Courage“, 2018 (GLM/ Fine Music)