

# Kaja Draksler Octet



Laura Polence- voice

Björk Níelsdóttir- voice

Ada Rave- tenor saxophone and clarinet

Ab Baars- tenor saxophone, clarinet,  
shakuhachi

George Dumitriu- violin and viola

Kaja Draksler- piano

Lennart Heyndels- double bass

Onno Govaert- drums and percussion

The central project of the Slovenian pianist and composer Kaja Draksler brings together a colourful group of eight international musicians, all based in Amsterdam.

The group has so far released two highly acclaimed albums, both on Clean Feed. The first set of compositions was collected on the double album “Gledalec” in 2017, their second recording, “Out for Stars”, written on the poetry of Robert Frost, was released 2020. In 2021, the Octet premiered “In Time”, a new set of music with texts by Matsuo Basho. The pieces were commissioned by KAAP, Amok Festival and Concertgebouw Brugge.

Draksler combines composition and improvisation, drawing from a variety of styles, places and historical periods, here inspired by the large array of possibilities and talents of the ensemble.

This group is Draksler’s attempt to realize some of the thoughts on music collected during her years of jazz and classical composition studies, as well as her experiences as an active improviser.

Videos:

[In Time](#), music on the words of Matsuo Basho, 2021

[Danas, Jučer, Sutra](#), 2020



"Kaja Draksler moves the ensemble with consummate mastery and maturity, the orchestrations are spectacular even in their not infrequent minimalism, the attention to detail emerges in a completely natural way but it is above all her vision of total music, complex, stratified and accessible at the same time, that strikes deeply."

Vincenzo Roggero, All About Jazz

"The Kaja Draksler Octet has once again proved itself as a completely unique ensemble, and 'Out For Stars' can already be called one of the most original records of 2020."

Herman te Loo, Jazzflits

An extraordinarily touching album that brought me a great deal of comfort this year. Draksler's Octet composes a far-away meadow for Robert Frost's flowers.

Nick Metzger, Free Jazz Blog

"Magnificent musical translations of nature poems by Robert Frost."

Out For Stars- jazz album of the year, Trouw, chosen by Mischa Andriessen



"Pianist Kaja Draksler gave the best performance of the festival with her unconventional octet, finessing gossamer-fine chamber pieces, mostly built around the poetry of Robert Frost."

Peter Margasak, Downbeat

"Gledalec- An extraordinary record, indispensable for those who want to follow the paths of improvised music in the 21st century."

Goncalo Falcão, Jazz.PT

Bewitchingly beautiful.

Ben Taffijn, Draai om je oren

A list of past concerts:

2016- Bimhuis, Amsterdam, The Netherlands; Nona, Mechelen, Belgium.

2017- Artacts, St.Johan in Tirol, Austria; Transition Festival, Utrecht, The Netherlands; Taktlos, Zurich, Switzerland; Cerkno Jazz Festival, Slovenia; A'Larme, Berlin, Germany; Culturgest, Lisbon, Portugal .

2018- Loft, Cologne, Germany; Bimhuis, Amsterdam, The Netherlands; North Sea Jazz Festival, Rotterdam, The Netherlands; Paradiso, Amsterdam, The Netherlands; Tampere Jazz Happening, Tampere, Finland; Krakow Jazz Autumn, Krakow, Poland.

2019- AMR Jazz Festival, Geneve, Switzerland; Ljubljana Jazz Festival, Slovenia; Copenhagen Jazz Festival, Denmark; Molde Jazz Festival, Norway; Wonderfeel Festival, The Netherlands; De Bijloke, Gent, Belgium

2020- Stadtgarten, Koln, Germany

2021- Saalfelden Jazz Festival, Saalfelden, Austria; Gaudeamus Muzikweek, Utrecht, The Netherlands; Amok Festival, Concertgebouw Brugge, Belgium