

A black and white photograph of a beach scene. In the foreground, a dark, textured rock or log is partially submerged in shallow water. The water is rippling, and several coins are scattered across the wet sand and in the water. The background shows the ocean waves breaking on the shore.

**Luzia von Wyl
Ensemble
Throwing Coins**

Throwing Coins

A 1954 Hollywood film and song perhaps explains why one of Rome's most visited tourist sites is also one of the least clearly seen. As *Three Coins In The Fountain* shows, the tradition is that one stands facing away from the Fontana di Trevi and then throws a tribute to luck and fate and fortune back over the right shoulder. After doing that, many lovers and dreamers simply drift away. Another reason for the relative invisibility of Nicola Salvi's great design is its appearance in another classic movie. In one of the nighttime sequences of Federico Fellini's *La dolce vita*, the two main characters wade into the water in the moonlight. Magnificent though the Trevi is, audiences only ever looked at Anita Ekberg and Marcello Mastroianni.

Had they looked up, they would have seen the figure of Oceanus, flanked on either side by *Abundance* and *Salubrity*. These are the qualities that shine through the music on Luzia von Wyl's *Throwing Coins*. This is not a record that has been casually thrown at us over the shoulder, but the patient result of vivid experience and much thought. Luzia spent some time in Rome in 2015 and the city's rich architectural heritage and commitment to *bella figura* chimed with and stirred her imagination. Something of the city's purposeful and joyous bustle also communicated itself in the way this record was made. It is a measure of the mutual confidence of Luzia's dedicated ensemble that the players recorded all together, with no separation of instrumental parts, a seeming nightmare for such virtuosic, complex music, but also absolutely logical. Even after careful rehearsal and prolonged study of the parts, the band creates an aural image of spontaneity, of graceful movement through urban and other, more remote spaces.

For this composer is a special kind of traveller. Her musical imagination is constantly refreshed by new settings and landscapes. “Akumal” was inspired by a beach in south-eastern Mexico, a “place of turtles” but also in Mayan tradition the entrance to the underworld. Make no mistake: Luzia von Wyl’s music is full of light and laughter, but it flirts with the shade as well. Another of the many lessons of Rome is that light and dark always exist side by side: that, after all, was one of the messages of Fellini’s great film, with its sunlit and nocturnal elements.

I wonder if “Wasps” was an unconscious memory of Rome, too. One of the city’s distinctive sounds is the buzz of Vespa motor scooters. It’s the *only* way to travel in Rome, *if* you’re brave enough to negotiate the traffic astride a “Wasp”. Luzia’s theme is written for two flutes, a brilliant and unexpected choice.

There is a piece named after the Q-line in New York City, and a theme (“Antumbra”) inspired by the traditional music of the Gulf states and by the sight of an outsized moon over the desert, but von Wyl never forgets where she comes from. Real travellers never do. Though it takes its colours from far away in Mexico, “Akumal” was written for her hometown festival in Lucerne, while “Solifati”, another piece that demonstrates von Wyl’s strong affinity for the flute, was inspired by spring in Lucerne, the days after *Fasnacht* or carnival when the cold recedes and the empty shelves begin to fill up again; for a moment, it feels as if New Orleans has been moved to the Swiss mountains.



Von Wyl's music takes its cues and its distinctive palette from all these places and experiences, but this time perhaps it's Rome and the Trevi that brings them all together. Is there *abundance* here? yes, in plenty. And is there *salubrity*? yes, to that, too; a sense of life, health and purpose, straight from the imagination of one of Europe's most vividly original young composers.

Also available:

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Luzia von Wyl Ensemble

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Brian Morton

La musique de von Wyl tire son inspiration et ses couleurs spécifiques de tous ces lieux, de toutes ces expériences ; cette fois, peut-être Rome et la fontaine de Trevi sont-elles leur dénominateur commun. Peut-on parler d'abondance ? Oui, à bien des égards. Et de salubrité ? Oui, de cela aussi : une sensation de vie, de santé et de détermination, sortie directement de l'imagination d'une compositrice européenne parmi les plus intensément originales de sa génération.

Brian Morton (Translated by Benjamin Mouliets)

Luzia von Wyl Ensemble Throwing Coins

Luzia von Wyl *piano*

Amin Mokdad *flute*

Nicola Katz *clarinet*

Lukas Roos *bass clarinet*

Maurus Conte *bassoon*

Vincent Milliod *violin*

Jonas Iten *violincello*

André Pousaz *bass*

Raphael Christen *marimba*

Lionel Friedli *drums*

Andrea Loetscher *flute (Solifati & Wasps)*

Recorded on September 8-10, 2017 at Bauer Studios Ludwigsburg, Germany by Johannes Wohlleben; Mix by Martin Ruch; CD-master by Peter Pfister; Cover photo & Liner photo by Falk Neumann; Liner notes by Brian Morton; Graphic concept by fuhrer vienna.

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File under: Jazz/Free Improvisation

1	Chromatika	6:08
2	Q	3:39
3	Akumal	6:04
4	Solifati	9:04
5	Wasps	2:48
6	Antumbra	8:15
7	Chromatika II	3:33
8	Spark	5:00

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Total Time DDD ²⁴Bit 44:36

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Alive In The House
Of Saints
Part 1 : hatOLOGY 707
Part 2 : hatOLOGY 708

Ran Blake
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Anthony Braxton
Quartet (Willisau) 1991
Studio : hatOLOGY 2-735

Matthew Shipp
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Samuel Blaser Trio
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