

There's a comforting melodic presence to the sophomore release from the quintet **BLAER**. And this, even though *Out Of Silence* is built on a foundation of repetition and tension. The twin saxophones of **Nils Fischer** and **Claudio von Arx** lay the melody on thick and with a calm patience, lending the music a sweet ambiance and a melancholy tone. And it stands out in stark contrast to the melodic cross-currents spread across the surface of the songs by pianist **Maja**



Nydegger, who splits time between accentuating the wind instruments and contradicting them. It's an evocative feature of the music, the way melodic intentions alternate between a state of unison and detachment. The bass and drums tandem of **Simon Iten** and **Emanuel Künzi** add an additional layer of contrast by syncing up either with saxophones or piano, but never both, so there is always a state of tension present and always complementary textures insinuating some semblance of unity.

"In Passing" and "Caught By Transience" adopt a slow pace and a contemplative tone, while "Until You Fade" and title-track "Out Of Silence" shows the band knows where the gas pedal is, but at either end of that spectrum, the personality of the music remains constant. There are a few instances, such as "Strokkur," where the quintet shows a flash of pop music sensibility. It's a nifty facet of the album's personality, as well as an essential balance to those tracks where ambiance is given more weight than actual song structure. That mix of atmospheric and catchy hooks is arguably the winning characteristic of this very enjoyable recording.

Your album personnel: **Maja Nydegger** (piano), **Nils Fischer** (alto sax, bass clarinet), **Claudio von Arx** (tenor sax), **Simon Iten** (bass) and **Emanuel Künzi** (drums).