

STEFAN GOTTFRIED

„...lyrical playing with a bright, warm sound - cheerful, engaging and vibrant...“
(jazzhalo.be - March 2016)

Stefan Gottfried is one of Austria's top-tier alto and soprano jazz-saxophonists of his generation. Born in the first hour of the Easter Sunday in 1993 in Waldviertel, a rural region in the very North of Austria, Stefan started his saxophone career at the age of 10 in a local marching band. After meeting the fantastic tenor saxophonist Jure Pukl he discovered the art of Jazz Improvisation a form of musical expression that spoke to him like nothing before.

Just turned 18, Stefan joined the Big Band of the *Guard of Honor* of the Austrian Army and started his Bachelor Studies at *Musik und Kunstuniversität* in Vienna, studying Jazz-Saxophone with the American saxophonist Andy Middleton. After graduating *cum laude* the aspiring musician moved to the Netherlands where he is currently studying at *Koninklijk Conservatorium* in Den Haag with his mentor Toon Roos who should become one of his greatest influences.

Stefan has been part of a large number of ensembles and Big Bands including the *Jeunesse Musicales Jazz World Orchestra*, the *Big Band of the Royal Conservatoire*, *CodArts Big Band* Rotterdam as well as the *MUK.jazz.orchestra* and the *Nederlands Studenten Jazz Orkest*. He's a member of the *Metropole Academy* of the *Metropole Orkest*. He has had the opportunity to perform at international festivals such as the *North Sea Jazz Festival*, *Brosella Brussels*, *Jazz am Podium Basel*, *Jazz is Back Groznjan*, *HARMOS Porto* and at renowned venues such as *Porgy & Bess Vienna*, *Tivoli Vredenburg*, *Sugarfactory Amsterdam*, *De Kleine Willem Enschede*. In a vast number of musical projects Stefan, remarkable due to his juvenile age has shared the stage and recorded with Jazz Greats such as Bob Mintzer, Bill Holman, Luis Bonilla, Bert Joris, Andy Middleton and many more.

While being engaged in various musical directions in order to pursue a path as a versatile musician, the winner of the *Marianne Mendt Jazz Award* in the Category „*Best Instrumentalist*“ (2013) is striving to express himself in own projects. With his new international band „*Gottfried Group*“ starring the Rising Star Gabriele di Franco on guitar and the world-class drummer Marton Juhasz Stefan presents his unique voice as composer and arranger. Imaginative and adventurous virtuosity spans an incredibly wide breath of expression - from fierce power to tender warmth, lyrical yet rhythmically driving. His compositions, harmonically modern and melodic clearly rooted in the jazz tradition but yet incorporating impressionistic facets and concepts therefore provide the perfect setting to create music with great emotional depth. Stefan's multilayered way of composing gives a great deal of importance to the interplay between the musicians, providing besides through-composed passages a lot of spaces for creativity and ideas to flow and is demanding musicians to perceive, interpret and transmit the musical content as a collective.

According to the Austrian Saxophonist this way of thinking in music provides the perfect metaphor for life in general: „*organise and structure your ideas in order to be spontaneous and flexible with them!*“