



Draco

by

**Agustí Fernández (pianist)
Jo Krause (drummer)**

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DRACO

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The Majorcan pianist Agustí Fernández (1954) is an improviser. The German drummer Jo Krause (1963) is a jazz musician. At least, that is how it looks at first glance. But maybe the whole thing is a little more complicated and, at the same time, much simpler than that. It is true that long ago Fernández chose improvisation over the interpretation of previously-composed music. It is also true that Krause is a musician steeped in jazz tradition. But, in the final analysis, Agustí Fernández and Jo Krause are musicians. And when they get together, that is what counts more than anything else.

Draco is an album of improvised music. Having staged a couple of concerts as a duo, pianist and drummer decided to go into the studio and record a session together. Without even planning what they would do, or how. Without agreeing any rules or limits, and setting no expectations as to the results that would be obtained. In this respect, then, *Draco* is like all the other impro sessions that Agustí Fernández has recorded in tandem with the likes of Peter Kowald, Derek Bailey and Marilyn Crispell. But no listener can fail to notice that the music in *Draco* resounds in a very special way. That, more than ever, it is imbued with echoes and gestures from a particular musical language...

Draco is a jazz record. When Jo Krause hits the bass drum or lets the snare go, the music sounds like jazz. Because his playing style and timing, ductile yet, at heart, solid, are the very essence of jazz. Because Krause received his musical formation in Holland, one of the great European epicentres of jazz, and has played with such US jazz greats as Benny Bailey and Johnny Griffin. But no one will find swing in the strict sense of the word on *Draco*, nor any of the typical offspring of bop, nor rhythm patterns that enable them to identify any particular school of jazz...

Draco is a dialogue between two musicians that have more in common than one might think. Despite the differences between the two, their lives have run a similar course: they have witnessed the same historic moments; they have had similar musical experiences; and they maintain the same open-minded approach to music. And when they make music together, the similarities between them far outweigh the differences.

Draco invites the listener to play a game that very few recordings allow. We can play at imagining that the music resounds, that other musicians are concealed within it. *La belle excuse* is like a ballad that Fernández and Krause, taking advantage of the fact that no one is listening, deconstruct beyond what the jazz canons permit. The title track, *Draco*, sounds like a trio (the left hand plays the double bass) bent on exploring a Monkian motif. *Madly (for Duke)* evokes Ellington—as well as Jason Moran's stripped-down beat—so strongly that Fernández and Krause decided to make their homage to the Duke clear in the very title. *A Slinger's* features only drums but, as he played, Krause must have been thinking about the friend he misses so much, the Dutch bebop pianist Cees Slinger (1929-2007). *That's what I thought* ends just when it appears poised to take up a melody that we will never hear and will have to make up for ourselves. *The rainmaker* is one of those mystical vamps that so often call Charles Lloyd to mind...

But one thing is beyond doubt: that each listener will find his or her own stories, buried in these improvisations. *Draco* is one of those things that should happen more often.

Roger Roca

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Agustí Fernández was born in Palma de Mallorca, where he studied piano. Later, he continued his studies in Barcelona, France, and Germany. His musical life changed when he discovered the music of **Cecil Taylor** and **Iannis Xenakis**, with whom he studied in 1978. Since that time, he has performed in the most important Spanish and European festivals. He has also composed music for dance, theater, cinema, and television.

Fernández's other work includes that of director and co-founder of the **Orquestra del Caos**, **Big Ensemble del Taller de Músics** and **IBA Collective** (Improvisers of Barcelona). In 1998, he created jointly with **Joan Saura** and **Liba Villavecchia** the group **Trío Local**.

In 2003 Fernández became the first Spanish musician to record for the prestigious German record label ECM, with his participation on the CD "Memory/Vision" by the **Evan Parker Electro-Acoustic Ensemble**, of which he remained a member from 2002. Also since that year, he has been a member of the **Barry Guy New Orchestra**.

In 2005 he began the trio **Fernández/Guy/López**, which premiered at the Festival Grec of Barcelona.

Fernández is professor of improvisation at the **Escola Superior de Música de Catalunya** (ESMUC: High Music School of Catalonia) since 2001.

Andrey Henkin, critic of **All About Jazz / Nova York** selected the solo piano concert by Agustí Fernández (27/3/09 at Baryshnikov Arts Center) as one of the top ten concerts in New York during 2007.

Fernández has played with artists as Derek Bailey, Peter Kowald, Evan Parker, Mats Gustafsson, Jo Krause, Marilyn Crispell, William Parker, Susie Ibarra, John Butcher, Ramon López, Joan Saura, Liba Villavecchia, Assif Tsahar, Axel Dörner, Barry Guy, Mat Maneri, Lê Quan Ninh, John Edwards, Lawrence D. Butch Morris, Sainkho Namtchylak, Günther Mark Sanders, Matthew Shipp,...

DISCOGRAPHY:

Leader:

- 1987 Agustí Fernández "Ardent" (Blau)
- 1988 Agustí Fernández Sextet "Nofres" (PDI)
- 1990 Agustí Fernández "La Porta" (PE)
- 1991 Agustí Fernández "Via Augusta" (PE)
- 1991 Agustí Fernández & Big Ensemble del Taller de Músics "Aura" (Taller)
- 1998 Agustí Fernández "1 is not 1" (Nova Era)
- 1998 Agustí Fernández, Susie Ibarra & William Parker "Live at the Joan Miró Foundation" (Synergy)
- 2001 Agustí Fernández "Serendipities and Territories" (IBA)
- 2004 Agustí Fernández Quartet "Lonely Woman" (Taller/Sirulita)
- 2004 Agustí Fernández "Camallera" (G3G/Sirulita)
- 2007 Agustí Fernández, Barry Guy & Ramón López "Aurora". (Maya recordings)

Others:

- 1990 Agustí Fernández & Wolfgang Reisinger "Unexpected" (PE)
- 1996 Agustí Fernández & Evan Parker "Tempranillo" (Nova Era)
- 1996 Agustí Fernández & Evan Parker en la recopilació "Buenaventura Durruti" (NATO)
- 1998 Agustí Fernández & Marilyn Crispell "Dark night, and luminous" (Nova Era)
- 1998 Agustí Fernández & Christoph Irmer "Ebro Delta" (Hybrid)
- 2000 Agustí Fernández, Joan Saura & Liba Villavecchia "Trio Local" (IBA)
- 2001 Agustí Fernández & William Parker "Second Set" (Radical Records)
- 2001 Lawrence D. "Butch" Morris, Graham Haynes, Agustí Fernández, J.A. Deane, Joan Saura "Conduction # 113, Interflight" (Palacio de Cristal)
- 2001 Agustí Fernández, Joan Saura & Liba Villavecchia "Trio Local +" (Dewdrop)
- 2002 Agustí Fernández & Derek Bailey "Barcelona" (Hopscotch)
- 2003 Agustí Fernández & Jane Rigler "Mandorla" (Dewdrop)
- 2003 Evan Parker Electro-Acoustic Ensemble "Memory/Vision" (ECM)
- 2003 Christoph Irmer, John Butcher & Agustí Fernández "Clearings" (ART)
- 2005 Barry Guy New Orchestra, "Oort /Entropy" (Intakt records)
- 2005 Evan Parker Electro-Acoustic Ensemble "The Eleventh Hour" (ECM)
- 2005 Agustí Fernández & Mats Gustafsson, "Critical Mass" (Psi records)
- 2005 Agustí Fernández & Peter Kowald, "Sea of lead" (Hopscotch)
- 2005 Ensemble Impromptu "Instint" (Marmita)
- 2005 Spanish Brass Luur Metals "Gaudi'um" (Anacrusi)
- 2006 Evan Parker Octet, "Crossing the River" (Psi records)
- 2007 Herb Robertson, Evan Parker, Agustí Fernández "Parallelisms" (Rubyflower)
- 2007 Ramón López, Harri Sjöstrom, Agustí Fernández "L'étrange partition sonore" (Jazzosphère/NoLimit)
- 2007 Agustí Fernández, Evan Parker, Barry Guy & Paul Lytton "Topos" (Maya)
- 2008 Agustí Fernández & Ingar Zach. "Germinal". (Plastic Strip)
- 2009 Agustí Fernández & Jo Krause. "Draco" (Anacrusi)

JO KRAUSE

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Drummer Jo Krause (Detmold, Germany 1963) is one of the leading jazzdrummers and teachers on the spanish jazz scene since he moved to Barcelona in 1993 . After getting private lessons from Art Taylor in 1980/81 he moved to Holland where he finished his studies at the renown Conservatory in Hilversum. During his 12 years stay in the Netherlands Jo was working and recording with most of the leading dutch jazz musicians and touring with countless wellknown jazzsoloists such as Tom Harrell, Woody Shaw, Benny Bailey, Johnny Griffin, Red Mitchell, Teddy Edwards, William Parker, Leena Conqueest, George Cables, J.R. Monterose, Deborah Brown, Peter Leitch, Herb Ellis, Barney Kessel, Jimmy Owens, Sal Nistico, Cees Slinger, Blossom Dearie, Georgie Fame, Dennis Erwin, John Clayton, Dick Oatts, Sal Mosca, Carl Fontana, David "Fathead" Newman, Herb Geller, Phillippe Catherine, John Eardley, Dave Pike, Ferdinand Povel, Bart van Lier, Frans Elsen, Amsterdam Jazz Quintet, Michael Moore and many others.

In 1993 Krause moved to Barcelona after a longer stay in New York.

In Spain he works frequently with Jose-Luís Gámez, Perico Sambeat, Agusti Fernandez, Monkiana, David Mengual, Rai Ferrer, Albert Bover, Ignasi Terrassa, Joaquin Chacon, Bill McHenry, Ben Waltzer, Chris Higgins and many others. In 2006 he forms the "Jo Krause Quartet" with Libert Fortuny, Roger Mas and David Mengual. Some of his recent projects as a co-leader are the "Agusti Fernandez-Jo Krause Duo" (new 2009 CD release "DRACO").

"Jo Krause- Roger Maas Quartet" with Enrique Oliver ts and DJ Foster b.

Jo is also a teacher at the Escola Superior de Musica de Catalunya (ESMUC) and the Centro Superior de Musica del Pais Vasco (MUSIKENE).

Selected DISCOGRAPHY:

- The Amsterdam Jazz Quintet " Signature"
- The Amsterdam Jazz Quintet " Pictures of Amsterdam"
- Georgie Fame " Portrait of Chet"
- Tomas Fryland " Copenhagen Sunset"
- Benny Bailey " Angel Eyes"
- Sigi Busch Quartet "The Berlin Songbook"
- Sigi Busch Quartet " European Songcollection"
- David Mengual Quinteto "Monkiana"
- Jose-Luis Gamez Quintet Quattro
- Ben Waltzer/Bill McHenry " Jazz is where you find it"
- Pall Mall Export Festival " Live at the Concertgebouw"
- Zut Alors feat. Micheal Moore " Pie Dough"
- Jose-Luis Gamez Quartet "Colores"
- Jose Luis Gamez-Dani Perez Quartet "String Captives"
- Silvia Droste Group " Duke's sound of love"
- Greetje Kauffeld & Cees Slinger " Devil may care"
- Gorka Benitez "Free Session"
- Agusti Fernandez "Lonely Woman"
- Ruud Brink Quartet "Pardon My Bop"
- Agusti Fernandez-Jo Krause Duo "Draco"