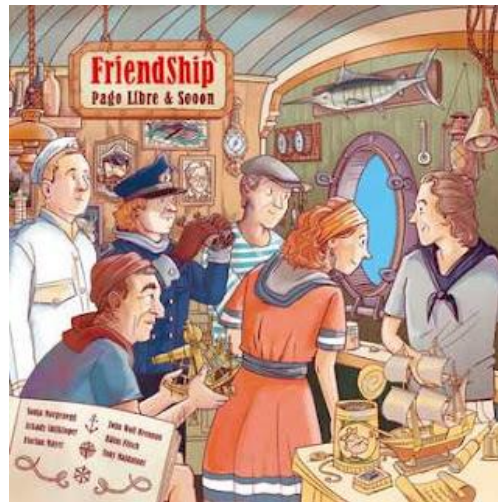


gapplegate music review

THE BLOG COVERS RELEASES IN THE AREAS OF FREE AND MAINSTREAM JAZZ, WORLD MUSIC, "ART" ROCK, AND THE BLUES.

friday, november 5, 2021

Pago Libre & Soon, Friendship



In the world of music coming out these days, anything goes if you let your mind remain free of rigid preconceptions. And so as I so do, things come to my ears and bring me some happiness if good. For example here today is a group by the name of Pago Libre & Soon and an album entitled *Friendship* (Leo CD LR 919). Now whatever one expects in new things we recently have been made available Pago Libre & Soon might not be what you might ordinarily expect to hear. It is a sextet.

To be precise, it consists of Sonja Morgenegg as vocalist and guitarists on a couple of tracks, then there is Arkady Shilkloper on French horn, alphorn and elephant horn, Florian Mayer on violin, John Wolf Brennan on piano, melodica and arrangements (which are always special, interesting), Raetus Fleisch on bass, and Tony Majdalani on voice and percussion, specifically on various hand drums.

And as can be the case in a good situation they are more than just the sum of their parts. Sonja is an outstanding vocalist. She and the band take us through a Jazz inflected Folk *mélange* ranging from Norwegian (to my ears) through to Eastern Europe, Baltic and even a touch of Mideastern.

The arrangements along with the instrumentation set everything up and Sonja's lead vocals bring it all home. Listen to their 5/4 version of the Beatles' "For No One" or even "Hey Bulldog" and you will get it. But there is lots of good music, some apparently original but all bearing the stamp of original and authentic rootedness.

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I am a life-long writer, musician, composer and editor. I wrote for **Cadence** Magazine for many years, a periodical covering jazz and improv music. My combined Blogspot blogs now cover well over 3,000 recordings in review. It's been a labor of love.