

Krakauer

Krakauer/Tagg Duo: Breath & Hammer

Breath & Hammer began with the simple meeting of a clarinetist and a pianist who share a constant quest to redefine the sounds and roles of their instruments.

Imagine...

- the traditional clarinet and piano combination totally reinvented and expanded into a multi-dimensional, multi-media, highly entertaining experience.
- a Grammy-nominated classical/world music artist from New York coming together with a "mad-scientist" South African sound explorer.
- lush orchestrations, pulsating percussive beats, samples, loop pedals and every extended technique one can imagine that create sounds from these two acoustic instruments extending from a whisper to a roar.
- a sound that could only have come from the culturally rich hotbed of New York City, with music deeply connected to the community of these two unique artists that encompasses elements of jazz, world music and electronica in a deeply personal sound.
- a captivating video feed that invites you into the creation of their soundworld.

...The result is Breath & Hammer

Influences of world music, jazz, classical, experimental techniques and electronics blend together in this unique collaboration. Krakauer's use of extended techniques, improvisation and circular breathing on the clarinet, and Tagg's prowess inside the piano to use it as a harp, a zither, a drum and a cello through bowed piano, plucking, strumming and more augment the traditional sounds of their instruments. In addition to utilizing the full range of timbres that can be imagined from both instruments, they further expand the scope of sonic possibilities by incorporating electronic effects and layers.

Widely considered one of the greatest clarinetists on the planet, Grammy-nominated artist David Krakauer has been praised internationally as a key innovator in modern klezmer as well as a major voice in classical music. South African-born pianist, composer and producer Kathleen Tagg has performed on four continents in leading venues such as Carnegie Hall, had her original music performed in venues such as New York's Lincoln Center, appeared on a host of classical, world music and multi-genre recordings and produced numerous CDs and inter-disciplinary programs from South Africa to Los Angeles.

Individually they have an impressive track record of creating innovative programs that stretch the boundaries of traditional concert presentations. In "Breath and Hammer" they bring together their disparate backgrounds to make something new and uniquely their own.

"Breath & Hammer" is made up of Krakauer & Tagg's arrangements of "simple songs" by composers as diverse as New York-based visionary John Zorn, Syrian clarinetist Kinan Azmeh, Cuban percussionist Roberto Rodriguez, as well as original compositions by Krakauer and Tagg with elements ranging from interlocking African drumming patterns to romantic symphonic textures to minimalism and klezmer. These diverse and seemingly disparate musical influences intermingle, transformed into something entirely new, a hybrid art form that bridges the cultures of the past and new work that looks towards the future.



Listen

[November 22 \(by Kinan Azmeh, arr. Tagg\)](#)
[Moldavian Journey \(by Emil Kroitor, arr. Krakauer & Tagg\)](#)
[Ebuhuel \(by John Zorn, arr. Krakauer & Tagg\)](#)
[Der Heyser Bulgar \(Traditional arr. Krakauer & Tagg\)](#)

Watch

[Breath & Hammer EPK](#)

Press Quotes

"Krakauer joined with the adventurous South African pianist Kathleen Tagg in an exciting new duo project known as Breath and Hammer. At the peak of their conversation, Krakauer sailed through virtuosic passages before taking off on a passionate, soul-stirring improvisation... Throughout their compelling duo set, Tagg joined prepared piano to electronics in increasingly brilliant applications."
— **Bill Milkowski, Downbeat Magazine**

"The Tagg-Krakauer duo took the room by storm as they presented one of the most remarkable concerts I have ever attended anywhere in the world. Each work on the programme was arranged or composed by either Tagg or Krakauer and this added a personal dimension to their performance, as creation and recreation elided in an astonishing display of indescribably stunning, mesmerising musicianship... Far more than "a multicultural journey"; it entered into the heart of humankind exploring connective artistic tissues while teasing out and celebrating the differences... This was music-making at its best: joyful abandonment without a trace of inhibition."
— **Jeffrey Brukman, CUE Magazine**

"The New York-based duo had us in awe from the very first second, and I am still in awe of the immense privilege it was to witness such a passionate and varied performance... Both Krakauer and Tagg elicited astonishing tones from their instruments by what can only be described as unorthodox methods." — **Marie Stinnes, What's on in Cape Town**

"It is lovely to watch Tagg and Krakauer playing from the same invisible page where mood and phrasing are written. Their synergy of interpretation travels immediately to the audience... After the last note of the enchantment had faded, no-one wanted to come out of meditation."
— **Andy Wilding, Fine Music Radio**

For more information, go to www.krakauertaggduo.com