

Frydlant Nights

Rostislav Fras – Skip Wilkins Quintet

Frydlant Nights is the 2010 CD release on the Czech Radio Prague label (Cesky Rozhlas/Radioservis CRO473-2) from the Rostislav Fras – Skip Wilkins Quintet. This ensemble is actually a collaborative quintet, with five friends who live on different sides of the Atlantic!

Sometimes known as “The International Quintet,” the group most frequently performs as “The Rostislav Fras – Skip Wilkins Quintet.” Comprised of two Czech musicians (saxophonist Rost’a Fras and bassist Josef Feco) and three Americans (pianist Skip Wilkins, saxophonist Neil Wetzel and drummer Gary Rissmiller), each member contributes material for performances and recordings. In various configurations, they have toured the Czech Republic eight times and the U.S. once.

The quintet had its first performance together in August 2007 at Prague’s well-known jazz club, *U Maleho Glena*, in the Mala Strana section of the city, at the foothills of Prague Castle. The castle walls fairly shook that night. The group also convenes every August for the one-week Karel Velebny Summer Jazz Workshop in Frydlant, where each member also teaches. Among the highlights of the week, the group performs in the Lector’s Concert at historic Frydlant Castle. They’ve performed countless times in Prague and Frydlant, as well as in Brno, Ostrava, Kyjov, Plsen, Pardubice, Cesky Krumlov, Prerov, Vsetin, Duba, Trinec, Tisnov and Pardubice. In the U.S., they have played many Pennsylvania venues.



Frydlant Nights celebrates the town and the workshop where the group convenes every summer. A hard-driving CD for a hard-driving band, the recording features the two-saxophone tandem of Rost'a Fras and Neil Wetzel, with the swinging, edgy rhythm section of Skip Wilkins, Josef Feco and Gary Rissmiller. This group is serious and fun! The first two selections on Frydlant Nights ("Watch Your Step" by Fras and "Elbow Room" by Wilkins) each refer to an injury that Wetzel had just two months before the group was to record. Needless to say, Wetzel's elbow was fine by the time the group recorded in the studios of Czech Radio Prague in August 2009. Another title, "Rosta-bout" by Wetzel, is an obvious homage to his fellow reedman, Fras. Wilkins wrote "LGT" as a drum feature for his long-time friend Rissmiller and Feco wrote "Down the Hatch" as a romp for the whole group.

Wilkins joins Fras and Feco on their side of the Atlantic while on sabbatical from his position at Lafayette College. He is living in Prague from June 2011 through the end of August 2012. He'll be performing often with Fras and Feco, while Wetzel and Rissmiller have planned visits for tours.

"If international cooperation worked so well in other spheres, the world would be just beautiful."
 - [Muzikus.cz](http://www.muzikus.cz) (April 28, 2010)

Frydlant Nights

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|---------------------------------|-------|--|
| 1. Watch Your Step (Fras) | 6:23 | Czech Radio Prague (Cesky Rozhlas) & Radioservis, CRO473-2 |
| 2. Elbow Room (Wilkins) | 10:05 | http://www.rozhlas.cz/praha/portal
http://www.radioservis-as.cz/ |
| 3. Rosta-bout (Wetzel) | 6:18 | |
| 4. Frydlant Nocturne (Wilkins) | 11:42 | Recorded August 12-13, 2009 in the Studios of Cesky Rozhlas Praha |
| 5. Down the Hatch (Feco) | 8:06 | http://rostislavfras.com/ |
| 6. LGT (Wilkins) | 4:58 | www.skipwilkinsjazz.com |
| 7. Waiting for Prague (Wilkins) | 5:47 | http://www.neilwetzel.com/ |
| 8. Bob's Bop (Fras) * | 5:58 | http://wn.com/joseffeco |

Rosta Fras, tenor saxophone
Neil Wetzel, alto saxophone
Miroslav Hloucal, tpt (guest *)
Skip Wilkins, piano
Josef Feco, bass
Gary Rissmiller, drums

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