

April 6, 2022

PRESS RELEASE

Taklit Editions & Productions



SHEKBAND - *Inflatable Ram*

JAZZ: ALBUM RELEASE DATE APRIL 29, 2022

They may be a young band but they radiate authenticity. A lively and masterful album wherein the fragile scent of childhood lingers.



The Ukrainian Jazz album **Inflatable Ram** is due for worldwide digital release on April 29, 2022. The release is out on the imprint of HGBSBlue Records/ Taklit France.

This extraordinary album features young Ukrainian musicians and it is poignant for various reasons. There is precocious musicianship, hope, beauty and joy throughout. **ShekBand** made their appearance a number of years ago and it may surprise people to learn their ages. The pianist

Anna is 14, The bass player **Artem** is 16 and the drummer **Maksym** is 12 years old.

The band came into being during a 2015 summer jazz festival in Bulgaria. That was when Maksym, then 5 years old, decided to join his siblings on stage. A desire to dig deeper into improvised music propelled them onwards from there.

By 2019 they were ready for wider exposure and they performed at Eastern European festivals in Ukraine, Bulgaria, Poland, Slovenia and Germany. This summer they will perform in Germany and Ireland.

They may be a young band but they radiate authenticity.



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Their arc of development is primarily due to their devoted jazz-loving parents, who supported them in every way possible. Their wisest decision, connecting them with a notable jazz educator from the **Kyiv Conservatory of Music #4** and so the album serves as a tribute to the institution and to the teaching methods of **Professor Oleksii Proshchenkov**. In summary, it symbolises the vitality of Ukrainian jazz education.

In December of 2019, the trio took part in the **7 Virtual Jazz Club Competition** and came to the notice of publisher and jury member Patricia Johnston. She noted that they had musicality, and were hard-working, passionate, innovative and confident. They were awarded an **honourable mention** by the judges. Patricia kept them in her sights and the resulting ShekBand album arises from that.

The album was mastered on the day before the invasion and within hours, the family was dodging missiles as they headed for safety. In spite of the horrors, the children have maintained their focus. Losing their possessions and their old life has been awful, but following dreams is a pathway to a better future. They are not going to let the darkness of war define them. Jazz is about living in the eternal now.

Among the 9 tunes, you will hear original compositions, Ukrainian folk references and their arrangement of a Wayne Shorter Standard.

Their youthful exuberance will touch your heart. So, if you believe in the light and in good music, then support ShekBand's, Inflatable Ram.

– JOHN FENTON –

INFLATABLE RAM

- | | |
|-----------------------|------|
| 1. Inflatable Ram | 3:22 |
| 2. Dragon River | 4:50 |
| 3. Ukrainian Samurai | 4:03 |
| 4. BaraShek | 4:23 |
| 5. Toock-Toock | 3:06 |
| 6. Dixit Land | 4:50 |
| 7. Flights of Stairs | 3:13 |
| 8. Slovenia | 2:41 |
| 9. Dreams and Marvels | 3:04 |
| 10. Deluge | 3:20 |

SHEKBAND

Anna Shekera – piano, vocals

Artem Shekera – double bass, vocals

Maksym Shekera – drums, vocals

Music & arrangements by ShekBand & Oleksii Proshchenkov
except N° 10 : « Deluge » by Wayne Shorter

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www.black-forest-sounds.de
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www.taklit.net

Oleksandr Shekera – lyrics (5 & 9)
Elza Zhrebchuk – photos
Design – Sophie Morisson Tansini
Recorded, mixed & mastered at Na Hati Records
Studios, Ukraine by Oleksandr Sadovets between
July 2020 & February 2022.

shekband.com.ua



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"All the compositions are well thought out. They are full of invention and cover a very large range of expression - very dramatic and sensitive qualities. Great stuff."

From a letter of encouragement to ShekBand - - JEFF BALLARD

LINER NOTES

1. *Inflatable Ram*. This story is about lightheartedness. It's a childhood where every day lasts endlessly. This fragile state of mind is like a balloon that flies up in the sky.
2. *Dragon River*. It's a little brook, which on its winding path has turned into a mighty river. And now it is no longer afraid of anything.
3. *Ukrainian Samurai*. We heard and read a lot about brave heroes, but didn't realize that they live among us.
4. *BaraShek*. I wake up from the sound of raindrops, and outside the window there is fog in the valley of the Carpathian Mountains.
5. *Toock-Toock*. Who is knocking and what for? Is it near my front door? Is it a monster, a ghost or... It's a Bear!
6. *Dixit Land*. We love to play the Dixit game and come up with incredible associations and stories.
7. *Flights of Stairs*. The melody of this track is like flights of stairs. First up, then down. Every flight of stairs leads us somewhere.
8. *Slovenia*. This country has the most beautiful mountains and the most delicious ice cream.
9. *Dreams and Marvels*. A little boy is wandering by the sea and marvels at what he sees there. The stars above him smile mysteriously.
10. *Deluge*. This is Wayne Shorter's jazz standard. We are thankful to legendary musicians for offering new ideas that feed our creativity.



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