

Kneipenbühne, Oberweiling

In two weeks, the 25th season of the Oberweiling stage comes to an end. Proprietors Hanne and Golly can look back at a quarter century of successful cultural events, including nearly a thousand concerts offering many incomparable highlights. One of these, which took place last Saturday, will not easily be topped.

The two world class musicians, Andrea Wolper and Ken Filiano, who started their European Tour at Oberweiling, were in their best form, despite suffering a bit of jetlag. The sympathetic singer and her partner, both of whom had appeared at New York's Downtown Music Gallery just a few days before, commented that with the warm reception they received at the sold out Kneipenbühne, their tour was off to a great start.

Unfortunately, the announced guitarist Ron Affif was prevented from being at the concert, and on short notice was replaced by the Berlin pianist Sebastian Schunke, who kept up courageously. Special guest Dieter Weberpals, from Nürnberg, added spots of flute colours.

The program presented mainstream vocal jazz without fear of crossing borders into other styles of music. In addition to some of Andrea's own compositions, there were covers of pop music classics such as Joni Mitchell's *Be Cool*. In this tune especially, Filiano demonstrated the range of possibilities for the double bass; one could feel almost physically why he has earned such a fine reputation and is one of the most sought-after bassists in New York.

Wolper's voice was simply fantastic, and she bowled over the audience, whether in perfect stylistic interpretation of a slow, lyrical blues, or in her amusing arrangement blending Van Morrison's *Moondance* with Cole Porter's *You'd Be So Nice To Come Home To*, from the 1943 film *Something To Shout About*.

Wolper demonstrated how multi-faceted vocal jazz can be, with her composition for text from the American poet Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*, in which she improvised freely and with fragile, elf-like beauty. Her ability and interpretation strongly reminded one (and at moments reached the same level as), the New York vocal artist David Moss (as a soloist in Heiner Goebbels *Surrogate Cities*, a vocal wonder of the world).

With a declaration of love for the Oberweiling organizers and the audience, Wolper sang, "Wish I knew why I'm so in love with you," lyrics from *Save Your Love For Me*, introduced originally by Nancy Wilson.

To be allowed to experience such a nice thing—Hanne and Golly were rewarded for their courage in presenting something so extraordinary, and this should provide them with the impetus to carry on at this level.