

ARTEMIS with “Flying Home: A Trumpet Summit” at Tri-C JazzFest 2024 (June 22)

by Max Newman



There are not many more underrated American jazz groups right now than ARTEMIS. On the afternoon of June 22, the New York-based quintet graced the stage at Tri-C JazzFest 2024 and did not disappoint. Filling the Mimi Ohio Theatre with mesmerizing sound, this was undoubtedly one of the most

impressive performances of the festival this year.

The performance immediately followed “Flying Home: a Trumpet Summit,” which celebrated generations of Tri-C alumni. The blistering whirlwind of intricate soloing and grooving rhythms was the perfect lead-in to the groundbreaking sonic experimentation of the main act.

ARTEMIS is certainly a close-knit group, but each member is also an absolute star in their own right. Pianist and musical director Renee Rosnes was the backbone, impressively speaking through her instrument. Her chords painted a vivid musical picture while her cascading solos coating each arrangement like honey.

On the bass, Noriko Ueda maintained a glassy tone that was almost hypnotic. She was always in the foreground, providing ethereal rhythmic lines that weaved through each chord, tying them tightly together. Her solos were passionate, technically flawless, and always kept each work moving.

Ingrid Jensen was simply remarkable on the trumpet. Her tone control and experimentation was notable, with a variety of glorious whines, glissandos, and screeches that were as impressive as they were clever.

On tenor saxophone, Nicole Glover was absolutely incredible. Her complex solos, played at an electric speed, were always clean and likely to go off on glorious tangents,

telling tales with her horn. Her tone maintained full clarity at fever pitches as well as slower, more contemplative moments. Her colleagues gave her ample space to work her magic, and she certainly took advantage.

Drummer Allison Miller was spectacular, playing with such a fluency that the drums themselves seemed to be an extension of her body. She always knew the perfect hit to match every moment, her solos stretching musical limits and painting the walls of the Theater with dense and miraculous rhythms. She played with a smile on her face — watching her made it difficult to not match her expression.

ARTEMIS' arrangements were stellar, especially their performance of Lyle Mays' flowery "Slink." However, the group's brilliance came through the most during their own compositions. The range of musical styles made each a standout in its own right.

Opening their set, Rosnes' "Galapagos" featured the composer in a sunlit solo that led into a grin-inducing melody. Each member strutted their stuff with fantastic solos; Glover's in particular was astonishingly sophisticated.

In Ueda's laid-back "Lights Away From Home" — a moonlit arrangement with a delightfully catchy melody — each member played their part to the letter, creating a stunningly delicate amalgamation of sound. Ueda's wistful bass solo and Rosnes' modal chord progressions particularly impressed.

Another terrific, nocturnal work, Miller's "Bow and Arrow" was characterized by its lush ecosystem of chords, which came in many different forms: anxious, brooding, excited, joyful, relieved, and more. Here, Miller stole the show, with crisp and incredibly complex drumming.

Jensen's otherworldly "Timber," the best piece of the night, began with a patchwork of creative sound, with flashes of saxophone, drumrolls, and subtle growls of the trumpet. Inspired by the way that "trees talk to one another and communicate," the song's gorgeous, catchy melody felt as natural as its subject matter. Each chord glowed brightly beneath winding, off-the-map solos.

Brilliant from start to finish, ARTEMIS' set proved why the group has taken the jazz world by storm.

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