In Search of Shanti

Aljoša Kavčič / Luka Debelić



LINE-UP

Aljoša Kavčič — piano / co-leader
Luka Debelić — guitar / co-leader
Tjan Šoštarič — double bass
Žiga Smrdel — drums
Žan Cesar — trumpet (release tour)

Private listening & album information ↗

In Search of Shanti brings together Slovenian pianist and composer Aljoša Kavčič and guitarist and composer Luka Debelić, both based in Vienna. Joined by Tjan Šoštarič on double bass, Žiga Smrdel on drums and Žan Cesar on trumpet for the release tour, they present original music shaped by a shared emphasis on melody, atmosphere and collective interaction.

Their compositions blend lyrical contemporary jazz with a modern harmonic language, leaving space for open improvisational interplay. The written material provides a framework within which the musicians explore and develop the music together.

Recorded at Artesuono Studio in Italy with Stefano Amerio, their debut album will be released internationally by Unit Records on 11 June 2027. Its first presentation is planned at the 2027 Ljubljana Jazz Festival, followed by European tour dates scheduled for July–September 2027.

Aljoša Kavčič **PIANO / CO-LEADER**

“One of the most gifted and dedicated musicians I ever came across in my life”
— Marko Churnchetz

Aljoša Kavčič is a Slovenian jazz pianist and composer based in Vienna. His performances include Ljubljana Jazz Festival, Porgy & Bess, Cankarjev dom, Jazztime Rijeka, Jazzinty and Ljubljana Castle Jazz Club. He has collaborated with the RTV Slovenia Big Band, including appearances as a soloist, Smrdel Brothers Collective, Jure Pukl, Nina Strnad, Primož Grašič, Luis Bonilla, Ben Tiberio, Vid Jamnik, Kristjan Krajnčan and Marko Churnchetz.

His distinctions include three first prizes at TEMSIG, the EMCY Award, the Škerjanc Award and second prize at Jazzon for his composition In Search of Shanti. In 2026, he was selected by Thana Alexa for the international Ponta Lopud Jazz Fellowship, sharing music and ideas with Grammy-winning and Grammy-nominated artists including Antonio Sánchez, Donny McCaslin, Jamey Haddad and Rachel Eckroth.

Luka Debelić **GUITAR / CO-LEADER**

Luka Debelić is a Slovenian jazz guitarist and composer based in Vienna. He has performed with Dan Costa, Matheus Jardim, Katarina Kochetova, Lorenz Widauer, Miloš Čolović and the RTV Slovenia Big Band, appearing with the latter as a featured soloist. His performances include Ljubljana Jazz Festival, Jazzinty, Porgy & Bess, ZWE, Jazzit Salzburg and Cankarjev dom. In 2022, he won first prize at TEMSIG in the jazz ensemble category.

He toured Central and Eastern Europe with Dan Costa's quartet in 2023 and 2025. He is also a member of Kitzavi Tzalon, a Vienna-based collective blending jazz, neo-soul, hip-hop, house and electronics. The group released its debut EP, Daswassup!, in 2025 and completed two European tours, including appearances at Melin Jazz Festival and Jazz & Wine Festival Satu Mare. He is currently working on a new album with vocalist Stephanie Semeniuc.

Tjan Šoštarič **DOUBLE BASS**

Tjan Šoštarič is a Slovenian jazz double bassist, multi-instrumentalist and composer. Initially trained in classical percussion, he brings a strong rhythmic foundation to his playing. His collaborations include Jure Pukl's Organic Trio, Renato Chicco, Philip Dizack, Daniel Nösig, Felipe Salles, Andy Middleton, Georg Vogel and Lorenz Widauer.

He recorded First Harvest with the Vienna Composers Big Band and performed on its album tour. His appearances include Ljubljana Jazz Festival, Novi Sad Jazz Festival, Balkan Trafik Festival in Brussels, Porgy & Bess, Stockwerk Graz and ZWE in Vienna.

Žiga Smrdel **DRUMS**

Žiga Smrdel is a Slovenian drummer, composer and producer whose projects include Smrdel Brothers Collective, WCKD Nation, Mind Tree and Zhlehtet. He has collaborated with Jure Pukl, Marko Churnchetz, Rok Zalokar, Boštjan Simon, Lana Janjanin and the RTV Slovenia Big Band.

His performances include Ljubljana Jazz Festival, Porgy & Bess, Made in New York Jazz Festival, Tallinn Music Week, Jazz Dock and Budapest Jazz Club. In 2023, he was invited to Ponta Lopud Jazz Festival, collaborating with Antonio Sánchez, Joe Lovano, David Sánchez and Thana Alexa. His distinctions include awards from TEMSIG, Zlata Piščal, 7 Virtual Jazz Club and HEMI.

Žan Cesar **TRUMPET**

Žan Cesar is a Slovenian jazz trumpeter and a graduate with honours of the University of Music and Performing Arts Graz, where he studied with James Rotondi. His distinctions include a DownBeat Student Award with Funk Fu and a Zlata Piščal award with Generator. He was a member of the JMI World Jazz Orchestra under Luis Bonilla in 2021 and 2025. His collaborations include Alex Sipiagin, Enrico Pieranunzi, Jim McNeely, Ben van Gelder, Robin Eubanks, John Riley and Robben Ford. He leads the Žan Cesar Quartet and performs with Generator, Pinetree and Funk Fu.

Album credit: trumpet on two tracks of In Search of Shanti.

EUROPEAN BOOKING / JULY–SEPTEMBER 2027

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Private listening & album information ↗