

**Jazzwise (GB)**  
**February 2010**  
**Robert Shore**

**Thierry Lang**  
**Lyoba Revisited**

ACT 9486-2 | ★ ★ ★

**Thierry Lang (p), Matthieu Michel (flug), Heiri Känzig (b),  
Daniel Pezzotti, Andi Plattner, Daniel Schaerer and  
Ambrosius Huber (clo). Rec. 12-13 April 2009**

This disc takes its name from the 'lyoba', a chant used by Mid-European cow herders as they drive their bovine charges out to pasture. Thierry Lang has made a study of popular melodies from Fribourg in west Switzerland – in particular the compositions of Abbé Joseph Bovet (1879–1951), who was himself drawn to the 'lyoba', and Pierre Kaelin (1913–95) – and transmuted his findings into a series of chamber-jazz pieces that tug unapologetically at the heartstrings and send the odd ripple of jazzy excitement down the spine. The likes of 'Rêver' offer an elegant mash-up of the two modes, folksy and blue-noted, with the quartet of cellos gracefully combining to evoke the sound of a male voice choir (for which Bovet most famously wrote), while the core trio of pianist Lang, flugelhorn player Matthieu Michel and double bassist Heiri Känzig emerge occasionally from the mystical fog of immemorial time to add distinctively twentieth-century accents. Lang's work has been described as 'music for the homesick' but, if you're not Swiss, it may actually have you longing for a land you've never known. **Robert Shore**