



Atle Nymo *Solo for Trio*

«Solo for Trio» is Atle Nymo's first album under his own name, and at the ripe age of 42, the leader at first glance may appear as a late bloomer, a young veteran or possibly something in between. The truth, however, is slightly different.

Blowing his way onto Norway's young and very vital jazz scene with the award-winning band Motif around the turn of the century, Atle Nymo over the following years established himself as one of the strongest tenor sax voices in Scandinavia. While still a music student, he toured Scandinavia with Pat Metheny and Chick Corea as a member of the Trondheim Jazz Orchestra, and became one of Norway's most sought-after instrumentalists. His brilliant work can be heard on around 50 albums by a number of artists, including the bands that he still plays in: Ensemble Denada, Motif, I.P.A and Chrome Hill.

Combining his career as a performing musician with the position as Associate Professor at the Norwegian Academy of Music since 2013, Atle Nymo for a long time was too busy (and happy) playing, composing, travelling and teaching to even consider a first album under his own name. However, an urge to delve into a different musical energy eventually gave him a push starting this trio.

"I wanted to explore a musical setting that was more open and subdued than the ones that I usually work within," says Atle, who cites the energy-sparkling, expressive jazz of the 60's as the main

base for his playing, and saxophonists like John Coltrane, Sonny Rollins, Gato Barbieri and fellow Norwegians Knut Riisnæs and Jan Garbarek among his early influences.

Concentrating more on aspects like tone, timbre and texture, Atle invited the ECM and Hubro-recording bassist/bandleader Mats Eilertsen (b. 1975) and drummer/percussionist Michaela Antalova (b. 1993) to join him in this search for nuances and subtle expression, working within the framework of trio interplay. After a few rehearsals, the trio played their first gig as part of the concert series RAW at the Norwegian Academy of Music in late 2016. From this event, live recordings of the tunes «Balance» and «Solo For Trio» have found their way to this record.

"I have known Mats since our days together at the «Jazzlinja», the jazz studies at the University of Trondheim," says Atle. "Although we have not played that much together over those 20 years, I have followed his musical development closely and I knew that he would be perfect for this music. He is a very open-minded player who can take the music in so many directions, and the same goes for Michaela. She is from Slovenia, currently living in Norway, and I became aware of her at the Norwegian Academy of Music where she completed her bachelor's degree a few years ago. Both in her solo concerts and in bands she plays drums in poetic ways that inspire me. It is very exciting for me to work with the kinds of sonic input that she and Mats bring to the table."

Except for the two live tracks, the album is a one-session recording from Oslo's Studio Paradiso, taking place before the trio had played another live gig. «Chapter 1, «Chapter 2» and «Chapter 3», featuring Atle on bass clarinet, are trio-improvisations; Atle's «Nightwalk», «Klikk» and «Round Shape» and Michaela's «For Atle and Mats» are based on melodic sketches, developed into their final versions by a finely tuned interplay between three intensely listening musicians.

"It is fascinating for me to work with so much focus on the various sounds of the bass and the drums," says Atle. "As the melodic material that we play is tonal and not too complex, I can concentrate on other parameters than I usually do. And the fact that we had played only one concert together before the recording session, made the music feel quite new to us and demanded that we listen very carefully to each other. I believe we all tried to play both intuitively and at the same time pick every single note, every single sound with the utmost care. We did not talk too much about how to play, we just agreed to keep the interplay open, dynamic and subdued, and in that respect, I feel that we succeeded quite well."

Terje Mosnes, August 2019

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