



Søren Kristiansen Solo Piano

UPON A STAR

Stunt Records

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Distribution GDC

To those who know pianist Søren Kristiansen for his extroverted and super swinging mainstream playing, last year's solo release *WITH A SONG IN MY HEART* came as a revelation. Critics competed with superlatives and a unanimous corps of reviewers from the Danish magazine *Jazz Special* voted it Danish Jazz Album Of The Year 2007. His vigorous virtuosity has led him through a process of distillation in which external lushness and conventionally rigid form often are pushed aside to give way to a deep quest towards the innermost core of the tune – be it irresistibly groovy or strictly logical.

WITH A SONG IN MY HEART called for exuberant headlines: "Beautiful, multifaceted, touching... the reflective interpretation of a piano artist". The inspiration from classical music is unmistakable. It has been said that this is how Chopin or Ravel might have improvised on piano in 2007.

Stunt records encouraged Kristiansen to record another solo album, this time exclusively featuring tunes associated with Christmas, which resulted in this powerful and challenging offering – a selection of songs from the heart, performed with a devotion only possible from someone with intricate and deep knowledge of each tune and hymn. Once again, this is a solo release that breathes with an extraordinary light touch and a magical elegance. Do not be fooled by Søren Kristiansen's modesty. He has no need to prove his huge technical ability. His message is one of dedication and intensity.

Touching and diffused with atmosphere, *UPON A STAR* is a different kind of Christmas album. Søren Kristiansen does wonderful things with well known international Christmas songs as well as traditional Danish hymns. This holiday music will be played all through the year.

In the world of music, be it classical, pop or even jazz, the market is flooded by saleable youngsters, who know it all from the onset. We may witness producers putting their money on musicians with no life experience other than that which they picked up on their way from graduation to the negotiations, which will make them overnight stars. Søren Kristiansen took a different path. He wanted to have something to say. He has been underway for a long time, and he has his own, personal musical language and story, enabling him to approach music with respect and appetite.

Søren Kristiansen – born December 7th 1962 comes from the picturesque town of Ærøskøbing on one of the small islands south of Hans Christian Andersen's native island, Funen. He made his debut as a professional jazz musician at the Copenhagen Jazz Festival in 1985. He comes out of a tradition led by figures such as Art Tatum, Oscar Peterson and Bill Evans. Among the bandleaders with whom he has played and made several recordings, are two of the most prominent Danish mainstream musicians, clarinetist Jorgen Svare and tenor saxophonist Jesper Thilo. In their bands Kristiansen has been able to cultivate his gift for basic, unflinching swing. Through the years he has also toured with several jazz greats, such as Harry "Sweets" Edison, Al Grey, Clark Terry, James Moody, Art Farmer, Putte Wichman and Rolf Ericsson.

Søren Kristiansen is a very popular pianist on the Danish jazz scene as a sideman (with many recordings under his belt as such), with his own trio, and now as a solo pianist. In 1992 he was awarded The Ben Webster Prize, in 1995 The Danish Jazz Prize, and in 2001 his first recording as a leader (Søren Kristiansen Trio: *VERY EARLY... VERY LATE*) was nominated for a Danish Grammy. He received Pala Bar's Jazz Prize in 2007 and Best Album Of The Year 2007 for his first solo album *WITH A SONG IN MY HEART*. He has recently composed and recorded the music for world famous director Henning Carlsen's new movie "Springet".



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