

Inger Marie / BY MYSELF

Norwegian vocalist Inger Marie's second solo album BY MYSELF is a worthy follow-up to her successful debut cd MAKE THIS MOMENT. 45-year old Inger Marie waited many years before venturing into a solo career, but more than twenty years as an active vocalist have provided her with ample experience in the music field.

"I started singing in public when I was quite young. I loved to perform, and I tried out different styles and musical genres. For six years I was the lead singer of a local big band, and later on I led my own jazz quintet."

In 2004, after many years of experience and paying dues, Inger Marie finally decided to record her debut CD, MAKE THIS MOMENT. *"The time was right, I had the right musicians, and after all these years I felt my singing had matured into a voice of my own."*

In fact, at her first recording session, Inger Marie disclosed a voice so controlled, beautiful and personal that listeners were left with their mouths open, stunned in admiration of her presence, warmth and direct communicative abilities.

MAKE THIS MOMENT was released in Norway in October 2004, and received rave reviews and instant recognition. Soon Inger Marie's voice touched hearts and impressed music lovers in places far from Norway. Japanese record buyers discovered her album, which started selling in hundreds, then in thousands. Record companies in Korea, The Philippines, Hong Kong, and soon Japan, released the album. It has now been released in most of Asia as well as in Europe, reaching the hearts and souls of thousands of listeners and selling close to 100.000 units.

"For many years I learned a lot by singing other people's songs, and trying to copy my favorite vocalists. I think this is a very good and normal way to learn and gain musical experience. But eventually I felt the need to express music and songs in my own way. And I felt safe and comfortable with that decision."

Inger Marie has built a solid relationship based on mutual respect with several musicians from the surprisingly high quality pool of players in and around her home town, and has hand-picked the musicians for her band. They provide the exquisite backing on her recordings, as well as on stage.

On piano you hear Oscar Jansen, a very popular musician, and a prolific painter in addition to his musical activities.

"Oscar is an ingenious musician with a unique way of phrasing and creating the right mood with his playing."

Ole Kelly Kvamme is an active freelance bass player. He also works as a music teacher. *"Ole's depth and warm sound on his old acoustic double-bass is no less than brilliant."*

Geir Aage Johnsen is a very original drummer with his own unique style. *"Geir is my favorite drummer ever... He always comes up with lots of ideas for arrangements."*



The saxophone player Oivind G. Stoemer works as a music teacher and freelance musician. He is also Inger Marie's son.

"I really like his sound and his lyrical style."

On her second album, BY MYSELF, Inger Marie chose to work with the renowned Danish producer Søren Sigumfeldt. They recorded the album at Nilento Studio, Gothenburg, Sweden. Inger Marie's hand-picked group of local Norwegian musicians are joined by Swedish guitar virtuoso Ulf Wakenius, known from Oscar Peterson's trio. Other guest performers

include Norwegian trumpeter Gunnar Halle, Danish electric guitarist Niclas Knudsen, and Norwegian vocalist Rasmus Solem.

"Life influences all of us in one way or another, and I believe my experiences in life are reflected in the way I express my songs. I want to express something genuine in the songs I perform, and I hope to touch other people's hearts. It's not my intention to impress my audience with lots of vocal skills, but rather I hope to express something honest and trustworthy through my singing. That's the most important thing for me."

BY MYSELF is easy to listen to, but hard to forget. The music is smooth, but far from saccharine or superficial. The honesty in Inger Marie's husky voice is unmistakable. You believe her. The words mean something - she can't sing a song without meaning it. Whether it's a jazz standard or a pop tune, she delivers the lyrics as if she had experienced and written every word. She doesn't waste time pressing her voice or using a heavy vibrato, she lets the music speak for itself with a dusty, velvety feel... and a voice that won't let go of you. This is the sound of a mature woman telling her stories with no regrets.

"My main focus is on perfecting my own personal style. And maybe I'm a little old fashioned, because I remain faithful to good, solid melodies and songs. That suits me fine. To me, the most important thing in making a new album is having something on my mind that I want to share. It's important to have a good connection with the band, producer and record company during the process, and, lastly, hopefully be well-received by the public. But the most important thing for me, is the joy of creating music and expressing myself through singing songs."

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For further information

**please contact Laura Littauer:
tel. 33 33 87 20 dir. 33 18 90 92
Laura@sundance.dk**



STUNT RECORDS

Sundance Music ApS Havnegade 41 1058 Copenhagen K Denmark
T: +45 3333 8720 F: +45 3333 8730 www.sundance.dk sundance@sundance.dk