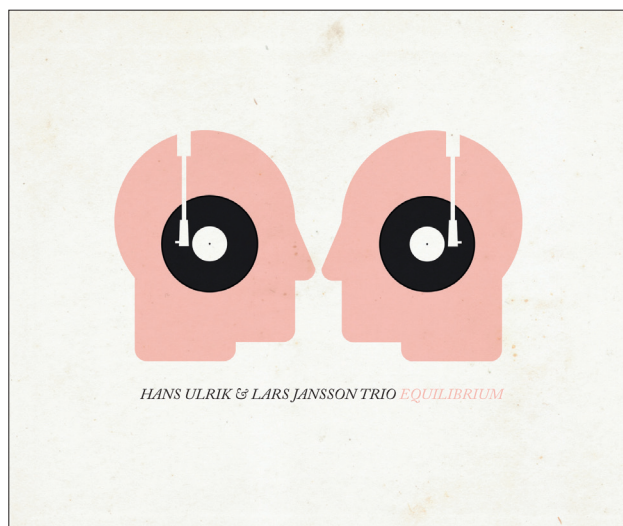


HANS ULRIK & LARS JANSSON TRIO
EQUILIBRIUM



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The Danish saxophonist and composer Hans Ulrik and the Swedish pianist Lars Jansson began working together in the early 1990's, after Hans Ulrik had heard Jansson's trio on THE ETERNAL NOW. "It shocked me", says Hans Ulrik. "This was exactly how I felt music should sound: extremely melodic, deep swing, and with a sublime sound on all instruments." They started collaborating, and in 1994 recorded STRANGE WORLD. Then there was silence. Ulrik followed other paths, and Jansson continued working with his various trios. But the contact remained intact, and those fortunate to have heard Hans Ulrik with Jansson's current trio, know that something great is always in the air. The quartet's music sparks and sparkles. Hans Ulrik writes music that he loves hearing Jansson play, and it is obvious that Jansson enjoys playing it. This jazz reaches out to its audience. In congenial interplay with Lars Jansson's Trio, it has a rhythmic appeal guaranteed to take hold of you, fronted by a melodic, richly textured saxophone, played by one of Denmark's most popular and dedicated jazz musicians.

In 1995 Hans Ulrik had plans of immigrating to New York. As it turned out, he missed all his interesting projects at home, and his stay in the Big Apple lasted only six months, during which he joined the New York Health Club, where he discovered power yoga. The young instructor introduced him to an exercise called "Downward Dog", which inspired the opening track of this release. Speaking of animals, "Simple Creature" is inspired by Hans Ulrik's red cat - much more than just a cat, and a daily source of pleasure and frustration.

Other of Ulrik's compositions have been inspired by great musicians: "Horace" is a blues in minor and a tribute to Horace Parlan. The idea came from a passage on one of Ulrik's favorite recordings, where Horace Parlan plays piano behind Stanley Turrentine. Another of his favorites is the album on which Elvis Costello meets Burt Bacharach. Hans Ulrik loves Bacharach's writing - splendidly melodic and almost irritatingly easy to sing - hence "Bacharach".

A respectful nod is directed towards Steve Swallow, yet another fine composer. The two have recorded together. There is an edge to Swallow's music. He is uncompromising and a great inspiration musically and personally. "Follow The Swallow".

Hans Ulrik transcribed Coltrane's "A Love Supreme" as faithfully as possible, but he revised the fourth movement, "Psalm", only because the original framework

is so simple and so closely associated with Coltrane's spirituality, that it seemed pointless to play it as a melody. "Psalm" is a deeply respectful interpretation.

It is only natural for Lars Jansson to contribute a tune. Jansson played a tour with Hans Ulrik's Jazz & Mambo project. Although he was favorable and loyal towards the concept, he preferred playing original material. "Hilda Smiles" is from that tour.

All in all, nine personal compositions augmented by one by Jansson and rounded off with Eigil Harder's "Den blå anemone". "Because", says Hans Ulrik, "when all is said and done, that is where I come from".

Hans Ulrik (b.1965) has long since proven his international stature. His sublime sax playing has made him popular and taken him far away from home. He was a member of the trendsetting Emborg/Larsen Group in the 1990's, and his many collaborators include Frans Bak, Cæcilie Norby, Thomas Clausen, Gary Peacock, Niels Lan Doky, Marilyn Mazur, Marc Johnson, The Danish Radio Big Band and Eliane Elias. Today Hans Ulrik is one of Europe's most active and outstanding saxophonists, renowned for his Scandinavian sound, but also for his great versatility. Ulrik has released several albums in his own name with John Scofield, Steve Swallow, Peter Erskine, Lars Danielsson, Eivind Aarset, Anders Jormin and Audun Kleive.

Lars Jansson (b.1951) has been a professional musician for years and played in countless Swedish bands including Egba, Hawk On Flight, and groups with Tomas Franck and Lars Danielsson. He has played with Arild Andersen, and he was a member of Jan Gabarek's group from 1987-88 (where he was replaced by Keith Jarrett!), and he has performed with a long list of international artists, while keeping various formats of his own trio intact. In Politiken's Jazz Encyclopedia he is described as "...one of Sweden's most gifted musicians and composers. Although inspired by Keith Jarrett, he has created his own musical universe, particularly as expressed in the trio format in congenial interplay with the other musicians". Currently the other musicians are bassist Thomas Fønnesbæk - whom in this constellation has proven himself one of Denmark's finest bass players - and the Swedish drummer Paul Svanberg.

*Downward Dog / Once Upon A Time / Simple Creature / Hilda Smiles / Talisman / Equilibrium / Psalm
Horace / Bacharach / Follow The Swallow / Den Blå Anemone.*

Hans Ulrik (ts, ss), Lars Jansson (p), Thomas Fønnesbæk (b), Paul Svanberg (d).

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