

HANS ULRIK & FRIENDS THE CHRISTMAS SONG



Stunt Records
STUCD 13132

Christmas is coming up, but THE CHRISTMAS SONG will last way past the holiday season. If you remember the feel of a genuine Danish jazz hit, JAZZ AND MAMBO - one of Stunt Records' (celebrating it's 30th anniversary this year) all-time bestselling albums - then you will already recognize the mood of Hans Ulrik's Christmas album: warm, groovy and unpretentious. Fronted by one of Denmark's most dedicated jazz musicians, saxophonist Hans Ulrik, this is jazz with an appealing, rhythmic lilt; although unpretentious, it is guaranteed to grab you. Melodic, structured and with Ulrik's rich sound, nothing can go wrong.

Christmas albums have a long and proud tradition: Bing Crosby, Frank Sinatra, Ella Fitzgerald, Diana Krall and many others have all interpreted seasonal songs. Many of them have become classics that people dig out every holiday season. Here, finally, is a Danish instrumental Christmas album destined for longevity. Hans Ulrik has often proved his ability to make modern, pleasing and melodious jazz albums. In other words, he appeals to a wide audience. His arrangements of well-known tunes are still recognizable, and he blows new energy into the songs and hymns, whether they are Danish, British or American. Ulrik's nationality is no secret (he has previously released a selection of Danish songs and the album DANISH STANDARDS), and it is a pleasure to hear the Danish hymns swing with a perfect combination of respect and tongue in cheek, and also to hear old standards infused with yet another shot of life. Whether you are a Christmas fan or a jazz fan - or even better, both - you will love the new versions of old Danish tunes, Rudolph the Red-nosed Reindeer and Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas.

Hans Ulrik was born in 1965 and began playing the saxophone at an early age. He studied at Berklee College of Music in Boston 1984-86, and a year

after returning to Denmark he began playing professionally with Nikolaj Bentzon, Niels Lan Doky, Emborg/Larsen and his own groups. Since 1992 he has worked with Marilyn Mazur's Future Song, the Danish Radio Big Band, Michael Ruff, Cæcilie Norby, Joey Baron, Jeff Ballard, Marc Johnson, Eliane Elias, Gary Peacock, Mino Cinelu, Adam Nussbaum, Lars Jansson, John Scofield, Peter Erskine, Steve Swallow, Lisa Nilsson and many others. He has appeared on over 100 jazz, rock and pop CD's as a sideman. He has always had his own groups, and his adaptability allows him to work in diverse settings without losing his own identity. Paired with his professionalism, this has made him one of his generation's most popular saxophonists.

Every Danish jazz aficionado knows Henrik Gunde, one of the country's most popular pianists. Gunde plays with his own quartet and with the Danish Radio Big Band and Jan Harbeck's quartet. With his outgoing style, he fits snugly into many formats and idioms. It seems that hardly any genre is foreign to this versatile musician, and he always plays loyally and with virtuosity and contagious energy.

Bassist Kasper Vadsholt, a 1991 graduate from Copenhagen's Rhythmic Conservatory, has often played with Hans Ulrik and Henrik Gunde. He has held a seat with the Danish Radio Big Band since 2004, and with the orchestra he has worked with many international stars in a diversity of styles. Drummer Søren Frost is an equally seasoned musician. He makes up the last third of the rhythm section in the Danish Radio Big Band. He is a busy sideman, but was also a successful co-leader of the New Orleans trio, Skipper-Just-Frost, with a Danish Music Award to show. Fortunately, THE CHRISTMAS SONG gives space to this versatile, funky drummer with a New Orleans second line beat running in his veins.

*Winter Wonderland / The Christmas Song / Greensleeves / Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer / Det kimer nu til julefest
Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas / Dejlig er jorden / Julen Har Bragt Velsignet Bud
Hark! The Heralds Angels Sing / Mit Hjerte Altid Vanker*

Hans Ulrik – tenor sax; Henrik Gunde – Fender Rhodes; Kasper Vadsholt – bass; Søren Frost – drums

Hans Ulrik & Friends, The Christmas Song, STUCD 13132, Stunt Records/Sundance Music.



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