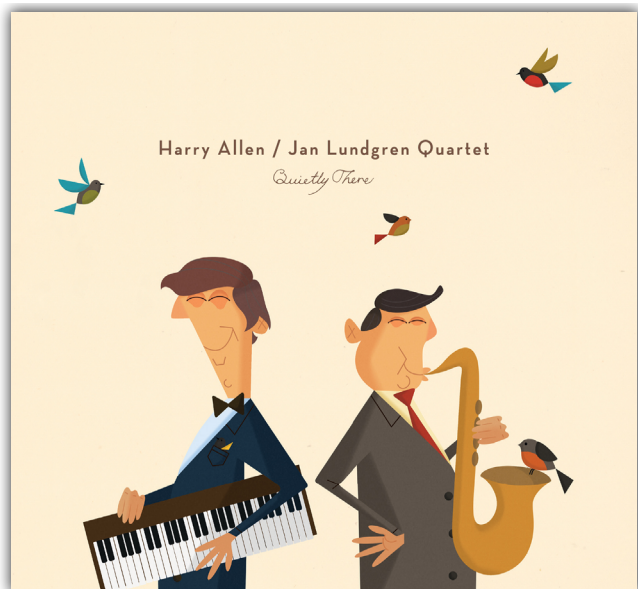


Harry Allen / Jan Lundgren Quartet

QUIETLY THERE

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STUCD 14142



Some musicians deserve more attention than they get. In this sentiment, the American jazz magazine *Down Beat* has a poll called “Talent Deserving Wider Recognition”. The American tenor saxophonist Harry Allen definitely belongs in this category. He is not widely known in Scandinavia despite his more than three dozen releases as bandleader. He is certainly not lazy when it comes to touring on both sides of the Atlantic. He is an old-fashioned traveling musician, happy to be hired with local musicians. Over the years many fine Scandinavian musicians – in this case Swedish pianist Jan Lundgren, likewise Swedish bassist Hans Backenroth, and Danish drummer Kristian Leth – have had the pleasure of Allen’s expertise, and a long-standing touring relationship with the aforementioned musicians has been documented on *QUIETLY THERE*, recorded during the Copenhagen Jazz Festival at STC Studios in the summer of 2014.

Harry Allen (born 1966) began playing accordion at the age of seven. Four years later he switched to clarinet, but soon substituted it with the tenor saxophone. “My father had been a drummer during the big band era, and he and Paul Gonsalves were close friends. Before joining Basie’s orchestra in the late 40’s he and my father had played together. And he is still one of my greatest inspirations along with Stan Getz. In my book, Stan Getz is one of the all-time greats. Technically as well as musically he is unique”, says Harry Allen. In the 80’s Allen studied at Rutgers University, where Kenny Baron, Sahib Shihab and Bob Minzer were among his teachers. He soon had enough gigs to make a living, and after a while drummer Oliver Jackson took him along to Europe. Since then Harry Allen has lived well as a touring jazz musician, but no matter how often he visits Europe, he never intends to leave New York, as so many other jazz musicians have done. “I just love New York. I can’t imagine living anywhere else. When it comes down to it, New York is where it happens. It’s great to come to Europe, where I’ve met many fine musicians, also the band I have recorded this album with. And I don’t mind traveling.” Harry Allen’s

playing does not imitate his heroes, but contributes to keeping the same tradition alive. Firmly based in swing and bop, his style is not innovative, but his music has a rare authentic authority, and he has a wonderful talent for making a tune sound fresh and meaningful. Quite simply, Harry Allen is a masterful interpreter. He has been called the Frank Sinatra of the tenor sax, and Johnny Mandel’s tunes on *QUIETLY THERE* are a fine platform for this dedicated musician. The Swedish pianist Jan Lundgren (born 1966) had hardly come out of his teens when Swedish tenor saxophonist Arne Domnerus spotted him. Years later, his performing and recording credits read like a “who’s who” of Swedish jazz as well as boasting numerous recordings on Japanese, American and German jazz labels. Regardless of the setting, his touch is elegant and his phrasing is swinging and supple.

Swedish bassist Hans Backenroth (also born 1966) has been a popular and versatile bassist in Swedish jazz for years. His credits include Monica Zetterlund, Alice Babs, Arne Domnerus, Putte Wickman, Bengt Hallberg, Bernt Rosengren and Kjell Öhman. Think Ray Brown and Oscar Pettiford. That will give you an idea of the swing and support personified by this fine musician. Drummer Kristian Leth (born 1973) is the youngster in this band and the only Dane. However, it is he who got the ball rolling and brought Harry Allen to Scandinavia. His discreet and light-handed drumming suits this music perfectly. He has toured and recorded with many fine musicians including Scott Hamilton, Eric Alexander, Claire Martin and Ulf Wakenius. The repertoire is a pleasant mixture of ballads and medium-tempo tunes, all written by Johnny Mandel, who – along with Henry Mancini – is one of the most talented songwriters in the generation following Gershwin, Porter, Kern and Berlin. At 88 he is still an active composer. There are but a few albums dedicated solely to Johnny Mandel’s compositions, which is yet another reason to welcome Harry Allen/Jan Lundgren Quartet’s *QUIETLY THERE*. Great songs, great music, lots of heart.

Harry Allen (ts), Jan Lundgren (p), Hans Backenroth (b), Kristian Leth (d).

Sure As You Are Born / Emily / The Shining Sea / Quietly There / A Time For Love / Cinnamon And Clove / The Shadow Of Your Smile / Just A Child / Suicide Is Painless.

STUCD 14142 Harry Allen / Jan Lundgren Quartet: QUIETLY THERE, Stunt Records/Sundance Music ApS.



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