

Jens Søndergaard Quartet

MORE PEPPER

- Sundance, live at JazzCup

In the world of jazz it is business as usual for musicians to relate to ideals. Most jazz musicians have for longer or shorter leaned their expression closely to notable stylistic icons and – let us be honest – outright copied them. Some never manage to liberate themselves from the icons and those are doomed to a musical life in the shades of their ideals. Some use the inspiration as a stepping-stone in the outreach to a 'voice' of their own.

Among those who throughout the years have listened to 62-year old sax player Jens Søndergaard there is little doubt that the fellow sax player Art Pepper played exactly the role as a stylistic icon an ideal to him. Not in terms of Pepper's turbulent and self-devastating mode of life with drugs and imprisonment, nor his personality but indeed his tonal language. But the inspiration is still alive and very present and Søndergaard will be the first to acknowledge that as a fact. But it is also a fact that Jens Søndergaard never lived nor played in the shades of his ideal but rather created his own ways of expression - a personal universe.



The alto sax of Art Pepper's is easily recognizable and extremely expressive. As a musician he was very emotional, expressed himself through an outstanding technique and he had a wonderful tone. But he was also a very fine composer. It has been a long standing desire for Jens Søndergaard to make a recording exclusively featuring Pepper-compositions - to recapture and record Art Pepper's music together with a dedicated group of musicians. MORE PEPPER is recorded live in 'Jazz Cup' of Copenhagen in front of an enthusiastic audience. Søndergaard chose some characteristic compositions of Pepper's – i.e. blues, latin and a couple of wonderful ballads. Listening to the 10 recordings of MORE PEPPER it is quite obvious that Pepper's music will stand the distance of time. At no point you find yourself recollecting that Art Pepper passed away a quarter of a century ago. And one can only be grateful that a significant number of songs still are left - deserving skilful treatment by Jens Søndergaard and his Syoung band.

The outcome of this recording is a remarkably good, vibrant and up-close live experience, bringing the atmosphere of one of the smaller club scenes – luckily still in existence – right out through your speakers, earphones or whatever listening device you prefer. This is plain energetic non-academic playing – encouraging and welcoming to a broad audience.

Jens Søndergaard has through ages been extremely active in the Danish jazz arena. He has had countless number of club-gigs along with his main occupation as a dentist (frequently used by American musicians staying over in Denmark). The acoustic jazz is very close to his heart and in his own name he has released a number of cd-s in cooperation with a.o. Lee Konitz.

JENS SØNDERGAARD: ALTO SAX & CLARINET THOMAS BORNØ: PIANO
MARC DAVIS: BASS DENNIS DRUD: DRUMS
FLEMMING QUIST MØLLER: CONGA & BONGOS

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