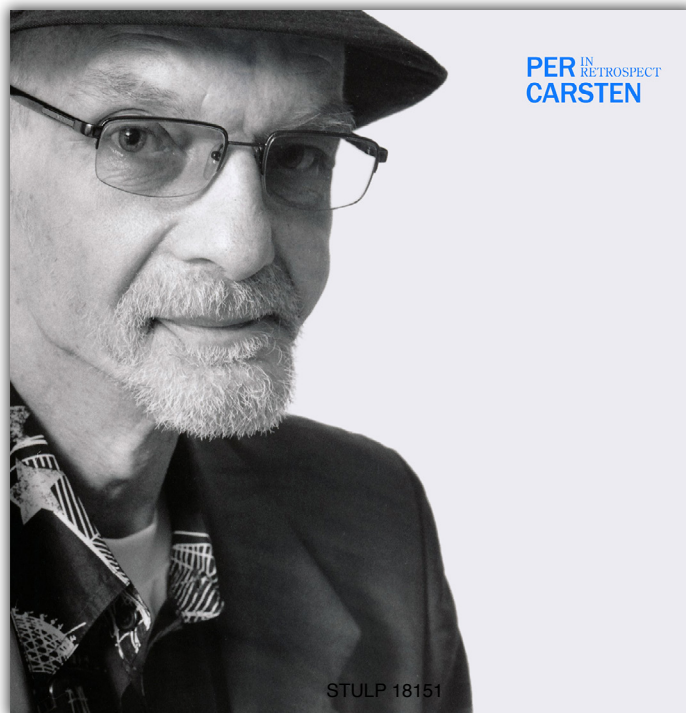


# PER CARSTEN

## IN RETROSPECT

Double Vinyl LP and Digital

Stunt X Records



StuntX LP - STXLP21911



With this release we get a glimpse of a very diverse music created during the major part of a lifespan: From urban 1970s funk and post-bop to romantic vocal jazz, fusion, pop and classical music. Per Carsten also dissolved strict genre-borders when he composed several large-scale suites. And whenever you heard Per Carsten perform there would be a fire behind all the dazzling proficiency on alto-sax, soprano-sax, various flutes or the Electronic Wind Instrument (EWI), which was the only wind instrument he could physically manage the last years of his life.

Per Carsten was one of Thad Jones' favorites during his period as leader of the Danish Radio Big Band. When turbo was needed Per Carsten was the man who could deliver – that is if he was in the right mood. Another leader of the Radio Big Band, Palle Mikkelborg, remembers how Per Carsten suddenly and without notice could refrain from playing a scheduled solo during a live transmitted show. You never quite knew how Per Carsten would cope with the situation – just behind the smug façade insecurity lured and compromise was not his game.

In his youth Per Carsten's ambition was to become an elite gymnast. He attended every possible circus show with the trapeze artist Tony Steele and eventually Carsten dedicated his composition Magic Man to Steele. Carsten's career as a musician began when he, just 19 years old, skipped the school and played his alto sax in various joints and restaurants in Copenhagen. He got a few lessons from the saxophonist Aage Voss but Carsten is mostly autodidact – as a former athlete he knew what practice and discipline could achieve. Among his favorite colleagues on saxophone were David Sanborn, Cannonball Adderley, Phil Woods and Bernt Rosengren – and he adored Nancy Wilson's singing.

Carsten soon became acquainted with established musicians like big band-leader Ib Glindemann and the combo-leader Finn Mickelborg. Carsten made his own groups and was a coveted sideman in ensembles lead by for instance drummer Bjarne Rostvold, and the trumpet-players Allan Botschinsky or Palle Mikkelborg. In 1966 Per Carsten began subbing in the Danish Radio Big Band and became a permanent member of the sax group in 1975 – he regularly per-

formed in the band until 1986. He also played in the semi-large Radiojazzgruppen 1966-70 and gathered inspirations as a composer and arranger from Neil Ardley, Michael Gibbs among others.

The Polish composer Krzysztof Komeda, who was in Copenhagen in 1966 to record the music for a Danish film (MENNESKER MØDES – OG SØD MUSIK OPSTÅR I HJERTET by Henning Carlsen), immediately chose Per Carsten after hearing his flute playing in club Montmartre. Per Carsten would also play solo in three more films.

From 1970 onwards Per Carsten was often commissioned as arranger and composer for several of Danish Radio's ensembles – mostly for the big band but he also wrote for chamber orchestra and choir. While Per Carsten had a seat in the big band sax group he met charismatic figures like Phil Woods and Dexter Gordon. All left a mark on the ambitious jazz artist, who was also among the first to try out the possibilities with electric amplification and electronic sound manipulation of the saxophone.

In the 1980s Per Carsten performed and recorded with his own electric quintets, but a diagnosed cancer in the back of his tongue June 1996 terminated his career as a saxophonist and flutist. But he continued to compose music and play the EWI.

Carsten was a devoted sailor with a sailboat of his own. He loved Indonesia and flew to Bali several times.

Producer's note: The scope of this release has been to show as much as possible of Carsten's faceted work. Sources have been all kinds of audio kept by aficionados for decades: Radio broadcasts, live concerts, studio sessions and rehearsals saved on ¼ inch reel-to-reel tapes recorded with various speeds, DAT- & DCC-tapes, even cassette tapes have been used. Sound qualities of course vary and may not always be up to today's standard even though careful restoration has been done.

All compositions by Per Carsten Petersen except where indicated.



STUNT RECORDS

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