

Jakob Dinesen

KEYS & STRINGS

Released on Double CD and Digital

Stunt Records

When the prominent Danish tenor saxophonist Jakob Dinesen's album YASMIN was released in 2014, it attracted more than just the usual attention. Danish jazz reviewers voted the album "the best of the year" and described the release as "ballad music with a magical sense of empathy... the most beautiful and most complete Danish jazz release in a long, long time" (Jazz Special). Audiences and venues welcomed the project with open arms and ears.

KEYS & STRINGS continues where YASMIN left off, in a repertoire consisting of standards and freshly written originals. Jakob Dinesen says that his goal has been to create a poetic universe and clean, honest, emotional, expressive statements in which the individual compositions have been allowed to determine the personnel. It's music where each song is a meditative journey without compromising the double-album's wholeness. It's music that almost physically surrounds the listener – a saxophone breath that leaves room and space for the other participants, whether with a trio, quartet, strings, or symphony orchestra. "Dino" (as he is known to friends) interprets the pieces with such a contagious calmness that in the liner notes Eddie Michel compares it to a musical version of the ancient Chinese martial art of Tai Chi, whose main principle is a quest for inner peace and mental and emotional balance.

On the sensitive successor to YASMIN, Jakob Dinesen's ambitions are realized in collaboration with pianists Carsten Dahl, Heine Hansen, Darin Pantoomkomol, and Magnus Hjort; Nikolaj Torp Larsen on keyboards; bassist Anders Christensen; drummers Jakob Høyer and Morten Ærø; the string quartet from YASMIN; and in the finale, Thailand's Philharmonic Orchestra. As producer, Kæv Glieman is also responsible for the sound. Everyone involved has worked with Dino in various contexts over the last 20 years and creates a sense of presence and security that brings out the best in him.

"Since YASMIN I have written and developed a new repertoire," explains Dino about this album, which – apart from being a touching meeting between a modern trio with piano and keyboards, a classical string quartet, and a jazz quartet – hits deep, and radiates sounds of sweetness, gentleness, and love. As mentioned, on the final track ("Everything Happens To Me") Dino is backed by Thailand's Philharmonic Orchestra. Despite the enormous sound, the expressiveness on this take is as delicate as fine porcelain.

Jakob Dinesen (tenor saxophone) + Carsten Dahl, Heine Hansen, Darin Pantoomkomol (piano), Nikolaj Torp Larsen (keyboards, effects), Anders "AC" Christensen (bass), Morten Ærø, Jakob Høyer (d), String quartet: Andrea Gyarfas, Karen Johanne Pedersen (violins), Sidsel Feher Most (viola), Samira Dayyani (cello) & Thailand Philharmonic Orchestra.

2CD: STUCD 19052. Jakob Dinesen, Keys & Strings, Stunt Records/Sundance Music ApS.



Stunt Records CD

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"It was the pianist on YASMIN, Thai Darin Pantoomkomol, who got the idea and made it happen. It was, of course, amazing to be a soloist with a 70-man symphony orchestra," says Jakob Dinesen.

Jakob Dinesen (b. 1968) is among the few of his generation's jazz musicians who have understood the importance of building on jazz traditions – not simply "playing the tradition," but to be inspired by it and allow it to become an integral part of his sound. He is a saxophonist with a personal voice that exudes references but is also born of calmness and dignity, and he speaks a tonal language that is both progressive and anchored in tradition.

Jakob has also built up a remarkable résumé. He has played with a sea of stars, including Paul Motian, Kurt Rosenwinkel, Eddie Gomez, Ben Street, Tony Allen, Nasheet Waits, and Steve Swallow. He has performed and recorded everything from traditional jazz with the trombonist Ole "Fessor" Lindgren and mainstream jazz with bassist Hugo Rasmussen to close collaborations with the unabashedly contemporary guitarist Jakob Bro. He has also made a name for himself as a composer and bandleader in his work with his own groups and collaborations. Always hungry for fresh sounds from new places, he's travelled the world with his saxophone. Despite never resting on his laurels, he has received virtually every prize and award possible in Denmark, and has released a slew of albums in his own name on Stunt Records in addition to YASMIN, including EVERYTHING WILL BE ALL RIGHT (2002) with Kurt Rosenwinkel; LADY WITH A SECRET (2005) with Eddie Gomez; ONE KISS TO MANY (2007) with Ben Street, Jakob Bro, and Nasheet Waits; DINO (2007) with Paul Motian; and the Cuban-inspired ENAMORADO EN COPENHAGUE (2011).

Jakob Dinesen is one of the most essential and versatile jazz musicians in Denmark – almost hyperactive at times, always in demand, and with his horn never far from his side. It's only natural, then, that he has become the player tasked with reviving the role of the great ballad interpreter. His agile and expressive saxophone playing, paired with an ear-tickling rhythm section, a string quartet, or the otherworldly sonics from keyboards, makes Jakob Dinesen's KEYS & STRINGS an exquisite listening experience.



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