

JULIA WERUP

Lämna inte mig

Stunt Records



As a singer, she's self-taught. Her effortless ability to hit the right notes was cultivated far from any practice room, and as her voice and narrative have grown into something special and recognizable it's important to appreciate her formative experiences throughout what can conservatively be described as an oftentimes complex life.

On 'The Thrill of Loving You,' poet and singer Julia Werup (born in 1987) breaks new musical ground on her official debut as a jazz vocalist. Accompanying her are bassist Johnny Åman, pianist Sven-Erik Lundequist, and drummer/producer Thomas Blachman.

Last year, romantic sparks flew during a rendezvous with Blachman, kindling an intense mutual infatuation. Their relationship inspired him to resume creating and producing music after an extended hiatus, a return which included working on 'The Thrill of Loving You.'

The project is inspired by icons from throughout the rich history of jazz – including trumpeter and singer Chet Baker, singers Billie Holiday, Monica Zetterlund, Abbey Lincoln, and French Jacques Brel, whose lyrics to 'Ne me quitte pas' Julia Werup translated into Swedish ('Lämna inte mig,' or 'Don't Leave Me' in English) for this occasion.

"I've chosen some of my favorite songs and lyrics I can find myself in. The tone is dark, but that wasn't anything I intended. I probably ended up with these songs because I have a dark side," she says about the programming choices.

'The Thrill of Loving You' is Julia Werup's first release as a jazz singer. The idea came to fruition as she was walking around the couple's home one day, casually singing 'Afro Blue.'

The sound begged the question: why keep that wonderful sound to themselves when it deserved to be shared with the world? And so, a band was assembled for the musical outing.

Bassist Johnny Åman was born in Finland, educated in Sweden, and now resides in Malmö. As one of the most in-demand musicians in Scandinavia, he's recorded with international jazz stars including Jerry Bergonzi, George Garzone, and Dave Liebman, as well as Danish elites such as Anders Mogensen, Lisbeth Diers, and Carl Winther. Pianist Sven-Erik Lundequist also lives in Malmö and is one of Julia Werup's former musical cohorts, having been described in DownBeat Magazine as "a brilliant, exploratory and sometimes teasing pianist."

Together with Werup and Blachman, they found common musical ground while exploring songs from the timeless songbook of jazz music. Through experimentation, they play with the material and arrangements and migrate towards a meditative and groovy sound. In line with Thomas Blachman's musical thesis: there's no point in creating something that's only sounds like other things and offers nothing new.

These interpretations live on the artistic merit of Julia Werup, and just like her and her story, the music is special, unique, strong, and recognizable. Original material is presented as well, and on a couple selections they tastefully slow the tempo down – achieving a tactful minimalism through musical eloquence. This is music that emanates from an enlightened Nordic collaboration, equal parts elegant and swinging, satisfying the soul's longing for both hope and resolution.



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