



Øystein Blix *It's OK to Play*

Mainstream jazz it is not, but then what is it? Freebag? Freely improvised contemporary music? Bits and pieces for a motion picture soundtrack? A playful jam session caught on tape? An experiment? All of the above? Whatever the case may be, this is music that is definitely outside the box – «interesting», thought provoking, but certainly not “easy listening”. Nor is it an album to be casually listened to, as background music, while preparing dinner on a Sunday. On the other hand, it is a collection of tracks that piques one’s curiosity, that beckons one back for a second listen – an anthology that must be read anew to perceive the nuances in the narration. The prospective listener must resist the temptation to raise eyebrows and retreat defensively from yet undiscovered terrain. To do so is to nip the flower in the bud.

The artists are well-known Nordic jazz musicians. Primus motor **Øystein Blix (trombone)** has a varied discography featuring many talents and a plethora of his own compositions. **Nils-Olav Johansen (guitar)** is one of the key pillars in the iconic Balkan-jazz orchestra Farmers Market, avant-garde Transjoik and the Trondheim Jazz Orchestra. **Audun Kleive (drums, percussion)** has been an important and prolific contributor to the Norwegian jazz scene since the 1980s, most notably, perhaps, as a key figure in the cult-like, free-improvisational trio JøKleBa.

The merit list for all three artists is a long and rich substantiation of their skills and musical diversity, not to mention their tastes and interests. Having

said that, I must quickly add that the music on this CD is somewhat different from anything any of these musicians have created individually in their earlier careers. Let this be the introduction and invitation to your listening experience, then – open your ears, minds and hearts!

Tim Challman 15 January 2015

Øystein Blix was born 1966 and lives in Tromsø, Norway. As a trombone player, composer and a sound designer he has been a central part of the music life in Tromsø since 1991. He has participated on several recordings where we can hear Øystein not only in the jazz category, but just as well with contemporary music and electronica.

He also teaches ear training at the University of Tromsø.

Between 1999 and 2003 he toured with **Blix/Bergalli Group** together with the trumpeter Gustavo Bergalli, Jan Gunnar Hoff – piano ao.

He has recorded three times with his quartet **Blix Band** (1990 and 1998 and 1999) and although he is running his own label Reflect, he preferred to release his first real solo record on Losen Records.

Øystein Blix – trombone

Nils-Olav Johansen – guitar

Audun Kleive - drums, percussion, electronics

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