



## Michael Aadal Group

### Pomona

1. The Border	6:38
2. Pomona	6:33
3. Signs - Part 1	1:36
4. Signs - Part 2	4:00
5. Purgatory	4:32
6. Iceland	6:16
7. Leaving	8:21
8. Reflections	4:26
9. Traces	5:41

Total Time: 48:03

All compositions by Michael Aadal  
 Arranged by Michael Aadal Group  
 Produced by Michael Aadal Group  
 Executive producer Odd Gjelsnes  
 Recorded February 2016 by Mike Hartung at  
 Propeller Music Division AS, Oslo  
 Mixed April 2016 by Mike Hartung at  
 Propeller Music Division AS  
 Mastered May 2016 by Chris Sansom at  
 Propeller Music (Mastering) Division AS  
 Front cover photo by Petter Furuseth  
 Band photo by Martin Litwicki  
 Cover design by Daniel Crichton

- Michael Aadal  
electric guitars
- André Kassen  
tenor saxophone
- Ole-Bjørn Talstad  
piano, pump organ and roland jupiter
- Anders Hofstad Sørås  
pedal steel, lap steel
- Audun Ramo  
acoustic bass
- Gunnar Sæter  
drums

A big thank you to all our families, friends and everyone else who has helped us along the way!  
 Contact: michaelaadad@gmail.com  
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## Michael Aadal Group • Pomona

As did *Abigail*, the bands' previous Losen Records release, *Pomona* resonates with charm. Guitarist Michael Aadal is passionate about his instruments and on this musical delight his strings are succulent and his chords command.

Pomona Avenue, Fullerton, Los Angeles was, in the early 1950s, the original location of the famed Fender factory. "I only use solid guitar body guitars on this album", explains Michael. "An old Stratocaster and a Telecaster. No arch tops and hollow bodies, which are the guitars most usually associated with jazz music. I wanted a more 'direct' and 'edgy' sound this time."

In *Pomona* we find a driven determination to examine musical roots. We are taken to the heart of blues, country and jazz, but this is no superficial fusion album – it represents cultural timelessness. There is a serene and seamless structure to both the compositions and the collective contributions of Aadal's superb musicians, a truly interactive ensemble and the resulting album is all-enveloping, a sonic tapestry.

The pleasing acknowledgements to Knopfler, the shades of Frisell, the melancholy Americana, the soul and grit all combine to create a richly textured and largely understated atmosphere.

Michael says of the opening track, *The Border*, "This tune really represents what I wanted to say with this album. It's all about the song and the melody and creating a good collective band sound." The tune builds, layer upon layer of

instrumental perfection and culminates with André Kassen's searing saxophone (heard to fuller effect on the enchanting track *Leaving*).

The utterly beautiful ballad *Purgatory* features the dualism of Aadal's guitar and Anders Hofstad Sørås' pedal steel guitar leading to a reflective passage by Kassen and finally, a lovingly-worked restatement of the theme.

The masterly rhythm section that is bassist Audun Ramo and drummer Gunnar Sæter shine on the imposing *Reflections* and pianist Ole-Bjørn Talstad and Sørås submit excellently constructed solos on the album's final track, *Traces*.

*Pomona* offers untroubled, natural music for a turbulent, inconsistent world. It's an organic reflection, a contemplative combination of musical roots and because the album comes from Norway, I hope you'll allow me a concluding cliché, *Pomona* is a breath of fresh air.

David Fishel, July 2016.  
[www.davidfishel.info](http://www.davidfishel.info)

Ole-Bjørn Talstad (b. 1983) is a Norwegian pianist/keyboardist. He got his master degree in 2009 at the University of Agder. Ole-Bjørn is a freelance musician, composer and teacher. He also plays in a jazzquartet called The Xing.

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Audun Ramo (b. 1984) started his musical career as a student at the University of Agder – where he also met the other members of Michael Aadal Group. During the years of studying he also played double bass in Spellemann-winning (Norwegian «Grammy Awards») blues act *Grande* and later nominated (but not winning) *The Crank Bros.* In the later years he've turned his ears more to folk music from around the world, especially with the band *Nutopia*, with the records «Zabibu» (2013) and «Antares» (2016). He has also worked as musical arranger and orchestral leader in the same musical path with the project *Fargespill* – an annual concert show mixing traditional Norwegian folk songs with songs immigrants brought with them to Norway.

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Anders Hofstad Sørås (b. 1983) is a guitarist and multi-instrumentalist specializing in pedal steel guitar. He has a master's degree in popular music from the University of Agder. Sørås has worked in many fields and genres of music, and has recorded and performed live with a wide arrange of Norwegian popular artists and musicians. He has worked with the ensemble *Splashgirl* as pedal steel guitarist, as well as leading his own ensemble *Silent Velcro* (with contributions from Kassen and Sæter) that plays his own compositions in the style of Doom-Americana.

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André Kassen (b. 1980) is a Norwegian saxophonist. He got his master degree in 2008. André is a freelance musician and composer. He plays in *Scheen Jazzorkester* who is also on the *Losen Record* label.

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Gunnar Sæter (1983) is educated as a performing drummer/percussionist at the Conservatory of music, University of Agder 2003-2007, and has a teachers degree in music (2007-2009). Gunnar is an active freelance drummer (both live and studio) and has played with many well-known artists like Kjetil Grande, Thom Hell, Vidar Busk, Erlend Ropstad, Hanne Kolstø etc. He has also played on various tv shows.

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Michael Aadal (b. 1979) is a Norwegian guitarist, and is an active freelance musician, composer as well as a guitar teacher. Michael got his masters degree in popular music at the University in Agder (2008). Besides playing in MAaG, he is also an active member of the band *Sordal* which is working on their 4<sup>th</sup> album these days. "Pomona" is the third album from MAaG, where Michael has written all of the tunes.

Release

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