



Haakon Graf Erik Smith Per Mathisen

SUNRAIN

Since they first began performing live together in 2011, keyboardist/composer Haakon Graf, drummer Erik Smith and bassist Per Mathisen have been indisputable Norway's number one jazz-funk trios. They have enthralled capacity crowds, a large number of times, around the country and performed at major jazz festivals, in concert halls and clubs, always leaving the stage with standing ovations and the audience in euphorically state of mind. Presenting world class funky jazz performed in a lively and humorous fashion, with a super virtuous touch from three Norwegians, their debut CD/ DVD recording package is a unique and multi-faceted audiovisual presentation of two of the Haakon Graf Trio's live performances, perfectly capturing their innate chemistry as an ensemble and virtuosity as individuals.

About the title for this live CD and DVD, Graf says: "For those who do not live or did not grow up in Scandinavia, the phenomenon of "Sunrain" is very common. After weeks of rain, there are often local clouds with showers pouring down as the sun peers through the other side. When the sun appears, it's a special experience. It's a metaphor for the fabric of life, a place between a smile and a tear, like my music, and also the dual package of this release gives an opportunity to look at our music from two different angles. "Sunrain" was just the title for one of the tunes, but when Mathisen came up with the suggestion of calling the whole release for that, I thought it was a brilliant idea"

About Smith and Mathisen, Graf says:

"Erik incorporates a wide variety of wonderful rhythmic expressions and he gives the trio a fantastic forward motion and drive. His techniques, musicality and flexibility on the drums, makes him able to play any kind of groove or style and to react instantly as a world class improvising musician. Erik is a true bona fide drummer with extreme fantastic skills"

"Per is not only a wizard on the electric bass, he is also a true virtuoso on the upright acoustic. Not many bass players in this world can

switch back and forth between those two, so different basses, so effortless like he can. Per's constantly experimenting and being highly creative with using a huge number of effect pedals also gives him an arsenal of amazing sounds, that always brings in fresh and sparkling elements to the music. And, besides of all of this, his fretless electric bass playing is incredible sensitive, lyrical and always with impeccable pitch".

"It's always an honor and a privilege to perform with Smith and Mathisen in our trio. I deliberately write tunes that are sketchy with just small arrangements built into them so we all 3 can be very spontaneous, have an intense organic interplay and push each other in surprisingly new directions. The music is always performed with serious passion and depth but also always has the aspect of humor and joy, much the same as the title "Sunrain" indicates.

This release of both a CD and DVD gives you as a listener and a viewer a unique opportunity to both seeing and hearing these 3 incredible musicians live in action. These performances are the raw truth, straight in your face, with no over dubs, edits or cut & paste producing, they just show you how super and hip Graf, Smith and Mathisen sound both as individuals and together. Haakon Graf is close to a living musical legend in Scandinavian jazz, he has played with all the greats ever worth mentioning and his career spans for over 45 years. On these recordings he sounds just as fresh, with endless new ideas, exactly like he did in the 70's. His ability to master 2 keyboards with different sounds at the same time is formidable and his compositions are subtle but still transparent and unique.

Hope you like to see and listen to this trio, with their amazing performances, as much as I do. Graf, Smith and Mathisen are playing their hearts out, pulling you into a world of beautiful grooves, melodies, harmonies and sounds.

Jonathan Widran

Haakon Graf is an Oslo, Norway born composer, pianist and keyboardist and European Grammy Award winner currently based in Los Angeles, California. As a leader and sideman, he has performed over the years with a multitude of jazz and pop artists, including Phil Collins, Flora Purim & Aírto Moreira, Frank Gambale, Dennis Chambers, Gary Grainger, Mike Clark and Paul Jackson from Herbie Hancock's Headhunters, Harvey Mason, Jan Garbarek, Terje Rypdal, Palle Mikkelborg, Jon Christensen, Jack DeJohnette and Miroslav Vitons.

In addition to working as a composer and musician on television shows, film scores, studio sessions and producing for many major European artists, Haakon led the trio Graffiti (featuring Chambers, Grainger and Ulk Wakenius) in the 1990s, recorded several albums in the 1970s and 1980s with Sveinung Hovensjø and Jon Christensen, and was musical director for the jazz clubs Hothouse, Jazz Alive and Blue Monk in the '80s and '90s. In the 2000s, he expanded his repertoire into Latin, Brazilian and world music, and played extensively with Cuban musicians in Norway. In October 2016, he will be reuniting with the original lineup of Graffiti for a European tour. Acclaimed by Keyboard Player magazine as "a spirited and intelligent player," Graf's talents and contributions have been praised by everyone from the late Jaco Pastorius and former George Duke and Luther Vandross bassist Byron Miller to mega-producer Narada Michael Walden.

Per Mathisen, born in Sandefjord, Norway, 07.10.1969.

Musical education from Trondheim Jazz Conservatory in Norway and Berklee College of Music, Boston USA.

Has been a freelance electric and acoustic upright bassplayer with base in Oslo, Norway, since 1994, and has performed in over 30 countries worldwide with some of the most famous musicians on the planet. He is often referred to as Norway's answer to Jaco Pastorius on electric bass and Niels Henning Ørsted Pedersen on acoustic upright bass. Per's current bands and projects:

1. "MATHISEN - WAKENIUS - ZIMRING TRIO"
(Per Mathisen basses, Ulf Wakenius guitar, Utsi Zimring drums).
2. "ACUNA / HOFF / MATHISEN"
(Alex Acuna drums, Jan Gunnar Hoff keys, Per Mathisen basses).
3. "MATHISEN - ROBIN - BORLAI"
(Per Mathisen basses, Ruggero Robin guitar, Gergo Borlai drums).
4. "MATHISEN - ALNÆS - PILOTO"
(Per Mathisen basses, Frode Alnæs guitar, Giraldo Piloto Barreto drums).
5. "MATHISEN - ZIMRING - KIKOSKI"
(Per Mathisen basses, Utsi Zimring drums, David Kikoski keys).

Member of bands:

"Olga Konkova Trio" "Ensemble Denada" "Hans Mathisen Quartet"
"Frode Alnæs Trio" "Dance with a stranger" "Guiffre Zone"

Released 13 highly acclaimed CD's as a leader, co leader or band member:

1. «ELASTICS»
with Ole Mathisen & Paolo Vinaccia, on Losen Records, Oslo 2011
2. «JUNGLE CITY»
with «Acuna-Hoff-Mathisen». Alessa Records, Austria 2009
3. »UNBOUND"
with Olga Konkova, Ole Mathisen, Gary Husband, Alessa Records, Austria. 2002
4. «NORTHERN CROSSINGS» with Olga Konkova, Ole Mathisen, Jojo Mayer, Candid Records, London 2000
5. «NYNDK»
with «NYNDK», Jazzheads Records, New York City 2004
6. «NORDIC DISRUPTION»
with «NYNDK», Jazzheads Records, New York City 2007
7. «THE HUNTING OF THE SNARK»
with «NYNDK», Jazzheads Records, New York City 2009
8. «COOKIN' AT HVALER»
with «Stringzone II», Alessa Records, Austria 2010
9. «MIRAGE»
with «FFEAR», Jazzheads Records, New York City 2012
10. «TRAPEZOID»
with «Crossing Borders Qrt», Alessa Records, Austria 2012
11. «BARXETA»
with «Acuna-Hoff-Mathisen», Losen Records, Oslo 2012
12. «OSPITALITA GENEROSA»
«Mathisen-Robin-Borlai Trio», Alessa Records, Austria 2015
13. «SOUNDS OF 3»
Per Mathisen with Frode Alnæs-Giraldo Piloto, Losen Records, Oslo 2016

Also released 2 DVD's:

1. «Alex Acuna - Jan Gunnar Hoff - Per Mathisen Trio» Live from Drumchannel.com in LA, USA.
2. «Mathisen – Borlai – Robin» «Live In Action».

Erik Smith is one of the busiest and most versatile drummers in Scandinavia. He started out banging on pots and pans at age three and joined his father's band at 12. From his base in Oslo, Norway, has worked in a multitude of genres, including big band and fusion jazz, pop and rock. He has worked with many well known artists passing through Norway, including Michael Bolton, Art Garfunkel, Neil Sedaka, Donna Summer and Randy Crawford, in addition to most artists and entertainers on the Scandinavian scene. In the jazz idiom, Smith has provided the groove for Frank Gambale, Bobby Shew, Andy Sheppard, Eddie Daniels, Phil Woods, Putte Wickman, Ed Palermo, Django Bates, Bob Mintzer, DeeDee Bridgewater and Gerald Wilson.

Renowned as a pioneering musical clinician, he is the first Norwegian drummer to tour extensively in support of his endorsing companies. He appeared at the NAMM Yamaha Groove Night in 2003, and also held a clinic at the PASIC convention in Nashville in 2004, both a first for a Scandinavian drummer. Erik has also done duo clinic tours with Yamaha colleagues John "JR" Robinson and Akira Jimbo. In addition, Smith leads his own bands, The Erik Smith Trio and Smiths Venner (Smiths Friends), and has made appearances with his own big band