

- 1: **A Piece Of The Apple** (F. Kjekstad) 07:19
 - 2: **Malala** (F. Kjekstad) 07:50
 - 3: **The Three Musketeers** (F. Kjekstad) 08:39
 - 4: **Not While I'm Around** (Stephen Sondheim) 05:38
 - 5: **That's All** (Allan Brandt/Bob Haymes) 08:30
 - 6: **Cold Duck Time** (Eddie Harris) 06:40
 - 7: **My Shining Hour** (Mercer/Arlen) 08:19
 - 8: **Invitation** (Paul Francis Webster/Bronistaw Kaper) 05:55
 - 9: **The Lone Ranger** (F. Kjekstad) 08:51
- Total Time: 67:41

Frode Kjekstad guitar
Eric Alexander sax
Mike LeDonne organ
Joe Farnsworth drums

Eric Alexander appears courtesy of HighNote Records
Mike LeDonne appears courtesy of Savant Records

Recorded January 9, 2014 at Tedesco Studios, USA by Tom Tedesco
Mixed November 2016 at Caspersen Studio by Håvard Caspersen
Mastered March 8, 2017 at Masterpool Studio, by Knut Bjørnar Asphol
Produced by Frode Kjekstad
Executive producer Odd Gjelsnes
Front cover picture by Kjersti Holst
Cover Design by design holtmann

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ISRC: N02NJ1778

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LOS 178-2

FRODE KJEKSTAD a piece of the apple

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Eric Alexander • Mike LeDonne • Joe Farnsworth

FRODE KJEKSTAD

a piece of the apple



I have known Frode Kjekstad since he was a student at the Music Conservatory in Oslo when I was a guest teacher there. That was some 20 years ago in the mid 1990s. He was an impressive jazz musician then and his talent has grown exponentially since that time. I was the producer on Frode's 2002 "New York Time" which was acclaimed jazz release in Norway that year. On this latest release "A Piece of the Apple", he furthers his legacy as perhaps Europe's finest Soul-Jazz guitarist.

Frode's guitar playing is a blend of great ideas, intense technical facility, crisp and clear tone, and swinging time, all delivered with an intense emotionalism reminiscent not of the Scandinavian "cool school", but of the finest American hard groovers.

Appearing on this set of 5 Kjekstad originals, 3 standards, and one jazz original (Eddie Harris' classic "Cold Duck Time") along with the guitarist are 3 of New York City's finest musicians, organist Mike LeDonne, saxophonist Eric Alexander, and drummer Joe Farnsworth. These gentlemen (ellas, you know what you are!) need no introduction to serious jazz fans but for the novices, LeDonne has played with everyone from Milt Jackson to Benny Golson, Alexander with Charles Earland and his first recorded appearance own right (and his first recorded appearance

was on my album "Jubilation" I believe), and Farnsworth with everyone from Lou Donaldson to Pharoah Sanders. In addition, these guys have their own group which appears regularly at the jazz club "Smoke" in NYC, so they are as tight in their playing together as real fraternal brothers.

These musicians are veteran performers who have toured the world many times and perfected their artistry in front of audiences on most of the continents of this globe. They are not recent "jazz school" graduates presenting watered down versions of the music of their heroes or "new" conglomerations of various eclectic "influences". These guys are all strong original and seasoned artists with their own powerful voices on their instruments. They play beautifully together on this album which I am sure will touch your soul and get your feet tapping as well!

"A Piece of the the Apple" is the groovy opener. Frode is right in your face with a burning solo, followed by Eric Alexander and LeDonne. Check out Farnsworth's rim shots moving the rhythm along.

"Malala" is a modal uptempo burner. The melody has those great lines in 4ths and the whole track just takes off and flies along from start to finish.

"The Three Musketeers", the third Kjekstad original of the set, is a minor bluesy tune in 3/4 time. Hey, how about that! Guess it has something to do with the title! Great solos all around, and cooking right on through.

"Not While I'm Around" is a soulful ballad with a backbeat kicked off by some dramatic organ from LeDonne. Frode is all alone singing the melody on his guitar and then into his solo, nice work from Eric in the middle, then Mike taking it to just under "monster movie" organ at the end!

"That's All" is a standard tune which is usually played as a slow ballad, is here a medium tempo swinger with a Charles Earlandesque intro of major chords going down in whole steps. Another strong track from all concerned.

"Cold Duck Time", the classic Eddie Harris tune from the great album "Les McCann and Eddie Harris Live at the Montreux Jazz Festival", is here just as funky as you please! Listen to Frode's rhythmic repeated notes that catapult him into his solo!

Happy listening...

Randy Johnston