



Erik Thormod Halvorsen *Social Call*

Social Call – The project

My first album, “Uppercase”, was released on Losen Records in 2015. On this recording I was fortunate to have the late Irish guitar legend Louis Stewart as a guest musician. The album was very well received, with positive reviews both nationally and internationally – not at least in the American online magazine “All About Jazz”. This encouraging reception as well as my ongoing collaboration with Losen Records and its leader Odd Gjelsnes, gave me the inspiration to start a new recording project.

The desire to convey lyrical jazz based on a strong melodic and thematic expression, and reaching out to a wide audience, has been our driving force and motivation from the start. From the outset of the project it was important to find fellow musicians who could create a common expression within this framework. It soon became obvious that I needed to expand the group from a quintet to a sextet.

For this album I collaborated with the trombonist Øivind Westby on the arrangements of two tracks where the group is expanded with a brass quintet. I think this has been very successful and added an extra musical dimension to the album, giving it an exciting orchestral sound which complements the compositions.

Social Call – The music

Social Call is the first track of the album. Gigi Gryce has written a lot of great music – a brilliant saxophonist who has been a sideman for one of my great trumpet heroes, Clifford Brown. This track gives you an opportunity to get acquainted with my new brilliant sideman – Dave Edge. Dave is British and has lived in Norway since 2005. From 1998 to 2005 he taught saxophone at LIPA, the Paul McCartney School in Liverpool. Dave is an active musician on the Oslo jazz scene, and is a regular band member of the groups Sharp 9 and The Real Thing. Stylistically, he is influenced by tenor saxophonists like Dexter Gordon and Stan Getz. **Social Call** is also the title of the album and suggests themes of communication and dialogue, something that is now more important than ever.

Michel Legrand is one of my definitive favorites and a master of simple motifs and themes. Usually **Watch What Happens** is played in a Latin style, but here you will hear it in an uptempo swing version. Piano player Freddy Hoel Nilsen gets the opportunity to really stretch out on this one. Freddy always has a perfect timing in his solos. He has a long professional career as a studio musician including 30 years as an associate professor at The Norwegian Academy of Music.



Øivind Westby has written a great new arrangement on **Ruby My Dear** for a sextet expanded with a brass quintet, giving Thelonious Monk's beautiful composition an original orchestral sound.

Latino Blue is a composition I originally wrote for concert band, but rearranged for this project. The soloists unfold in a Latin/Calypso song based on a 12-bar west coast blues. This also works as an introduction to my faithful time keeper Lars Erik Norum. Lars Erik has a unique ability to regain energy and momentum in his playing. After the theme, Frode Kjekstad plunges into a great solo with amazing technique and harmonic overview. Frode is a guitarist who enjoys international recognition. He has performed on famous jazz scenes in cities such as New York and London. I was very happy when he agreed to join the band and contribute to this album.

The lowkey and beautiful waltz called **Little K.** is written by our bassist Agnar Aspaas and dedicated to his granddaughter Karin. Agnar is a newcomer to the band and I particularly appreciate his great harmonious lines, instinctive understanding of time and his ability to create a great interaction with the rest of the band.

Blues for Henry P. is dedicated to Sandvika Storband's (Sandvika Big Band) first musical director Henry Pehrson. I wrote this blues in 1974 when I played in the band. Henry was a true enthusiast and a great inspiration who encouraged me to compose. The song has been rearranged for this project.

I Should Care is a beautiful lyrical composition with a nostalgic feel. It has previously been recorded with Frank Sinatra. Here in a lovely arrangement by Dave Edge.

A Beautiful Friendship is a nice uptempo tune that is not often heard these days.

Exit Summer is another composition I originally wrote for concert band. I think Øivind Westby's new arrangement, with delicate colouring of the music, matches my intentions well. The brass quintet features again here, alongside Dave Edge on flute.

I wanted a quiet finish to the record. It had to be this old favourite. **Body and Soul** is not only one of jazz history's most famous and most played ballads, it is also one of the most beautiful.

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LOS 189-2



Release **February 9, 2018**



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