

- 1 THE PHINEAS TRAIN 7:09
- 2 OPEN OCEAN 4:07
- 3 BLUES 4U 5:40
- 4 BONEBREAKER 5:36
- 5 MOON SONG 6:25
- 6 STARS ALIGNED 6:30
- 7 HAMMOND CHEESE 5:53
- 8 FOGGY MORNING IN THE WOODS 5:48
- 9 JINGLES 6:28 Total time 53:36

FRODE KJESTAD
GUITAR
ERIC ALEXANDER
TENOR SAXOPHONE
ROY POWELL
ORGAN
FREDERIK VILLMOW
DRUMS

All compositions by Frode Kjekstad
except 1 by Harold Mabern, 9 by Wes Montgomery

Recorded January 26, 2025 by Håvard Caspersen
at Rud vgs, Sandvika, Norway
Mixed July 2025 by Håvard Caspersen
at Caspersen Studio, Drammen, Norway
Mastered October 2025 by Frode Berg
at Your Sound Mastering, Spikkestad, Norway
Produced by Frode Kjekstad
Executive producer Odd Gjelsnes
Cover photo by Kjersti Holst
Quartet photo by Ingvild B. Berget
Design by Max Franosch

LOS 327-2



© 2026 Losen Records www.loosenrecords.no info@loosenrecords.no
ISRC: NO2NJ2527 All rights reserved. Unauthorized duplication, public performance
and broadcasting of the music on this CD is a violation of applicable laws. Made in EU.

neb

FRODE KJESTAD QRT STARS ALIGNED

Losen Records LOS 327-2

Frode Kjekstad Qrt

feat. Eric Alexander

Roy Powell Frederik Villmow **Stars Aligned**



STARS ALIGNED

What a perfectly apt album title. We have our 'stars'; four of them. They're aligned. All independent factors have come together – at the ideal moment.

Norwegian guitarist Frode Kjekstad has worked with luminaries including Joe Farnsworth, Frank Foster, Johnny Griffin, and Lonnie Smith (2004 album *New York Time*, also featuring Erik Alexander).

English organ and piano maestro Roy Powell's collaborations have included performances with Arild Andersen, Eddie Daniels, Art Farmer, and Dave Liebman.

German drummer Frederik Villmow owns an equally impressive credit list: Dave Kikoski, Benny Benack III, Chris Potter, and Vince Mendoza.

American saxophonist Erik Alexander has performed and recorded with a celestial constellation including: Harold Mabern, Ron Carter, Kenny Barron, Cedar Walton, and Pat Martino.

What elements combine to produce a perfect jazz album? Concise, motivative themes ('head-solos-head' arrangements), intricate phrasing, freedom for soloists to improvise over (complex) chord progressions, interdisciplinary elegance and symbiosis. *Stars Aligned* is truly an exemplary example.

The jazzily-titled opener, "The Phineas Trane", explodes with all the above-mentioned ingredients with powerful and punchy solos from all.

Your perfect jazz album might well contain a joyous tune in 3/4 time, a jazz waltz – "Open Ocean" is exactly that.

If you like solid, walking-tempo blues – check out "Blues 4U"!

Let's trade bars of funk with bars of swing, and we have "Bonebreaker".

We need a seductive, contemplative ballad. "Moon Song" more than fits the bill.

The eponymous "Stars Aligned" is a fast-paced bluesy outing in a minor key – with major delivery.

Latin overtones infuse "Hammond Cheese" with its groovy head and heady solos.

Back to a ballad, the exquisite "Foggy Morning In The Woods" feels – exactly like that.

"Jingles", with its call-and-response head is a minor key (non-melancholic!) intense, blistering excursion (underlined by the spontaneous, triumphant "yeah" at the end).

Connect virtuosity, immaculate timing, positivity with a soupçon of serendipity – and the stars align. A perfect jazz album.

David Fishel
www.davidfishel.info

