



Keith Jarrett *La Fenice*

ECM 2601/2602

★★★★

Keith Jarrett is the pianist who has asserted the most influence on contemporary practice by shifting focus from a blues- or clavé-based bebop vocabulary to classically indebted complexity and abstraction grounded in implicit pulse. Since his 1971 ECM debut, *Facing You*, he's released more than a dozen albums of such in-studio or onstage performances. *La Fenice*, documenting his 2006 concert at Venice, Italy's Teatro La Fenice, is the first to be released since recordings of his 2008 Paris/London concerts were issued in 2009. And it's an apt example of what Jarrett's brought to this demanding format.

With remarkable concentration for more than 70 minutes (there's a four-minute pause three-quarters of the way through, during which he detours into Gilbert and Sullivan's "The Sun Whose Rays"), the pianist creates a suite of loosely related explorations, evidently using no pre-prepared material. All of Jarrett's hallmarks are here: free-flowing, virtuosic finger work, continuity and development of original ideas, sensitive touch and attention to dynamics, demonstration of vast harmonic knowledge and rhythmic surety. The pianist's absorption of classical compositions, particularly those of Bach, the late Romantics and early modernists, dominate this performance; there's no blues connotation until "Part III."

Although Jarrett's improvisation begins with a crisp, keyboard-ranging investigation, by "Part IV" he's established a reflective, autumnal mood that, despite a relatively upbeat "Part V" and the walking blues of "Part VIII," continues through his encores. The finale, his own "Blossom," is melancholy, not so far-reaching as Jarrett's suite, but revealing of the artist's tender, yearning heart.

—Howard Mandel

La Fenice: Disc One: Parts I through V. Disc 2: Part VI: The Sun Whose Rays; Part VII; Part VIII; My Wild Irish Rose; Stella By Starlight; Blossom. (47:08/52:58)

Personnel: Keith Jarrett, piano.

Ordering info: ecmrecords.com

Jacob Anderskov *Mysteries (Kinetics Live In Köln)*

ILK 273

★★★★

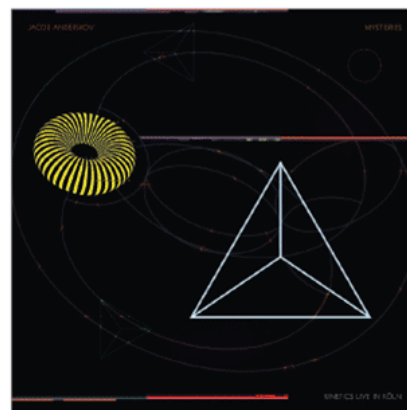
Jesper Zeuthen/ Jacob Anderskov/ Anders Vestergaard *Out Of The Spectacle*

ILK 283

★★★★

These two recordings capture the breadth of superb Danish pianist Jacob Anderskov, a leading light of the Copenhagen scene for the past two decades. *Mysteries (Kinetics Live In Köln)* is an elegant piano trio with two younger Danes—bassist Adam Pultz Melbye and drummer Anders Vestergaard. The beautifully recorded set was captured live in Köln, Germany, and features the stunning intimacy this unit has developed since forming in 2014. "Brekkek Kekkek" highlights the group's graceful sense of flow, extolling a brooding extravagance that reveals one of the pianist's main influences, Paul Bley.

Throughout the recording, Anderskov spreads his notes like a painter over the canvas stretched by the rhythm section. Within the shimmering stream of sound, Melbye and Vestergaard add friction, breaking down the groove with well placed eddies and bumps. "Anchorman" conveys a deep blues vibe and morphs gracefully into the elliptical "Tse Tse," a slow drag meticulously stoked by the drummer's crisp cymbal work and the bassist's sparse low-end surges. Anderskov applies wonderfully spacious counterpoint, using his right hand to unspool sleek, gossamer strands of melody, while his left hand adds thick jabs and swells. There's a lurching, time-stopping quality on "Pull Up," where the pianist explores some appealing tart harmony within stuttery lines. A blues feeling also permeates the title track, a slow crawl, where Anderskov and Melbye are magically in sync, particularly when the latter uses his bow to generate some sensually bittersweet lines.



A much different side of the pianist is present on *Out Of The Spectacle*, an improvised session from a multi-generational band. Alto saxophonist Jesper Zeuthen has been the pianist's regular co-conspirator for years, but he's been kicking around since the late '60s, and his forcefulness is readily apparent. Vestergaard proves himself worthy of such company, adapting to this more open-ended setting with ease. Anderskov effectively deploys some modest manipulations inside of the piano—damping strings here, scraping them there—that impart a rich textural dimension to the music.

The recording opens with an extended duo passage between pianist and drummer, summoning a herky-jerk propulsion, before Zeuthen's cool alto enters, blowing probing lines with a vibrato-rich, nasal tone. The trio coalesces around his lines, which roam freely but remain deeply engaged with the action around him. As the record unfolds, Zeuthen injects some Balkan-style melody, as well as Ayleresque intensity, turning up the vibrato, while the other musicians powerfully prod and respond. —Peter Margasak

Mysteries (Kinetics Live In Köln): Brekkek Kekkek; Anchorman; Tse Tse; Pull Up; Mysteries; Snap, Pans; Ongami Megalith. (42:15)

Personnel: Jacob Anderskov, piano; Adam Pultz Melbye, bass; Anders Vestergaard, drums.

Out Of The Spectacle: Part I; Part II; Part III. (39:53)

Personnel: Jesper Zeuthen, alto saxophone; Jacob Anderskov, piano; Anders Vestergaard, drums.

Ordering info: ilkmusic.com

"The pureness and fluency of her playing were irresistible, far out of the ordinary."
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