

POLARITY — an acoustic jazz project

"My main goal is to create a specific identity for each album I make. This time I chose to involve Anders Jormin and Audun Kleive, two of Scandinavia's finest jazz artists. The result is *Polarity*, an album based on both new and older compositions of mine, recorded in a unique acoustic setting" — Jan Gunnar Hoff 2018

Jan Gunnar Hoff **piano** Anders Jormin **bass** Audun Kleive **drums**

POLARITY

Hoff Ensemble

Recorded in DXD 24bit/352.8kHz

■ 5.1 DTS-HD MA 24/192kHz ■ 7.1.4 Dolby Atmos 48kHz

■ 2.0 LPCM 24/192kHz ■ 7.1.4 Auro-3D 96kHz

+ **mShuttle** MP3 and MQA



EAN13: 7041888523628



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POLARITY has been conceived as a cohesive experience where the compositions themselves, the moments of spontaneous inspiration during performance and the natural sound world of the church acoustic all affect the final result. The compositions are inspired by actual experiences and particular states of mind.

“The Elder” was composed in film director Ingmar Bergman’s study on the island of Fårö. The ambience in Bergman’s house and the view of the unending expanse of the Baltic Sea induced in me a sense of melancholy but also an almost ecstatic mood that resulted in what is really a homage to the legendary director.

The title track “Polarity” started out as an improvisation which I was working into a finished melody. Its main theme is direct and exultant and pushes forward fairly fast. We supplemented the ensemble’s palette of sounds by introducing an analogue synthesizer that grows in intensity, its sound filling the room with autonomous power. I have tried to program synth sounds in a Prophet 6 that can merge naturally with the trio without disturbing the acoustic sound picture.

“Justice” is my emotional response to the experience of witnessing officialdom intervene in a family situation and how this affected all involved. “Innocence” and “Within” both have their take-off point in acutely vulnerable emotional conditions, where to show weakness can be experienced as a sign of strength. “Sacred” is based on a simple major and minor tonality, with the synthesizer and the *coll’ arco* bass line central elements.

The character of “Euphoria” is elated – the spontaneous improvisation between the piano and drums driving the melody to a no-holds-barred level of energy. “Beginning”, with its minimalistic calm, is in marked contrast; dark melancholy and gloom find release in a spirit of reconciliation. “Pathway” is a set of variations on a series of chords; the

variations unfold with the piano and double bass taking on different roles as the piece develops. “Home” was originally composed as a backdrop to Knut Hamsun’s poem “I ungdommens vår” (In the Spring of Youth) but has been fleshed out to a trio ballad. This is the album’s closer.

To search for enduring musical ideas that can stand being heard many times is an exciting challenge. On this album some older tunes are included because in the trio format they can gain a new dimension and a fresh clarity. The ballad “Moving” exudes a calm and sanguine mood with several tonal levels, and I think it adds something rather special to the album. “Revamp” stands out from the core material of the album – it has a very forthright character, which is something that takes the collective playing of the Hoff Ensemble into the heart of a more traditional jazz melody.

I have composed a lot of music for jazz quartet and other ensembles. The idea to work on a project for a trio came to me a few years ago, but it is only recently that the idea has really begun to take form. It has been important to define a cohesive aesthetic with musicians capable of carrying it through, but at the same time to preserve and project the personal signature in the compositions. The choice of musicians was not difficult, with Audun Kleive and Anders Jormin both having long track records on the Scandinavian jazz scene, and both still eager to explore and energize the established trio format. This is the first time the three of us have made a recording like this together, vacating the usual studio setting in favour of the acoustics of a church.

My main goal is to create a specific identity for each album and to make the music come alive.

Jan Gunnar Hoff 2018



POLARITY er tenkt som en helhetlig opplevelse der det komponerte materialet, øyeblikkets inspirasjon i framføringen og det naturlige lydbildet i kirkerommet trekker i samme retning. Som komponist lar jeg meg ofte inspirere av konkrete opplevelser og sinnsstemninger.

«The Elder» ble skrevet i arbeidsrommet til filmregissøren Ingmar Bergman på Fårö. Atmosfæren i Bergmans bolig på øya og utsikten mot den uendelige, store Østersjøen satte meg i en vemodig, men også høyreist stemning som resulterte i en slags hommage til legenden.

Opprinnelsen til tittelkuttet «Polarity» er en improvisasjon som jeg utviklet til en ferdig låt. Den har et direkte og livsbejaende hovedtema og beveger seg framover i et høyt tempo. Her utvider vi paletten i ensemblet med en analog synthesizer som vokser fram og skinner i rommet, der den blir en kraft i seg selv. Jeg har forsøkt å programmere synthlyder i en Prophet 6 som kan smelte naturlig inn med trioen uten å forstyrre det akustiske lydbildet, men allikevel tilføre noe i sammenhengen. «Sacred» er basert på en enkel dur- og moll-tonalitet, med synthesizeren og strykebasen som sentrale elementer.

«Justice» er knyttet til en situasjon der en familie ble fratatt barna og hvordan dette påvirket alle de involverte. «Innocence» og «Within» er skrevet ut fra et sårbart emosjonelt ståsted, der det å vise svakhet kan oppleves som en styrke.

«Euphoria» er satt i en opprømt tilstand der den spontane improvisasjonen mellom slagverk og piano løfter låten til et uforbeholdent energinivå. «Beginning» er en sterk kontrast med sin minimalistiske stillferdighet der tungsinnen forløses i en åpen forsoning. «Pathway» er ulike variasjoner over samme akkordrekke der rollene mellom piano og bass

utvikler seg i forløpet. «Home» ble opprinnelig skrevet som bakteppe til Knut Hamsuns dikt «I ungdommens vår» men er utviklet videre til en trioballade som avslutter albumet.

Å søke bærekraftige musikalske idéer som tåler å høres gjentatte ganger er en spennende utfordring. Noen eldre låter er tatt med fordi trioformatet gir dem en ny dimensjon og klarhet. Balladen «Moving» har en ro og positivitet over seg med flere tonale plan og den tilfører en stemningsmessig grunn tone til albumformatet. «Revamp» skiller seg fra kjernen i det øvrige materialet, men har en direktehet som også tar triosamspillet i Hoff Ensemble inn i en mer tradisjonell jazzlåt.

Jeg har skrevet mye musikk for jazzkvartett og større ensembler. Tanken om å rendyrke et trioprosjekt kom for noen år siden, men først i den senere tid har ideen tatt en konkret retning. Det har vært viktig å definere en enhetlig estetikk med musikere som kan formidle denne, men samtidig ivareta og utdype den personlige signaturen som ligger i komposisjonene og konseptet. Valget av samarbeidspartnere falt derfor naturlig med Audun Kleive og Anders Jormin som begge har lang fartstid i nordisk jazz, men stadig er nysgjerrige på å utforske og vitalisere det etablerte trioformatet. Dette er også første gang vi tre gjør en slik innspilling sammen utenfor den vanlige studiosituasjonen og her går inn i et kirkerom.

Mitt hovedmål er at hver plateutgivelse får sin egen spesifikke identitet og lever sitt eget liv.

Jean-Gunnar Hoff 2018

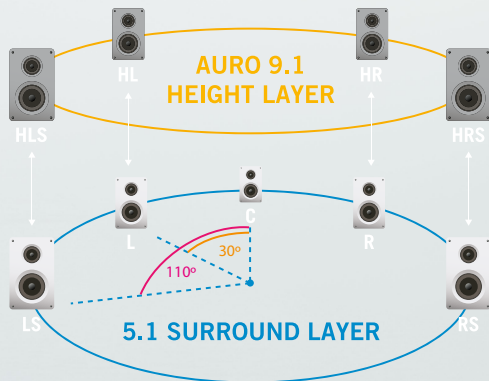


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2L (Lindberg Lyd) records in spacious acoustic venues; large concert halls, churches and cathedrals. This is actually where we can make the most intimate recordings. The qualities we seek in large rooms are not necessarily a big reverb, but openness due to the absence of close reflecting walls. Making an ambient and beautiful recording is the way of least resistance. Searching the fine edge between direct contact and openness; that's the real challenge! A really good recording should be able to bodily move the listener. This core quality of audio production is made by choosing the right venue for the repertoire, and balancing the image in the placement of microphones and musicians relative to each other in that venue. There is no method available today to reproduce the exact perception of attending a live performance. That leaves us with the art of illusion when it comes to recording music. As recording engineers and producers we need to do exactly the same as any good musician; interpret the music and the composer's intentions and adapt to the media where we perform. Immersive audio is a completely new conception of the musical experience. Recorded music is no longer a matter of a fixed two-dimensional setting, but rather a three-dimensional enveloping situation. Stereo can be described as a flat canvas, while immersive audio is a sculpture that you can literally move around and relate to spatially; surrounded by music you can move about in the aural space and choose angles, vantage points and positions.

Morten Lindberg balance engineer and recording producer

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■ 5.1 DTS-HD MA 24/192kHz ■ 7.1.4 Dolby Atmos 48kHz

■ 2.0 LPCM 24/192kHz ■ 7.1.4 Auro-3D 96kHz

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1. Make sure that your BD player is connected to your computer network.
2. Insert the Pure Audio Blu-ray Disc into your BD player and press the mShuttle button after the disc is loaded.
3. Open the Internet browser of your computer and type in the IP address of your BD player. You will find this address in the setup menu of your Blu-ray Disc player.
4. Select booklet and audio files to download from the Blu-ray to your computer.



Blu-ray authoring **msm studio group**

Screen design and Blu-ray authoring **Michael Thomas Hoffmann**

Pure Audio Blu-ray concept development **Morten Lindberg** and **Stefan Bock**

Recorded in Sofienberg Church, Norway
September 2017 by Lindberg Lyd AS

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Recording Technician **BEATRICE JOHANNESSEN**
Piano Technician **ERIC SCHANDALL** Steinway C-model

Editing, Mix and Mastering **MORTEN LINDBERG**

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Graphic Design and Session Photos **MORTEN LINDBERG**
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Executive Producers **JAN GUNNAR HOFF** and **MORTEN LINDBERG**

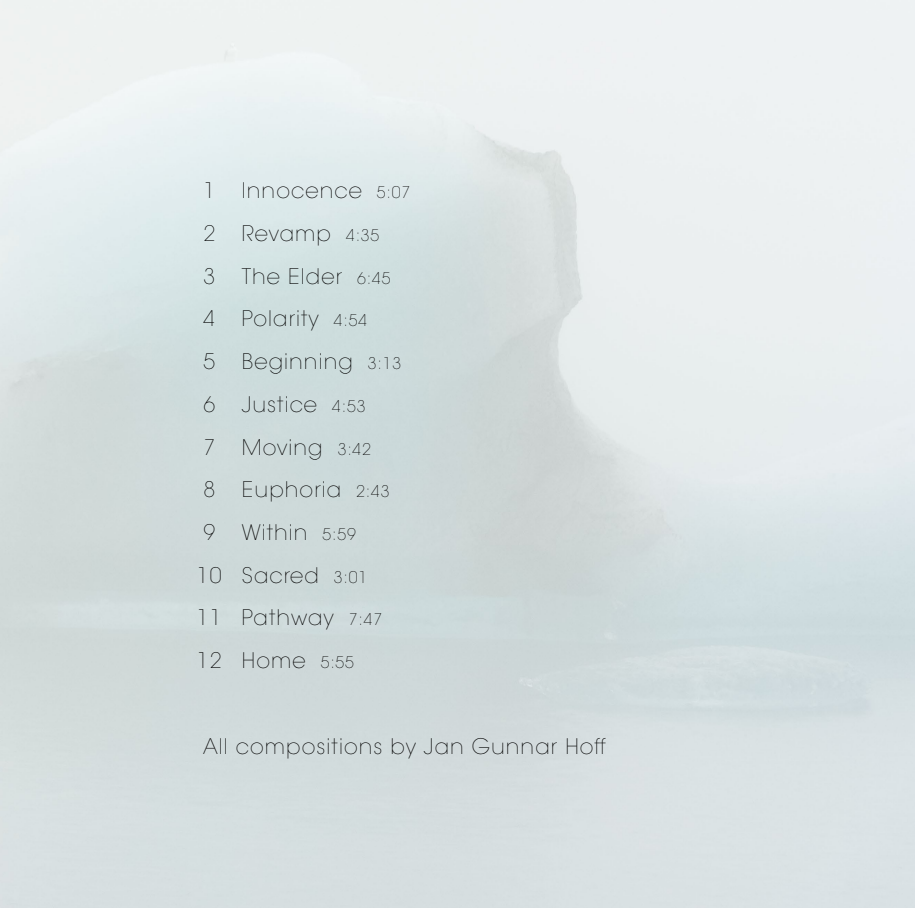
Produced with support from Fond for utøvende kunstnere and The Arctic University of Norway (UiT)



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This recording was made by Lindberg Lyd AS with DPA microphones and HORUS converters to a PYRAMIX workstation on Ravenna AoIP. Complete system on JMF Audio PCD302 power line conditioner. Digital eXtreme Definition is a professional audio format that brings analogue qualities in 24 bit at 352.8 kHz sampling rate.

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- 1 Innocence 5:07
 - 2 Revamp 4:35
 - 3 The Elder 6:45
 - 4 Polarity 4:54
 - 5 Beginning 3:13
 - 6 Justice 4:53
 - 7 Moving 3:42
 - 8 Euphoria 2:43
 - 9 Within 5:59
 - 10 Sacred 3:01
 - 11 Pathway 7:47
 - 12 Home 5:55

All compositions by Jan Gunnar Hoff