

- 1 Innocence 5:07
- 2 Polarity 4:53
- 3 The Elder 6:43
- 4 Revamp 4:37

side A

- 1 Within 6:00
- 2 Justice 4:51
- 3 Euphoria 2:41
- 4 Home 5:50

side B

all compositions by Jan Gunnar Hoff

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

Jan Gunnar Hoff piano Anders Jormin bass Audun Kleive drums

POLARITY

Hoff Ensemble

2L-145-LP

Hoff Ensemble

POLARITY

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Recorded in Sofienberg Church, Norway, September 2017 by Lindberg Lyd AS 33 1/3 RPM 180g clear vinyl

recording producer and balance engineer MORTEN LINDBERG recording technician BEATRICE JOHANNESSEN Piano Technician ERIC SCHANDALL Steinway C-model editing MORTEN LINDBERG and JAN GUNNAR HOFF mix and mastering MORTEN LINDBERG photo TRYM BERGSMO graphic design MORTEN LINDBERG pressed by TAKT 2L-145-LP 20©23 Lindberg Lyd AS, Norway

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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.

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. “Home” was originally composed as a back-drop 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. “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





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2L 145 LP

Hoff Ensemble

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STEREO 33 1/3 rpm
side A