

LIVING is Jan Gunnar Hoff's first solo piano album. His personal blend of different styles and influences is presented in its purest form — simply music.

Hoff is a Norwegian jazz pianist, arranger and composer. Some of his pieces are meditative and expressive, while others have a strong rhythmic nerve, creating contrast and variation in the programme.

Jan Gunnar Hoff has worked extensively as a bandleader and solo artist since 1992, developing his distinctive musical style. His compositions have been performed in collaborations with Mike Stern, Pat Metheny, Alex Acuña, Audun Kleive, Maria João, Mathias Eick and many others.

LIVING is a journey that carries Hoff's artistic identity further into his own musical terrain, enhanced by the crystal clear recording from Sofienberg Church in Oslo.

Jan Gunnar Hoff LIVING



EAN13: 7041888517627



Recorded in DSD 24bit/352.8kHz

5.1 DTS HD MA 24/192kHz

2.0 LPCM 24/192kHz + mShuttle MP3 and FLAC

2L-092-SABD made in Norway 20©13 Lindberg Lyd AS

2L⁹²



- 1 Living 5:45
- 2 Mirror I 3:31
- 3 Mountain High 3:22
- 4 Karlygash 3:41
- 5 Coming My Way 3:09
- 6 Mirror II 2:58
- 7 Florence 5:20
- 8 Brytning 3:53
- 9 Fly North 3:58
- 10 Valse de Décembre 4:53
- 11 Sommernat 4:56
- 12 Feberdigte 4:01
- 13 Å eg veit meg eit land 4:55
- 14 Sacrifice 5:34

All compositions by Jan Gunnar Hoff
except 4 by Akhmet Zhubanov and 13 by Adolf Thomsen



LIVING is Jan Gunnar Hoff's first solo piano album. His personal blend of different styles and influences is presented in its purest form – simply music.

Jan Gunnar Hoff is a Norwegian jazz pianist, arranger and composer. He was born in Bodø in 1958. His career as a jazz musician started in a piano trio in 1976. In 1992 he made his debut as a solo artist and composed a suite in four movements for the occasion. The concert was a great success and the music was recorded for his first CD *Syklus*, described by the press as “the vitamin injection of 1993”. Since then Hoff has made a number of albums in his own name and composed 180 works for different ensembles. He received the Edvard Prize (named after Edvard Grieg) in 2005 for his jazz mass *Meditatus* and was composer of the commissioned work for Vossa Jazz the same year.

Jan Gunnar Hoff has worked extensively as a bandleader and solo artist since 1992, developing his distinctive musical style. His compositions have been performed in collaborations with Mike Stern, Pat Metheny, Alex Acuña, Audun Kleive, Maria João, Mathias Eick and many others. As a sideman Hoff has contributed to numerous recordings in different genres. He was the arranger and leader of *Quiet Winter Night*, Grammy-nominated for best surround sound in 2013, an album where he successfully merges elements of jazz, folk and popular music.

LIVING is a solo piano journey that carries Hoff's artistic identity further into his own musical terrain, enhanced by the crystal clear recording from Sofienberg Church in Oslo, August 2012.

“Hoff's writing and playing possesses an almost pop-like clarity and concision, but with a far richer vernacular.”

– John Kelman, Allaboutjazz.com



I started playing the piano at the age of 10. Early on I began improvising on the classical pieces that my piano teacher gave me. I made minor variations in the melodies and learnt a lot of music by ear. A few years later I listened to artists like Emerson, Lake & Palmer, Rick Wakeman, Deep Purple, Ketil Bjørnstad, Oscar Peterson, Keith Jarrett and Weather Report. Edvard Grieg was also a major influence. I have always felt as being part of a crossover tradition somewhere between jazz, classical and popular music. The melody for me is the strongest part of music.

I spend a lot of time searching for thematic substance and try to develop this into tunes or larger compositions. In order to make the melodies “come alive” I seek to express emotion and passion in the performance itself. There is also a strong link between improvisation and composition. Many of my pieces emerge from improvising on the piano or are captured from a sequencer session. I start writing a lot of small sketches, then choose which ideas to develop further.

The material on this album represents different periods and aspects of my composing. “Brytning” is part of a suite written for the the Arts Festival of North Norway in Harstad 1992. This was a classical arena where I made my debut as a solo artist. “Mountain High” (1995) has a similar latin feel. I remember writing this piece in a mood of disappointment, trying to compensate real life with music, climbing upwards. The title track “Living” is an excerpt from a commission for Bodø Jazz Open in



2012. It is like a constant flow, a desire to keep moving and still be alive. “Sacrifice” is another excerpt from the same project and was an attempt to take out something deep that overrides the song or jazz format, in the shape of a simple piano theme.

“Å eg veit meg eit land” (My homeland so dear, way up in the north) has been called “The Northern Norway Provincial Anthem”. It was written as early as 1896 by Elias Blix; the melody was composed by Adolf Thomsen in 1901. This hymn is also known as “Barndomsminne frå Nordland” (Childhood memory from Nordland). “Fly North”, too, grasps some of the pride I feel at being part of the North. “Valse de Décembre” is written in December, which is a very dark period in Northern Norway. This can sometimes trigger a special mood.

“Karlygash” (Swallow) is a composition by Kazakh composer Akhmet Zhubanov (1906-1968), freely interpreted. “Florence” is inspired by a trip to Italy and was part of my commission *Pictures* for the Nordland Music Festival in 2011. Mirror I & II are improvisations: “Mirror I” has a calm starting point, “Mirror II” is more rapid and percussive. “Sommernat” and “Feberdigte” are inspired by Knut Hamsun’s beautiful poems from his collection *Det vilde kor* and were part of a project in 2009 for the 150th anniversary of the birth of Hamsun.

“Coming My Way” describes a moment when something happens or “comes your way” – something that turns your life around forever. I composed this melody early one morning in June 2011 and the text just came along with it:

*Like a winter song you were there, quiet tales were told it was coming
my way, for the first and the last time. Like the falling leaves we made
ground, as if time stood still it was coming our way, for the first and
the last time*

*As the seed has grown we are still around there, as the years go by and
things fade constantly, in the wake of the seasons we get stronger and
stay, in ourselves, for the sake of all that’s passed on...*

Special thanks to my family, Morten Lindberg, Norsk Kulturråd and Odd Erik Vatlestad.

Jørn Gundersen Hoff 2013



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.

Surround sound 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 surround sound 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

engineer and producer



Recorded at Sofienberg Church, Oslo, Norway
August 2012 by Lindberg Lyd AS

Blu-ray is the first domestic format in history that unites theatre movies and music sound in equally high quality. The musical advantage is the high resolution for audio, and the convenience for the audience as one single player will handle music, films, DVD-collection and your old library of traditional CD.

Developed by Munich's msm-studios in co-operation with Lindberg Lyd, the Pure Audio Blu-ray combines the Blu-ray format's vast storage capacity and bandwidth necessary for high resolution sound (up to 192 kHz/24Bit) in surround and stereo with the easy and straight-forward handling of a CD. Pure Audio Blu-ray can be operated in two ways: by on-screen menu navigation or by remote control without a TV screen. Remote control operation is as easy as with a CD: besides the standard transport controls the numeric keys directly access the corresponding track number and the desired audio stream can be selected by the coloured keys on the remote control. For example, press the red button for 5.0 DTS HD Master or yellow for 2.0 LPCM. Pure Audio Blu-ray plays back on every Blu-ray player.

■ 5.1 DTS HD MA 24/192kHz ■ 2.0 LPCM 24/192kHz

This **Pure Audio Blu-ray** is equipped with **mShuttle** technology – the key to enjoying your music even when away from your Blu-ray player. Connecting your BD player to your home network will enable you to access portable copies of the songs residing on the disc: you may burn your own copy in CD quality or transfer MP3s of your favourite tracks to your mobile player. mShuttle provides a versatile listening experience of Pure Audio Blu-ray: in studio quality FLAC on your home entertainment system, in CD quality in car & kitchen, or as MP3 wherever you are.

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-studios GmbH**
audio encoding **Morten Lindberg** • screen design **Dominik Fritz**
authoring **Martin Seer** • project management **Stefan Bock**
Blu-ray producers **Morten Lindberg** and **Stefan Bock**

Recording Producer and Balance Engineer **MORTEN LINDBERG**
Recording Technician **BEATRICE JOHANNESSEN**
Piano Technician **THRON IRBY** Steinway D-model

Editing **MORTEN LINDBERG** and **JAN GUNNAR HOFF**
Mix and Mastering **MORTEN LINDBERG**

Liner Notes Editors **JAN GUNNAR HOFF**,
JØRN SIMENSTAD AND **RICHARD HUGH PEEL**
Photo and Graphic Design **MORTEN LINDBERG**

Executive Producers **JØRN SIMENSTAD** and **MORTEN LINDBERG**



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This recording was made by Lindberg Lyd AS with DPA microphones, Millennia Media amplifiers and SPHYNX2 converters to a PYRAMIX workstation. Digital eXtreme Definition is a professional audio format that brings "analogue" qualities in 24 bit at 352.8 kHz sampling rate. DXD preserves 8.4672 Mbit/s per channel. This leaves headroom for editing and balancing before quantizing to DSD for SACD or PCM for Blu-Ray.

Note on Low Frequency Effect channel: For SACD and FLAC files, all six channels (including the Lfe channel) are calibrated for equal playback levels. However, in the audio streams for the Blu-ray the Lfe channel is lowered by -10dB in the mastering process, anticipating a +10dB elevation in cinema-style home theatre playback.