



Ensemble Denada

Windfall – Music by Helge Sunde



Ensemble Denada – Windfall

The English word 'windfall' describes ripe fruit being blown off trees. As a sweet apple that has fallen off your neighbour's tree into your garden can be a pretty nice thing, 'windfall' also serves as a metaphor for an unexpected opportunity.

Ensemble Denada's music is full of windfall. There is plenty of lucky accidents and coincidences, sounds and noises that go together in the most unexpected ways. Even the songs themselves often derive from obscure chances and stories. To say it in the band's own words "A swimming moose, swimming a West Norwegian fjord can become a jazz song in 5/4, a typing error on a sheet of music can lead into a song about a sofa on a wild sleigh ride down a steep hill."

Of course a musical project can never fully rely on the concept of luck, someone needs to pull the strings and grab the opportunities as they come along. For Ensemble Denada this someone is trombone player Helge Sunde. Being the musical mastermind behind the Norwegian jazz orchestra, Sunde is responsible for all compositions and arrangements.

There is a brass section, woodwinds and a rhythm section with bass, drums, piano and guitar in Ensemble Denada, but Sunde still somehow manages to create a compact, yet versatile band sound that is at its best in the cinematic moments of 'Windfall'. You can see an old cartoon film before your inner eye, then a car chase scene followed by an atmospheric Arthouse film and a modern ballet. The transparent recording made at the Sendesaal Bremen, an old radio concert studio, makes sure there are no distractions on your mind's journey.

Sunde draws his inspirations mostly from American acts like Weather Report, Frank Zappa, Bill Evans or Miles Davis but Ensemble Denada clearly has its very own vibe, putting more emphasis on telling musical stories and the poetic aspects of music.

This said, it seems only logical that three of the seven tracks on 'Windfall' are dedicated to Olav H. Hauge, a Norwegian poet much admired by Sunde. Hauge also inspired the album title as he is a true man of chance and lucky coincidences. His breakthrough as a poet only came when he was already 60 years old, after someone gave him a guide book about poetry. Ten years later, at age 70 Hauge found the woman of his life and got married. And as if that wasn't enough he also worked as an apple farmer in West Norway before he became a full-time poet. Who could ever know more about windfall than he?