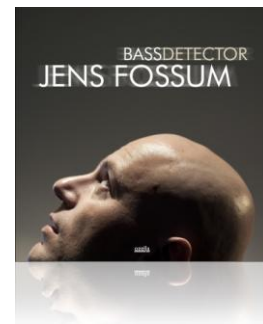


**Jens Fossum**  
**Bass Detector****100% Fossum, 100% diversity**

Over the past ten years, Jens Fossum has built a reputation as a formidable team player: The Trondheim-born bassist has been a member of the the late Sigurd Køhn's quartet, performed in songwriter Randi Tytingvåg's backing band and supported sensual jazz vocalist Hilde Louise Asbjørnsen. For his first solo album, meanwhile, Fossum for once wanted to make everything sound exactly the way he wanted without having to restrict himself or strike a compromise. On *Bass Detector*, accordingly, everything is upside down: The bass is moving from the background into the spotlight, Fossum is turning from a sidekick into a leader and this time, the greats of the Norwegian jazz scene are guests – putting their talents at his disposal.

So what do you get with 100% Fossum? 100% diversity, mainly. Already on previous group albums, Fossum displayed his talents on a wide range of instruments, including the Chinese er-hu and pipa next to cello, mandolin and guitar. Although all of them are again making an appearance here, they are integrated into a larger, overarching concept: Despite its title, which might suggest something more puristic, *Bass Detector* explores the synergies between different string instruments in the context of contrasting musical cultures – from West to East, from Europe to Latin America and from Africa to India.

To a close observer, this development in Fossum's oeuvre can hardly come as a surprise. Already *Let Go Instrumentals*, released two years ago with the Tytingvåg Ensemble, was as much a work of beauty as a daring experiment: The musicians simply cut out the original vocal tracks from the songs and presented the instrumental backing tracks in their naked glory. *Bass Detector*, too, is all about essence, risk, breaks with routine and complete freedom. The album sees Fossum handling a variety of different basses - double bass, electric bass, piccolo bass as well as piccolino bass with a built in midi system - and challenging himself with finding an organic connection between acoustic means and electronic interfaces. Musically, things could hardly get more eclectic, encompassing a wide range of styles, from pumping funk rhythms and soulful horn sections to dense ensemble parts and cool licks, running the full gamut of his influences and passions.

In the end, however, none of this could work without the exchange between his collaborators – including Fossum's brother Håvard (saxophone, flute, clarinet), various drummers and keyboarders, saxophonist Børge Are Halvorsen as well as Melvin Smith on trumpet and Bud Smith on trombone. It is the twists and turns of their lines, the equally confrontational and harmonious interplay between all of their voices which makes *Bass Detector* such a stimulating experience. It might be a solo album in name – but you could never get the full 100% from Fossum without the right team to support him.