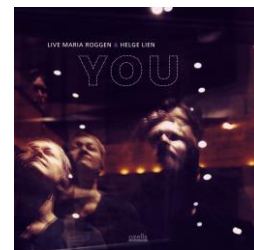


Live Maria Roggen & Helge Lien You



Rediscovering nordic classics

Just like an instrument, every language has it's own unique sound. It can be fun listening to songs in other languages, even if you don't speak a word of Italian, French or Arabic. Some lyrics though have been crafted so delicately and are so rich with details and images that it's a shame they never make it across the language barrier.

This is true for many songs from Scandinavia, regardless of the genre. Singer Live Maria Roggen and pianist Helge Lien want to help some of these songs jump the language barrier with their new album „You“. On their debut „Låvesalg“ (2011) the Norwegian duo focussed on their mother tongue, whilst for „You“ the two Spellemansprisen-awarded musicians performed nine songs from Nordic songwriters in English. The result is as surprising as it is captivating. Only a few insiders outside Scandinavia will have heard of the likes of Jon Ebersson, Sidsel Endresen and Roger Andreassen, but thanks to Live & Lien they can now compete with the great song-poets of past decades.

Songs like „Waterfall“, „Cries Like A Baby“ or the title track „You“ almost sound like forgotten classics. Some of the melodies and lyrics seem familiar, like musical postcards from the past. In part this is due to the outstanding song writing skills of the original artists, but the congenial translations and interpretations of Live & Lien definitely play a major role. Live Maria Roggen has the ability to switch between styles seamlessly. This is particularly impressive on „Scatterheart“, a song by Icelandic singer Björk. Roggen playfully integrates Björks eccentric style into her own, thus making the song her own. Throughout the whole album Roggen is in control at all times, showing a large scale of emotions. Next to Roggen, Helge Lien proves on „You“ why you might call him the single most important piano player in Norway today. He delicately creates spaces and atmospheres for Roggen, dynamically follows her lead, only taking the center of attention when it is necessary.

There is always joy in listening to a duo that creates this type of magic together, yet with Live & Lien the joy is paired with a sense of gratefulness. Their reinterpretations and translations opened a door for us to enjoy these beautiful songs and that is a reason to be grateful.