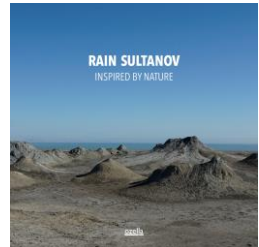




Rain Sultanov Inspired by Nature -Seven Sounds of Azerbaijan



A musical travel guide to Azerbaijan

Since the soviet days, Azerbaijan has had a rich jazz scene. To make sure it's not becoming another obscure insider tip the remote country at the Caspian Sea needs to make some waves internationally from time to time. Under these circumstances a luminary like Rain Sultanov is a real blessing.

The saxophone player is the most popular jazz musician in Azerbaijan. An official „honoured artist“ of the country, Sultanov often comes back to themes from Azerbaijan in his music, drawing attention to the history and culture of his home land. His project „Voice of Karabakh“ describes the struggles of Mountainous Garabagh, the contested region on the border to Armenia and „Tale Of My Land“ delves into the stories and histories of Azerbaijan.

Whilst working on these projects, Sultanov developed the idea of also turning the breath-taking, extreme landscapes of the country into music and show their beauty to his audience. With the help of German filmmaker Antje Dombrowski and diplomat Thomas Melzer, the idea became reality. They gathered musicians and set off to a trip around Azerbaijan to collect sounds and inspiration for the album. They found bubbling gush springs, jammed with blacksmiths, blew against the storm, manhandled a grand piano into the steppe and scared off water birds with unheard sounds. All the impressions, sketches and recordings from this trip they took to Oslo's reclaimed Rainbow Studios.

Here Sultanov's dream finally turned into an album, every bit as breath-taking, extreme and beautiful as the landscapes of Azerbaijan: „Inspired by Nature - Seven Sounds of Azerbaidjan“. Even though Oslo is far away from Azerbaijan, Rain Sultanov managed to bring back these unique places and turn their atmosphere into music. The sounds and moods the musicians found on their „sound excursion“ where translated into parts for instruments and where contrasted with typical melodies of the region. This experimental mixture of folk and sounds Rain Sultanov and his musicians then integrated in imaginative yet elegant jazz arrangements.

The result are pictures made of sound - dreamy, inspiring and surprising – put together from saxophone, percussion, piano, bass, drums, cello and vocals. „Inspired by Nature“ sends the listener on an inner journey to Rain Sultanov's Azerbaijan and proves that we sometimes see more, when we take the time to listen.