



Helge Lien Trio

Hello Troll



Snappy Trolls with mystical power

A little nation with a big jazz tradition is the land of fjords and trolls. Fascinating new artists and acts sporting a huge zest for playing and an irrepressible urge for experimentation keep pushing out of Norway to conquer the rest of the jazz world. The Helge Lien Trio, who have already won a large circle of fans in Scandinavia and Japan with their five albums and inspiring live concerts, are especially significant. They maintain the balance between jazz traditions and the avantgardist art of improvisation like hardly any other classic piano trio, par excellence.

After CD releases in Norway and Japan, the release at German record company Ozella Music 'Hello Troll' helped immediately to get international success. Raving reviews from around the globe and invitations to international Festivals followed like London Jazz Festival, Philharmony Luxembourg, Kongsberg and the legendary Punkt (both Norway). Recorded on the 24. and 25. of February 2008 in the renowned Rainbow Studios in Oslo, and produced by pianist Helge Lien and Ozella Music-mastermind Dagobert Böhm, this work surprises us with a wealth of pictorial – impressionistic tone colors, that thanks to their clarity, are as pure as the air in the land of fjords. They are irresistible.

January 2009 the album gets honoured with the Norwegian Grammy: Best Jazz Album of the Year. Followed by Indie Acoustic Project Awards: Best CD of the year in the Instrumental Category, and January 2010: **Best Audiophile Release of the year 2009** (USA magazine SoundStage!) to name a few.

Helge Lien, who besides his own trio project performs with other Norwegian acts like Silje Nergaard, has developed his very own unmistakable style of trio playing with band colleagues Frode Berg (bass) and Knut Aalefjær (drums & percussion). With instinctive sureness, the musicians develop a „chamber music“ jazz that stands out through its harmonically complex tone colors. Building on Bill Evans' lyrical power and the exhilaratingly melancholic playing of Esbjörn Svensson, Lien, in constant dialogue with Berg & Aalefjær, creates distinct moods on 'Hello Troll' – moods that he presents with ease.

The first bars of the opener „Gamut Warning“ are carried by great discipline and an absolute relevance. Together with Lien's dynamic phrasing and the trio's instinctively sure interplay, they make you prick up your ears immediately. And the other tracks, like the dramatic "Axis Of Free Will", the highly romantic „Radio“, the fragile songs "Diverted Dance" and "It Is What It Is, But It Is", or the tricky but fiery piece "Halla Troll" impressively demonstrate that a formation that masters the "The Art Of The Trio" perfectly is presenting itself here.

Doubtlessly pianist Helge Lien, who is very skilled at playing to the gallery with his modal piano art, is one of the most exciting young talents in Scandinavia. After the honorable *Dagbladet* from Norway already described the forerunner CD 'To The Little Radio' as „the best Norwegian Piano Trio Album in a long time“, we can be looking out for a similar reaction to their new longplayer. Playing their way into the hearts of a steadily growing circle of listeners with classic-impressionistic patterns and rhythmical-melodic jazz, this trio's resourcefulness seems to truly know no bounds.

Summary

How to master "The Art Of The Trio" perfectly. Until now we've only known it from Brad Mehldau, Bill Evans and E.S.T. Now, with the Norwegian Helge Lien Trio, a new formation is on the way to adding new exciting soundscapes to the piano trio. Perfectly in tune with each other, this trio has presented us with „Hello Troll“, an album that paints lyrical-impressionistic moods, and whose appeal is practically irresistible.