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Streif Nordic Winter

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Bewitchingly beautiful to spite the freezing cold

If music is the language of the human soul, Streif's songs are the joystick for feelings of warmth and comfort. Somehow, it has to be the long darkness, icy winters, and magnificent loneliness of the Norwegian countryside that makes such fullness of sound and enormous joy in experimentation flourish, something that doesn't seem possible elsewhere in the world.

Streif's four-man ensemble consisting of Georg Reiss (clarinet, tárogáto, saxophone), Tom Karlsrud (accordeon, euphonium), Torbjørn Økland (guitar, mandoline, trumpet), and Birger Mistereggen (percussion, marimba, drums), presents itself with an incredibly superb wealth of musical invention that really gets into your ears, and stays there.

The classical-traditional folklore of Scandinavia and the Baltic, moving between heavy-hearted melancholy and airy lightness in Streif's arrangements, is coupled with a multitude of musical genres and styles. The sad sound of the accordeon, flowing into ethereal floating guitar riffs worthy of David Gilmour, crescends to a musical landscape, approaching majestic beauty. With tárogáto, clarinet, and guitar, the fragile singing of the brides "Brudesang Fra Solør" and "Saktmodig Brudemarsj" penetrates the cold and silence of the nordic winter, seducing the heart and mind to relish in rapture.

Letting yourself get into Streif is like taking a dive into a melting pot of cultures. Sometimes it sounds as if the lost world of the eastern Jewish Shtetl has again come to life, with "Bessleiken" making the baltic shake with euphonium, accordeon, and percussion until, with drum rolls and the sounding of the clarinet, it finally takes you back to the North ("Klarinettlåt Etter"). The traditional ways and irresistible harmonies are enchanting, and they are, thanks to Streif, magnificently optimized without losing their authenticity or essence. The nordic winter, carefree, wraps itself around the burning heat of the equator or finds warmth in the smokey jazz cellars of Manhattan with the sacral "Hjemlandslokke".

Streif's musical world journey, which fears neither challenge nor improvisational frolicking, is a feast for the senses and food for the soul.

Summary

Streif don't leave their listeners out in the cold. On their fourth album "Nordic Winter", the snow and the cold get caught up in a musical high front that feeds off northern European folklore, rock, jazz, and a multitude of world music sounds. Tremendously experimental and strong in improvisation, they warm the heart and soul to the very bone.