



Ruth Wilhelmine Meyer Klangbiotoper



Political Soundscapes

Sometimes, the music of Ruth Wilhelmine Meyer can seem to come from another planet. And yet, *Klangbiotoper* very much deals with the world we're living in: "When I set out to record this album, I was filled with a lot of fear and apathy", Meyer recounts, "Everywhere I looked, I saw the atrocities that we were committing towards our planet and it got me thinking. I reflected on my lack of will to do something about the situation and about our collective failure to take action. In some ways, working on the album was a way for me to enter into a dialogue with the places, plants and creatures of nature." This deeply felt commitment has turned *Klangbiotoper* into something few would have expected from the exceptional Norwegian vocalist: A political statement.

Politics are usually set aside for far angrier genres like punk or metal. Certainly, compared to these, *Klangbiotoper* can seem like a quietly growing nightshade, an intimate sound environment beyond categories. The drive for change certainly does not express itself through anger or ideologies here. Rather, the album is about a return to humanity, about rebuilding our relationship with nature and opening ourselves up to the beauty that surrounds us. Aptly, opening track "Kvæven" begins with the whispering sound of Meyer exhaling, quite possibly the most elemental sound of all. It is only after her breath has subsided that the music begins.

Instead of starting from a universal angle, Meyer has chosen to take a personal perspective as her point of departure: "My references for the album were places in nature that I feel connected to: *Vinje i Telemark in the mountains where I was raised. My birth place of Tromsø on the Northern coast. And Nordmarka, a forest area near Oslo, which I visit regularly.*" And so, these softly flowing, harmonically open compositions oscillate between folk tunes from Meyer's childhood and associative, almost sculptural instrumental parts, in which her band - made up of tuba, saxophone and percussion - is casting the shapes and outlines of the worlds she is singing about on the retina of the mind's eye.

What may sound somewhat eccentric and experimental on paper, turns out to be intoxicating, intense and intimate. *Klangbiotoper* is both an audiophile headphone environment and an expression of direct, undiluted emotions, a tribute both to her own roots and the things that unite as all. Of course, you're free to just sit back and enjoy the trip. But for anyone with open ears, this music is always more than that: An invitation for deeper reflection, a call to take things into our own hands.