

# GREWS TUNE

## MULGREW MILLER & KLÜVERS BIG BAND



Stunt Records  
STUCD 12122  
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For years – 35 to be exact – under the leadership of untiring Jens Klüver, Klüver's Big Band has been a musical institution in Aarhus. Out of his love of jazz music and the American big band tradition in particular, a professional big band has grown to reach high musical standards. After decades fronting Denmark's perhaps finest large jazz orchestra, Jens Klüver chose this year's Aarhus Festival to retire from his orchestra and take his farewells with musicians and audiences. He has handed the baton over to Lars Møller, and the orchestra has changed its name to the Aarhus Jazz Orchestra.

The line-up includes several of the country's finest jazz musicians – many soloists with international careers – but more important, the band has an overpowering collective energy and the will and musicality to let their music take flight and swing ferociously.

Jens Klüver's farewell present is a CD, GREW'S TUNE, a collaboration with American pianist Mulgrew Miller. This wonderful release is the band's fifteenth, and the idea behind it is similar to many of their previous albums: Choosing a jazz artist normally not associated with big band music, and performing arrangements of his repertoire or original compositions.

Outside of their many concerts on their own, the orchestra has worked with Thad Jones, Clark Terry, Frank Foster, Slide Hampton, Bob Berg, Lee Konitz, Harry "Sweets" Edison, Dee Dee Bridgewater, Bob Mintzer and Joe Henderson. Recent years have seen collaborations with Kenny Werner, Joe Lovano, Dennis Macrel, Byron Stripling, Kurt Elling, Donny McCaslin and John Scofield.

The band's anniversary season was exceptionally busy. Opening 2011 with a sold-out Scandinavian tour with American jazz superstar, the Grammy-winning Kurt Elling, the band performed with another jazz great, guitar giant John Scofield, and his regular drummer Bill Stewart at the Aarhus Festival. Then there were a series of concerts with Chick Corea's favorite drummer,

Jeff Ballard, and pianist Lars Jansson. In October and November, Klüver's Big Band toured the US – once again with Kurt Elling. They played ten concerts in Chicago, New York, Boston and Washington, including six consecutive nights at New York's legendary club Birdland.

2012 started with the productive collaboration with Mulgrew Miller, known as one of the finest accompanists in jazz. Appearing as sideman on more than 500 albums, he has recorded in his own name with trios and combos. He is a superb practitioner of the American jazz piano tradition, his muscular style nodding respectfully to Oscar Peterson and perhaps especially McCoy Tyner, while cultivating a lyrical side which is all his own. Mulgrew Miller penned all the CD's compositions and - naturally - he is the main soloist.

After a thorough study of Miller's music, Klüver picked six tunes of varied character for the CD. He chose three arrangers: two Americans with whom the band has worked previously, pianist Matt Harris and drummer Dennis Mackrel, and one Dane, trumpeter Jesper Riis. Their different styles contribute to the refreshing diversity of this selection.

The band played five concerts with Miller in early February, and all the tracks were taken from the last concert in Vejle – by far the best performance, and a fine example of the orchestra's high artistic level.

The interplay between drummer Morten Lund, bassist Morten Ramsbøl and Mulgrew Miller creates a fantastic foundation for the horns and pushes the soloists to their very best in the supple arrangements.

Jens Klüver has a lot to be proud of, and the rest of us can only appreciate this sparkling big band album. A lovely farewell for a fine big band leader.

Thank you, Jens!

*Thinking Out Loud / Return Trip / Samba D'Blue / Grew's Tune / Hand In Hand / When You Get There.*

**Mulgrew Miller (p), Michael Mølhede, Jan Lynggaard Sørensen, Jakob Buchanan, Rasmus Bøgelund Pedersen (tp), Nikolai Bøgelund Pedersen, Henrik Resen, Niels Jacob Nørgaard, Stefan Ringive (tb), Morten Øberg, Claus Waidtløw, Niels Lyhne Løkkegaard, Finn Harald Henriksen (sax), Søren Bo Addemos (g), Morten Ramsbøl (bas), Morten Lund (d), Jens Klüver (dir).**

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