

BJARNE ROUPÉ

BJARNE ROUPÉ LIGHT AND DARK



Stunt Records
STUCD 13102



Since World War II Sweden has produced a steady succession of great guitarists.

In the 1950's it was Rune Gustavsson, the late 1960's saw the emergence of Georg Wadenius, and in the 1980's it was Ulf Wakenius. In the 1990's Anders Chico Lindvall came along, and in the new millennium it has been Krister Jonsson, Hans Olding and Tomas Janson. They all play with intensity and concentration and also with that special touch of Swedish cool. In the 1970's the new kid on the block was Bjarne Roupé. He was part of the period's exciting world/jazz/rock scene in Stockholm, and he caused attention with the Swedish jazz-rock group Egba, which also included pianist Lars Jansson and percussionist Ahmadu Jarr. The band was very popular in Denmark where they often performed at the Jazz House Montmartre.

When Bjarne Roupé left Egba in 1979, he settled in Denmark and soon became an important figure on the Danish music scene in groups like Alpha Centauri, Mazur/Markussen, Six Winds, Entrance, the Danish Radio Jazz Group, and his own trio with Bo Stief and Alex Riel. He played gigs with Eddie Harris, Jimmy Smith and Dizzy Gillespie, and in 1984 he played on the recording of AURA with Miles Davis. In 1985 he joined the Danish Radio Big Band. After five years, he left the Danish Radio Big Band to concentrate on teaching career at the Rhythmic Music Conservatory in Copenhagen, although he still performed with Kim Kristensen's Ocean Fables, with composer Michael Mantler (with whom he recorded for

ECM), and with his own projects. In 2012 he quit his job as associate professor at the conservatory and is now back performing fulltime.

Roupé is among the elite of European jazz guitarists. His playing is full of characteristic sophistication, original harmonic sense, sure-fire taste, and a subtle, almost dreamy guitar sound. He plays lovely, lyrical lines, intelligent, swinging up-tempo solos, and lowdown funky blues – but he can also unleash a growling powerhouse of guitar, just like back in the heyday of jazz-rock.

He is also a fine jazz composer, represented here with seven originals, some bursting with energy, others showing a more lyrical side – but all fully balanced in melodic, harmonic and structural content, and all challenging to the improvisational musician.

The other members of his quartet are Swedish tenor giant Tomas Franck, whose Coltrane-inspired style has earned him a strong position on the jazz scene in Copenhagen for the last 35 years. The rhythm section is likewise among the very best Denmark has to offer: bassist Lennart Ginman, also known from his work with pianist Carsten Dahl, and the versatile drummer Aage Tanggaard, a long-term member of Svend Asmussen's famous group.

At a time when young musicians release a new album every year, this is Bjarne Roupé's first album as a bandleader since 1988. Let us hope that we need not wait another 25 years for the next one.

Sign Of Four / Light And Dark / Miles Across / Trekvarts Blues / Vals / Miss T / Tucas Dream

Bjarne Roupé (g), Tomas Franck (ts), Lennart Ginman (b), Aage Tanggaard (dr)

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