

**Claes Janson
&
Christina von Bülow**

Feat. Emily McEwan

**Det regnar i min stad
(It's raining in my town)**

Released on CD, LP and digital



The Finnish-Swedish poet Åke Grandell's lyrical, thoughtful poems, set to music by the Danish saxophonist Christina von Bülow, and sung by the Swedish singing sensation Claes Janson.

Christina von Bülow's DET REGNAR I MIN STAD (IT'S RAINING IN MY TOWN) is an album brought to life over a years-long project driven by love and dedication. It's the result of a physically, musically, and emotionally intense voyage set in motion by a rediscovered letter. The letter included a wish - and an invitation - and ended up strengthening the bond between Christina von Bülow and the Swedish culture she's so fascinated with and inspired by. It also resulted in this new album - DET REGNAR I MIN STAD - the product of five days of magical and moving studio recordings.

Throughout a career spanning more than 30 years, alto saxophonist Christina von Bülow has been honored with several Danish awards for her lyrical, melodic playing. In 2022, she became the 2nd non-Swede ever to receive the *Lars Gullin Award*, an honor named after baritone saxophonist Lars Gullin, a Swedish jazz icon. At the award ceremony, presenters noted that Christina is also influenced by stylists such as Stan Getz and Lee Konitz, which is true - but to really understand Christina's playing and inspiration, one must understand the joy that Swedish jazz offers when played by masters like trumpeter Jan Allan (b. 1934), whom Christina von Bülow invited to play on her debut album in 1994. His tone captivated her, and the inspiration materialized, among other things, in the song *Vise in Februar*, which Christina had written with Allan in mind.

Finnish-Swedish poet Åke Grandell had heard *Vise in Februar*, and the melody had stuck something deep inside him. He wrote words to it, and sent them to Christina along with several lyrics and texts - and a proposal: he asked her if she might write music to his words. One song became many. Decades later, *Vise in Februar* would be one of the 14 songs on DET REGNAR I MIN STAD, all with lyrics by Åke Grandell and, with one exception, all in Swedish.

Grandell, who passed away in 2015, was committed to keeping Finnish-Swedish culture alive through his work and activities, including years as a radio host. He was also a prolific writer - in Swedish. Four collections of his poems were released, while hun-

dreds of typewritten pages ended up with his family in Grankulla (or *Kauniainen* as it's called in Finnish). Christina von Bülow would travel there to visit Grandell's daughter, who permitted the Dane to go through her father's texts.

Åke Grandell wrote with poetic magic about love, grief, and longing; about losing and transience; and about the natural world that surrounds us. He wrote about general, existential questions, and his words went straight to Christina's heart. In her mind, it became clear that the songs had to be interpreted by a mature man to truly resonate with listeners. She immediately thought of Claes Janson, born in 1947 - an established voice and popular institution in Swedish music for more than 50 years as a jazz, blues, and show singer. His deep, warm voice and intimate, touching interpretations creep under the skin of listeners. With his phrasing, emphasis, and the color of his voice, he can give words special meanings that are felt rather than thought.

This is Christina von Bülow's first project that pairs words with melodies. The lyrical content and mood of the poems showed the way, and her melodies and arrangements also ended up drawing inspiration from her love of the Swedish song tradition - from Bellman to Georg Riedel, Cornelis Vreeswijk, and Jan Johansson, among others. The result is a collection of versatile songs with roots in folk, jazz, and bossa nova. And the lyrics cover just about everything and anything that concerns and consumes us as humans.

Christina visited Uppsala a couple of times to rehearse with Claes Janson before they met in Copenhagen in the spring of 2022 with the rest of the all-star team she assembled: her son, Pelle von Bülow, on guitar; Steen Rasmussen on piano; Daniel Franck on bass; and Frands Rifbjerg on drums. Claes's dark pipes aren't the only vocals we hear on DET REGNAR I MIN STAD as some selections esteemed Swedish-Scottish singer Emily McEwan also adds her dynamic, inviting timbre.

Doftvind / Sliter en gråtlåt ur mitt hår / Havsmorgon / Ordafärd / Sommarlängtan / Det regnar i min stad / I februari / Sonett om förgängligheten / Förbön / Summer wishes / Skimmerschal / Sommarsorg / När den egnaste dör / Bra Så?

Claes Janson, Emily McEwan (voc), Christina von Bülow (as, fl), Steen Rasmussen (p), Pelle von Bülow (g), Daniel Franck (b), Frands Rifbjerg (d)

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