

Press release

Lisa Ullén Quartet *Borderlands*

Critically acclaimed Lisa Ullén Quartet return with their third CD, *Borderlands*. On previous albums *Big Bang* (2006) and *Revolution Rock* (2009), the quartet took free jazz for a rumbling and rolling walk on the wild side. Now the party's on again.

Borderlands is colourblazingly kick ass – not so much free jazz, as free from musical biases: Thelonious Monk partying with Primal Scream jamming in the krautrock spirit of Can, say. “Sisters, Brothers, Here’s Another” rolls in like a train of newly arrived dreams, before pulling itself together into a hymn to the times in which we’re living, providing the album’s possibly most lyrical moment. And yet it’s a record shot through with moments of tenderness, passages in which the musicians emerge as individuals by becoming part of something greater than themselves. The music is often intensely melodic – listen, for instance, to how the piano, trombone, and bass in “Room Full of Tunes” weave melodic lines into a sustained chord, or to Ölmedal’s bass talking to Äleklint’s trombone in “Midnight Conversation,” or to the group opening a secret passage way to Pink Floyd’s *Dark Side of the Moon* in “Waiting Room.”

There’s very little in the manner of traditional jazz solos, here. Instead, the distinction of each musician can be heard in the way they pick up on the tone and timbre of the other instruments. Andreas Axelsson provides an elastic rhythmic foundation that never stiffens into a groove, while the bass of Nils Ölmedal finds melodies on top of, underneath, and in-between Mats Äleklint’s inventive horn lines and Lisa Ullén’s meticulously nuanced attacks on the grand piano that set the course for the group as a whole. Together they make music that blissfully ignores genres and rules, and builds instead on a caring trust that brings to mind something like Gertrude Stein’s endlessly suggestive tender buttons:

“The care with which there is incredible justice and likeness, all this makes a magnificent asparagus, and also a fountain.”

On *Borderlands*, four musicians reach out their hands and receive what is happening in a series of free form compositions that takes us out of the future, into the present. It’s never been more important to *listen* than now.

artist: **Lisa Ullén Quartet**
Lisa Ullén grand piano
Mats Äleklint trombone and electronics
Nils Ölmedal double bass
Andreas Axelsson drums

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