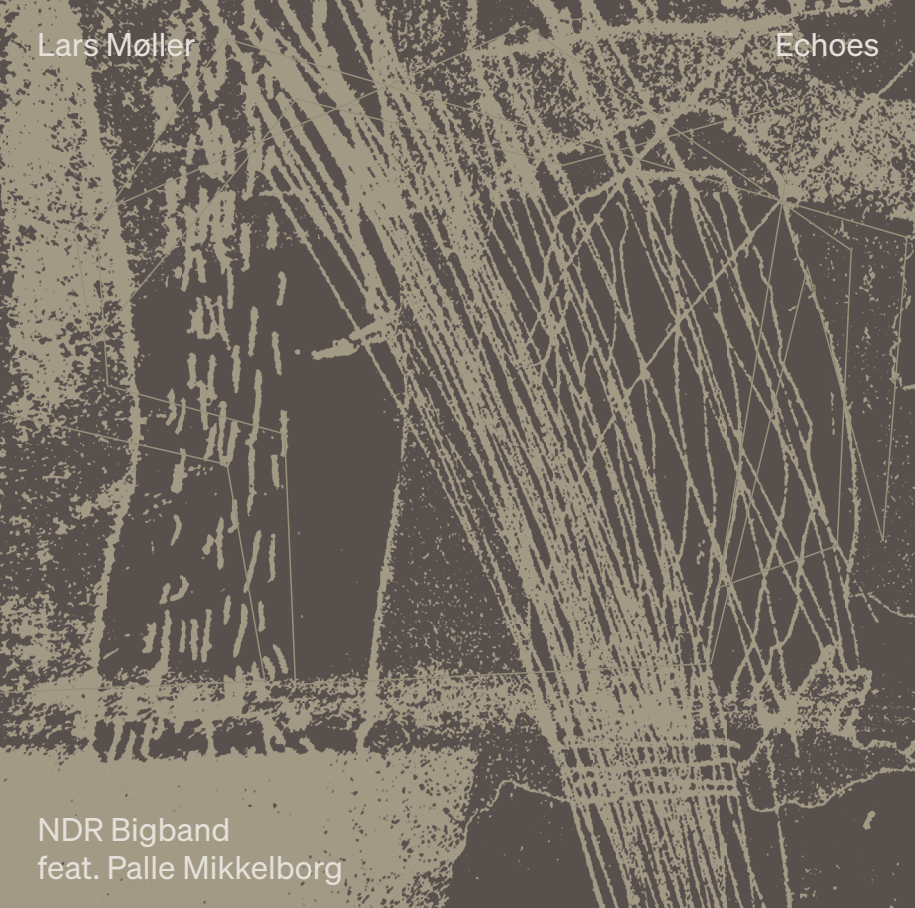




Lars Møller

Echoes

NDR Bigband
feat. Palle Mikkelborg

Lars Møller (b. 1966)

Echoes

Lars Møller, tenor saxophone and conductor

Palle Mikkelsen, trumpet

NDR Bigband – The Hamburg Radio Jazz Orchestra

Trumpets and flugelhorn – Felix Meyer, Ingolf Burkhardt, Claus Stötter,
Menzel Mutzke

Saxophones and woodwinds – Fiete Felsch, Peter Bolte, Gabor Bolla,
Frank Delle, Luigi Grasso

Trombones – Dan Gottshall, Klaus Heidenreich, Sonja Beeh, Ingo Lahme

Guitar – Sandra Hempel

Piano – Florian Weber

Bass – Ingmar Heller

Percussion – Marcio Doctor

Drums – Morten Lund

Musicians of additional recordings

Trumpets – Thorsten Benkenstein, Martijn de Laat, Percy Pursglove

Saxophones – Gabriel Coburger, Adrian Hanack, Julius Gawlik,
Yannick Glettenberg

Trombone – Stefan Lottermann



Danish Arts
Foundation

- | | | |
|---|--|-------|
| 1 | Salt (2019) | 15:56 |
| | Solos by Lars Møller (tenor sax), Palle Mikkelsen (trumpet),
Florian Weber (piano) and Marcio Doctor (percussion) | |
| 2 | Brazilian Aria (2019) | 7:33 |
| | (Brazilian traditional adapted by Lars Møller)
Solos by Florian Weber (piano) and Palle Mikkelsen (trumpet) | |
| | Echoes of India (2019) | 26:16 |
| | Solos by Palle Mikkelsen (trumpet), Florian Weber (piano)
and Morten Lund (drums) | |
| 3 | Part I, Hommage | 14:25 |
| 4 | Part II, Transition | 6:46 |
| 5 | Part III, Passage | 5:05 |
| 6 | Folk Song No. 1 (2006, rev. 2019) | 10:43 |
| | (Danish traditional adapted by Lars Møller)
Solo by Gabor Bolla (tenor saxophone) | |

Total 60:30

Live recording (24 August 2019, Musikhuset Aarhus)

World premiere recording



Lars Møller

Air and Fire

‘The breath goes not merely as far as the man of material science knows. He knows only the vibrations of the air, going out and coming in, and he sees no further. Besides this there is pulsation: the beating of the heart and head, the pulse, all these keep a rhythm. Man very rarely thinks about what depends on this rhythm. The whole life depends on it!’

– Hazrat Inayat Khan (1882–1927): *The Mysticism of Sound and Music*

By Christian Munch-Hansen

A newborn child pushes its way from the swimming foetal state into the world, where it takes its first inhalations and exhalations. Often with sound. It wails its way into life. A birth is a creation, as the philosopher Hannah Arendt has reflected upon in connection with her concept of ‘natality’, which in a broader sense is about possibilities, creativity and hope.

It is the miraculous thing we do throughout life: draw air into our lungs and respire. The word ‘inspiration’ is precisely the same as inhaling

and filling the lungs with oxygen. This must resonate with any musician, especially if one plays a wind instrument, as is the case with composer and saxophonist Lars Møller. Throughout his career spanning more than 30 years, he has expanded his musical expression as an instrumentalist and orchestral composer, stretched between the West and the East, between Scandinavian thoughtfulness, robust American jazz and emotive Indian modalities and rhythmic patterns.

Lars Møller calls this release *Echoes*, for the music is the 'reverberation' of the artistic, human and spiritual encounter that took place back in 2019 between the composer and conductor, NDR Bigband's colouristic orchestra and trumpeter Palle Mikkelborg's soulful presence.

But the music is also an 'echo' of deeper tracks in Lars Møller's artistic career, including the compositional stepping stones that lead back to composer and arranger Bob Brookmeyer in particular, the intense immersion in American jazz and Indian music that carries forward the legacy of John Coltrane, and the immersion in meditation and breathing, which has led Lars Møller to also incorporate meditation into his musical work today.

With *Echoes*, one can say that something appears in a new way in Lars Møller's orchestral music or at least becomes more unfolded than before. Namely, the contrast between, on the one hand, the spaciousness and air in the subdued and impro-

vised passages, centred around Palle Mikkelborg's free and airborne playing (in several places in lively dialogue with pianist Florian Weber), and on the other hand, the condensed compositional patterns and orchestrations with both dancing pulse and tonal finesse.

In other words, it is music that contains both air and fire. As one of the four elements, air can be understood alchemically as the budding spring, static, misty and connected with timelessness, spiritual openness and presence. These are qualities one hears in Møller's and the orchestra's opening of *Salt* and especially in Mikkelborg's trumpet voice, which captures the sound of wind and expresses being in the moment. As Møller recalls from the initial rehearsals: 'I clearly remember the moment when we played together with the whole band for the first time. Palle grasped that space, Florian joined in, and a magical door opened.'

Following this is fire, which is associated with summer and heat, but

also dynamics, tension and action, elements that unfold in several passages in Møller's energetic orchestral music. In *Salt* and in the suite *Echoes of India*, one can not only imagine the profound, spiritual India, but also the colourful and rhythmically pulsating India with its spices, class divisions and busy streets, where growth, slums and poverty are allowed to flow side by side with a karmic shrug of the shoulders.

Salt begins with a humming raga atmosphere. Møller is the first soloist (the only place on the album) and here uses his tenor saxophone as a shehnai, the traditional oboe-like reed instrument, which he has previously studied in New Delhi. The winding melodic lines and small displacements are based on the melancholically reflective raga 'Todi', a pentatonic raga traditionally played in the morning. This is not something you just play on a tenor sax, and Møller has spent years refining this technique.

The music gradually transforms into a rhythmic orchestral arrangement, based on an Indian seven-beat rhythm ('rupak taal'), while the drone is maintained (for a full nine minutes). *Salt* can thus also be seen as a variation of the type of orchestral composition that builds on a 'pedal point' with examples dating back to Pete Rugolo's *Mirage* (1950) and in works by classical composers such as Mahler, Scriabin, Stravinsky and Shostakovich.

Dynamically, *Salt* is like a slow wave rising. This brings forward the theme in the title with a reflection on the Indian politician and activist Mahatma Gandhi and his Salt March in 1930, which was an action against the British colonial rule's monopoly on salt production. The march was a political masterstroke because it exposed the moral collapse of the then British colonial rule when the English brutally cracked down on the peaceful demonstrators. Gandhi's civil disobedience and non-violent strategy had far-reaching conse-

quences as inspiration for, among others, Martin Luther King in the USA.

Brazilian Aria also contains a human perspective. The music has grown in the shadow of Brazil's slave past, which the country shares with many other nations (including Denmark) that likewise have slave skeletons in their closets. The melody comes from a well-known Brazilian folk song, which was reportedly sung by enslaved Brazilians when they witnessed the punishment of other slaves. Pain and suffering are thus the subtext of the beautiful melody, which composer Heitor Villa-Lobos also used, and which Lars Møller first reworked in connection with his collaboration with Egberto Gismonti in Copenhagen in 2019. In this recording, NDR Bigband creates an airy and wistful polyphonic expression. Palle Mikkelborg is a fragile melody bearer, and Florian Weber contributes a strong and poetic piano solo. The particularly luminous sound universe

brings to mind Gil Evans, and in the orchestral build-up of tension under the piano solo, Møller is inspired by Maria Schneider and her arrangement of the main theme from the film *Spartacus* (1960).

The three-part suite *Echoes of India* is the musical focal point of the album. Palle Mikkelborg opens 'Part I, Hommage' with infinity as space. It is a spellbinding introduction that sets the scene before the orchestra's rhythm section carries ostinato and pulse forward with almost ceremonial reverence. The modal and melodic foundation of the music is the light and lyrical raga 'Durga' (possibly the raga Ravi Shankar showed John Coltrane, who used it in the piece *India* in 1961). It is felt in the brass's major key sounds: an atmosphere of growing trust and confidence, emphasised in Møller's arrangement with the horns' lively melodic wave movements. Towards the end, the movement is taken over by a dark, rock-

influenced ostinato, for the concept of the 'Durga' also contains a more aggressive side as the name of an Indian goddess of war riding on a lion.

'Part II, Transition' offers something big and unexpected that no one could have calculated in advance: an improvisation between Palle Mikkelborg and Florian Weber, who play out a long opening that constitutes a composition in itself. Imperceptibly, the music glides into Møller's beautiful ballad. One should be aware of the last couple of minutes, where the old master arranger Gil Evans emerges as a blurred historical figure in the brass sounds. This is a conscious move on Møller's part, and it reminds us of Gil Evans and Miles Davis's legendary collaborations. Mikkelborg managed to work with both of them; in the 70s and 80s, he occasionally played with Gil Evans Orchestra, and in 1984–85 he wrote and recorded the orchestral masterpiece *Aura* for – and with – Miles Davis as soloist.

Part III, 'Passage' is a short movement with clear rhythmic appeal, driven forward by Morten Lund's elegant and energetic drumming. There is dynamic development in the brass, whose melodic figures bud in motivic variations. Once again, the modal drone character with roots in raga music is emphasised. Here, just a taste of the music's sense of eternity is given, and with Mikkelborg's concluding notes, wrapped in spatial resonance, it seems to fade into the universe like a space probe of sound and air.

The album concludes with one of Lars Møller's most well-known compositions, *Folk Song No. 1*, which is based on the Danish song 'Marken er mejet' ('The Field Is Harvested'). Møller originally wrote the arrangement for the European Jazz Youth Orchestra in 2006 but has since used it in many contexts and won an international award with the composition. In this revised arrangement with NDR

Bigband, the music's flow of joy and energy is emphasised, which also suits the original folk song's celebration of harvest time with song and dance. Gabor Bolla unfolds the theme with a sparkling solo on tenor saxophone that moves the air.

In a way, we are back at the beginning. Playing the saxophone and making sound is 'basically breathing', says Lars Møller and elaborates: 'As an orchestra, you also breathe together and intonate sonically together. You create an element of fundamental human togetherness and presence. And then something happens to the space.'

Christian Munch-Hansen (b. 1969) is a music journalist, author and teacher. He has worked as a music critic for several Danish newspapers. He is the author of, among others, By af jazz (2008), Musical Dream Machine (2014), Forvandlinger (2022) and Lyden af Solen (2024).

A personal note

By Lars Møller

In the creation of this album, I have been privileged with invaluable inspiration and support from a range of musical collaborators and traditions. The music is imbued with Palle Mikkelborg's profound musical spirit, which has been a driving force throughout the project.

Salt draws on the Indian morning raga 'Todi', which I became acquainted with in the 1990s during my studies of the reed instrument shehnai under the tutelage of masters Pandit Anant Lal and Pandit Daya Shankar in Delhi. The opening bass ostinato of the piece is a contribution from my long-time musical partner, guitarist Thor Madsen.

Brazilian Aria is based on a Brazilian folk melody, whose beauty and historical depth were revealed to me by composer and pianist Egberto

Gismonti. The same melody has previously inspired the composer Heitor Villa-Lobos.

Echoes of India is a three-part tribute to Indian music. The first part, 'Hommage', draws its melodic material from raga 'Durga', whose inner life was unfolded to me by my Indian musical half-brother, shehnai player Sanjeev Shankar. The movement honours the great masters Ravi Shankar and Bismillah Khan, who brought this rich tradition to the West, as well as John Coltrane, who was inspired to revolutionise the expression of jazz. The second part, 'Transition', was transformed in the encounter between Palle Mikkelborg's and pianist Florian Weber's sublime improvisations. The third part, 'Passage', is dedicated to my composition teacher Bob Brookmeyer, whose spirit hovered over the creative process as a loving source of inspiration.

Folk Song No. 1 is based on the traditional Danish harvest song 'Marken er mejet' and was originally

commissioned by my mentor Erik Moskeholm for the European Jazz Youth Orchestra.

I owe a great debt of gratitude to the musicians in the NDR Bigband for their outstanding artistic contributions and patience, as well as to the producer and sound engineer team Christian Cluxen and Manuel Glowczewski for their meticulous and dedicated work on *Echoes*.

Palle Mikkelborg, a towering figure in Danish jazz, stands as one of the most innovative and influential trumpeters of his generation. Despite early formal training, Mikkelborg's unique voice is largely self-taught, drawing inspiration from a diverse palette ranging from jazz luminaries Miles Davis and Gil Evans to classical masters Ravel and Messiaen.

Since the 1960s, Mikkelborg has consistently pushed the boundaries of jazz, his distinctive trumpet style and ambitious compositions challenging conventional norms. His signature sound seamlessly blends lyrical introspection with dramatic flair, often creating expansive, atmospheric soundscapes enhanced by pioneering use of electronics and unconventional orchestrations.

Mikkelborg's work often transcends mere musicality, delving into spiritual and philosophical realms. This is evident in compositions like *Going to Pieces Without Falling Apart* (2002) and *My God and My All* (1991).

His influence extends far beyond Scandinavian borders. The critically acclaimed *Aura*, composed for and recorded with Miles Davis, solidified Mikkelborg's international reputation. His appearance at the 1968 Newport Jazz Festival marked him as a rising star, and he has since collaborated with an impressive roster of jazz giants including Niels-Henning Ørsted Pedersen, Jan Garbarek and Dexter Gordon. Mikkelborg has recorded as a bandleader for labels such as Debut, Metronome, Sonet, Storyville and ECM.

Unique among Germany's radio big bands, the **NDR Bigband** (The Hamburg Radio Jazz Orchestra) is a jazz ensemble composed of premier soloists of diverse backgrounds and influences whose collective endeavors coalesce to produce an original and striking group sound for a large ensemble. The NDR Bigband lives on its strong personalities. Each musician has his own individual style and

his own musical language. But there is one thing on which they all agree: what counts is the sound, the groove, the melody – the music.

1,400 concerts, numerous invitations to festivals in Germany and abroad and more than 80 record releases tell their own story. With around 25 programmes every year, each musician is required to adjust to new challenges again in a short time, with fresh ears. As a publically funded ensemble, the NDR Bigband sees itself as a culture medium.

Tours with world-famous musicians such as Al Jarreau, Randy Brecker, Omar Sosa, Maria Schneider, Bobby McFerrin, Chet Baker and many other artists, not only from the world of jazz, take the NDR Bigband not just to Europe but also to other continents around the world.

Luften og ilden

“Åndedrættet rummer mere, end naturvidenskabsmanden umiddelbart forstår. Han kender kun til vibrationerne af luften, der trækkes ud og ind, og han ser ikke længere end det. Derudover findes en pulseren: hjertets og hovedets pulsslag, pulsen, alt dette er en rytme. Mennesket tænker sjældent over, hvor meget der afhænger af denne rytme. Hele livet afhænger af den!”

– Hazrat Inayat Khan (1882-1927): *The Mysticism of Sound and Music*

Af Christian Munch-Hansen

Et nyfødt barn presser sig vej fra den svømmende fostertilstand og ud i verden, hvor det tager sine første ind- og udåndinger. Gerne med lyd på. Det vræler sig vej ind i livet. En fødsel er en skabelse, sådan som filosofen Hannah Arendt har gjort sig tanker om i forbindelse med sit begreb *natalitet*, der i videre forstand handler om muligheder, kreativitet og håb.

Det er det mirakuløse, vi foretager os livet igennem: trækker luft ned i lungerne og respirerer. Ordet 'inspiration' er netop det samme som at inha-

lere og fylde lungerne med ilt. Det må vække genklang hos enhver musiker, og især hvis man spiller et blæseinstrument, som det er tilfældet med komponisten og saxofonisten Lars Møller. Han har igennem sin mere end 30 år lange karriere ekspanderet sit musikalske udtryk som instrumentalist og orkestral komponist, spændt ud mellem Vesten og Østen, mellem skandinavisk eftertænksomhed, robust amerikansk jazz og følelsesfulde indiske modaliteter og rytmemønstre.

Echoes kalder Lars Møller denne udgivelse, for musikken er 'efterklangen' af det kunstneriske, menneskelige og spirituelle møde, som fandt sted tilbage i 2019 mellem komponisten og dirigenten, NDR Bigbands koloristiske orkester og trompetisten Palle Mikkelsbørgs sjælfulde nærvær.

Men musikken er også en 'efterklang' af dybere spor i Lars Møllers kunstneriske løbebane, herunder de kompositoriske trædesten, der fører tilbage til især komponisten og arrangøren Bob Brookmeyer, den intense fordybelse i amerikansk jazz og indisk musik, der løfter arven videre fra John Coltrane, og fordybelsen i meditation og vejtrækning, som har ført til, at Lars Møller i dag også inkorporerer meditation i sit musikalske arbejde.

Med *Echoes* kan man tale om, at noget kommer til syne på en ny måde i Lars Møllers orkestermusik eller i hvert fald bliver mere foldet ud end tidligere. Nemlig kontrasten mellem på den ene side rumligheden og luften i de af-

dæmpede og improviserede passager, hvis omdrejningspunkt er Palle Mikkelsbørgs frie og luftbårne spil (flere steder i spillevende dialog med pianisten Florian Weber), og på den anden side de fortættede kompositoriske mønstre og orkestreringer med både dansende puls og klanglig finesse.

Det er med andre ord en musik, der rummer både luften og ilden. Som et af de fire elementer kan luft i alkymistisk forstand forstås som det spirende forår, statisk, tåget og forbundet med tidløshed, spirituel åbenhed og nærvær. Det er kvaliteter, man hører i Møllers og orkestrets åbning på *Salt* og i særdeleshed i Mikkelsbørgs trompetstemme, der fanger lyden af vind og udtrykker væren i øjeblikket. Som Møller erindrer fra de indledende prøver: "Jeg husker tydeligt det øjeblik, hvor vi spillede sammen med hele bandet for første gang. Palle greb det rum, Florian gik med og en magisk dør åbnede sig."

I forlængelse af dette er der ilden, som er forbundet med sommer og

varme, men også dynamik, spænding og action, elementer, der folder sig ud i flere passager i Møllers driftige orkestermusik. I *Salt* og i suiten *Echoes of India* kan man ikke blot forestille sig det dybsindige, spirituelle Indien, men også det farverige og rytmisk pulserende Indien med krydderierne, klaseskellene og de trafikerede gader, hvor vækst, slum og armod får lov at flyde side om side med et karmisk træk på skulderen.

Salt indledes med summende raga-stemning. Møller er førstesolist (det eneste sted på pladen) og benytter her sin tenorsaxofon som en *shehnai*, det traditionelle, obo-lignende rør-bladsinstrument, som han tidligere har studeret i New Delhi. De bugtende melodiske linjer og små forskydninger har afsæt i den sørgmodigt efter-tænksomme raga "Todi", en pentaton raga, som traditionelt spilles om morgenen. Det er ikke noget, man bare spiller på en tenorsax, og Møller har brugt årevis på at finpudse denne tek-

nik. Musikken transformeres gradvist til et rytmisk orkesterarrangement, baseret på en indisk 7-slagsrytme "rupak taal", samtidig med at dronen fastholdes (i hele ni minutter). *Salt* kan dermed også ses som en variation af den type orkesterkomposition, der bygger på et orgelpunkt med eksempler tilbage til blandt andre Pete Rugolos *Mirage* (1950) og i værker af klassiske komponister som Mahler, Skrjabin, Stravinsky og Sjostakovitj.

Dynamisk er *Salt* som en langsom bølge, der rejser sig. Hermed bringes tematikken i titlen frem med en refleksion over den indiske politiker og aktivist Mahatma Gandhi og hans saltmarch i 1930, der var en aktion imod det britiske kolonistyrers monopol på saltfremstilling. Marchen var en politisk genistreg, fordi den udstillede det daværende britiske kolonistyrers moralske kollaps, da englænderne slog brutalt ned på de fredelige demonstranter. Gandhis civile ulydighed og ikke-voldsstrategi fik vidtrækkende konsekvenser som

inspiration for blandt andre Martin Luther King i USA.

Også *Brazilian Aria* rummer et humant perspektiv. Musikken er groet frem i skyggen af Brasiliens slavefortid, som landet deler med mange andre nationer (herunder Danmark), der ligeledes har slaveskeletter i skabene. Melodien stammer fra en kendt brasiliansk folkesang, som efter sigende blev sunget af slavegjorte brasilianere, når de overværede afstraffelse af andre slaver. Smerte og lidelse er således underteksten i den smukke melodi, som også komponisten Heitor Villa-Lobos anvendte, og som Lars Møller første gang bearbejdede i forbindelse med sit samarbejde med Egberto Gismonti i København i 2019. I nærværende indspilning skaber NDR Bigband et luftigt og vemodigt polyfont udtryk. Palle Mikkelsen er skrøbelig melodibærer, og Florian Weber bidrager med en stærk og poetisk klaversolo. Det særligt lysende klangunivers bringer minder om Gil Evans, og i

den orkestrale spændingsopbygning under klaversoloen er Møller inspireret af Maria Schneider og hendes arrangement af hovedtemaet til filmen *Spartacus* (1960).

Den tredelte suite *Echoes of India* er pladens musikalske omdrejningspunkt. Palle Mikkelsen åbner "Part I, Hommage" med uendeligheden som rum. Det er en tryllebindende introduktion, der sætter scenen, før orkestrets rytmegruppe bærer ostinat og puls frem med næsten ceremoniel ærbødighed. Musikkens modale og melodiske grundlag er den lette og lyriske raga "Durga" (muligvis den raga, Ravi Shankar viste John Coltrane, som brugte den i stykket *India* i 1961). Det mærkes i messingblæsernes durklange: en atmosfære af voksende tillid og selvtilid, der understreges i Møllers arrangement med hornenes livlige, melodiske bølgebevægelser. Den imod slutningen overtages satsen af en mørk, rockpræget ostinat, for begrebet

“Durga” rummer også en mere aggressiv side som navnet på en indisk krigsgudinde, der rider på en løve.

“Part II, Transition” byder på noget stort og uventet, som ingen på forhånd kunne have kalkuleret med: en improvisation mellem Palle Mikkelsen og Florian Weber, som leger en lang åbning frem, der udgør en komposition i sig selv. Umærkeligt glider musikken over i Møllers smukke ballade. Man bør være opmærksom på de sidste par minutter, hvor den gamle mesterarrangør Gil Evans træder frem som en sløret historisk gestalt i blæserklange. Det er et bevidst greb fra Møllers side, og det minder os om Gil Evans og Miles Davis’ legendariske samarbejder. Mikkelsen nåede at arbejde med dem begge; i 70’erne og 80’erne spillede han lejlighedsvis med Gil Evans Orchestra, og i 1984-85 skrev og indspillede han det orkestrale storværk *Aura* til – og med – Miles Davis som solist.

“Part III, Passage” er en kort sats med klar rytmisk appel, drevet frem af Morten Lunds elegante og energiske trommespil. Der er dynamisk udvikling i blæserne, hvis melodiske figurer knopskyder i motiviske variationer. Atter betones den modale drone-karakter med rod i raga-musikken. Her gives blot en smagsprøve på musikkens evighedsfornemmelse, og med Mikkelsens afsluttende toner, indpakket i rumklang, synes den at fortone sig i universet som en rum-sonde af lyd og luft.

Pladen afsluttes med en af Lars Møllers mest kendte kompositioner, *Folk Song No. 1*, der bygger på den danske vise “Marken er mejet”. Møller skrev oprindeligt arrangementet til European Jazz Youth Orchestra i 2006, men har siden anvendt det i mange sammenhænge og vundet en international pris med kompositionen. I dette reviderede arrangement med NDR Bigband understreges musikens flow af livsglæde og energi,

som også passer til den oprindelige folkesangs fejring af høsttiden med sang og dans. Gabor Bolla udfolder tematikken med en sprudlende solo på tenorsaxofon, der får luften til at flytte sig.

På en måde er vi tilbage ved begyndelsen. At spille saxofon og at lave lyd er “basalt set at trække vejret”, siger Lars Møller og uddyber: “Også som orkester trækker man vejret sammen og intonerer lydligt sammen. Man skaber et element af grundlæggende menneskeligt samvær og nærvær. Og da sker der noget med rummet.”

Christian Munch-Hansen (f. 1969) er musikjournalist, forfatter og underviser. Han har arbejdet som musikkritiker på flere danske dagblade. Han er blandt andet forfatter til By af jazz (2008), Musical Dream Machine (2014), Forvandlinger (2022) og Lyden af Solen (2024).

En personlig note

Af Lars Møller

I skabelsen af dette album har jeg været begunstiget af uvurderlig inspiration og støtte fra en række musikalske samarbejdspartnere og traditioner. Musikken er gennemsyret af Palle Mikkelsens dybe musikalske ånd, som har været en bærende kraft gennem projektet.

Salt trækker på den indiske morgenraga “Todi”, som jeg stiftede bekendtskab med i 1990’erne under mine studier af rørblæserinstrumentet shehnai hos mestrene Pandit Anant Lal og Pandit Daya Shankar i Delhi. Nummerets indledende basostinat er et bidrag fra min mangeårige musikalske partner, guitaristen Thor Madsen.

Brazilian Aria bygger på en brasiliansk folkemelodi, hvis skønhed og historiske dybde blev åbenbart for mig af komponist og pianist Egberto Gismonti. Samme melodi har

tidligere inspireret komponisten Heitor Villa-Lobos.

Echoes of India er en tredelt hyldest til indisk musik. Første del, "Homage", henter sit melodiske materiale fra ragaen "Durga", hvis indre liv blev udfoldet for mig af min musikalske halvbror, den indiske shehnai-spiller Sanjeev Shankar. Satsen hylder de store mestre Ravi Shankar og Bismillah Khan, som bragte denne rige tradition til Vesten, samt John Coltrane, der lod sig inspirere til at revolutionere jazzens udtryk. Anden del, "Transition", blev forvandlet i mødet mellem Palle Mikkelborgs og pianist Florian Webers sublime improvisationer. Tredje del, "Passage", er tilegnet min kompositions lærer Bob Brookmeyer, hvis ånd svævede over tilblivelsesprocessen som en kærlig inspirationskilde.

Folk Song No. 1 tager udgangspunkt i den traditionelle danske høstsang "Marken er mejet" og blev oprindeligt bestilt af min mentor Erik Moskeholm til European Jazz Youth Orchestra.

Jeg skylder en stor tak til musikerne i NDR Bigband for deres enestående kunstneriske bidrag og tålmodighed, samt til producer- og lydtekniker-teamet Christian Cluxen og Manuel Glowczewski for deres omhyggelige og dedikerede arbejde med *Echoes*.

Palle Mikkelborg regnes for at være en af Danmarks mest fremtrædende og nyskabende jazzmusikere. Trods tidlig trompetundervisning er han i vid udstrækning selvært. Hans musikalske inspiration spænder vidt – fra jazzikoner som Miles Davis, George Russell og Gil Evans til klassiske komponister som Ravel, Messiaen og Ives.

Siden 1960'erne har Mikkelborg konstant udfordret musikalske grænser med sit personlige trompetspil, ambitiøse orkesterarrangementer og genreoverskridende værker. Hans karakteristiske stil forener det lyriske med det dramatiske og er ofte kendetegnet ved en vidtfavnende, atmosfærisk kvalitet, forstærket af utraditionelle orkestreringer og elektroniske effekter. Mikkelborgs kompositioner rummer også en spirituel, transcendent dimension, hvilket afspejles i værker som *Going to Pieces Without Falling Apart* (2002) og *My God and My All* (1991).

Mikkelborgs anerkendelse rækker langt ud over Skandinaviens grænser,

ikke mindst takket være værker som *Aura*, skrevet til og indspillet med Miles Davis. Han optrådte med sin kvintet på den prestigefyldte Newport Jazz Festival i 1968 og har gennem årene samarbejdet med et imponerende udsnit af jazzens største navne, herunder Niels-Henning Ørsted Pedersen, Terje Rypdal, Abdullah Ibrahim, Jan Garbarek, Dexter Gordon og Gil Evans. Mikkelborg har indspillet for pladeselskaber som Debut, Metrophone, Sonet, Storyville og ECM.

NDR Bigband skiller sig ud blandt Tysklands radiobigbands. Orkestret består af topsolister med forskellige musikalske baggrunde, hvor hver musiker bidrager med sin egen stil, men tilsammen formår at skabe en unik og personlig ensembleklang, hvor netop klangen, groovet, melodien – musikken – er i højsædet.

Med over 1.400 koncerter bag sig, utallige festivaloptrædener og flere end 80 pladeudgivelser har NDR Bigband for længst cementeret

sin position på den internationale jazzscene. Orkestret er kendt for sin alsidighed og spiller omkring 25 forskellige koncerter hvert år. Som et offentligt finansieret ensemble ser NDR Bigband sig selv som et vækstmedium.

NDR Bigband har gennem årene turneret med nogle af jazzens største navne, heriblandt Al Jarreau, Randy Brecker, Omar Sosa, Maria Schneider, Bobby McFerrin og Chet Baker og mange andre kunstnere, også udenfor jazzens verden. Turnéerne har ikke kun bragt NDR Bigband rundt i Europa, men også til andre kontinenter verden over.

DDD

Recorded live at Musikhuset Aarhus by DR (Danish Broadcasting Corporation) on 24 August 2019 . Additional recordings (overdubs) at NDR Studio 1, Hamburg on 16–18 November 2020, 7 December 2020 (conducted by Torsten Maaß) and 10–11 November 2022

NDR post-production

Recording producer: Christian Cluxen

Recording engineers: Manuel Glowczewski and Sven Kohlwege (2020)

Technicians: Philipp Neumann (2020) and Jens Kunze (2020, 2022)

Technical assistants: Lasse Zacharias (2020), Lars Reichmann (2020) and

Rafael Rupprecht, Masih Mohammadi

Mixed by Christian Cluxen, Manuel Glowczewski and Lars Møller, NDR, Hamburg

Mastering by Christian Cluxen

Produced by Lars Møller

Executive producers for NDR: Axel Dürr and Michael Dreyer

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NDR Bigband, www.ndr.de/bigband



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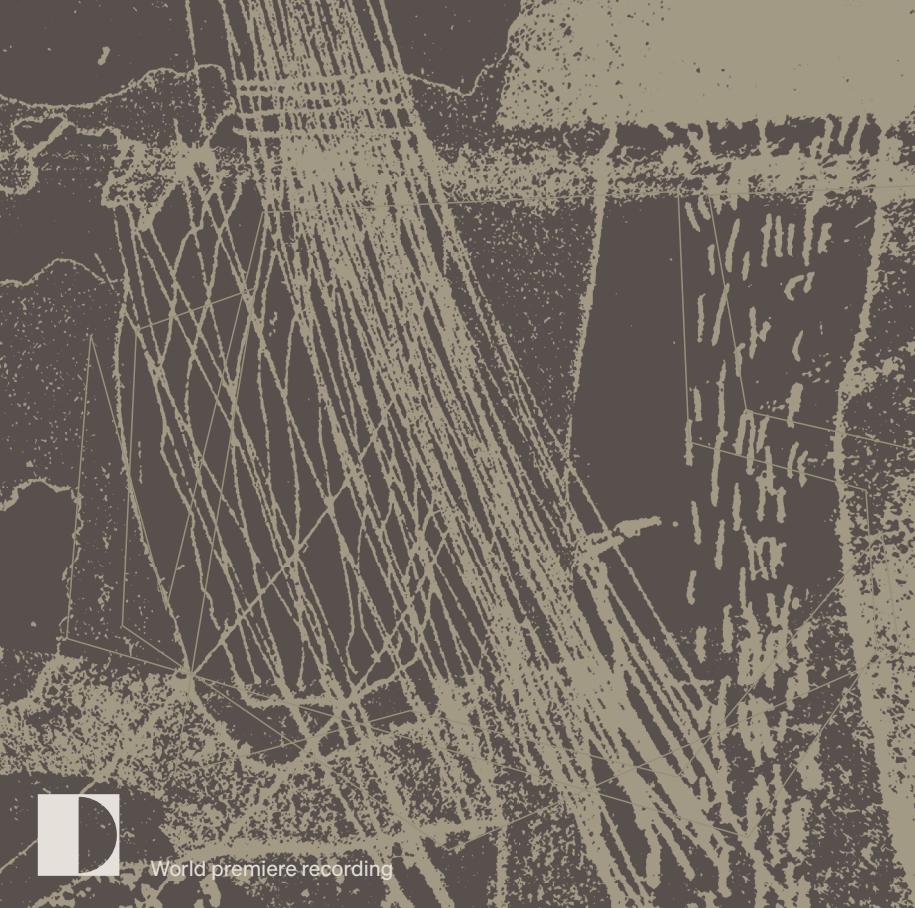


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MUSIKANTOLOGI

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