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## THE NORWEGIAN SAXOPHONE IN A HAPPY CROSSOVER EXERCISE

On February 15, 2019 by Jean-Luc Caron

Take-Out , CD , Symphonic Music

### Lawo

Martin Romberg (born 1978): *The Tale of Taliesin*; Torstein Aagaard-Nilsen (born 1964); Kjell Habbestad (born in 1955): *Bør*: A Norwegian dream. Ola Asdahl Rokkonen, saxophone; The St. Petersburg Northern Sinfonia, direction: Fabio Mastrangelo. 1 CD LAWQ. Recorded at Studio Lendok in St. Petersburg (Russia) in November 2016. Notice in English. Length: 71:41



Contemporary Norwegian music reaches us only dropper. We have the opportunity to meet three of today's composers in their works for alto saxophone and orchestra.

The Norwegian saxophonist Ola Asdahl Rokkonen (born in 1983) appears as the master builder of these recordings perfectly successful on the technical level and exciting in more than one respect with regard to aesthetics. Active both in the classical and jazz fields, he defends with skill three scores in first world engraving. Its rigorous and flexible playing, its warm and lascivious timbres, its controlled and catchy rhythms are perfectly combined with the fine sound qualities of the Saint-Petersburg Northern Sinfonia Orchestra (founded in 2016) led with confidence and know-how by Fabio Mastrangelo, Italian conductor educated in Bari, his hometown, then in Geneva and London. The reputation of Studio Lendok is never in doubt in these succulent recordings.

Martin Romberg's score, *Taliensi's Tale*, based on an ancient Celtic legend, written in 2009, dominates the program by the beauty of the saxophone and orchestral sounds, the languorous lengths of his contemplative passages and the easy of his speech. No doubt this is a powerful example of what the best *crossover* spirit can offer.

*Bør* (Burden) by Torstein Aagaard-Nilsen (2012), inspired by the existentialist poem by Stein Mehern (1935-2017), is divided into three sections, drawing a specific atmosphere, first of all by "... the weight of this light" characterized by Expansion-retraction movements and also by improvised phrases. Then the paragraph noted "... all stars twinkle" nourishes the inspiration of the musician before the final subdivision "... the enigma is neither time nor space" with dramatic accents do not end up resolving to express tranquility.

*A Norwegian Dream* (Draumkvedet) famous medieval visionary poem of the XIII<sup>th</sup> century led Kjell Habbestadd to opt for a traditional orchestration close late romantic, especially as fraught with folk elements. Written in 2002 and revised in 2015, its three movements Dream, Bliss and Vision adopt alternately improvised elements, jazzy measures, calmed climates; they constitute an invitation to reflection on the meaning of existence.

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