



Benedicte Maurseth

1. Huldre mi 4:04
2. Huldreslått I & II 7:40
3. Huldreslått 9.03
4. Etterdønning / *Reverberation* 4.24
5. Den 4. Gorrlausen 3:58
6. Og fargane skiftar på fjorden / *And the Colours Shifts on the Fjord* 6:26
7. Nøringen 2:58
8. Bygdatråen 8.40

Track one is composed by Lars Skjervheim, track four and six are composed by Benedicte Maurseth (TONO).

All other tracks are traditional music interpreted and arranged by Benedicte Maurseth

Benedicte Maurseth: Hardanger fiddle, voice

HCD7347

EAN: 7033662073474

Release:

Benedicte Maurseth is a remarkable musician, rooted in tradition yet a true visionary, the unique sound of her Hardanger fiddle displaying both the eloquent fragility and the raw power of the human spirit. Here, in perhaps her most personal album to date, she's alone but never isolated; she celebrates her connections with her past and propels them into the future. Her playing is like the velvet softness of a forest floor, the light creeping back after winter darkness, an eagle soaring into the sky. It is music which belongs to Norway, to the world and beyond.

Hers is an impressive career whose many recordings have included her acclaimed international release "Over Tones" on the ECM label in 2014, collaborations with such genre defying musicians as Nils Økland and Marilyn Crispell, David Rothenberg, lutenist Rolf Lislevand and the renowned Norwegian writer Jon Fosse. She's in demand as a collaborator because of her belief in experiment and improvisation, and her sense of creative adventure. Her approach seems determined, potent, charismatic yet quietly respectful, of the music, and of her listeners. Who are we? What place do we have in her life?

"Nothing ever stands still", she says sharing this latest collection of music with us, and it's perhaps those words more than anything that give the key to the tunes she has chosen and the way she has been working with them.

From the mysterious opener 'Bygdatråen', to her quietly compelling voice

entering in 'Og fargane skiftar på fjorden' to a silvery Huldre slått and the final, prayer-like 'Huldre Mi', she reveals a confidence, a deep belief in what she's doing. Benedicte talks about having "variations" or "options" when working with tunes from centuries ago; it's been her natural way of approaching music ever since childhood and her lessons with her teacher Knut Hamre. Being "wrong" is not a possibility, and nor does that approach sit within the legacy of Norwegian traditional music. Norway's languages, spoken or musical, reflect enormously varied geographical traditions, human needs and expression. You cannot be wrong but you can celebrate differences, differences in the interpretations of tunes, differences in techniques.

Embodying a creative curiosity is essential for artistic growth, and giving oneself, and others, permission to take risks is an important quality to inhabit. Maybe now, this reveals the moment of her greatest involvement with the language she has grown up with. Her collaborator here, her own fiddle, is an equal partner, and it feels as though they work together to find the rich and powerful sound that we hear in these tunes. The mysterious qualities we have grown to expect of the Hardanger fiddle are there, but they speak in compelling and authoritative ways. How magical it would be to be an unseen visitor in a space where Benedicte and her fiddle converse, discuss, sometimes wrestle with a tune, sometimes coax each other into a different space, sometimes cry, and often laugh. The music we hear on this CD has surely grown out of this intimate relationship, one we want to know more about, though we know it's also something deeply personal and private.

Being in the presence of a Hardanger fiddle player is to be drawn into their unique musical and performing personality. How can that be translated through a recording process? How can that sense of self and of space be present and transport and intoxicate a listener? The production process is a tough one, and there are, all too often, over-produced recordings making their way onto the market which ultimately remove the listener from the true feeling of personal expression. The sound here, on this recording, has a genuine validity, this is not just an album of Hardanger fiddle music, this is Benedicte Maurseth, no-one else. She engages with the listener through the space she creates, how she paces and places the different tracks, and how each is a step along the path. She gives her listener a sense of involvement, moments of delight and dance, of disruption and challenge, of surprise as we hear her own voice in song taking us to other imagined places. But perhaps most of all she gives the listener respect in allowing each of us to reflect and be just who we need to be at any given moment. There is room for Benedicte's narrative as well as our own.

Fiona Talkington
March 2019

Contact: andreas@grappa.no Tel.: +47 23358011 / +47 41419089
www.grappa.no/heilo