



NATURE
Nils Wogram Nostalgia
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Nils Wogram – Trombone
Arno Krijger – Hammond Organ and Bass Pedals
Dejan Terzic – Drums, Glockenspiel

NILS WOGRAM NOSTALGIA // NATURE

The mountain is calling. The music on *Nature* is formed by an intensive experience of nature and possesses the intimacy and immediacy one expects more from Norwegian jazz. "Being in nature is an important source of inspiration for me," admits Nils Wogram. "You can think of different things there, get some peace and quiet. Since it's really such an important part of my emotional world, I decided to write pieces for an album that are all inspired by natural spectacles and then to record them with my band Nostalgia."

Vapors from the Hammond subside like heavy fog in a valley, the drums set swabs of mountain blooms covered with dew, and the trombone makes gravity felt as it moves upwards or spreads its wings to pursue the sun over the

black treetops. The grooves and sounds are synchronized with organic processes such as a step, breath or glance that wanders slowly over the horizon and collects countless details. In recent years, Nils Wogram has written and recorded many abstract things. With his band Nostalgia he is now returning to a very physical sense of sound. He draws power directly from the ground and passes it – via his instrument and the whole band sound – back into the atmosphere.

“What I compose,” said Wogram, “is shaped as much by my current ideas as it is from the feeling wherever it draws the band along with their unique features and strengths. The last music we made with Nostalgia was quite rock-oriented, but there were many arranged parts, some of which were also quite demanding. Once again I wanted to move a bit more towards acoustic music, something that I can specifically reduce down to its essentials.”

So often, life runs in circles. It is not uncommon that you find yourself on an impassable trail, at a spot where you were once before, and find a completely new outlook. Wogram also had this experience when he confronted organist Arno Krijger and drummer Dejan Terzic with the songs of *Nature*. They were quite surprised at the simplicity of the new songs. Not that the trombonist would have had to work hard to convince them, but the three musicians had to work together to find the appropriate attitude – to simply leave the pieces the way they were intended. This process culminated in a journey of discovery that led not only to the Alpine peaks. It is the collective element of surprise that is the great strength of the CD. It often sounds as if the musicians asked each other while playing: Can we really do that? The fact that it works lies as much on the personal maturity and integrity of the three protagonists as it does on how captivating and eloquent their common narrative thread is.

Wogram, Krijger and Terzic know exactly what they want and can do in this context, but they also find precisely the right moments where they can forget all that and just let go. They play what they feel like, take up a search without having to encounter the ultimate wisdom. “And all the while you also penetrate into areas where you’ve never been before, but which you really want to make your own. Things where you say to yourself, there’s something in it, something that really fits me.”

The idea behind Nostalgic is to place jazz since its beginnings in close touch with the tradition of German Romanticism. For this, you only need to think of the twilight cover of *Affinity*, the first CD by Nostalgia. More than ever, one can hear a fundamentally honest, undisguised pathos on *Nature*. “Jazz is often about seeing who can play better and has the hipper ideas,” says Wogram. “Here I simply wanted to make an album without doing all that simply because I just felt like it. That does not mean that you cannot again devote yourself to more complex ideas later. But now this is exactly what had to come out.” Wogram manages to convey real *joie de vivre* on the shortest possible path without having to deliver a musical packaging information leaflet or a highlighted hiking map. He just goes out and takes the listener with him. Nostalgia carries a colossal life force to the listener.

Instead of longtime Nostalgia organist Florian Ross, Arno Krijger now presses the keys. Unlike most other jazz organists who manage the bass with the left hand, Krijger plays the bass lines with his feet. In most organ trios, the

guitarist takes over the chord function when the organist plays solo. Since Nostalgia doesn't have a guitarist, this obviously doesn't work. But since Krijger plays the bass per pedes, he takes over the chords with his left hand and melodies and improvisations with the right. Thanks to this substructure, Wogram can build the pieces differently. But he appreciates yet another of Krijger's characteristic: "Arno is not an organ-playing pianist as Florian Ross is, rather he exclusively plays the organ. His self-conception lends the organ tonal nuances that did not exist earlier in Nostalgia. This is a real asset for me. When Florian said goodbye to the band, I was very sad, but life goes on. I then found Arno; it was a great stroke of fortune. He has an affinity for the same musical principles that are very important to me. As a leader I have exploited this mercilessly."

Wogram not only appreciates drummer Dejan Terzic's intuitive instinct for his sense of beat, groove and fire, but also his sensitivity for dynamics and form. "When I play rhythmic things with him, I do not have to concentrate on anything, but can just start playing. That's the very reason why I founded an organ trio, because organ and drums together develop such a deep groove."

Wogram antennae are always receiving signals. On the last tour he kept an eye and ear on the CDs and iPods of his colleagues. As a band leader, he sees his responsibility as abstracting these impulses and linking them with his own ideas. *Nature* is a godsend on Wogram's search for the natural. To stay with the metaphor: whoever drives into the mountains does not see the mountains for the first time in his life. But exactly because the mountain silhouette looks so familiar, one would immediately want to climb up on top of the mountain. Only on the way up to the summit does one actually realize how unique each individual mountain is. Indeed, it is exactly this very familiarity in the unique that forms the unpretentious and seductive power of this CD.