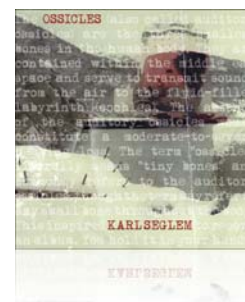




Karl Seglem

Ossicles



Ballroom-Jams & Hidden Messages

For over a decade, Norwegian Hornsman Karl Seglem has made expressing things that can not be put into words his goal. He may have come closer than ever before to attaining that vision on „Ossicles“. Well knowing that the stage has always been his most natural habitat, Seglem traveled to the idyllically located Herrenhaus-Hotel in the small town of Salderatzen to recreate the mythical moods of his concerts on his 27th studio album. The basic sessions to four key-pieces took place in the building's entirely wood-panelled ballroom and in front of a small audience, creating a subtle but palpable tension. Only then did Seglem enter Reidar Skår's 7Etag Studio in Oslo to finish work on „Ossicles“. The result may not be a live album in the traditional sense, but nonetheless constitutes the most vivid document of his highly personal approach to Jazz so far.

On the one hand, „Ossicles“ continues Seglems' mission of fusing the purity, archaic power and lyrical melodicism of Norwegian Folk with exploratory improvisation. Opener „Gammal Rørsle (Old Movement)“, is a case in point and a classic Seglem-tune, a grooving and obliquely ornamented journey for Trumpet Goat Horn and an exotic, glistening texture of percussion. „Mårblå (More Blue)“, with its angular Violin-lines, meanwhile, was written on the remote peninsula mentioned in its title: Located in the Sognefjord and only accessible by ferry, Mårblå provided an inspiring backdrop for Seglem, who took enough food for a week, collected and cooked delicious mushrooms in the woods and used the pervasive quiet and calm to write new material. Compared to predecessor „NORSKjazz.no“, a timeless collection of deep, soulful Jazz-ballads, „Ossicles“ can thus clearly be characterised as a return to his unique signature sound.

At the same time, the album does introduce a string of new compositional elements and heralds a fresh point of departure. Seglem called in the support of no less than three different percussionists, including Erland Dahlen of former Norwegian Rock band Madrugada, while seamlessly integrating the timbral colours of the West African ngoni and Antilope Horn. African influences, Reggae rhythms and Pakistani metrics are just a few of the surprising stylistic elements contained within the remarkably eclectic arrangements, but they are always used with great care and an ear for the message hiding behind the sounds: „It's quite a simple piece“, Seglem says about „Gammal Rørsle“, „yet the melancholic sound of the goat horn awards it a touch that is impossible to explain.“ Thanks to the associative and atmospheric density of „Ossicles“, he no longer needs to, either.