

rune grammofon

Arve Henriksen

Sakuteiki

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Arve Henriksen: trumpet, harmonium, church organ, vocal

"Sakuteiki" is the first solo album by the Norwegian trumpet player already celebrated for his work with Supersilent, the Christian Wallumrød Trio, Trygve Seim's "Different Rivers" Orchestra and the bands of Iain Ballamy and Audun Kleive. The album emphasises the uniquely "vocal" quality of his trumpet playing and his indebtedness to the music and culture of Japan. The tonal quality of the shakuhachi flute in particular has long been an inspiration for him, giving him a sense of direction in the development of his own sound.

"An interest in sound-making was there from the beginning of my work with the trumpet. I have spent many hours on developing a warm sound, for instance, but not only that. In my opinion, the trumpet has vast potential for tone and sound variations that we still have not heard. At one point, I think it was in 1988, Nils Petter Molvær lent me a cassette of shakuhachi playing. Then things changed." Arve Henriksen began collecting recordings of Japanese music, with koto, biwa, shakuhachi and other instruments: "I let the music 'ring' and develop in my head. I was astonished by the sound of this flute..." The shakuhachi's roots in the tradition of Zen Buddhism fascinated the trumpeter, as did its "meditative and minimalistic expressive quality. This has made me work with tone and sound making in a new direction."

"Of course, before this and all the way along I have been and I am influenced by Jon Hassell, Per Jørgensen, Don Cherry, Palle Mikkelborg, Nils Petter Molvær, Miles Davis, Chet Baker and many more. I have for many years been searching for sounds and moods in different corners...the Armenian instrument duduk, Indian flutes, Balinese sounds, Mongolian overtone singing, Sidsel Endresen's vocal sounds, electronic sounds. Over the last 10 or 12 years I've been into many different styles and worked with many inspiring musicians and artists. Anyway: the trumpet sound has gradually moved along in the spirit of the shakuhachi."

The album is titled after an 11th century Japanese treatise on garden planning, which emphasises the principle of placing things "where they are called for". The music is, accordingly, laid out with great stringency. It is an album of contemplative music, at the opposite end of the spectrum from Supersilent's sound-storms, although fellow Supersilent electronics man Helge Stein (a.k.a Deathprod) was engineer for the project. "I knew from the first moment that Helge would be involved in this production. He inspired me and gave the right influences to let the music emerge in the different recording spaces. "Sakuteiki" was recorded in the barrel-vaulted room of Oslo's Emanuel Vigeland museum and in two churches noted for their acoustic properties, the Sofienberg Church and the Lommedalen Church. In each of these reverberant spaces Henriksen places his sounds carefully, creating the "aesthetic tension" of which the author of the Sakuteiki spoke.

"At first I had an idea of making a record with electronics, sampling and so on," Arve Henriksen says, "but I soon found out that the most honest way of dealing with 'my' music at this point was to cut down on ideas and sound and complexity. It had to be simple, in a way. I chose the various rooms because I wanted different reverb and acoustic response. This record is made with no additional reverb and editing, and everything is recorded live with no overdubs. Sofienberg is a regular Norwegian church in Oslo. The organ there is old, but has a nice, dark bass sound and the reverb in the room gives a warm feeling. The problem with this church is that it is situated in the middle of Oslo...and we had some problems with outside noises.... so we tried the church in Lommedalen. I already knew that this church had a special organ. It is tuned in a old way"-as can be heard on "Procession Passing". The organ and harmonium pieces mark Henriksen's debut as a keyboardist. "The Emanuel Vigeland Museum is a very special place. It is in fact a Mausoleum which has a long reverb - 10-15 seconds. The room is dark with scary paintings on the walls and ceiling. It is like a mini Cathedral." A fourth location employed during the recording was Studio Mekannik, a loft-apartment studio in Oslo with a much tighter acoustic, used for the piece "Inside Tea-House".

Is the album's quietness a reaction to the sensory overload of Supersilent? "No, it's probably a supplement to the sound area around Supersilent. Maybe it is a reaction to the electronic mindless laptop music currently being circulated as 'great art.' I hope the CD has some moments of tranquility..."

Born in 1968, Arve Henriksen studied at the Trondheim Conservatory from 1987-1991, and has worked as a freelance musician since 1989. He has worked with many musicians familiar to ECM listeners including Jon Balke (with whose Magnetic North Orchestra he has played extensively), Anders Jormin, Edward Vesala, Jon Christensen, Marilyn Mazur, Marilyn Crispell, Nils Petter Molvaer, Misha Alperin, Arkady Shilkloper, Marc Ducret, Ketil Bjørnstad, Tore Brunborg, the Cikada String Quartet and more. He has played in a very broad span of contexts, ranging from work with koto player Satsuki Odamura to the rock band Motorpsycho via numerous free improvising groups with Ernst Reisinger, Sten Sandell, Iver Kleive, Peter Friis-Nilsen et cetera.