

Bobo Stenson, Arild Andersen, Jon Christensen – Underwear (1971)

Written by bluesever

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1 - Underwear 07:41.55 2 - Luberon 09:19.65 3 - Test 03:38.55 4 - Tant W 08:55.60
5 - Untitled 03:57.40 6 - Rudolf 06:12.40 Musicians: Bobo Stenson - Piano Arild Andersen - Bass, Cello, Guitar Jon Christensen – Percussion

This LP from ECM's early days finds Swedish pianist Bobo Stenson leading bassist Arild Andersen and drummer Jon Christensen in a program of uncompromising, collectively improvised post-bop. Andersen is prominent in the mix and plays just tons, all of it totally relevant to the music. Christensen provides structure, drawing on his breathtaking talent to contribute a dazzling range of color, a deft, flawless pulse, and fresh rhythmic ideas for the pianist and bassist. Stenson stakes out a middle ground, communicating closely with his partners and underpinning the group with subtle cues and harmonic shifts. Stenson's title track, a great post-bop, piano-bass-drum performance, goes for broke, but with discipline and a shared sense of purpose. From delicate beginnings, the pianist's two ballads, "Luberon" and "Tant W.," build steadily in power and intensity. Ornette Coleman's "Untitled" gets a short, manic workout, reminiscent of pianist Keith Jarrett's involvement with Coleman's music. "Test" is a mesmerizing piano vamp, over which Andersen adds arco effects, as Stenson strums and plucks from inside the piano, and Christensen busies himself with miscellaneous percussion toys. The concluding track, "Rudolf," is an Andersen reworking of Miles Davis' "Mademoiselle Mabry." Although structured as a piano trio, this set's main attraction is the opportunity to hear, up close, the enormous talents of Christensen and Andersen. That, in turn, though, says something about the egalitarian spirit of Stenson. ---Jim Todd, Rovi

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