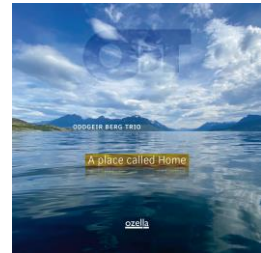




Oddgeir Berg Trio A Place Called Home



Island of Sound

The island of Rolla is tiny and sparsely populated - a mere 900 people live here. On *A Place Called Home*, Oddgeir Berg takes us to this, his father's birth place, for a concept album about the magic of nature, the spaces hidden in memory, and the bonds that family provides. Recorded with a new trio line-up and featuring arguably the strongest compositions of his career, this is at once his most personal and most universal work.

From afar, Rolla may look more like the tip of a vast underwater rockscape than an inhabitable island. Idyllically embedded into a fjord, it rises from the waterline to Mount Sula's 1,000 meter peak. Oddgeir's father was born on a couch in the very house depicted at the back of the cover and still today, the family spends many free days among Rolla's shores, meadows and mountains. These ten wordless songs pay homage to that time, taking listeners through a sonic tour of the island and its wild landscape.

At the same time, the music was written during a period of personal turmoil, including a cancer diagnosis for Berg's mother, and the worries which accompanied her treatment. As one would expect, the music feels intimate and pastoral, mostly slower-paced and introspective. And yet, it unfolds a magnetic pull, drawing listeners in through the lyricism of its melodies and the simmering tension of the interplay between the musicians. You can clearly hear how close these topics are to Oddgeir Berg's heart.

Considering this background, *A Place Called Home* is a remarkably uplifting experience. On "Circles," Berg explores neoclassical fusion, inviting new member Audun Ramo to embark on a gorgeous bass solo. "Song for my Mother" oscillates between the hope- and the fearful as Lars Berntsen's drums bleed into textural pulses. But it is "Happiness is where YOU are" which is the most surprising cut here: A warm, almost danceable piece based on a four to the floor bass, and latin percussion flourishes which lend it a dreamy house feeling.

The spirit of gentle exploration may feel like a contradiction for an album about home. But really, it is only natural. Once you've climbed all the way to the top of Mount Sula, you're treated to a spectacular view: On the one side, it stretches across Norway. On the other, it opens into the sea and the Atlantic.

It is an invitation to a journey – to make any place your home.