

For the recording of a new album of improvised music for piano, double bass and drums, produced by Manfred Eicher of ECM Records, my task was to compose and arrange eight compositions. My own compositions are *Doubt thou the stars*, based on a few stanzas from William Shakespeare's Hamlet, act 2, scene 2. *Three shades of a house*, a rubato lament inspired by a triptych by Norwegian artist Hanne Borchgrevink. *Oktoberhavet*, based on a poem by Tomas Tranströmer. *Hemingway intonations*, originally commissioned and performed by the Altenberg trio (violin, cello, piano), the foundation for the composition taken from Hemingway's famous six-word novel. And *Stilla*, a jazz tune in its direct expressivity. And three arrangements of other composers' music; Cuban Silvio Rodríguez' *Cancion contra la indecision*, *Wedding song from Poniky* by Bela Bartok, and Eric Satie's *Elegie*. In all this, the aim was to compose music directly written for the specific musicians involved (Bobo Stenson and Jon Fält besides myself). Musicians that I know well and yet want to challenge with *multidirectional* material- music that can resolve in many different ways, music with no predefined conceptualization, music open for each player's personal interpretation.

What do I mean, in this case, writing a *multidirectional music*? Very simplified it is how to make others sound good. Composing multidirectional is the aim to make each individual in an improvising ensemble feel challenged and comfortable at the same time. To feel both the right and necessity of doing personal choices of direction. By using poems, paintings or historical music as references besides the score itself, I can as a composer open for more than only a one-dimensional contemporary musical framework and for a less foreseeable mutual direction in the music. The interpretation is not obvious for the musician- and therefore opens for and demands creativity. I also avoid composing too much of detailed sections in order to have the improvisation constantly present and alive. The music is clearly centered around the three musicians and their artistic uniqueness and personal ways of approaching given material. I write with the specific trio in mind, knowing its advantages, skills and maybe its needs. Three experienced artists take, one by one, their own direction in music in addition to the multilayered scores. Out of this the deep interplay evolves.

In a recording situation, this individual creativity and the complex interplay necessary is put on edge. When recording in studio - without the direct and rewarding communication with listeners and room and with a new material to master - experience, mutual trust and the constantly active listening are key elements. A somewhat unpredictable musical dialogue between the players, based on balancing musical gestures and space, will occur. Curiosity, focus and acceptance- key words for an experienced improviser- will have to overcome routine, fear and expectation. "In fear we expect, with love we accept", says Kenny Werner in his book *Effortless mastery*. The result can be heard on ECM 2582.