

ACT

Solveig Sletta Hjell

solveig sletta hjell
domestic songs**DOMESTIC SONGS****ACT 9017-2**

LC 07644

ACT

German Release Date: September 28, 2007**Solveig Sletta Hjell recorded her new album in her living room - a home for her songs.**

Good to see you! Come on in and make yourself at home. Solveig Sletta Hjell's new album is an invitation. An invitation to come closer, to linger, to let mind and soul catch up. The name of the album, *Domestic Songs* has a literal dimension. The CD was created in her living room, at her very own piano.

The result – a kind of 21st century chamber music – continues in the tradition of the previous *Slow Motion Quintet* albums, which received an overwhelming response from audience and reviewers alike. *Concerto* said about "Good Rain" (ACT 9713-2): "Modern, pop and beautiful. The Norwegian Quintet touches me in a wide-open, lively, loving, poetic, oblique, melancholy and balladesque way", while the *WELT* was impressed by a unique quality in the Norwegian's singing: "Solveig Sletta Hjell is one of those singers with great musicality, for whom singing is more than just delivering a song, more body, more insistence, more music". The forerunner "Pixiedust" (ACT 9708-2) had already elicited the following endorsement from the *British Jazzwise*: "By the end of her concerts you know you've experienced something unique" and the *Independent on Sunday* warned: "Incredibly moving... This is serious stuff".

Home is not a place. Home is a treasure trove of experience that shapes our life. Solveig Sletta Hjell has never hesitated in sharing this experience with her audience. Her studies (which included training by Sidsel Endresen, the Norwegian icon of experimental singing) culminated in a practical research project: Her *Slow Motion Quintet* opened up "a new way of looking at jazz and pop characterized by slowness and a concentration on hidden treasures" (*Hamburger Abendblatt*). In spring 2005 she received the renowned "Spellemannsprisen" the Norwegian equivalent of a Grammy for her album "Silver" (ACT 9715-2), in July of the same year, she was presented with the "Radka Toneff's Memory Award" at the festival *Molde Jazz*, and finally the *Kongsberg Jazzfestival* gave her the *Vital-Pris* (worth 100.000 Kroner). She invested the prize (which converts to around 12.500 Euro) in a beautiful Steinway grand piano, and began using it to accompany herself at her daily practice sessions at home.

This is the background for *Domestic Songs*. They are a result of well-aimed support for jazz and the sum of a wide range of listening experience: The gospel piano on "Match Perfect" reminds Solveig of singing in her father's church as a young girl. The brass band arrangements on "One of These Days" and the lullaby "Oh Sweetly" sung here as a duet with her brother Olav suggest further connections. From the dry keyboard groove that makes way for the wonderful pop-coloured choir on "Snowfall", Tom Waits' and Dorothy Parker's straightforward wisdom ("Time") and ("Inscription for the ceiling of a bedroom") the singer with the "magical voice" (*STERN*) spans a bridge that reaches out to the late Beatle song "Because", which receives a congenial 21st century remake with harmonium, trumpet and glockenspiel.

Solveig Sletta Hjell has really come home. She sings and plays the *Domestic Songs* herself on her piano, and has composed the music and written the lyrics to quite a few of them. The catchiness of "Snowfall", the stunning declaration of love on "I Do" and not least "Birds and Hopes", this comforting view of the future, demonstrate her quality as a singer/songwriter in her own right. But Solveig Sletta Hjell is anything but a diva, who goes solo and leaves her band behind. Even if the *Slow Motion Quintet* is not mentioned on the cover, trumpeter Sjur Miljeteig is co-producer, co-author and writer of sensitive horn arrangements, drummer Per Oddvar Johansson and the young bassist Jo Berger Myhre provide a dependable foundation where necessary. Pianist Morten Qvenild contributed a sensitive melodic meditation on the evening poem "Bed is too small". Peder Kjellsby finally, a long standing member of the quintet's inner circle of friends is co-producer of *Domestic Songs*, does his thing on the harmonium and glockenspiel and plays the guitar solo on "Because" with an edgy sound somewhere between Marc Ribot and Ry Cooder.

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A voice. A piano. This concentration on the bare essentials is the source of the unostentatious urgency of *Domestic Songs*. The songs are perceptive and descriptive of what lies hidden under the surface of things; they are a world apart from any docile domesticity. "Slettahjells voice can really get under your skin", observed the *Bonner Generalanzeiger* last year. And right it is!

The CD:

Domestic Songs – Solveig Slettahjell – ACT 9017-2 – LC 07644

Line Up:

Solveig Slettahjell – vocals, piano / Sjur Miljeteig – trumpet, vocals
Peder Kjellsby – harmonium, glockenspiel, guitar, percussion / Jo Berger Myhre - bass
Per Oddvar Johansen – drums / Olav Slettahjell – vocals (Oh, Sweetly)

Tracks:

01 4.30 AM (P. Kjellsby, S. Slettahjell) 3:14 / 02 I Do (S. Slettahjell) 2:56 / 03 One Of These Days (S. Miljeteig) 3:16 / 04 This Is My People (S. Miljeteig) 3:04 / 05 Because (J. Lennon, P. McCartney) 2:41
06 Time (T. Waits) 4:14 / 07 Snowfall (S. Slettahjell) 3:13 / 08 Match Perfect (P. Kjellsby) 2:31
09 Inscription For The Ceiling Of A Bedroom (S. Miljeteig, D. Parker) 1:48 / 10 Bed Is Too Small (M. Qvenild) 2:56
11 Baby's Bed's A Silver Moon (S. Miljeteig) 2:33 / 12 Leave Me Here (S. Miljeteig) 3:52
13 Oh, Sweetly (S. Slettahjell) 2:05 / 14 Never Forget The Good Ones (P. Kjellsby) 3:46
Bonus Track: Birds And Hopes (S. Slettahjell) 2:37

Recorded by Sjur Miljeteig and Peder Kjellsby, Oslo, February 01-10, 2007

Mixed by Sjur Miljeteig and Peder Kjellsby, Bengtsfors and Oslo, February 19-25, 2007 and May 12-13, 2007

Mastered by Giert Clausen at Fersk Lyd with Knut Vaernes

Produced by Sjur Miljeteig and Peder Kjellsby

Solveig Slettahjell on ACT:

ACT 9713-2 Good Rain

ACT 9715-2 Silver

ACT 9708-2 Pixiedust

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