

FRIENSEMBLET

A Free-Spirited Jazz Ensemble Led By **Mathilde Grooss Viddal**

FRIENSEMBLET - PRESS QUOTES

UNDERGROOVE (2012)

"Highly creative - I'd love to hear this band live! ...The performance bursts with playfulness, voltage, watts and I don't know what."

- **Per Ivar Henriksbø, Gudbrandsdølen, 26.04.12**

"12 musicians across all genres - where jazz, folk, and electronica merges to an elevated entity."

- **Erling Wicklund, NRK P2, 24.04.12**

"Great and fantastic."

- **Kjell Moe, Nordlys, 09.05.12**

"Holding Balance" was released in 2006 and I cried a warning about "music Gil Evans turns in his grave to hear better". "Come Closer" fulfilled all expectations three years later, and we can not do all the songs on "Undergroove" justice, other than to determine that it's just incredibly good. "Undergroove" is not possible to ignore."

- **Roald Helgheim, Dagsavisen, 21.04.12**

COME CLOSER (2009)

(translated from Norwegian to English by Hågen Rørmark)

"Mathilde Grooss Viddal creates free spirited contemporary music full of improvisation and freewheeling elements where all of the band-members are featured equally. The result is extremely powerful music that takes its cue from open-mindedness and the sheer joy of playing!"

- **Kjell Moe, Nordlys, 11.11.09**

"[Here] the artistry is let loose, there's no consideration made to please the faint-hearted or wishes to be played by Vidar Lønn-Arnesen (Norwegian easy-listening radio host). This is raw, wild and ill-mannered, jazz with no restrictions or rules, the way the nature of free-jazz was meant to be."

- **Per Ivar Henriksbø, Gudbrandsdølen Dagingen 15.10.09**

HOLDING BALANCE (2006)

(translated from Norwegian to English by Michael W. Sandelson)

"Powerful and free."

"Attention, please! This is Contemporary music with bells on. The CD has a really good arrangement that Gil Evans surely would stir in his grave to hear better, a beautiful version of "In A Dream" with the singer Marianne Natvig, accompanied by Viddal's bass clarinet. This is before the band puts the icing on the cake with Cole Porter's "I Love You", in their own way. This is the pleasant surprise this Autumn."

- **Roald Helgheim, Dagsavisen 01.10.06**

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“New, strong voice for large ensembles.”

“Holding Balance” is so good. The music is both modern and energetically composed for a large ensemble, bringing forth exciting arrangements with both power and nerve. Inspired solos and robust ensemble-playing, coupled with in changes of mood, give us instant audible associations to Maria Schneider’s Orchestral music. So, Geir Lysne, Jon Balke, Erlend Skomsvoll, Eirik Hegdal and Helge Sunde: you’ve got company from a woman on the team. Not by virtue of equality, but quality.”

- [Terje Mosnes, Dagbladet 04.10.06](#)

“Fantastically good Norwegian Jazz/new music big band led by composer and bass clarinetist/saxophonist Mathilde Grooss Viddal. The most obvious comparison would be to Maria Schneider's work, but Mathilde and her ensemble have their own sound. She's utterly unknown here, but I can't believe that a great band like this can be ignored for long - especially as this is their debut recording! Unless you are completely allergic to jazz, this comes highly recommended!”

“The CD Holding Balance is an exploration of the conceptual world of modern big band jazz. The listener is given a glimpse into Grooss Viddals tonal work; a blend of free-improvisasjon, humor, and strict composition. She is inspired by John Coltrane, Ornette Coleman, Tom Waits, Carla Bley, by groove-based compositions, 20th century harmonies and free improvisation. The compositions serve as vehicles for showcasing the individual members’ improvisatory skills as well as constituting a musical entity in their own right. The strong focus on the compositions and their arrangements allows Chateau Neuf Fri Ensemble to make music that ranges over large spectres, from the free-flowing and intense to the lyrical and soothing.”

- [Steve Feigenbaum, Wayside Music, USA, 2007](#)

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