

ACT

Nils Landgren

Christmas With My Friends VI ACT 9872-2

German release date: 26. October 2018

Christmas without the songs – it's unthinkable. And yet how can one be open to different musical styles and also strike a good balance between them? How can all the right moods for the festive season be captured? Should it be classical or soulful, gospel or pop, blues or jazz? The result can often be just one style of singing from one person – but that's not the case with Nils Landgren's "Christmas With My Friends". A sequence which would normally have had to be patched together from a wide range of interpreters is all there, and from just the one source. Alongside the Swedish trombonist/singer himself, there are four vocalists, Jeanette Köhn, Ida Sand, Jessica Pilnäs and Sharon Dyll, and their fundamentally different voices allow them to combine many musical genres. The way these four co-exist so harmoniously is just one of the reasons why "Christmas With My Friends" has proved to be quite so popular and successful over the past twelve years. Accompanied by Eva Kruse on bass, Johan Norberg on guitar, and saxophonist Jonas Knutsson, the ensemble reinterprets Christmas songs from all over the world and in a jazz spirit, bringing together the well-known with the less familiar, combining the cheerful with the contemplative.

Soprano Jeanette Köhn sets the classical tone. She has been garlanded with all of the most important prizes in Sweden, including a Grammy. She also tends to be the singer who steps into the limelight for important official celebrations in Sweden such as the King's Birthday, the Nobel Prize Ceremony, Astrid Lindgren's funeral or the Royal Wedding in 2010. And she brings exactly that sense of occasion to "Christmas With My Friends", notably in the album's reflective conclusion with the Swedish traditional song "Den signade dag" and Mendelssohn's "Hark! the Herald Angels Sing". She is to be heard in delightful vocal duets with Nils Landgren – a medley from "Little Drummer Boy" and "Peace On Earth" – and also with Ida Sand in "Christmas Lullaby".

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CHRISTMAS WITH MY FRIENDS VI

Jonas Knutsson
Johan Norberg
Jeanette Köhn
Jessica Pilnäs
Sharon Dyll
Eva Kruse
Ida Sand



And mentioning Ida Sand, she is not only the pianist for this little Christmas ensemble, she also brings her bitter-sweet voice to it. For many years she has been one of the outstanding white soul voices in Europe, and is the perfect singer for the bluesy "Merry Christmas Baby", and for Dave Grusin's soul song "Who Comes This Night".

Jessica Pilnäs has a clear and bright timbre, hers is a disarmingly light voice, and she has a fine understanding of how jazz should flow. She caused a sensation in 2012 with a Peggy Lee tribute. She has exactly the right voice and attitude for standards like Frank Loesser's "What Are You Doing New Year's Eve?" and for her own composition "When This Night is Over".

The darkest vocal colour comes from Sharon Dyll. Daughter of a Swedish mother and Guyanan father, she grew up in London and Barbados and brings gospel and blues to the party. She made her name in musicals (as well as work in overdubbing, as a TV actress and as a speech teacher). Just watch the stage light up as she comes on to sing songs like Bobby Troup's "I'd Like You For Christmas" or Jonas Knutsson's "Come One, Come All".

And of course one must not forget our Master of Ceremonies himself, Nils Landgren. He doesn't only make the trombone sing, he also has that unmistakable, throaty yet bright soul voice. He sets the Christmas cavalcade in motion with the opening piece "Christmas Is", on which he welcomes all of the others to join in.

"Christmas With My Friends VI" is a celebration, and everyone who enjoys exceptionally good Christmas songs from Bach to ABBA in new and characterful interpretations is most welcome to it. It is the perfect accompaniment for all situations and moods, and is to be enjoyed before, during and after the day itself. Everyone involved in it has been a part of this joyous Christmas music-making for a long time now – while the number of listeners feel who love to be part of it has kept on growing too. For all of these friends may it be a peaceful and very merry Christmas!

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Photo by Raphael Sprenger

- 01 **Christmas Is** (Eva Kruse & Peter Liljeqvist) 3:00
- 02 **Oh No, It's Christmas Again** (Johan Norberg/Nils Landgren) 2:34
- 03 **Who Comes This Night** (Dave Grusin/Sally Stevens) 3:47
- 04 **Wie soll ich dich empfangen** (Johann S. Bach/Paul Gerhardt) 2:02
- 05 **Little Drummer Boy** (Katherine K. Davis, Harry Simeone & Henry Onorati)
Peace On Earth (Ian Fraser, Larry Grossman & Alan Kohan) 3:16
- 06 **Come One, Come All** (Jonas Knutsson/Sharon Dyall) 4:01
- 07 **What Are You Doing New Year's Eve?** (Frank Loesser) 3:31
- 08 **The Story Of Christmas** (Evelina Gard) 2:57
- 09 **I Have A Dream** (Benny Andersson & Björn Ulvaeus) 2:58
- 10 **Merry Christmas Baby** (Lou Baxter & Johnny Moore) 3:00
- 11 **Christmas Lullaby** (John Rutter) 3:58
- 12 **When This Night Is Over** (Jessica Pilnäs) 3:56
- 13 **I'd Like You For Christmas** (Bobby Troup) 3:05
- 14 **Hymn No III** (Johan Norberg & Nils Landgren) 1:51
- 15 **Den signade dag** (traditional, Johan Olof Wallin) 3:24
- 16 **Hark! The Herald Angels Sing** (Felix M. Bartholdy/Charles Wesley) 4:11

Produced by Nils Landgren with Johan Norberg

Cover design by Siggie Loch, based on David Ortins / ACT Art Collection

Christmas With My Friends VI is also available on Vinyl (ACT 9872-1)

Also available:

Christmas With My Friends I to V

Christmas With My Friends V – Vinyl (ACT 9830-1)

Nils Landgren / trombone & vocals
Sharon Dyall / vocals
Jonas Knutsson / saxophones
Jeanette Köhn / vocals
Eva Kruse / bass
Jessica Pilnäs / vocals
Ida Sand / vocals & piano
Johan Norberg / guitars & kantele

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