

# ACT

## Ida Sand

### Do You Hear Me?

ACT 9743-2 (also on vinyl)

Release date: 30. April 2021

In 2020, the authorities in Sweden tried to keep normal life going for as long as possible, but, even there, things were eventually brought to a halt by Corona. And like everywhere else, musicians were among the hardest-hit. "It felt somehow as if one of my limbs had been severed," recalls Ida Sand. "I had a longing to sing, I was missing music so much." The Stockholm-based singer/pianist is a well-established artist with a strong and long-standing following in several countries across Europe, so her diary would normally have been full. The lack of work, it turned out, was having a similar effect on her long-term colleague, keyboardist/organist Jesper Nordenström. "One day he called me," she recalls. "'Let's meet in my studio and let's just do something'. Okay, I said, I can try to bring some compositions. We asked some more friends if they wanted to play. It all came from the simple desire finally to be doing again what we all love: making music together. We played four or five pieces and agreed to meet again. I promised I'd bring some new material for the next time, and I did. It was amazingly motivating to be back doing my job..."

**The result is "Do You Hear Me?".** The phrase is used a lot, but here it has a special significance: this is Ida Sand's most personal album to date, and not least because she has written all of the ten songs herself. "Before every project, you ask yourself: what should my next step be? In this case it was very clear: for the first time, I wanted to record my own songs, and only my own songs." But that's not the only reason why "Do You Hear Me?" has turned into such a strong singer/songwriter album. Sand has always seen herself as more of a soul singer than a jazz singer, and in terms of emotions, these tunes hold nothing back. They aim directly for the heart. "I didn't think much about the songs before I wrote them. It all just came together when we were in the studio. One track, 'Too Close for Comfort', I wrote when I got home after a session. It took me about half an hour, I was in such a state of creative flow, I literally couldn't stop!"

**Ida Sand has produced an exciting, varied and colourful garland of songs** to make up the album: we start with a snappy, guitar-heavy folk number, "Wasted on the Youth", then the ravishingly groovy "Burning". This is followed by a funky anthem a la Randy Crawford, "Now Is Not the Time".

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Jesper Nordenström  
Ola Gustafsson  
Dan Berglund  
Per Lindvall  
+ guests



**The title track is a ballad which feels almost psychedelic,** whereas "Too Close for Comfort" is a languid love song. "Don't Run Away" is a crisp soul shuffle with a brass section, and "Now Is Not the Time" is thoughtful, drawing the attention in on its subtle lyrics. "Go Be With Her" has the melancholy defiance of a song by Tom Waits or Randy Newman. Here, the singer pointedly expresses the wish that her departing lover should experience just as much happiness with his new squeeze as she had with him...

**The members of Sand's band dovetail with each other wonderfully:** they are all old friends, and she has been with them either in the studio or on the stage countless times. Besides Nordenström – who contributes a superbly abstract organ intro to "Can You Hear Me Now" – they are Sand's husband Ola Gustafsson on acoustic and electric guitars, e.s.t. veteran Dan Berglund on bass and Per Lindvall on drums. Anders Van Hofsten contributes vocals, while trumpeter Goran Kajfeš and saxophonist Per "Ruskträsk" Johansson, both known for their roles as creative heads of Oddjob, are there to form a top-notch brass section as required.

**This band of soloists puts itself completely at the service of Sand's music.** They never fail to ensure that the distinctive timbre of her voice, always so dramatic, can shine through. As different as the many moods, styles and the solo passages in this album may be, the songs have one thing in common. As Sand explains: "It could have been a subconscious thing, but because of the time and the circumstances, the songs are almost always about relationships – and not just about couples. I wrote one song for my mother, one for a friend, and one is about parting." So, "Do You Hear Me?" is an album which has something to say – musically, thematically and at a human level – about the times we are living through. So we need to thank Ida Sand – plus her friends...and the strength of that irrepressible longing to be back doing what she does so naturally and so well – for having captured all of these moods and reflections in ten remarkable and captivating new songs.

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- 01 Wasted on the Youth 3:29
- 02 Burning 4:20
- 03 Can You Hear Me Now 4:45
- 04 Waiting 5:34
- 05 Now Is Not the Time 4:33
- 06 Sweet Child 5:24
- 07 Too Close for Comfort 5:15
- 08 Don't Run Away 4:14
- 09 Let Go 3:46
- 10 Go Be With Her 3:12

All music and lyrics written by Ida Sand  
Produced by the artist

Recorded by Jarkko Heiniö at Stureparken Studio,  
Stockholm, May 4 - 6 and June 10 - 12, 2020  
Mixed by Pål Svenre at Unit 7  
Mastering by Klaus Scheuermann

**Ida Sand** vocals, piano & wurlizer  
**Jesper Nordenström** organ, keyboard & synths  
**Per Lindvall** drums & percussion  
**Dan Berglund** upright bass & Höfner bass  
**Ola Gustafsson** acoustic & electric guitars  
**Anders Von Hofsten** backup vocals  
**Goran Kajfeš** trumpet  
**Per "Ruskträsk" Johansson** saxophone  
**Mats Öberg** harmonica (guest on "Waiting")

Cover art by Petrus Wandrey © VG Bild-Kunst, 2021

Photo by Josefine Bäckström

#### Ida Sand on ACT

My Soul Kitchen (2018, ACT 9736-2)  
Young at heart (2015, ACT 9729-2)  
The Gospel Truth (2011, ACT 9518-2)  
True Love (2009, ACT 9481-2)  
Meet Me around Midnight (2007, ACT 9716-2)

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