

Niklas Winter
born 1969
guitar

Niklas Winter started his studies at the Turku Conservatory in 1985 with guitar as his main instrument. When the interest towards jazz music grew, Winter decided to travel abroad to study guitar and jazz composition at the Berklee College of Music in 1991.

There he met musicians who would play an important role in his future projects and bands.

In Boston he formed the **Scandinavian Jazz Quartet** with Danish tenor saxophone player **Emil Hess**. This band has been active since 1992 until this day with performances in Europe and Asia. The quartet has produced 3 CD's so far, the latest one in 2000 named Silent Knowledge.

Nowdays the band works with different rhythm sections, performing compositions of Winter and Hess. In the latest constellation drums are played by **Richard Huntley** (New York) and bass by **Ville Herrala** (Finland).

Other musicians have been **Jesper Bodilsen** (Denmark) on bass and **Morten Lund** (Denmark) on drums. This quartet has also done many projects with piano players (**Lars Jansson** from Sweden and **Thomas Clausen** and **Nikolaj Hess** from Denmark).

The newest band that Winter leads has also the beginning already in the Berklee days. His old friend and colleague, bass player **Hideyuki Shima** (Japan) contacted him in the early spring of 2004 and soon there was a two week tour scheduled in October 2004 with concerts in Tokyo, Osaka, Kyoto and in Yokohama. This quartet is called **Niklas Winter Quartet (NWQ)** and the rest of the musicians besides Mr. Shima are **Eisuke Kato** (Japan) on piano and **Toni Porthen** (Finland) on drums. The band plays melodic jazz music with a focus on tight groove and high energy.

The new CD of Niklas Winter named '**Beautopia**' was released in Japan on King Records in December 2007. 10 musicians from Finland, Japan and Denmark perform on this CD.

Basically there is two different bands playing, NWQ and a quintet consisting of top Finnish jazz musicians as **Jukka Eskola**, **Seppo Kantonen**, **Severi Pyysalo**, **Timo Hirvonen** and drummer Toni Porthén. The musicians from Denmark are **Jesper Bodilsen** on bass and **Morten Lund** on drums.

This record has received outstanding reviews in the Japanese magazines and media. Beautopia will be released in Finland and Europe in April 2008. This is the 5th CD of Winter as bandleader.

. www.studio-saari.com

Besides of the quartet mentioned above, Winter also leads his Finnish-Swedish quartet that recently released their first album called '**Live in Stockholm**' (2006).

This CD, recorded in the legendary Miller's Café in Stockholm, is modern contemporary jazz at its best. The band, **Niklas Winter Quartet** (West!) is known for fearlessly mixing elements from american free jazz to european concert music. The other members are **Fredrik Nordström** from Sweden on tenor saxophone (Swedish Jazzprice in 2001) and **Filip Augustson** on bass. **Markku Ounaskari** from Finland plays the drums. This quartet is a frequent guest on the clubscene in Europe.

Winter also works with larger ensembles and smaller ones. A good example of the larger is his arrangements of the medieval psalm collection **Piae Cantiones**. Here Winter works with a voice ensemble and a band consisting of cello, vibraphone, saxophone and acoustic guitar. A highly acclaimed CD was finished in 2002, recorded in the Turku Cathedral and simply named Niklas Winter Quartet: Piae Cantiones. This octet performs mostly at classical music festivals. In this band you find virtuosos like **Severi Pyysalo** (vibraphone) and **Tane Kannisto** (saxophone).

Among other big projects have been writing bigband music that was performed in October 2005 at TUC, Tokyo and at the La Porta Hall in Suzu in December 2007.

Music for a septet was performed successfully in Christians Kirke, Copenhagen Denmark in the Spring of 2006. Newly written music will now in 2008 be performed at the **City Theater in Vaasa**

(28-29.4.2008) and at the **Finlandia House** in 10.5.2008. These two compositions are ordered from Winter by the Kuula Opisto in Vaasa and by Svenska Kulturfonden, celebrating the 100-anniversary of the foundation itself.

Musicians that Winter has performed with are, to name a few: **Kenny Wheeler, Lars Jansson, Jukki Uotila, Ted Curson, Cameron Brown, Kiri Te Kanawa, Svante Thuresson, Katrine Madsen, Jeanette Lindström, Severi Pyysalo, Thomas Clausen** and many more..

Besides the Piae Cantiones project, Winter pushes the limits of the guitar trio format with different rhythm sections. In this format he mostly works with standard material mixed with his originals. A radio recording by **YLE** was made with his trio in February 2006. Winter has also successfully written music for television documentary programs. (YLE)

He has also received awards such as The Aboa Award in 2001 and the Western Finland's Culture Award in 2006.

Winter has also been asked to perform solo at different festivals and concerts, **Beijing Modern Music Festival** in May 2005 and now again in November 2008. You can find pieces of this soundworld in every record Winter has recently made- one or two solo guitar tracks are always there. On the latest album Winter performs a tribute to the late great guitarist Derek Bailey.

During the years Winter has performed in the greater part of the jazz festivals in Finland including: **Pori Jazz, Turku Jazz, Keitele Jazz, Baltic Jazz, Winter Jazz, Elo Jazz, Jyväskylä Summer Jazz, Kalott Jazz** and in **Lahden Jazztori**.

Here is a selected discography of Niklas Winter:

As leader:

2008 Beautopia (King Records, KICJ529)
2006 Live in Stockholm (Abovoice-1013)

Band: Niklas Winter
Band: Niklas Winter Quartet

2002 Piae Cantiones (Abovoice-1011)

Band: Niklas Winter Quartet & Camerata Aboensis

2001 Saknad (Abovoice-1008)
1999 Hypnosis (Silence-0001)

Band: Winter's Jazz Workshop
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As co-leader:

2000 Silent Knowledge (Abovoice-1006)

Band: Scandinavian Jazz Quartet Feat. Nikolaj Hess

1997 A Night In Bilbao (Music Mecca)

Band: Scandinavian Jazz Quartet Feat. Lars Jansson

1994 New Deal (Intermusic)

Band: Scandinavian Jazz Quartet

As sideman:

2000 Answer (Silence-0002)
2001 Blue (Svarvar Music)
1995 Hägringar (SeepraSing)
1994 Nattfågel. (NILCD-1)

Band: Jan Simons Band Feat. Kenny Wheeler
Band: Mikael Svarvar
Band: Mecki Knif
Band: Nilla Hansson Trio

Contact and Booking:
Information, music and more:

info@abovoice.com
www.niklaswinter.com