OUR Recordings

The Mols Booklet of Melodies

Cat. no 9.70859 I **UPC**: 730099785914

01 **A Minor Masquerade in Thwaite**	04.52
02. **Lambhill**	06.44
03. **She Wandered with the Dwarves on the Three Knolls**	03.46
04. **The Young Goose Maiden part I.**	02.53
05. **Isles Head**	07.14
06. **Suite Dark Ness**	10.43
07. **Old Memories Fading**	06.05
08. **The Sacred Stones**	05.00
09. **I Am the Wind**	05.41
10. **Hopsa on Headlandhill**	04.30
11. **The Wall of the Dragged Passage**	04.44
12. **The Yellow Cottage**	03.59
13. **The Young Goose Maiden part II.**	03.09
Total:	**69.12**

MUSICIANS

Jakob Buchanan (composer/ flugelhorn)
Chris Speed (tenor saxophone/ clarinet)
Anders Jormin (bass)
Simon Toldam (piano)

Artos Quartet:
Tue Lautrup (violin)
Sarah Lucy Foldager (violin)
Sanna Ripatti (viola)
Brian Friisholm (cello)

MOLS – The Mols Booklet of Melodies

A short introduction

On his new double vinyl album, Jakob Buchanan masterfully blends the ultra-local folk music and the unique character of the landscape, with some of the world's leading names in modern jazz.

A few years ago, jazz composer and trumpeter Jakob Buchanan moved to Mols. Here, he sits and plays in an old circus wagon on Thorup Mark, gazing over the rolling hills and becoming absorbed in an old booklet of folk tunes by the local legend, fiddler Peter Madsen (1865–1900). One autumn day, he tries out the old dance tunes on his trumpet while looking out across the landscape. The tunes turn into hymns, and it feels as if an old soul is reborn floating across the warm, hilly land, a landscape that writes its own silent music on the horizon every day.

MOLS – The Mols Booklet of Melodies is a musical homage to the landscapes and folk music of Mols, a symphonic work premiered at Tved Church on Mols on April 26, 2025.
The music is released on vinyl and digitally, accompanied by text and images by Rasmus Theisen, author of the novel Molbohistorier (2023), and photographer Per Bergmann.
In addition to his own projects, Buchanan performed and toured with late percussionist Marilyn Mazur. His previous album Requiem was recently re-performed at Musikhuset in Aarhus, and it received both *Album of the Year* and *Composer of the Year* at the *Danish Music Awards 2021*.

MOLS – The Mols Booklet of Melodies is a 70-minute work for an octet consisting of a classical string quartet and a jazz quartet. Four traditional folk tunes from Peter Madsen's handwritten book are woven into the composition, creating a musical narrative where string quartet and jazz quartet alternately take center stage.

MUSICIANS

Composer and trumpeter Jakob Buchanan was recently honored as *Jazz Composer of the Year 2024* at the *Danish Music Awards* for the album *Song & Wind*, featuring the *Aarhus Jazz Orchestra*, *Copenhagen Boys' Choir*, late percussionist Marilyn Mazur, and conductor Carsten Seyer-Hansen (OUR Recordings).

Swedish bassist Anders Jormin is one of the world's most distinguished jazz bassists. He has received numerous awards and honors, including the rare *Jan Johansson Prize*, the *Swedish Radio's Guldkatten Award*, and *The Royal Swedish Academy of Music's Grand Prize*. His solo album *Alone* became a cult classic and was named *Record of the Year* in all categories worldwide in 1991.

New York legend Chris Speed is a tenor saxophonist, clarinetist, and composer. His work spans widely rooted in jazz, yet extending into various forms of folk, classical, and rock music. Speed is associated with a wide range of ensembles and has been a prominent and influential voice in jazz and improvised music for over three decades.

Pianist and composer Simon Toldam is one of Scandinavia's most exciting and acclaimed musicians. He has released 17 albums, five of which have won *Danish Music Awards*, including *Orchestra of the Year 2021* and *Best Album 2019*. He is a member of the Danish record label *ILK Music*.

The Artos Quartet was founded in the summer of 2018 and has quickly established itself on the Danish music scene. Its vision is to perform string quartet music at the highest level and to promote awareness of the vast repertoire of quartet works written by the most beloved composers. The Artos Quartet serves as the artistic leadership and resident ensemble of the *Artos Festival* in Aarhus. The quartet consists of Tue Lautrup (violin), Sarah Lucy Foldager (violin), Sanna Ripatti (viola), and Brian Friisholm (cello).

About the compositions by Jakob Buchanan

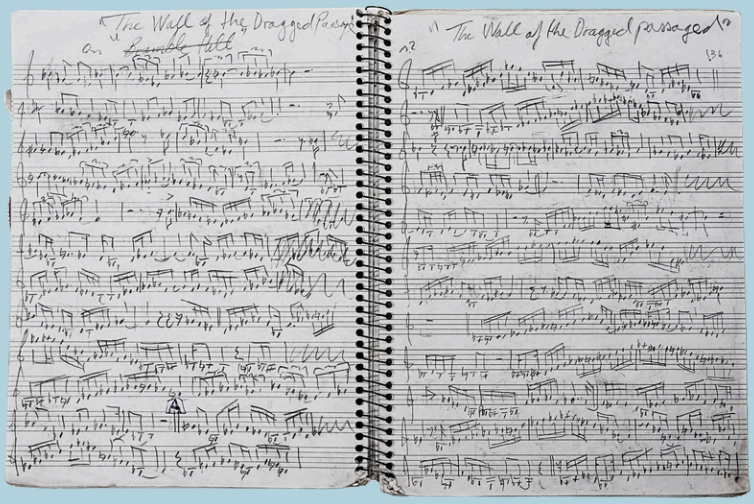
All the music *on this album was created in my circus wagon on Mols, at Thorup Mark just outside Tved, by The Yellow Cottage House that the farmer and fiddler Martin Madsen had built around 1904. Martin Madsen was the son of Peter Madsen, who lived up in Tved.*

Since my Molbo neighbors Jan and Berit made me aware of this history, it has planted a musical seed in me, a sense of humility, respect, and curiosity about what it must have been like to be a farm laborer while also being a musician, playing for everything from dances to funerals.

That was the beginning of a compositional process in which I selected four melodies by Peter Madsen from the booklet and then really began to take them apart and put them back together. Around and within these magical sonic doorways to a bygone time, I wanted to weave new moods, all of it composed on the horn while looking out at my surroundings, my view. To create musical mood transcriptions of what nature did to my melodic lines. Sitting in the middle of a symphony of fields, meadows, forests, hills and valleys; country roads cutting through the landscape, visited by everything from deer and falcons to large flocks of seagulls, geese, fieldfares, and goldfinches.
I needed an approach where the music truly became my own, and when I began to explore what the place names around me meant and then translated the titles into English, it was as if the music opened itself to me. It created both distance and a resonance of something fairy-tale-like and Tolkien-esque. It became clear to me that I had to write for instruments that could be connected to the music: trumpet, clarinet, violin, etc.

About the compositions by Jakob Buchanan

1. A Minor Masquerade in Thwaite
(En Mindre Maskerade i Tved)



A small tribute to Tved and the town's old tradition of celebrating Shrovetide and revue. The melody is originally a masquerade from Peter Madsens melody book, but I rewrote it in a minor key and created a harmonic universe in my own colors. Tved comes from the word Thwaite, which in Old Norse means a clearing. The place name is found all over the Nordic countries and also in England, where Jutlandic tribes likely brought it with them from Denmark.

2. Lambhill *(Lamhøj)*
Lamhøj leads up to *Vistoft Church* from Thorup. I asked my neighbor Jan what his favorite place in the area was, and it was Lamhøj. He will be buried at Vistoft churchyard with a view over, among other things, *Knebel Inlet*, near his childhood home.

3. She Wandered with the Dwarves on the Three Knolls *(Hun vandrede med dværgene på de tre høje)* For my wife Nanna and Trehøje, which is her workplace. A magical and iconic place on Mols.

4 The Young Goose Maiden *(Den lille gåsepige I. del)*
A small movement inspired by a melody from Peter Madsen's melody book, which I imagine as *The Little Goose Maiden*.

5. Isles Head *(Øhoved)*
A tribute to the magical *Øhoved*, which frames *Knebel Inlet* from the south.

6. Suite Dark Ness *(Mulnæs Suite)*
A tribute to Mols, my friend Anders Jørgen, and the entire community we have become part of. When the dark season arrives, we find comfort in seeing the lights from our friends' farms, Løgholm and Metholm, on the other side of the fields of Lower Tved. I have read that Mols, according to some old church records, derives from Mulnæs, which can mean the Dark Headland. Translated into English: *The Dark Ness*.

7. Old Memories Fading *(Gamle minder blegner)*
In a way, the title piece of this Mols fantasy. Again, a small melody from Peter Madsen's melody book, which I have tried to rewrite into a cinematic landscape universe as I see it from my view. A tribute to the fiddlers of a bygone time, whose spirit still exists here, in the wind, in the landscapes, and in some of the houses.

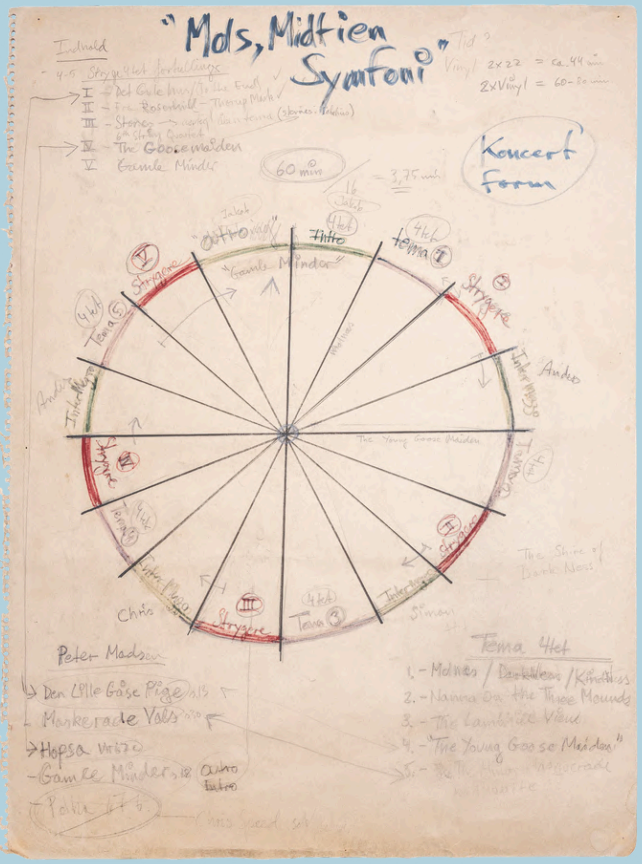
About the compositions by Jakob Buchanan

8. The Sacred Stones *(Stendysserne)*
The stone dolmens stand everywhere on Mols as monuments from ancient times, dating back to around 3500 BC, reminding us that this place has been inhabited since time immemorial. Some of the place names may date all the way back to the Iron Age, such as Tved (Thwaite).

9. I Am the Wind *(Jeg er vinden)*
The wind shapes our daily life, as we live in a completely open landscape without shelter. I thrive incredibly well with it ... perhaps because I myself am a wind player. Holger Drachmann writes: *"I am the sea, for I cannot be otherwise." I write: "I am the wind, for I cannot be otherwise"*.

10. Hopsa on the Headlandhill *(Hopsa på Skødshoved)*
A Hopsa dance tune from Peter Madsen's melody book. Again a decomposition, where all the melodic material has been taken apart and reassembled. I have mirrored the melodic lines around themselves and tried to recreate a fiddler vibe, but with a new melodic language.

11. The Wall of the Dragged Passage *(Dragsmur)*
Dragsmur *(The Wall of The Dragged Passage)* is the transition or passage from Mols that leads to Helgenæs, from where one can look back across to overview Mols.



Buchanan's Sketches to the Music

12. The Yellow Cottage House *(Det gule hus)*

A reworking of some of my own melodic material, which is the only one of my purely string quartet movements included on this recording.
It started as a practice sketch to train myself in writing for string quartet, and it simply sounded right when I sat in the circus wagon listening to rehearsal recordings with the Artos String Quartet.

13. The Young Goose Maiden part II
(Den lille gåsepige II. del)
Simon Toldam's solo piano interpretation of *The Little Goose Maiden*.

The Gifts of the Landscape

By Christian Munch-Hansen

> *What if the music is already there,*
> *and we just have to find it?*
> - **Kenny Wheeler**

Several years ago, Jakob Buchanan met one of his great sources of inspiration, the Canadian trumpeter and composer Kenny Wheeler, who gave him the question quoted above. Wheeler's words stand as a kind of riddle pointing toward the very core of making music.

Where does music come from, and how does it find its form?

The music on this release, *The Mols Booklet of Melodies* quite literally emerged through interaction with the ancient landscape of Mols, the name of the peninsula region located in southern Djursland on the east coast of Jutland, where Jakob Buchanan has lived since 2020, just outside the town of Knebel. Close to the house stands his circus wagon, a workspace and lookout point from which he has an unobstructed view across the fields and the expansive landscape.

Here Buchanan sat (throughout 2024–April 2025) with an old book of sheet music that he had been given by the young local writer Rasmus Theisen. It contains traditional fiddler tunes by the late local musician Peter Madsen, who was a violinist but also played trumpet and clarinet. It is Madsen's family house that Buchanan has taken over, and it was Madsen's notated melodies that he began to play with. This sets a creative process in motion.

It was as if an old soul had been awakened. The melodies were not played in a dancing fiddler's tempo, but more freely and floatingly, like music for a film about something that once was. Like old memories from a distant time that still held a power.

The Gifts of the Landscape by Christian Munch-Hansen

Jakob Buchanan regards *MOLS – The Mols Booklet of Melodies* as a tribute to Mols and to the traditional fiddlers. Even in his choice of instrumentation, he has drawn inspiration from the old folk musician who once lived in his house. His violin, trumpet, and clarinet, which are now exhibited in a local museum, have been transformed into a new work for string quartet and jazz ensemble with flugelhorn, clarinet, piano, and double bass. A symbiotic music in which the instruments and the different genre traits lean toward one another.

It is a fascinating transformation that has taken place, from loosely sketched melodic fragments to the finished result: a newly composed Nordic chamber suite with a warm orchestral sound. A series of movements organically linked together like points on a topographical map. And a strong expression of what jazz has evolved within a Nordic and European context. This is felt throughout in the lively interplay between the jazz soloists and the Artos String Quartet, and not least in the spontaneity the musicians dare to show as co-creators of Buchanan's compositions.

The instruments slide in and out of one another with a careful dosing of effects. There are hints of old, shifting-foot dances. Ideas flow with a calm pulse and mingle like dream scenes. Buchanan's flugelhorn rises like a hawk above the landscape. At one moment Toldam's piano playing is cautious, like a foal sniffing its surroundings; the next it is like a spring welling up. Chris Speed's clarinet has warmth, his saxophone a dry, trembling tone. Anders Jormin binds the music together with a dark, pliable bass, while also creating magical moments con arco. The Artos String Quartet adds an indispensable sonic palette.

With *MOLS – The Mols Booklet of Melodies* we enter a genre landscape that defies clear definition. The music inhabits the borderland between composed music and improvised jazz, an under-illuminated current in contemporary music. In recent years, significant names have worked with string quartets and improvised music, including Uri Caine, Tyshawn Sorey, Vijay Iyer, and Wolfert Brederode, as well as Danish colleagues such as Palle Mikkelborg, Jacob Anderskov and Nikolaj Hess.

On writing for strings, Buchanan says:

> *Naturally, I have listened to string quartets by great composers: Shostakovich, Bartók, Stravinsky. But fortunately, it ended with me writing as myself. That is to say, I have essentially written for the strings as I would write for wind instruments. In that way I have brought the string quartet into my universe.*

Jakob Buchanan's movement into this field is a natural consequence of an artistic development that in recent years has taken him from Nordic combo jazz into orchestral composition. It began with the innovative and award-winning major work *Requiem (2015)* for big band, choir, and soloists, followed by Songs *To The Green Land (2019)* with almost the same ensemble, which was performed live but not recorded. Next came *On Rosenhill (2020)*, written for big band and soloists, a personal tribute to the childhood neighborhood of Rosenhøj in Aarhus. Finally, *Song & Wind (2023)* was released, an orchestral suite for big band, boys' choir, and soloists, which earned Buchanan the award *Jazz Composer of the Year* at the *Danish Music Award Jazz 2024*.

The titles of the pieces also play a role through their associations with old agrarian culture and with fairy tales. Buchanan says: *"In the area where I live, there are both old place names and ancient stone dolmens, some of which are estimated to be more than 5,000 years old. That creates a special atmosphere."*

Jakob Buchanan is also a great admirer of J.R.R. Tolkien's fantasy universe. And Tolkien himself actually borrowed words from Mols in his search for place names and terms for his fictional mythology. Tolkien was greatly inspired by place names from this part of Jutland. It was from here that he got ideas for names such as *Helm's Deep (Hjelms Dyb)* and *Isengard (Isgaard)*. The musical, the literary, and the local history flow together.
So how does music come into being?

In this case, it is not wrong to claim that Jakob Buchanan in fact followed his old mentor Kenny Wheeler's advice and discovered the music and its stories where they lay waiting to be found, in the immediate surroundings, in the soil, the hills, the stones, and in an old book of sheet music.

Christian Munch-Hansen is a writer, jazz journalist, and educator.

The Mols Booklet of Melodies – and Other Molbo Stories

By Mathias Kokholm, Molbo Municipality

A handful of years ago, composer and musician Jakob Buchanan (b. 1968) moved to Mols. He lives there with his wife Nanna in *The Yellow Cottage House* on Thorup Mark outside Tved. The house has been given its own track number on the present record, even though it is still uninhabitable and under renovation, while life is being lived and the music written in a couple of trailers facing the open, rolling landscape.

The Yellow Cottage House was built and inhabited by the first state smallholder on Mols, Martin Madsen. It is said of Martin Madsen that he was a skilled fiddler; his main instrument was the clarinet, with which he could make people float above the floor when music was played for dancing at the assembly hall or at a *Hopsa on Headlandhill* (*Skødshoved)*, as another track on the record is called.

Martin Madsen played**,** among others, together with his father Peter Madsen, who was a divinely gifted fiddler and composer. However, Martin Madsen abruptly stopped playing on White Sunday morning in 1906 after a heavy bout of drinking that ended in collapse and mental darkness. From then on, he put both the alcohol and the clarinet on the shelf at the same time, devoting himself instead to Bible reading and the Inner Mission movement.

When Jakob Buchanan moved to Mols, he was given a booklet of sheet music by the writer Rasmus Theisen, who himself grew up on Mols and has, among other things, written the modern folk-horror novel *Molbohistorier (2024)*. The booklet is a collection of some of the melodies that the aforementioned Peter Madsen (1865–1900). wrote and played throughout a lifetime on Mols.

Peter Madsen was a colorful character in the area, a smallholder and fiddler, politically engaged, with a penchant for the dreamy and the anarchistic. Yet he was locally recognized and appreciated for his music, which in its time was written and played for festive occasions and holidays.
The booklet became an opening for Jakob Buchanan into the place where he had settled, a key to some of the composite basic moods one senses on Mols: the striking landscape, the long natural and cultural history, the unbroken cultures and ways of life. In the old circus wagon on Thorup Mark, he began playing from Peter Madsen's notations on his trumpet, and the idea of a work from Mols and for Mols began to take shape as the old melodies were gradually brought back to life.

The album *MOLS* is a symphonic work, a large-scale composition in which Jakob Buchanan, through his fusion of jazz and classical music, now incorporates Peter Madsen's folk music into the composition. In several places, one can clearly hear and sense the folk music, and the four tracks on the album, *The Little Goose Maiden*, *A Minor Masquerade in Thwaite* (Tved), *Old Memories Fading* and *Hopsa on Headlandhill* (Hopsa på Skødshoved) also have concrete sources in the fiddler's notations. But Buchanan translates Madsen, absorbs him into his own language, plays his tunes but not his time signatures.

It is often an immediate impulse to pay tribute to something one encounters, especially when it comes unexpectedly, for example, a piece of music from a bygone time that feels fresh and opening, something one wants to show others, to present. It easily becomes a landscape painting in a gilded frame, a static, romantic gesture that, in its eagerness to preserve, is rather in danger of contributing to its demise.

Mols is so beautiful, with so many landscape motifs, the sky and the sea that can captivate us and even lead some of us to move here. But we must relate to the fact that a reproduction of Sunset over Knebel Inlet does not tell the whole story, for example, that beneath the water's surface there is no longer life in the inner waters. We must also contribute something ourselves, with curiosity and respect, whatever we can.

Peter Madsen's pieces were often written as occasional songs, sometimes for specific people who are no longer here, for example, Attorney Thorup's *Jubilee Polka*. Nevertheless, the titles, the mentioned names, places, and tunes open up an understanding of Mols, much like the familiarity with nature that some feel when they learn the names of plants. Jakob Buchanan has himself placed locations and words from Mols into his titles, place names such as *Øhoved (The Isles Head) Lamhøj (Lambhill)* which he has had inscribed on his own inner map, among other things through his neighbors Jan and Berit, who have opened Mols to him with their deeply rooted love for these places.

Jakob Buchanan does not merely pay tribute, does not simply reproduce Peter Madsen's folk music, but weaves it together with his own. Two worlds, times, soundscapes, and languages brought together in a work that, hopefully, embraces the composite basic moods of Mols and gives new life to the music and the people.

When one writes music, one writes out the individual voices, the individual instruments, sometimes even directly for the person who is to play the instrument. That is how it can seem here, at any rate. Buchanan does not write for Martin Madsen's clarinet on Thorup Mark so that butcher Kruse's jubilee fades into history; he writes for Chris Speed's clarinet in Los Angeles, so that he can come to Mols and blow people out of the church in *Tved (Thwaite)* to a *Hopsa on the Headlandhill (Hopsa på Skødshoved)* while ears spin around in new winds.

Mathias Kokholm, Molbo Municipality, December 2025

The text is based on a conversation/interview with Jakob Buchanan, Mols, November 2025. Music by Peter Madsen and from his Nodebøger, Spillemandslauget Djursland – Mols, 2009. Ole Thomsen, *Det lune land – Om liv på Mols*, Forlaget Wunderbuch, 2012

Recording Information

Recorded live at *Symphonic Hall of Musikhuset Aarhus,*
The old town of Aarhus and the Church of Tved (Tved Kirke)
23.–26. of April 2025

Recording Assistant
Henrik Winther

Recording / Mixing / Editing Engineer
Johannes Lundberg

Mastering Engineer
Petter Erichsson

Executive Producer
Lars Hannibal

Publisher
Antipyrine (co-publisher of the Vinylbox)

Graphic Designer
Thea Baumbach Johansen

Photographer
Per Bergmann

Authors (Booklet notes)
Jakob Buchanan, Christian Munch-Hansen, Mathias Kokholm

Thanks to: Musikhuset Aarhus, Jan og Berit, Geir Lysne, Lisbeth Hjorth, m.fl. Anna Jalving, Frederik Sakham, David Riddle, Rasmus Buchanan, Tved Kirke's menighedsråd, René, Gorm Ridder Jensen, Henrik Winther, Vibe Thorhauge (djm)

Special thanks to: Tved Sparekasse Fond, Nanna Bach Buchanan, Per Bergmann, Tue Lautrup, Sarah Lucy Foldager, Sanna Ripatti, Brian Friisholm, Artos Musik Festival, Chris Speed, Anders Jormin, Simon Toldam, Johannes, Petter, Hannibal/OUR Recordings, Mathias Kokholm and Rasmus Theisen.

You can read much more about the album at
https://www.ourrecordings.com/albums/mols

Direct streaming
https://www.ourrecordings.com/stream-music

Follow us on

Danish Music Award 2024
as “Best Jazz Composition”

PRESS HIGHLIGHTS
– Song & Wind

“Song & Wind is distinctive, another profound offering from the master of symphonic jazz, Jakob Buchanan, exploring the meaningfulness of life.”
Jazz Special (UK)

“The works emerge as grand, monumental masterpieces. Song & Wind is no exception.”
GAFFA (DK)

“Beautiful, spiritual, complex, and demanding. In return, it is deeply rewarding, thought-provoking, and enriching.” **Politiken (DK)** ★★★★★

“The poetic penetration and imaginative quality of the collective interplay ultimately distinguish this probing, beautifully crafted, and most stimulating music.”
Jazz Journal (UK)

“Within the boundaries Buchanan sets for himself, the music seamlessly combines idioms to produce profoundly beautiful results.” **Jazz Views (UK)**

“A quality production on all levels … a sacral-sounding fusion of jazz and classical music that feels destined for churches and cathedrals.” **Progessor (Norway)** ★★★★★★

“Highly moving music revolving around doubt and loss. The use of boys’ voices adds authenticity and emotional credibility to the work.” **Kulturen Nu (DK)** ★★★★★

“A worthy successor to Buchanan’s award-winning Requiem, a major work, expressive and full of beauty, drawing on the past while charting a course into the future.”
All About Jazz (USA)

“A unique and dramatic musical encounter, contemplative, intensely emotional, and lingering long after it ends. The unconventional instrumentation introduces a ritualistic, spiritual dimension.” **Salt Peanuts (Norway)**

“Focused, structured, melancholic, and ethereally beautiful, yet open, experimental, and serious. In many ways, Song & Wind feels like a postlude to Requiem.” **Ivan Rod (DK)**