



**FOR TWO**  
ECM 2139

Bjarne Roupé (guitars)  
Per Salo (piano)

recorded June - October 2010  
Copenhagen and Pernes-Les-Fontaines, France

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**TITLES**

Duets 1 - 18

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**THE MUSIC /RECORDING**

The concise and relatively short pieces featured on this new recording continue Mantler's basic concept of creating music that is in part completely notated, but also involves improvisation. It is here reduced to a minimum, possibly his simplest and most economic interpretation of that idea so far, with only two instruments: the piano representing his basically orchestral compositional concept with a soloist from contemporary new music (a "classical" non-improvising pianist), combined with a second player coming from jazz, the guitarist (improvising/freely interpreting).

Per Salo's piano tracks were recorded during June 2010 at Studios La Buissonne at Pernes-Les-Fontaines, France and Bjarne Roupé's guitar tracks during August at his home in Copenhagen. The material was subsequently edited by Michael Mantler, and mixed and mastered September/October 2010 at Studios La Buissonne with engineers Gérard de Haro and Nicolas Baillard.

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**THE MUSICIANS**

Bjarne Roupé

Born in Sweden in 1952, but now based in Copenhagen, he is a well-known and immensely experienced musician who has performed and recorded with his own groups as well as with a multitude of international musicians and groups: The Danish Radio Big Band, Palle Mikkelborg and Miles Davis (*Aura*), Ocean Fables with Marilyn Mazur, Bo Stief's Chasing Dreams, Dizzy Gillespie, Eddie Harris, Bob Brookmeyer, Jimmy Smith, Toots Thielemans, Hermeto Pascoal, Clark Terry, Van Morrison, Georgie Fame, Johnny Griffin, Art Farmer, Dee Dee Bridgewater, and many others. He also works freelance in the theaters and recording studios and teaches at Copenhagen's Conservatory for Rhythmic Music.

He continues the tradition of guitar soloists in Mantler's music as a member of his "Chamber Music and Songs" Ensemble and participated in the *Cerco Un Paese Innocente* and *School of Understanding* recordings and performances, followed by appearances on the *Songs and One Symphony* and *Hide and Seek* albums. His latest collaboration was as soloist on the "Guitar Concerto" during its premiere performance at the Berlin JazzFest 2007, subsequently released on Mantler's latest ECM recording *Concertos*.

#### Per Salo

Born in 1962 in Copenhagen Denmark, he studied piano and organ in Denmark, Italy and USA. and graduated with an Organ Diploma from the Royal Danish Conservatory of Music and with a Masters Degree in Piano Performance from the Juilliard School of Music in New York.

Very active both as a soloist and as a chamber musician, his repertoire includes many contemporary works and his concert activities have brought him to many European countries, Korea and the USA. Recently he appeared as a soloist in Olivier Messiaen's *Turangalila Symphony* at concerts in Germany and Denmark.

In 1996 he formed a duo with violinist Christina Åstrand, which released recordings of the violin music of Carl Nielsen, winning two prizes at the Danish Music Awards. 1997 the two musicians formed The Danish Horn Trio together with the French horn player Jakob Keiding. The trio has played in many festivals throughout Scandinavia and Europe and recorded horn trios by Johannes Brahms and Gyorgy Ligeti, which was chosen as "CD of the Month" by the BBC Music Magazine.

As a piano soloist he has recorded numerous CDs with music by composers such as Charles Ives (*Concord Sonata*), Niels Viggo Bentzon (*Piano Works*) and Rued Langgaard. In 1997 Chandos released Per Salo's recording of Per Nørgaard's *Concerto in Due Tempi*, which he premiered with the Danish National Radio Symphony Orchestra when the composer was awarded the Leonie Sonning Music Prize. He has previously collaborated with Michael Mantler on his *Hide and Seek* CD.

Per Salo has received many awards, among them the Artist Prize of the Danish Music Critics. Since 1989 he holds the position of pianist and organist with the Danish National Radio Symphony Orchestra in Copenhagen.



Photo: Fie Johansen

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## REVIEW

*Vienna-born composer Michael Mantler came to prominence on the American free-jazz scene in the late 1960s, with challenging music for the improv piano virtuoso Cecil Taylor. Since his return to Europe in the 1990s, however, he has favoured a territory between contemporary classical music, avant-rock and improvisation (he likes the freedom from jazz baggage that non-jazz improvisers have), sometimes using quirky singers such as Robert Wyatt and Jack Bruce. For Two is a set of 18 short pieces written for a classical pianist (Danish chamber musician Per Salo) and a jazz guitarist (the Copenhagen-based Swede Bjarne Roupé, who played on Miles Davis and Palle Mikkelborg's cult European album Aura). There are brisk and pristine piano melodies punctuated by echoing guitar chords, sprawling, low-end phrases echoed or challenged by Roupé's weaving ascents, whimsical treble themes with humming electric undercurrents, and occasional episodes close to unison playing. The jostling Duet Seven and the stuttering piano against singing long lines on Eight show how sympathetic the partnership is - as do the dark and prowling Thirteen, the rumbling Seventeen, and several undulating, slow tone poems wreathing through the session. It's contemporary chamber music with improv input rather than jazz, but Mantler is a composer of pungent melodies who welcomes their manipulation at the hands of improvisers.*

*- John Fordham, GUARDIAN*

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