

Pile House Records presents

Harald Haugaard: "Lys og Forfald", release date 13 March 2015

"Music is a force, and I am humbly thankful to be part of it", says Danish violinist, producer and composer Harald Haugaard on the occasion of the release of his new album *Lys og Forfald*.

Lys og Forfald ('Light and Decay') is the concluding part of his trilogy, coming after the albums *Burning Fields* und *Den Femte Søster* ('The Fifth Sister'). All three tell stories about places, people and events, but whereas the first two albums revolved around themes of optimistic anticipation of the future, the third and final CD in the series is, in Harald's own words, all about "the beauty and the light to be found in endings, in solitude, in autumn.... When you shut one door, another generally opens. Out of decay springs light."

Prime examples of this are the tracks "Prelude" and "Skye-Havnen" [*Skye Harbour*], of which Harald says: "I was born and brought up in the fairy-tale land of Hans Christian Andersen and these two pieces are true, modern-day tales in which young men set out on a long journey during which they face challenges and have to make choices which later turn out to be of great significance. If we choose to believe in the good and the beautiful in most things in life, decay can be infinitely beautiful and fruitful."

Harald Haugaard spent four years working on the new album, and was particularly at pains to ensure that his contemporary compositions, rooted as they are in the musical traditions of Denmark, had a distinctive sound that radiated warmth and depth - a sound that could only be achieved by recording and mixing the music in an analogue studio. The album was recorded by the Helene Blum & Harald Haugaard Band in the legendary Medley Studio in Copenhagen (Radiohead, Prince, Neneh Cherry...). After five years of touring in Europe and North America, having performed some 400-500 concerts together, Harald and the band members have forged such a close relationship, both musical and personal, that the band were very much involved in shaping and arranging the music on the new album.

Also featured on the album are some illustrious guests from the North European music scene, including Swedish guitarist Roger Tallroth, Danish jazz pianist Christoffer Møller, Brian Finnegan on Irish whistle and the celebrated Bavarian ensemble Fraunhofer Saitenmusik.

Only the very best acoustic and analogue microphones, amplifiers and mixing desk were used for recording the album. After recording sessions, instead of staring at the computer screen looking at the music, they switched off the computers and just listened, so that they could work on the music further. Talking of the recordings, Harald says: "I owe music a large debt, so I have to give it the greatest possible respect. That is why it is important not to use the methods by which music is generally produced nowadays, but to choose the very best means of recording an album."

Harald Haugaard is one of Denmark's best musicians. He has won the Danish Music Prize no less than twelve times, and he is also very well known abroad, particularly in Germany as a result of his work as Artistic Director of the Folk Baltica Festival.

"In a couple of places on this album I have deliberately looked back", Harald Haugaard admits, but it is by no means his intention to linger in the past. "The trilogy ends, as it began, with "Morgen" [*Morning*].

Lys og Forfald is released on 13 March 2015 by Westpark Music. After its release, Harald Haugaard will be touring Europe, North America and Japan with his band.



Further information and tour dates can be found at www.haraldh.dk.