

Jazz CD: Mads Tolling, 'The Playmaker'

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Sunday, November 15, 2009



Jazz

Offhand, I can't think of very many jazz instrumental compositions dedicated to NFL quarterbacks and other sports figures. Then again, Danish-born violinist Mads Tolling defies predictability through his 11-cut sophomore CD, "The Playmaker," whose "Playmaker Suite" (dedicated to Tom Brady, retired French footballer Zinedine Zidane and basketball's LeBron James) probes the connections he sees between sports and music. Tolling, who is a member of the Turtle Island Quartet and a soloist with bassist Stanley Clarke's band, gathers guest artists Clarke, keyboardist Russell Ferrante and vibraphonist Stefon Harris to explore a wide variety of styles on the new CD, from a beautifully elaborate arrangement of Thom Yorke's "Just," to a sizzling take on Led Zeppelin's "Black Dog," to the Danish folk song "I Skovens Dybe Stille Ro." The album is marked with virtuosic moments of sublime, genre-busting string work by Tolling, with stellar contributions by his guest artists and guitarist Mike Abraham, drummers Eric Garland and Jeff Mars, and bassist George Ban-Weiss.

MADS TOLLING

THE PLAYMAKER

MADSMAN RECORDS

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