**CLAUS WAIDTLØW BIO**

Prolific, adventurous and a true virtuoso and visionary, Claus Waidtløw has been one of the most highly respected jazz musicians in Denmark for nearly two decades. Originally an alto saxophonist, Waidtløw is primarily known today for his tenor work and audacious compositional sense. Internationally celebrated, Waidtløw has long been one of the leading trendsetters in European jazz.

Born in 1967 and a presence on the Danish music scene since 1989. He is educated from the Rhythmic Conservatorium in Copenhagen, where he also studied modern composition with Bob Brookmeyer.

In 1995 he won the international jazz competition in Gexto, Spain, with the group Science Fiction Quartet.

In 1997, Waidtløw released his debut as a leader, *Claustrophobia* (Stunt Records), which featured the Danish trumpet player Jens Winther. Waidtløw followed that release with 2005’s *From the Story Book* (Calibrated Records), cut with the Claus Waidtløw Group, and, most recently, last year’s *Flavours*, recorded by the same musicians but now calling themselves the Claus Waidtløw Quartet. The album has received glowing reviews, including one that called Waidtløw “one of the most proficient in the art of playing the saxophone in Denmark today” and added that Waidtløw “is in a league of his own.”

Both *From the Story Book* and *Flavours* present Waidtløw not only as a world-class saxophonist but also as a superb composer with advanced, contemporary sensibilities and a mastery of accessible melodic ideas. Said one reviewer, commenting on the eight tracks on *From the* *Story Book*, “Every single composition has a perfectly consistent and forward-moving story, which the listener will follow with great interest from the beginning to the end.” Although the music is always melodic and structured logically, Waidtløw has succeeded in mixing the complex with the simple. As a result, his music possesses profound substance but also a freshness and lightness that ensures that the expression of the artists’ concepts becomes neither too difficult nor unapproachable.

Listening to *Flavours* confirms without a doubt that Claus Waidtløw is a supremely talented writer who brings a personal touch to all of his work. Acknowledgement of his compositional gifts has resulted in several grants through the years, including a two-year grant from the Danish Arts Foundation in 2001.

Waidtløw has written not only for small ensemble but also for big bands. As a big band composer he has been commissioned to compose for, among others, Aarhus Jazz Orchestra, the New Music Orchestra, Aarhus Art Ensemble and The Orchestra.

In 2015 Waidtløw released the CD ”Playhouse”. It present Waidtløw as a bigband composer, conductor and soloist. The album also feature the great Jeff Ballard on drums, along with the renowned Danish Bigband The Orchestra.

In 2011 Waidtløw did a big project with another great Danish band, the Klüvers Bigband, which also featured Jeff Ballard, along with Swedish pianist Lars Jansson and Danish percussionst Rune Olesen.

In 2011 Waidtløw also toured for two weeks in the United States with the world-famous singer Kurt Elling and the Klüvers Big Band. The tour included a weeklong stay at New York’s Birdland, one of the world’s most legendary jazz clubs. During that same year Waidtløw performed at the famous jazz club Montmartre in Copenhagen, with bassist Eddie Gomez and pianist David Kikoski.

Waidtløw has shown promise and ambition since he first appeared on the music scene. In 1998, Waidtløw toured Denmark with Carla Bley and Steve Swallow, as a part of the Jazz Visit program. Around 2000 Waidtløw began his successful longtime association with Winther. Waidtløw served as a regular member of Winther’s different groups during this period - they can be heard together on Winther’s CD, *Walk the Walk, Talk the Talk* (Stunt Records), from 2002. A high point of his work with Winther was a performance at the Copenhagen Jazz Festival, which also featured the legendary American drummer Billy Hart.

In 2001 Waidtløw, together with pianist Nikolaj Hess and drummer Morten Lund, recorded *Back and Forth* (Music Mecca) in New York, with the prolific American bassist Christian McBride.

In 1996 he was nominated for the Ben Webster Prize, the most significant jazz honor in Denmark.

He has also contributed as a prolific sideman to more than 50 recordings, and has worked with such great artists as Toots Thielemanns, Eliane Elias, Kurt Elling, John Scofield, Eddie Gomez, Steve Swallow, Carla Bley, Christian McBride, Bill Stewart, Mulgrew Miller, Jeff Ballard, Dave Kikoski, Sam Yahell, Bob Brookmeyer, Maria Schneider and Billy Hart. A member of Aarhus Jazz Orchestra since June 2006.

In addition to playing and writing music, Waidtløw currently teaches saxophone at the Danish National Academy of Music. A well-known educator, he is a permanent faculty member of the Engelsholms Vinter and Summer jazz camps. He has shared his teaching skills with such high-profile artists as Brad Mehldau, Jeff Ballard, Gretchen Parlato, Antonio Sanchez and Ben Monder.