

## Christian Vuust *Urban Hymn*

AERO MUSIC 008

★★★★★

Danish tenor saxophonist Christian Vuust is a veteran of his nation's exceedingly rich jazz scene, which has produced such exceptional players as guitarist Jakob Bro, drummer Alex Riel and pianist Lars Jansson. Vuust has recorded nine albums, but he's participated in more than 70. Denmark's wealth of jazz talent is staggering, but unfortunately it's little appreciated in the States. Vuust's sophisticated and lush 10th album, *Urban Hymn*, is, by contrast, his tribute to New York City—really, it should be dedicated to his homeland. Though recorded in Manhattan with drummer Jeff Ballard, pianist Aaron Parks and bassist Ben Street, the music's rich tonality and sparse arrangements seem to reflect Scandinavia's sun-filled nights and eternally autumnal seasons. It's music that builds slowly, and maintains a whisper-like dynamic throughout. Vuust's music is meditative, his warm tenor recalling a wistful Michael Brecker, his composition's open palettes a perfect laboratory for the exploratory skills of his sidemen on this date. Opener "Helgenaes" features Ballard, the drummer rumbling bells, dabbling on hand drums and generally rattling rhythms with what sounds like fingers on drum skins. The title track is melancholy yet stately, Park's gentle, piano-led opening melody leading to Vuust's plaintive solo statement; the song practically pirouettes in place like a jewel. "Fjer" is as close to boisterous as *Urban Hymn* gets—a tentative shuffle that slowly fills out an eighth-note rhythm. That Vuust found New York City so inspiring is impressive; his music is even more so. —Ken Micallef

**Urban Hymn:** Helgenaes; Laerke; Urban Hymns; Rubato NYC; Fjer; Wedding Song; Biking The Big Apple; Tompkins Square Park; Summer Bygone. (50:44)

**Personnel:** Christian Vuust, tenor saxophone; Aaron Parks, piano; Ben Street, bass; Jeff Ballard, drums.

**Ordering info:** [christianvuust.com](http://christianvuust.com)

