

## Billy Hart - All Our Reasons (2012)

Written by bluesever

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1. *Song For Balkis* 12:50 2. *Ohnedaruth* 6:03 3. *Tolli's Dance* 5:27 4. *Nostalgia For The Impossible* 5:51 5. *Nigeria* 6:30 6. *Duchess* 7:52 7. *Wasteland* 7:08 8. *Old Wood* 1:42 9. *Imke's March* 5:48  
Mark Turner – tenor sax Ethan Iverson – piano Ben Street – double bass Billy Hart - drums

In 2003, this group was called the Ethan Iverson/Mark Turner Quartet. Master drummer Billy Hart asked if he could borrow the band's name as his own for a show in his hometown of Montclair, New Jersey. The other members -- who also include bassist Ben Street -- voted to name it for him permanently. They recorded their well-received Quartet for High Note in 2005, and have played together live whenever schedules permit. *All Our Reasons* was recorded in June of 2011 in New York; it marks Hart's debut as a leader for ECM. His "Song for Balkis" opens the album with a brief but animated drum solo primarily on tom-toms, before he is joined by Iverson and Street; finally Turner enters in what develops as a shimmering, elliptical yet melodic exploration that feels more like a group improvisation. Iverson's "Ohnedaruth" begins with an extended piano solo before the band enters at the halfway point and deftly executes the pianist's extrapolation of themes inherent to John Coltrane's "Giant Steps." (The tune is titled after the late saxophonist's adopted spiritual name.) Hart's gorgeous cymbal work and propulsive bluesy swing drive "Tolli's Dance," with compelling work from Turner. Speaking of Turner, his "Nigeria" is a canny investigation of a Sonny Rollins number with the title reversed. It's a fine example of 21st century post-bop harmonic interplay with all the swing and fingerpopping intact. Set closer "Imke's March," by Hart, begins and ends with a whistled melody that he used to call his daughter in from the playground. Iverson makes the most of the melody, using his signature sense of diatonic lyricism and developing the theme in increments with Turner stating each new development. Street holds it taut as Hart uses cymbals and snare to "dance" around the trio, while keeping the thematic "march" sense throughout. *All Our Reasons* is wonderfully executed, and full of excellent tunes, nice improvisational turns, numerous surprises (many of them subtle), and a warm, lively sense of engagement throughout. ---Thom Jurek, Rovi

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