

Jacob Young - Evening Falls (2004)

Written by bluesever
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1 *Blue* 7:19 2 *Evening Air* 6:48 3 *Minor Peace* 6:19 4 *Looking For Jon* 4:29 5 *Sky* 5:00 6 *Presence Of Descant* 3:56 7 *Formerly* 6:48 8 *The Promise* 4:25 9 *Falling* 4:47
Bass Clarinet – Vidar Johansen Double Bass – Mats Eilertsen Drums – Jon Christensen
Guitar – Jacob Young Trumpet – Mathias Eick Tenor Saxophone – Vidar Johansen (6)

34-year old guitarist, composer, and bandleader Jacob Young hails from Oslo, Norway, making him a natural for Manfred Eicher's ECM label. Young was educated at the New School for Jazz and Contemporary Music in New York, where he studied under Jim Hall and privately with John Abercrombie. Young's warm, rounded tone indicates a debt to the former while his wide harmonic palette owes to the latter; but his extended melodic vocabulary, gorgeous phrasing, and notions of group interplay are his own. What is immediately startling about *Evening Falls* is its lyricism; it doesn't sound like a guitarist's date. Young's compositions reflect song, paying careful attention to nuance and dynamic. There is plenty of room for improvisation and group interplay -- with veteran drummer Jon Christensen, trumpeter Mathias Eick, bass clarinetist and saxophonist Vidar Johansen, and bassist Mats Eilertsen -- around melodic invention. On "Sky," Young weaves a spacious frame that engages and centers around his own atmospheric guitaristry. It underscores and accents the trumpet's singing voice and the elegant, restrained use of bass clarinet and tenor as a backing voice, offering shadowy, restrained counterpoint, and harmonic extension. His fills dip, float and point, and his chord voicings are imaginative and painterly, guiding the tune from underneath, stepping out front only when it dictates. As a soloist, his command of technique is basically flawless; he's smooth yet soulful, graceful with just enough edge to make his occasional improvisational angularities poignant. The opener, "Blue," opens with guitar and bass, establishing an elegiac backdrop for the trumpeter and bass clarinet. Eick is mournful and melancholy; his playing is dimensionally expanded by Johansen's spare lines slipping out from just underneath to lengthen any given line's impression. The counterpoint between Young and Eilertsen that introduces "Falling," the album closer, is breathtaking. Its brevity offers respect toward space and silence even as it unfolds. What this final impression brings home is the empathy in Young's music. It makes for a beautifully balanced, elegantly performed, and poetically rendered listening experience. ---Thom Jurek, AllMusic Review

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