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## Arild Andersen Live at Belleville ECM Records

By [Bill Milkowski](#)

This new trio, led by the veteran Norwegian bassist-composer and featuring Italian drummer Paolo Vinaccia and Scottish tenor saxophonist Tommy Smith, is captured in freewheeling form at Oslo's Belleville Club. A member of Jan Garbarek's innovative group of the late '60s that helped define "Eurojazz," Andersen is a bold soloist with a big tone and an even bigger vision. He indulges in a wide range of expression in this adventurous outing that organically incorporates free jazz, Scandinavian folkloric music, ambient soundscapes, chamber music, frantic freebop, live electronics and even a touch of Ellingtonia.

The centerpiece is Andersen's epic "Independency," a four-part suite written in 2005 to commemorate the centennial of Norway's liberation from Sweden. The dark, dirgelike Part One has Andersen summoning up his Norwegian folk-music roots, with Smith providing the Garbarek-like plaintive call. Part Two is a ferocious freebop excursion fueled by Andersen's formidable walking basslines and Vinaccia's loose, DeJohnette-like interactive swing prowess. This second movement also features the blowtorch intensity and fluent stylings of Smith, a tremendous improviser and underrated player we haven't heard much of stateside since his string of excellent Blue Note recordings in the late '80s-early '90s. The third movement is an atmospheric rubato piece that has Andersen bowing with long delay lines against Vinaccia's deft, coloristic brushwork and alongside Smith's somber long tones. The fourth movement is a lilting, melodic number that finds Andersen shifting nimbly from lilting chords to knotty unison lines with Smith.

They turn in a luxurious "Prelude to a Kiss" with Smith channeling his inner Ben Webster, while on the pent-up blowing vehicle "Outhouse" he's channeling his inner Michael Brecker. Following that whirlwind, intense jam they close on a gentle note with Andersen's simple, new-agey "Dreamhorse," in which the bassist plays lyrically and beautifully on top of his own digitally looped arpeggiated lines before engaging in some spirited call-and-response with Smith. Creative and challenging music by a dynamic new trio.

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