

Jan-Olof Strandberg Deep-Digging Fusion



time ago. That actually goes for almost anything you want to be serious about." Jan-Olof's latest CD, *Illustrations* [PSI], showcases his acoustic bass guitar work as well as his deep roots in '70s jazz fusion. Although stylistically diverse, the disc has a Nordic streak, owing to his early predilection for the ECM label's brand of Scandinavian fusion.

Jan-Olof also learned the importance of dynamics from his upright studies. "That's probably why I've had a hard time finding electric basses I really enjoyed playing. I've had maybe a hundred, but only now do I feel I've found the right ones." His main electric bass is an MTD custom 5-string, but he has also used Alembics for many years. He owns a Series 1 5-string, a Series 2 6-string, and a fretless Signature 4, as well as a custom-made bass with Alembic Series 1 electronics. His three acoustic bass guitars were all made in Finland: a Lasse Nurmi 5-string (EADGC) and two Rauno Nieminen Signature Strandberg 4's. He also has a German Vektor electric upright.

When recording, Jan-Olof uses an Alembic F1-X preamp or two EBS-1 Classic preamps; live, he runs into the Classic preamp with an EBS EPX-800 power amp or a Fafner head with one 2x10

cabinet and one 4x10. On his fretted basses he prefers .045-.105 stainless steel strings, with a .030 C and a .128-.135 B, depending on the bass; on the fretless he uses .050-.110 strings for a bigger sound.

Strandberg—whose influences include Marcus Miller, Richard Bona, Dominique Di Piazza, and Armand Sabal-Lecco (who guests on Jan-Olof's second PSI CD, *Great Moments*)—doesn't limit himself to live performances and sessions. He also teaches clinics and private lessons, writes articles for music magazines, and works for a Finnish music distributor. Among his current musical efforts are a collaboration with Simple Minds drummer Mel Gaynor and a project with bass giant Paul Jackson and Abe Tomoyuki. A new record, *The Electric City*, is scheduled for a fall '03 release. "The bass guitar sound will be very big—but by 'big' I don't mean only bottom end."

Jan-Olof constantly works on his recorded sound. "I often play quite hard, which probably comes from playing the double bass. The tone gets better when you powerfully dig into the strings. I want to develop my sound as much as possible, because sound is every bass player's signature element." —Mikael Jansson

The most important thing I learned from studying the double bass was discipline," says Finnish fusion phenom Jan-Olof Strandberg. "I learned to practice regularly and with patience—the same philosophy as in martial arts, which I was into a long

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