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Anne Mette Iversen Quartet with 4Corners

The first of three releases to launch the Brooklyn Jazz Underground Records label. Possibly expecting some ultra-heavy urban sounds, it's a surprise to find that nearly all the musicians involved are classically-trained, European-influenced contemporary jazzers. This double album is particularly fascinating. Cd one is devoted to a four-movement symphony for double quartet. Now there have been umpteen instances of "jazzing the classics" dating back to Paul Whiteman in 1928 and most have been unsuccessful musical compromises. Anne Mette Iversen's venture is definitely an exception. Recorded in Copenhagen, utilising Denmark's 4Corners string quartet, who play their parts with great feeling. the mutual respect and resultant fusion really works. only on the up-tempo fade section of "North (Presto)" do the strings become somewhat repetitive. Iversen has surrounded herself with some really excellent musicians. Danny Grissett is a major discovery and his classical side is as good as the jazz one. John Ellis is becoming an important player these days. A country-boy native of the New Orleans area, he's got a leader deal with the late Joel Dorn's label, Hyena, and is rapidly developing into a fluent soloist, full of original ideas and playing more in a current Wayne Shorter vein than he did when first heard, while Otis Brown III on the drums fits in perfectly with the others. The second CD is all jazz and consists of nine originals inspired by various places that the quartet's appeared at, mainly in Europe, over the past three years. The standard of improvisation is remarkably good throughout. A very pleasant double surprise.