

MORTEN HAXHOLM: “AETHER II” – PRESS 2025

Released by Zack's MUSIC - JUNE 26th 2025

After a decade in a modern New Yorker jazz sound, with 7 albums and a number of great American artists, I returned to my Nordic roots in 2023 with the first AETHER album.

After a Danish Music Award nomination, great reviews and airplay on the first album, we release the second album ”AETHER II” on June 26, 2025.

The AETHER albums revolves around 'ballad' as a concept - but where the quietness is also challenged: how much can you stretch the format dynamically - and in terms of tonal density? Spherical lightness and calm in its simple melodies, with references to indie rock, minimalist classical music, and modern acoustic jazz.

Additionally the album features several electronic elements: simple minimalist modular synth, manipulated reallife recordings and subtle effects on the acoustic instruments.

The music is composed and dedicated to all that is close to my heart – an artistic interpretation of the stories, places and people that mean a lot to me.

The compositions themselves reflect this, but also the *production* of the tracks: listen to the track “CODA” where a reallife recording from the forest (where my brother lives) is processed to a grainy subtle texture – and a discreet electronic percussion layer that refers to my brothers artistic work and his electronic music. “Magnolia” is a reference to an early childhood memory from my grandparents’ allotment house, and “Silveon” is dedicated to my eldest daughter and her fascination with a Japanese toy.

Another example is the album and single cover art, that is based on a series of watercolor paintings made together with my daughters and I.

I hope you will feel welcome here in my story about what is near to my heart – and I hope it will resonate and evoke memories in you.

If you want to know more, I have written a brief text about each song, and the people, feelings and places that have inspired them, at the end of this document.

Morten Haxholm, Copenhagen April 2025

ABOUT MORTEN HAXHOLM:

Morten Haxholm is a Danish doublebass player and composer based in Copenhagen.

He is engaged in countless Danish jazz, pop and rock projects as a sideman, has an active work as a composer, and has played with countless Danish musicians, and recorded (and played several tours) with international names like Lage Lund, Gilad Hekselman, Emma Rawicz, Lionel Loueke, Melissa Aldana, Seamus Blake, John Escreet, Jonathan Kreisberg and Ari Hoenig.

ARTIST: MORTEN HAXHOLM

TITLE: AETHER II

RELEASE: JUNE 26th 2025 on the label: "Zack's MUSIC"

CD / STREAM

Line up:

Lubos Soukup - Saxophone & Clarinet
Rasmus Oppenhagen Krogh – Guitar
Nikolaj Hess – Piano & Rhodes
Jakob Høyer - Drums
Morten Haxholm – Doublebass & Bassguitar

Casper Hesselager – Wurlitzer on #7. Audio processing. Modular Synth.
Tomasz Dabrowski – Trumpet on #8

All compositions by Morten Haxholm

Produced by Morten Haxholm Co-produced by Lubos Soukup

Recorded november 4th 2024 at The V-Recording studios, Copenhagen by Thomas Vang

Mix & Master by August Wanngren

Cover art by Morten Haxholm, cover design/layout: Daniel Buchwald

Thanks to DMF, Dansk Artist Forbund, KODA and RUSK for financial support

REVIEWS AND QUOTES ABOUT MORTEN HAXHOLM:

<https://mortenhaxholm.com/press/>

COVER ART 4000x4000

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1GnCEpDsT_1kDj_oarnDFxX9uxmfn0bji?usp=sharing

HIGH RES PRESS PICTURES: <https://t.ly/zlqe2>

Homepage: <https://www.mortenhaxholm.com>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/@MortenHaxholm>

FaceBook: <https://www.facebook.com/mortenchristian>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/mortenhaxholm/>

MORTEN HAXHOLM: “AETHER II” PRESS

Track by track descriptions of the album

”SILVEON”

Dedicated to my eldest daughter, the title is inspired by one of her favorite toys (of Japanese origin).

The composition consists of two parts: two different loops of 4 chords that showcase the compositional concept of “modal interchange”. Topped with a slightly naive melody that is both calm, freefloating and singable.

The clarinet enters the second time we hear the melody, and brings extra light and life to the song - as I think of my young daughters: full of light and life.

The introduction “**ABSTRACT**” is an airy mood setting of the entire album, where we are introduced to both the album’s acoustic jazz sound - but also a layer of electronic post-processing - that is featured throughout the album. On Silveon it is especially audible in the intro and in the C part.

”UNTETHERED”

UNTETHERED is a composition in two parts – 2 ways of being 'unbound'. The first part is about traveling the world and feeling that all possibilities are open. The second half, CODA, describes another kind of untetheredness, to be creative – without any bonds.

“**CODA**” is dedicated to my brother, who lives in a forest near our childhood town, together with his family. My brother is an artist in many different medias – paintings, fabric, performances – but also diverse genres of music.

He has, among other things, a “hand-played” techno / electronic music project, where the rhythms ain't quantized (rhythmically adjusted) – unlike almost everything else in the genre. The CODA of Untethered is a dedication to my brother: with a discreet layer of hand-played rhythmic electronic percussion, and processed sounds from the forest where he lives.

“Untethered” can be translated as “unbond / limitless” and I feel it describes my brother’s artistic work very well.

”MAGNOLIA”

Named after a wonderful childhood memory: sitting one summer day in my grandparents' small garden, characterized by a tiny gardenhouse, a small lawn - and a magnolia tree. The warm, safe atmosphere in your grandparents' presence, the smell of grass, the sound of birdsong and the luxury of being pampered with an orange soda.

The song's melancholic mood probably comes from my awareness that the memory is seen through my eyes as a child, but understood as an adult. A longing for an innocent childhood that I know will never come again - but at the same time also; that it is my turn to help create some new summer memories.

"SIREN SONG"

Originally written for my students, who needed to be introduced to a specific type of jazz with approachable chords, interesting rhythms and a singable melody.

I was obviously quite fond of the melody when I gave the tune a title; and it was actually intended as a working title – but somehow the title and the song grew inseparably together.

I am so happy with the rhythmic conversation and interaction that occurs within the band throughout the song – exactly the kind of rhythms I was hoping for when I wrote the song.

"WINTERKEEPER"

Inspired by a true story, about Steven Fuller - an elderly man who has lived very remote in Yellowstone National Park for over 50 years, employed as a forester to look after the area, with the title "The Winterkeeper". There is an interesting documentary about him, made by "the Guardian" (UK newspaper).

The winterkeeper lives alone with his cat in a cabin in the woods, without much company other than nature, and even snowed in for a large part of the winter.

It is such a beautiful picture of human sacrifice, steely determination and harmony with nature - a true lone wolf in a battle against the elements. I do think he deserves to be celebrated with this small gesture; a dedication in the title of this composition.

"ELEGY"

A requiem for those who are no longer here.

A spherical melody and an airy soundscape, which finds contrast in a C part that plays with the simple quarternote rhythm from the A and B parts, by taking a 16th note out of the bar, and thus switching between 3 bars 15/16 and a bar 7/8. Leaving the C parting both uplifting and slightly off-kilter.

"SHIMMERS"

Named after the undulating chord progression that Rasmus Oppenhagen plays so beautifully on the guitar in the intro and during the theme. The chords evoke dreamy landscapes for me: moonlight reflecting in the waves of the ocean, or a shimmering heat haze on a hot summer day.

"INCARNADINE"

The verb incarnadine literally means "to make the color of flesh," although it's more commonly used to mean "to redden." The first use of incarnadine as a verb is in Shakespeare's Macbeth, when Macbeth talks about the blood on his hands in Act 2, Scene 2.

The album comes to a thoughtful ending, with this little hymn.

The track start out nice and quiet, but develops dramatically from an hymn into a “chant”.

I imagine a shamanistic ritual that starts out quietly with a tea ceremony, but develops into a festive round of shouting and singing into the late hours, before the ritual dies down at dawn and only the last ones finish the ritualistic melody in a quiet manner.

Morten Haxholm, Copenhagen April 2025