



Bio information: **I.P.A.**

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FILE UNDER: JAZZ / IMPROV

**Powerhouse Scandinavian Quintet I.P.A. Explores  
the Jagged Contours of Form and Freedom on its Cuneiform Debut,  
*I Just Did Say Something***

Maybe it's the region's boundless but stark natural beauty or its internationally envied social order, but whatever the cause **Scandinavia** has nurtured a particularly vivid jazz scene marked by a tantalizing balance of form and freedom. Over the past decade the quintet **I.P.A.** has come to embody the best of this volatile sensibility, which makes sense as the band draws its players from definitive Nordic ensembles such as **Atomic**, **Motif**, **Ensemble Denada**, **Trondheim Jazz Orchestra**, and **The Thing**. *I Just Did Say Something* is I.P.A.'s fourth release and its first recording on the USA-based label **Cuneiform**. The quintet's most exhilarating statement yet, it's the work of a band fully alive to its own power, while eagerly investigating new directions.

Featuring Oslo-based **Atle Nymo** on tenor saxophone and bass clarinet, Norwegian-born, Austin, Texas-based bassist **Ingebrigt Håker Flaten**, Trondheim drummer **Håkon Mjåset Johansen**, and Stockholm's **Magnus Broo** on trumpet and **Mattias Ståhl** on vibraphone, I.P.A. is strongly influenced by the seminal 1960s work of **Don Cherry** and **Ornette Coleman**. Harmonically unfettered, rhythmically unpredictable, and melodically unvarnished, the quintet thrives on live-wire interaction, with rapidly intersecting lines that swoop and collide, disentangle and divide.

"We have melodies, but not really structured melodies," says Nymo, one of the band's primary composers. "We're definitely influenced by **Don Cherry**. I see us as part of this Scandinavian jazz scene, but we're open to influences from all over."

*I Just Did Say Something* kicks off in high gear with Nymo's "**Kort Hilsen**," an exploration of cellular improvisation flowing from three brief phrases that expand, constrict, and blend through the course of the steeplechase (the title is Norwegian for "brief hello"). From the frantic to the sublime, Nymo's arrangement of the traditional Balinese theme "**Sayembara**" explores the metallophone qualities of the vibes, connecting a distinctly Ornettish approach to phrasing with the cadences of gamelan. It's an ingenious piece that sounds unlike anything else on the contemporary scene. Nymo concludes his winning, opening trifecta with the woozy ballad "**Naked Ø**," a hymn-like summons inspired sonically and conceptually by Swedish ethnomusicologist, drummer, and composer **Bengt Berger** classic 1981 **ECM** recording *Bitter Funeral Beer* (featuring Don Cherry's pocket trumpet).

The album takes an **Ellingtonian** turn with Ståhl's "**Majken**," a playful melody introduced and concluded by Broo's **Cootie Williamseque** solo trumpet. Propelled by Johansen's dancing brush work, Ståhl delivers a shimmering passage that eventually coaxes the saxophones into the fray. Ståhl's bouncy five-note theme "**Slakt Sving**" takes the quintet in a different direction. A loose and limber tune that waxes and wanes in density, it inspires a searching tenor solo by Nymo.

Broo also contributes two incisive tunes to the proceedings, with the mood-shifting, Caribbean-inflected "**Sir William**" and the elegant "**Barbro Violet**," a spacious arrangement that keys on the transparent textures of the brushes, vibes and bass. The album closes with Flaten's joyous title track, a piece that captures much of what makes I.P.A.'s music irresistible. Deceptively simple at the start, the tune's celebratory feel gradually takes on a frenzied air, like a party in the wee hours when restraint no longer holds. In the end, no one is hurt and nothing is broken, but the intimations of danger and freedom leave you eager for the next celebration.

I.P.A.'s origins go back to 2007 when Nymo, Flaten and Johansen released their electrifying interpretation of Don Cherry's classic 1966 **Blue Note** album *Complete Communion* on the Norwegian label **Bolage**. When Broo joined forces with the triumvirate the following year, I.P.A. was born. The quartet introduced itself on Bolage with two critically hailed albums, 2009's *Lorena* and 2011's *It's A Delicate Thing*. By 2014's *Bubble*, which came out on the top-shelf Swedish indie **Moserobie**, vibes master **Mattias Ståhl** had expanded the band to a quintet and *All About Jazz* proclaimed the ensemble "one of the best kept secrets in the fertile Nordic musical scenery."

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“Adding Mattias really opens up the possibilities,” Nymo says. “He’s a fantastic player, and helped us expand the colors and how we interact within the band.”

Born in Valnesfjord near Fauske, **Norway**, **Atle Nymo** has been a standout on the Norwegian jazz scene since the turn of the century. In 2001 he earned the **Young Nordic Jazz Comet** award with the band **Motif**, and went on to collaborate with artists such as **John Taylor**, **Palle Danielsson**, **Bugge Wesseltoft**, **Chick Corea** and **Pat Metheny**. In addition to I.P.A., he works in bands like **Motif**, **Trondheim Jazz Orchestra**, and **Ensemble Denada**, which earned the **2010 ECHO Deutscher Musikpreis Jazz Award** for big band album of the year.

The senior member of the band, **Magnus Broo** was born in Småland, **Sweden**, and was already a well-established international figure when he joined I.P.A. A graduate of **North Texas State University**, he first gained widespread notice in the band **Atomic**. He’s released a series of acclaimed quartet sessions under his own name, while also recording widely with Swedish guitarist **Fredrik Nordström** and Chicago saxophonist **Ken Vandermark**.

Hailing from Oppdal, **Norway**, **Ingebrigt Håker Flaten** spent his formative years in the mid ‘90s studying at **Trondheim Music Conservatory**. Before the end of the decade he had performed widely with **The Source**, the **Maria Kannegaard Trio**, the **Paul Bley**-inspired trio **Close Erase**, and the Coltrane-inspired quartet **Element**. Settled in Oslo by 1996, he became one of the busiest bassists on the scene, performing and recording prolifically with **Petter Wettre** in **The Trio**, **Jazzmob**, **Bugge Wesseltoft's Sharing**, **School Days**, **The Scorch Trio** (with **Raoul Björkenheim** and **Paal Nilssen-Love**), and **The Thing** (a trio with Nilssen-Love and **Mats Gustafsson**). Before joining I.P.A. he had worked extensively with Broo in the all-star band **Atomic**. Since moving to Austin, Texas in 2009, Flaten has honed an expanding network of improvisers, relationships manifested in his band, **The Young Mothers**, with drummers **Stefan Gonzalez** and **Frank Rosaly**, trumpeter/poet/rapper **Jawaad Taylor**, saxophonist **Jason Jackson**, and guitarist **Jonathan Horne**.

Drummer **Håkon Mjåset Johansen** was born and raised in Trondheim, **Norway**, where he gained early attention playing with the **Trondheim Jazz Orchestra** featuring **Chick Corea** at Moldejazz in 2000. He’s earned a series of awards and distinctions, including the coveted **Kongsberg Jazz Award in 2013**. As essential member of several high profile ensembles, he’s toured and recorded with **Come Shine**, **Urban Connection**, **Svein Olav Herstad Trio**, **Excess Luggage**, **Maryland**, and most visibly, **Motif**.

The band’s latest addition, vibraphonist **Mattias Ståhl**, was born in Oskarshamn, **Sweden** and lives in Stockholm. His quartet **Ståhls Blå** released two critically hailed albums featuring his original compositions, earning Ståhl the **Swedish Radio Award 2002** as newcomer of the year. A busy sideman, he’s performed and recorded with the award-winning **Fredrik Nordström Quintet**, **Klaus Holm Kollektiv**, **Emil Svanängen** (aka **Loney Dear**), **Cecilia Persson Quintet**, **Martin Küchen’s Angles**, and legendary bassist/composer **Georg Riedel**.

While all committed to an array of bands and projects, the five musicians in I.P.A. have found kindred exploratory spirits in the band. With ***I Just Did Say Something*** the combo has staked a larger claim, coming close to capturing the full creative breadth of this all-star ensemble.

“We really cover a lot of ground,” Nymo says. “That’s something we realized while making this record. This is what we sound like now, but we’re already off in new directions.”

*For more information on I.P.A.:*

[www.atlenymo.com/i-p-a/](http://www.atlenymo.com/i-p-a/) – [www.facebook.com/IPAJAZZ](https://www.facebook.com/IPAJAZZ) – [www.cuneiformrecords.com](http://www.cuneiformrecords.com)

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