

Finnish pianist Joonas Haavisto releases new trio album "Oku"

The album, released in Finland and Japan in January, is the third for the up-and-coming Haavisto and his talented trio. The band will tour in Japan in April.

Joonas Haavisto, one of the most talented jazz pianists of his generation, released his new album "Oku" through Helsinki's Fredriksson Music in Finland in January 2016. Marking the third release for Haavisto, "Oku" unites three stellar musicians from the Finnish scene. Haavisto on piano is joined by **Antti Lötjönen** on bass and **Joonas Riippa** on drums on a set which features 7 originals penned by Haavisto plus the lone standard "When I Fall in Love" by Victor Young. The album also received a Japanese release via LABEL, and the trio will tour in Japan in April performing five concerts.

The theme and the title of the new album is the Japanese term "Oku", a path – or perhaps even more aptly, an "inner space". For the band, it symbolizes their 10 years of playing together, honing their personal skills and the shared trio sound. The traditional formation of a jazz piano trio is a dynamic vehicle for expression for Haavisto, Lötjönen and Riippa, who bring together their vast experience in playing with various kinds of formations, many ranking at the top of the vibrant Finnish jazz scene. Of Haavisto's band mates, bassist Antti Lötjönen is known for being part of many of the top ranking Finnish ensembles including Timo Lassy Band, The Five Corners Quintet, Verner Pohjola Quartet and Ilmiliekki Quartet. He was also awarded as the "Artist of the Year" at Pori Jazz 2015. Drummer Joonas Riippa mans the drum stool of Mikko Innanen 10+, Plop, Mikko Innanen & Innkvisitio, Kahden Miehen Galaksi, plus more.

Haavisto's compositions on "Oku" are inspired by the urban landscapes of Tokyo, the legacy of the legendary Finnish composer Jean Sibelius, and the wild nature of Finland. Stylistically, the music is rooted at the jazz piano trio tradition, while the band is also not shy to utilize a freer form of expression made possible by the harmonic and melodic choices made by Haavisto in composing the tunes.

"The idea of finding the oku is closely connected to the idea of anticipation and a firm belief on a future which encourages one to keep going on and to search deeper", Haavisto says. "This is a key element

in my composing and playing. The deeper you go, the more you will find."

Joonas Haavisto (b.1982) is a Finnish pianist and composer based in Helsinki. He is considered as being one of the most exciting young jazz musicians working in the Nordic jazz scene at the moment. Haavisto has won several prizes in international jazz competitions including the solo piano competition Jazz Improvizacija 2006 in Vilnius, the Young Nordic Jazz Comets 2007 and the Jazz Hoeilaart 2010. He was one of the semi-finalists at the Nottingham International Jazz Piano Competition in 2010. Haavisto has performed widely around Europe, USA, Canada and Japan with his groups. In addition to performing and working as a band leader, Haavisto has also performed with some of the finest jazz musicians around such as Jerry Bergonzi, Jonathan Kreisberg, Ron McLure, Jukka Perko, Verner Pohjola and Jukkis Uotila. In 2015, Haavisto completed a widely acclaimed 5-night residency at Helsinki's We Jazz Festival, performing a series of intimate duo concerts in his own living room. The Joonas Haavisto Trio has released three albums, "Blue Waters" (2009, Rockadillo), "Micro to Macro" (2012, Fredriksson Music / Blue Gleam) and "Oku" (2016, Fredriksson Music / Blue Gleam).

"Oku" has received widespread acclaim hot on the heels of its release. The album was featured on the Apple Music "Jazz A-List" and the Japanese "Jazz Critique Magazine" called it a "masterpiece from the rising Nordic Star". In Finland, the album has received several 5-star ratings in the press.

<http://www.joonashaavisto.com>

Joonas Haavisto Trio: "Oku"

Finland: Fredriksson Music 2016 (FRMCD016, released on 8 January 2016) Japan: Blue Gleam 2016 (BG007, released on 20 January 2016) Distribution: Playground Music (Finland) / Vivid Sound Corporation (Japan)

1. *One For Jean* / 2. *Winter Sleep* / 3. *Frozen* / 4. *Xibalba* / 5. *Singularity* / 7. *Chilling At Shinjuku* / 8. *Band Wagon* / 9. *When I Fall In Love*
- Compositions: Joonas Haavisto (except *When I Fall In Love* by Victor Young)

Joonas Haavisto, piano / Antti Lötjönen, double bass / Joonas Riippa, drums

Joonas Haavisto Trio live

6 Apr Helsinki, FI: Steinway Piano Gallery
14 Apr Tochigi, JP: Tochigi Prefecture Cultural Center
15 Apr Chiba, JP: Sammu City Naruto Culture Center
16 Apr Kanagawa, JP: Sakae Ward Cultural Center
Lilis
17 Apr Nagano, JP: Suzaka City Cultural Hall
18 Apr Tkoyo, JP: Shinjuku Bunka Center

Download link to a digital copy of the album plus press images: <http://we.tl/CqjCLF0Qjy>

Request a physical CD promo copy: press@heihei.fi

Additional information and interview requests: Hei Hei Media, press@heihei.fi