**Photo Exhibition by Lena Ringstad Opens April 27**

**at Gallery Flingan och Berget in Stockholm**

*For Immediate Release*

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**STOCKHOLM, April 15, 2019.** A photo exhibition by Lena Ringstad opens April 27 at the Gallery Flingan och Berget, Södermalm, Stockholm. The exhibition features over 65 photographs from Lena’s 25-year photographical journey in Los Angeles, where she worked with music legends and sidemen to legends like Stevie Wonder, David Bowie, Chaka Khan, Sting and more. The exhibition will be on display until 16 June.

**Lena Ringstad** has lived her life navigating parallel lines of her loves for the art of photography and the joy of music. The Swedish photograph master has devoted a sizable amount of time to bringing artful light to musicians who too-often toil in darkness. It is these images she is showcasing in her inaugural photo exhibit, home in Sweden, “Keepin’ the Music Playing: Sidemen in the Shadows.”

A move to Southern California in August of 1993 proved fortuitous in multiple areas. Lena studied graphic design at the California Institute of the Arts (Cal Arts) where her photography skills were further sharpened thanks to **Dennis Keeley**: a master at shooting famous musicians.

In the midst of all this business and the single life in Santa Monica, Lena met her soulmate in a Hollywood bar she stopped off in to wet her whistle. The date was Monday May 13, the restaurant was Farfalla and the man was Myron Bernard who was promoting the musical entertainment that evening in the upstairs lounge Bar F2. When he pulled up a chair to get to know her better, other musicians joined the conversation. Lena found herself blissfully surrounded by players who worked with many of her favorite artists: keyboardist **Herman Jackson** (Whitney Houston), bassist **Del Atkins** (Pointer Sisters), **Eric McKain** (Broadway’s “The Lion King”), and **Greg “G-Mo” Moore** and **Scooter Powell** (James Ingram). Lena had landed in the lair where all the cats came to hang out and jam…merely the tip of the iceberg of everyone Myron knew. *This was the life*…but it gets better!

Lena began shooting the musicians on their club sets, in recording studios, private parties, conventions - anywhere they would allow. An exhibition of her Monday Nights @ Farfalla was a hit. Next, Myron began a weekly “Jazz-Soul Series” at a short-lived spin-off of the Baked Potato club on Hollywood & Vine. This period opened many doors to future collaborations and Lena snapped a treasure trove of photos of visiting artists such as **Norman Connors**, **Jean Carn**, **Bob James** and **Bobby Lyle**, plus locals such as **Andy Summers** (The Police), **Carl Anderson**, **Barbara Morrison**, **Ndugu,** **Vinx**, **Keb’ Mo’**, **Phil Upchurch** and more. Once Lena’s photos went on the wall, every musician who played there wanted one, too.

Among Lena’s secrets was coming in during soundchecks before the shows to angle the house lights in such a way that she gave backing musicians the maximum amount of coverage without dimming the shine on the star. Then when it was time to shoot, she mostly used Kodak 3200 TMZ black and white, pushing the film 1 stop to 6400. Flash photography was not allowed in nightclubs or recording studios so this was the best way to get the shots. Lena took inspiration from the early work of Dutch photographer **Anton Corbijn**, the black and white jazz photography of **William Claxton**, and unconscious influence from The Blue Note Album Covers of the `50s and `60s (largely shot by **Francis Wolff** and designed by **Reid Miles**). This is keenly revealed in Lena’s first photo session at Capitol Records (owner of the Blue Note catalog) of vibraphonist **Bob Leatherbarrow**, saxophonist **Ernie Watts** and bassist **Reggie Hamilton**. “I always know when I’ve got ‘the shot’ the moment I click the shutter,” Lena states. “You must learn the technical side of things…but always allow space to follow your instincts.”

Lena’s instincts have resulted in hundreds of great shots: private penthouse events for **Stevie Wonder**, shooting the cover and designing the graphics for *Candleligh*t by singer **Leon Ware** and pianist **Don Grusin**, “The Fourth Annual Latin Jazz Festival: Con Ritmo y Sabor 2000 Honoring **Chico O’Farrill**” at The Greek Theater where she shot legends from **Willie Colon** to **McCoy Tyner**, the **Pointer Sisters** live in Washington, D.C., an intimate portrait of singer **Brenda Lee Eager** who told her, “You captured my soul,” and photo sessions for **Anna Gordy Gaye** and the Gordy Family of Motown.

Most precious of all are the opportunities Lena got to shoot her two all-time favorite singers: the late, great **Al Jarreau** (who obligingly sat for two hours one afternoon at Citrus College to allow her to snap to her “heart’s horizon”) and the late, great **James Ingram**. She got the shock of her life during a rehearsal at Center Staging when she and her mother opened the door and James was right there on the other side, dropped to his knees to serenade them then ushered them to their seats. He later autographed her album with the words, “*From one artist to another*.”

Working with husband Myron, Lena has also helped to manage, shoot press photos, create album graphics and web sites for drummers **Rayford Griffin** and **Ricky Lawson**, singer/songwriters **Lynne Fiddmont** and **Melissa Manchester**, music director **Rickey Minor**, bassist **Nate Watts**, songwriter **Derek Bramble**, singers **Lori Perry** and **Ricky Jones**, and more. Though she has photographed superstars from Chaka to Stevie, Lena Ringstad’s mission has been shining a light on those in the background. “I love shooting portraits of all people,” Lena concludes, “but especially musicians and artists whose works inspires me. Photography and music are artforms I did not choose. They chose me.”

With her exhibition “Keepin’ the Music Playing: Sidemen in the Shadows,” Lena Ringstad returns home to Sweden to proudly display the lane she created for herself where the arts of photography and music harmoniously intersect.

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**Gallery Opening:**

Kulturnatt Stockholm 2019. Free admission

Saturday: 27/4, 18.00-24.00

**Additional Hours:**

Monday: 29/4, 6/5, 13/5, 16.00-19.00

Weekend: 4-5/4, 12.00-16.00, 11-12/5, 12.00-16.00

and by appointments