

Caroline Henderson

DEN DANSKE SANG

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Her newest recording, *THE DANISH SONG*, features Caroline Henderson doing what she does best – this time in the Danish language, for the first time ever in an illustrious singing career that began 25 years ago. The new album arrives February 28th, 2020.

Traveling in memories, closing my eyes / And you stand at a busy train station / The language it dances / Right on the tongue in a choreography of a new melody / Minutes become hours as hours become years / And years become life understood by the heart.

The year was 1983, and Caroline Henderson had quite literally just hopped on the train from Sweden. Upon arriving at the Central Station in the Danish capital of Copenhagen, she never thought that what was planned as a temporary visit would turn into a sustained and successful career at the top of the Danish music scene. Six years later, she and Maria Bramsen collaborated with pop group Ray Dee Ohh, and when the group later dissolved, Henderson released one of the most notable debut albums in Danish pop history. The songs on *CINEMATAZTIC* were a vital part of Danes' pop culture soundtrack of 1995 and have since aged unusually well. The record included several hits, and along with her later album *MADE IN EUROPE*, Caroline Henderson would go on to receive seven Danish Grammy awards. Her sound would migrate from cinematic pop to a more electronically influenced soundscape to a jazz universe that has manifested itself on several recordings and tours.

"I've always moved around. After exploring one dimension/direction, I've wanted to dive into a new one.

My curiosity has propelled me forward. It's felt natural, like a long, sliding movement, and I feel lucky to have been allowed to try as much and as many things as I have. A couple of years ago, for the first time, I felt the need to look back and make some sort of reflective status update. A pulse-check, for both myself and the musical heritage that has shaped me," says the singer.

As the daughter of a Swedish mother and an American father, and having been raised in Sweden, New York, Philadelphia, and Paris, Henderson was already regarded as somewhat of a foreigner wherever she went. Being a multi-national and growing up in Denmark didn't mean she had to relinquish any self-identity, however. Henderson wanted to stay in the country she had taken the train to, but didn't initially plant any cultural roots. She was a Swede with dark skin in Denmark. And then, suddenly, she started falling in love with the Danish songbook and the rich musical tradition of her new home.

"Music was the vehicle and difference-maker. To hear Trille's record and identify with the everyday lyrics about the newly-divorced, busy mother who was supposed to have everything in their life together; to fall in love with Sebastian's songs, with which all Danes in the eighties had a relationship; to connect with CV Jørgensen's lyrics and begin to understand the subtext and the unspoken in his universe; or to be touched by the grandeur and beauty of a composer like Carl Nielsen... It all became the key to feeling integrated, for me. To connect with the words, feel the power of poetry, and ultimately let the tonal language creep under the skin," says Caroline Henderson.



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She wanted to revisit the songs that helped shape her as a human, as a musician, and as a Dane. Over the last few years, she collected some of her favorite Danish tunes and recorded them. THE DANISH SONG is a story about life as a journey, about being adopted by a new country, about learning a new language and understanding oneself again through things that were initially foreign. All of the songs on the album have had a bearing on Caroline Henderson and have been loving companions and compasses while navigating through the unknown.

THE DANISH SONG is Caroline Henderson's twelfth solo album and the first in the Danish language. The album, like the bandleader herself, melds a clear love for both acoustic and electronic sounds and instruments. Some of the interpretations are tastefully pared down to a lyrical and intimate Nordic jazz ambience, while others incorporate beats, choirs, and even a symphony orchestra in the arrangements. Throughout the album, one is captivated by the vintage and mood-saturated, almost dusty expression overall, combined with her sensual vocals that convey a closeness and a love for the language and the narratives of the songs.

The collection of material on THE DANISH SONG includes offerings from many of the great and important Danish lyricists and poets: Sebastian's New Light in the Dark and Trille's Woman-Hymn Hello Sister are side-by-side with one of the great Danish classics, Why is Happiness so Whimsical from 1937 and Carl Nielsen's beautiful I Am Often Happy, whose inherent melancholy is a meaningful part of the Danish identity. Caroline Henderson, together with Anders Stig Møller, composed the music for Tove Ditlevsen's poem The Eternal Three (the process is documented in the DR program 'Totally Lyrical'). And, of course, it's only fitting that the album be rounded off with a song written by another Dane with Swedish roots – Benny Andersen and his Longing for Sweden: "Here I stand staring at the coast of Sweden / and longing for higher mountains / My heart tripping and flipping with desire / To take the first ferry / And forget all the bad / In the light birch groves / Where young girls laugh / But I must stay here / Because otherwise I become seasick."

There are many thoughts behind the record's selection of songs. Henderson explains: "I wanted to create a personal, musical journey through time that frames my view of all things 'Danish.' At what point does one actually become Danish? And what does that even mean? You might see this album as a quest for identity. Music, in my opinion, provides a shortcut to a country's values, history, and the soul of the people. In THE DANISH SONG, I follow the route and movement that has followed me throughout my adult life. The move gave me a curiosity and sent me on not just a physical but also a mental journey. My roots were slow to grow. And now, today, Denmark is also my country, Danish is my language, and my culture, and my once lonely tree has now become a family tree."

And then we are back to where we started: on the album's opening song, The Journey, which Caroline Henderson herself wrote the lyrics to, while the 'most-Danish' of living Danish composers, Bent Fabricius-Bjerre, composed the melody. It's a personal song about arriving at one's destination by train, the passing of time, and about discovering peace in the need to finally find a home.

In the spring of 2020, Caroline Henderson will go on tour, featuring selections from her new album, THE DANISH SONG. The tour opens in Holbæk on April 15th and ends in Copenhagen on April 26th. Tickets can be purchased at www.gig.to/carolinehenderson2020.

Concerts

- 15.04.20: Holbæk, Elværket
- 16.04.20: Aalborg, Musikkens Hus, Intimsalen
- 18.04.20: Hørsholm, Trommen
- 24.04.20: Aarhus, Musikhuset Aarhus, Lille Sal
- 26.04.20: København, DR Koncerthuset, Koncertsalen

*Caroline Henderson (vokal), Nikolaj Hess (p), Daniel Franck (b), Jakob Høyer (d), Dawda Jobarteh (kora)
Gustaf Ljunggren (guit, clarinet, kornet), Anders Stig Møller (Synth), Rasmus Bille Bähnecke (Programming)
Katrine Muff Enevoldsen (Choir), Peter Jensen, Per Ekdahl, Budapest Art Orchestra,
Budapest Art Choir, Peter Pejtsik (Dir Art Orchestra)*

*REJSEN 2:15 / NYT LYS I MØRKET 4:38 / HVORFOR ER LYKKEN SÅ LUNEFULD 4:39
DER VAR ENGANG 4:48 / HEJ SØSTER 5:34 / I AFTEN 2:36 / DE EVIGE TRE 3:55 / GÆSTER 1:34 /
TIT ER JEG GLAD 4:10 / DEN STØRSTE SORG 2:55 / LÆNGSEL EFTER SVERIGE 4:05 / NISSELOFTET 0:45*

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