

Biography of **Malene Mortensen**

April 2005 – Date With A dream

Danish release of the Stunt album *Date With A Dream*, an album full of original grooves and new songs, pop tunes and jazz standards in modern arrangements. Over the following months the CD will be released in the rest of Europe, Asia and Australia.

January - 2005 – CD recording

In January and February Malene Mortensen records her second solo album with her new band + strings and brass. The CD is recorded in Gothenburg's Nilento Studio in Sweden and Christiania's Boi Studio in Copenhagen, Denmark.

Summer - 2004

Scandinavia's leading independent jazz label, Stunt Records (a part of Sundance The Scandinavian Music Company) signs Malene. For 25 years Stunt has constantly expanded its reputation for sublime releases of high musical and artistic quality. Malene is paired with another of the company's young, talented artists, pianist Kasper Villaume, who is also chosen as musical producer. The rest of the band is made up by the brilliant Chick Corea bassist, Avishai Cohen, and drummer Morten Lund.

Spring - 2004

The spring and summer of 2004 are busy with concert bookings, musical experiments, and trips to New York and Los Angeles. In September 2004 Malene begins an education at The Rhythmic Conservatory's coveted soloist dept. in Copenhagen. Here she develops her talent in the creative, youthful atmosphere that attracts musicians from all over the world.

Paris, France - 2003

Following a Danish tour in October 2003, Malene performs in Paris as part of the Danish jazz campaign *jazz.dk*. 200 key people from the French jazz scene are enchanted by her hour-long set. In December she performs at Disney Village in Paris, and in January 2004 she contributes her talent to the successful Danish Galla Concert at the Midem music fair in Cannes.

Paradise - 2003

Over the winter of 2002/2003 Malene works with Niels Lan Doky on her solo debut, *Paradise*, released September 1st. Doky hears Malene sing, and immediately approaches her. Their musical collaboration leads to a record contract. The album is enhanced by the presence of Danish jazz greats Niels-Henning Ørsted Pedersen and Alex Riel. Malene and Lan Doky compose several of the songs. The rest are written especially for the album by other songwriters. The release is produced by Doky.

After the songs are written, the album – recorded live in Copenhagen - takes three days to make.

It is a modern album. It is simple and sophisticated. The sound is open, colorful and warm. Powerful and sensitive. No limits, no barriers. It is Scandinavian with a touch of New York.

Universal Music, the company behind the largest Danish export successes of our time, Aqua and Safri Duo, signed Malene Mortensen in order to promote her not only locally but on the international scene in USA, Europe and Japan as well.

The Eurovision Song Contest – 2002

Two years earlier, an unknown high school student, Malene Mortensen, now 21, sang her way into the hearts of the Danes, winning the Danish Eurovision Song Contest with the song *Vis Mig, Hvem Du Er* (Show Me Who You Are). Previously – 2001 - she had reached the finals in the Danish Broadcasting Corporation's song contest "Stjerne For En Aften" (an equivalent to the British "Pop Idol" shows) with the song *Sing It Back*.

May & June -2002

This is a busy time for Malene: the Eurovision Song Contest in Tallinn, musical exams and high school tests, concerts and a CD project. Despite her hectic schedule, Malene passes her high school exam in her main subject, singing, with the highest grade in the Danish school system, the rare 13. Her censors are Danish music heavyweights Jørgen Emborg and Hanne Boel.

Malene sings a duet with “Stjerne For En Aften” winner, James Sampson on the track *Fallin’*, and records the Danish version of the second Disney Tarzan movie.

The Copenhagen Jazz Festivals 2002 & 2003

She performs with the Jens Erik Raasted-Christian Lund Quartet. She also makes an appearance with a special personal interest, singing at a benefit for The Danish Cancer Society on the Danish island of Falster. This cause has always been important to Malene. Her mother, drummer Karen Mortensen, died of cancer in 1993, and was originally from Falster. Malene dedicated her *Paradise* album to her mother.

1998 – 2001

In 1998 Malene is accepted at Sankt Annæ Gymnasium, a Copenhagen high school specializing in musical training and catering to young people with exceptional musical talent. She attends the MGK and high school dept., a 4-year education combining a normal high school curriculum with high level musical training.

The spring of 1999 sees her winning second prize in the Copenhagen newspaper Berlingske Tidende’s annual music competition. Later that same year she offers her solo interpretation of the gospel *Ever Smiling Liberty* with the Sankt Annæ Gymnasium Choir, and is consequently invited to perform the song in several venues around Denmark. Malene also appears numerous times as a vocalist with the Sankt Annæ Gymnasium Big Band.

During her first two years at high school, she sings with several jazz and pop groups. One of these bands, the jazz combo Zongo Quartet, is chosen to represent Denmark at the Who’s Next youth music festival in Malmoe, Sweden. Music has always played a major role in Malene’s life, through influence from her biological mother and her foster mother, music instructor Birthe Skou, and her father, Jens Winther, with whom she has often performed. For five years – until she was 16 - she sang with the Royal Danish Conservatory of Music Children’s Choir, where she was given regular solo assignments, and as early as 8th and 9th grade, she formed a gospel trio with two girlfriends from school, performing at private gatherings. Her vocalist heroes include Beyonce Knowles, Aretha Franklin, Whitney Houston, Sarah Vaughan and Nancy Wilson.



