

# SPACELAB THE CHAMP



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Organ trios and parties are two sides of the same coin – that's just the way it is. For the past six CopenhagenJazz Festival seasons, hip organ trio SPACELAB has been the funky house band at Copenhagen Jazz House's late night scene. Nikolaj Hess plays organ, his brother Mikkel Hess is the drummer, and Anders Christensen – known as AC – plays bass. The trio has single-handedly created the musical setting for the wild after-hours parties attended by dancers, jazz aficionados, late-night hang-arounds, people looking for a party, or those of us who just find it hard to go home after a day full of music around the festival town. The music is physical indeed, but **THE CHAMP** is more than a mere souvenir to conjure up recollections of heady festival nights at the Copenhagen Jazz House.

This isn't your run-of-the-mill organ trio. For one, AC plays the upright bass, which gives the trio a different sound and takes some of the control away from the organist. Always grooving, and with a wonderful simplicity, this innovative trio explores dark corners usually left untouched, in a repertoire far from the usual organ stuff. They play new original compositions, mainly by Nikolaj Hess.

Their straightforward approach and funky rhythms earn the band a wide appeal. SPACELAB is in orbit, whirring and bubbling with enthusiasm and intensity.

The three musicians have worked together in many contexts for 15 years – they more or less grew up together. Nikolaj Hess has been an active musician for years in a wide variety

of constellations, in his own projects and as a sideman. This extremely active organist, pianist and bandleader shares his time between Denmark and the US. He may often be heard with Marilyn Mazur, Jesper Lundgaard, Mads Vinding, Alex Riel, Lars Danielsson, and all the top Scandinavian musicians, but he has also worked with Lee Konitz, Benny Golson, Fela Kuti, Dave Liebman, Harwie Schwartz, John Hebert, Christian McBide, Donny McCaslin and many others. He is a popular accompanist for a. o. Etta Cameron, Cæcilie Norby and Caroline Henderson.

Anders Christensen is perhaps Denmark's most used bassist today. He recently released his solo debut "Dear Someone" featuring Aaron Parks on piano and drummer Paul Motian. He crosses back and forth between jazz and rock, performing with equal ease with Savage Rose and Caroline Henderson (whose latest hit album he produced). He was a member of The Raveonettes, just recorded for ECM with trumpeter Tomasz Stanko, and used to be a regular member of Paul Motian's band. He is the bassist in Jakob Bro's and Jakob Dinesen's trios, has recorded with George Garzone and recently recorded and performed with Tom Harrell, Joe Lovano and Lee Konitz.

Recent years have seen drummer Mikkel Hess become one of Copenhagen's busiest and most original musicians. While writing movie scores, playing his deeply original drum style with just about anybody, and recording his own music with the cross-over ensemble Hess Is More, he never forgets jazz.

*Playin' / Hakuna / Fæør / Kalahari / ECM / African Trees / Adagio / Lullabye // Wind / Bartok.*

**Nikolaj Hess (hammond organ), Anders Christensen (bass), Mikkel Hess (drums).**

Press photos can be downloaded at [www.sundance.dk](http://www.sundance.dk)



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