

Hanne Boel

KOPI

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In January 2020, Hanne Boel released *BETWEEN DARK AND DAYLIGHT*, an album the press proclaimed “a resounding comeback.” But for it to be called a “comeback,” she would have had to “disappear,” and there are more than a few fans around the world who would say that her presence is felt and heard, clearly and constantly. Surely, Hanne Boel’s current artistic influence exists without whatever her latest release might be. Her presence is actually indisputable – whether on recordings, on tour, or as a professor and creative beacon for upcoming musicians at the Rhythmic Conservatory of Music in Copenhagen. Not even the Corona-virus could stop her artistic activities and creativity. In fact, the shutdown created a void in Hanne’s calendar, and an opportunity leading to a self-imposed challenge: to sing in her native language of Danish.

Hanne saw the project as a tribute to a younger generation of songwriters in Danish music. Working with Jacob Funch, she selected and recorded 10 songs from the 2010s and for the first time in her long career she chose to sing songs in her mother tongue. A challenge easier said than sung for the otherwise experienced singer – to approach and reinvent songs by younger Danish names like Marie Key, The Minds Of 99, Odd Numbers, and Medina. The Danish Queen of Soul had to experiment in order to inject her own personality into ‘new’

music and a language with which she’s intimately familiar, but almost entirely in conversational contexts. “I haven’t sung in Danish since I was in a church choir a long, long time ago, or sat and played and sang with the guitar when I was very, very young. So that, in itself, was a challenge, and vocally I really got to some new places,” she says. “Especially with the songs that are related to hip-hop and rap – those gave me problems. I’ve sat at home with my microphone, shouting and screaming in rage and powerlessness in an effort to find the right way in, so that I was involved and could make the songs’ and lyrics’ expression my own.”

It’s not because the themes of the songs are new to Hanne Boel – they’re not so different than the subjects of popular songs when she broke through in the 1980s and 90s. After a young Hanne Boel had toured the country for a number of years with the funk group Blast, she turned to the soul-embossed sound first heard on her 1988 album, *BLACK WOLF*.

The album officially kicked off her solo career, and she would follow up with another huge success, 1990’s *DARK PASSION*. That was the time when her career was fueled, energized and elevated by *Hanne Boel steroids*, as a journalist once called it, as she introduced the world to her powerful version of soul music.



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Since then, Hanne has topped the charts in Denmark and Scandinavia time and time again. With 21 releases and total sales of more than 2.5 million albums, Hanne Boel is the best-selling Danish singer ever. She's also been a constant presence performing live, appearing on stages throughout all four seasons of Scandinavian weather for sold-out crowds in Denmark and in Norway – another Nordic country whose people have taken her in as one of their own.

Last year, Hanne Boel released the album BETWEEN DARK & DAYLIGHT – a large production that had been a long time coming, and included lots of original material. An extensive tour was planned, expectations were high, and the joy and anticipation of being on the road with the new material were at their apexes... only to be shut down, due to the pandemic. But out of the ensuing void and restlessness sprung an idea for an album – an album in Danish, featuring newer Danish songs. Together with her regular musical partner, Jacob Funch (the

creative guitarist, keyboard player, and more, who also starred in and produced BETWEEN DARK & DAYLIGHT), they got started.

The songs Hanne has chosen to interpret are composed by a wide spread of songwriters – some younger, some more established, with one older, legendary exception (best known as Sebastian). The musical approach on the album is minimalist: Hanne Boel's nuanced voice and Jacob Funch on guitar, synth, programming, and everything else. Overall, it's a refreshing musical outing and a surprising bid to honor some of the younger generation's newer Danish "classics." Hanne Boel's intense power and authentic interpretations make a strong impression, bringing fresh takes from a storied voice. Her mature emotional authenticity is elegantly draped around the forms of the songs in the repertoire, affirming them as *timeless*. And so, with a familiar touch, Hanne Boel continues introducing us to new sides of a talent we thought we knew so well.

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