

Tønder Festival's New Musical Offering

Musicians from the top international drawer are heading for Tønder Festival. Treats include The Bros. Landreth, Phosphorescent & Vincent Neil Emerson

TØNDER, SØNDERJYLLAND, DENMARK, February 28, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Americana, country and blues musicians from the top international drawer are heading for Tønder Festival. Treats include The Bros. Landreth, Phosphorescent, Vincent Neil Emerson and David Ritschard. Plus a special concert by Bjørn Eidsvåg accompanied by the Southern Jutland Symphony Orchestra.



Tønder Festival. Credit: Helle Arensbak

Eight more names are added to the Tønder Festival 2024 roster, a varied gathering of bands and soloists, who, true to Tønder Festival form, are a mix of familiar musical favourites with new musicians making their mark on the international scene.

Nordic songwriters

Two Scandinavian musicians will be appearing: Swedish David Ritschard, who had to turn us down last year, and Norwegian Bjørn Eidsvåg, this time backed by no less than the Southern Jutland Symphony Orchestra.

Full Cream Americana and Country

Canadian The Bros. Landreth have a substantial following in Denmark, and are back in Tønder this year. From USA we have three very different styles: country comet Vincent Neil Emerson, americana songwriter Kassi Valezza and indie folk band Phosphorescent.

Voices from Europe and UK

British blues singer Elles Bailey, who is currently attracting a lot of heat, will perform at Tønder Festival for the first time. As will Tønder Festival veteran Hans Theessink, this time with the revived band Blue Groove.

THE MUSICIANS:

The Bros. Landreth (CAN)

Roots rock and americana of the highest carat from a band who have built up a solid fan base in this country in recent years. The Bros. Landreth, from Winnipeg in Canada, played Tønder Festival in 2015 and 2018, and their front man Joey Landreth, guitar and vocal, has also appeared here on his own. His slide guitar play is first class, on a par with guitarists such as Derek Trucks, Ry Cooder and the late Lowell George. The band's debut album *Let It Lie* caused a stir and won a Canadian JUNO Award in 2015. The Bros. Landreth toured intensively thereafter, among their number the guitarist and singer Ariel Posen, who appeared at Tønder Festival in his own name in 2023. The Covid 19 pandemic meant WFH for the band rather than touring the world. Joey Landreth and his brother Dave, on bass and vocal, retreated to their studio in Winnipeg, focussing on producing a new sound and new songs in a more laid-back style. The results can be heard on the album *Come Morning* from 2022. Today, The Bros. Landreth are still a band orbiting round the two brothers, though they consider the new Bros. Landreth a band reborn. Their only Danish festival in 2024.

www.thebroslandreth.com

Vincent Neil Emerson (USA)

He had to cancel in 2022, but here's the good news: 32 year-old Texan songwriter Vincent Neil Emerson is coming to Tønder Festival in 2024. He carries proud songwriting traditions further, with country music as a base and clear lines back to his songwriting forebears like Townes Van Zandt, Guy Clark and Steve Earle. Vincent Neil Emerson masters the essential songwriters' craft of telling personal and relevant stories. His toolbox is sparse: just a guitar and a voice that speaks to us all. The words come from his own life, as for instance in the song *High On Gettin' By*, where you find the lines, "But the words keep on fallin', and the highway keeps on callin' to my pen". This song is on the album *Vincent Neil Emerson* from 2021, produced by Rodney Crowell. On the same record is the song *The Ballad of the Choctaw Apache*, a tale of the Choctaw Apache tribe that Vincent Neil Emerson is related to. This cultural heritage and his familial ties to USA's original people inform his most recent album *The Golden Crystal Kingdom* (2023), which Shooter Jennings produced. His only Danish festival concert in 2024.

www.vincentneilemerson.com

David Ritschard (SE)

Through the years, many Swedish musicians have developed their own Swedish take on roots rock and country music. It is no exaggeration to say that today, David Ritschard (born 1989) occupies first place in that category. Some call him the King of Sweden, in homage to his artistic level. David Ritschard enlists the Swedish language and song tradition, and American country rock, soul, and bluegrass music, and with talent and perception welds songs that resound and give meaning. Since 2018, David Ritschard has released two albums, an EP and 15 singles. Both audiences and critics are enthusiastic. In 2022, he released the EP *Rockbotten* (a play on Rock Bottom and Robot) and the album *Blåbärskungen* (Blueberry King) in 2021, a blend of banal realism with more than a touch of irony, and pedal steel music with horns, strings and choral

backing. David Ritschard has set a new high bar for coupling standard American roots music and Swedish language and song. He has won several awards, among them the Swedish Robespierre Prize and Singer/Songwriter of the Year at the Manifest Gala, the Swedish music industry awards ceremony. His only Danish festival in 2024.

www.davidritschard.com

Elles Bailey (ENG)

American blues and rock are the main ingredients for British songwriter and singer Elles Bailey. Her debut recording, in 2015, was the EP *Who Am I to Me*, and audiences in the live venues were well pleased with Elles Bailey's powerful voice and her rocking blues band. In 2017 they recorded the album *Wildfire* in Nashville, USA. Two years later, back in Nashville, they laid down *Road I Call Home*. Touring USA and Europe followed, and Elles Bailey gradually worked her way up. During the Covid scare, Elles Bailey recorded several new songs, collected in her third studio album *Shining in the Half Light* (2022). In 2020, Elles Bailey won a prize at the Americana Awards UK, and this new record brought more. She won two prizes at the UK Blues Awards in 2023 and the Artist & Live Act of the Year award at the British Americana Awards. 2023 was filled with festival concerts, and 2024 will see tours in UK and Scandinavia – including Tønder Festival – and new recordings. Her only Danish festival in 2024.

www.ellesbailey.com

Hans Theessink & Blue Groove (NL, USA)

Tønder Festival celebrates its 50th anniversary this year with many of the musicians who have played at the festival through the years. One of them is blues and roots guitarist and singer Hans Theessink, who is well known to seasoned festival guests. Hans Theessink has a large following in Denmark and has played at Tønder Festival since 1976. Solo, with tuba player Jon Sass, or guitarist and singer Terry Evans, or guitarist Knud Møller or with the band Blue Groove. This summer, it is Blue Groove who are back together and touring Europe. Hans Theessink & Blue Groove were very popular in the 80s and 90s. They took a break in 2000 to pursue other projects. In 2018, they reunited to celebrate Hans Theessink's 70th birthday with a concert. The idea to reform the band came up, and now you can look forward to seeing and hearing them. Blue Groove consists of Jon Sass, tuba; Ali Thelfa, percussion, vocal; Doretta Carter, vocal and Etta Scollo, vocal. Hans Theessink was born in the Netherlands in 1948, lived in Denmark in the 70s, and is today a resident of Vienna.

www.theessink.com

The South Jutland Symphony Orchestra with Bjørn Eidsvåg (DK, NO)

Bjørn Eidsvåg is a national treasure in his homeland of Norway and has won the hearts of many Danes, too. Eidsvåg has a welter of awards and prizes, notably the Honourable Annual Award at the Fiddlers' Convention in 2006, Norway's most august traditional music institution. Bjørn Eidsvåg has worked with many Norwegian and Scandinavian artists, among them Swedish Lisa Nilsson and the Danish soul singer Karen Busck. In 2014, Eidsvågs famous songs were given a distinguished setting, when he sang to the accompaniment of KORK, the Norwegian state

broadcasting service's symphony orchestra. This presaged sell-out concerts in Oslo Spektrum and other Norwegian concert halls, and the release of Classic Bjørn Eidsvåg with KORK. This year, Tønder Festival's audience can enjoy that very magic, when Bjørn Eidsvåg takes the stage with the Southern Jutland Symphony Orchestra. In 2004, the Southern Jutland Symphony Orchestra played at Tønder Festival, 'The Brendan Voyage' concert, with top Irish uilleann piper Liam O'Flynn. "We are excited to be playing at Tønder Festival. This is a new opportunity for us to reach a wider audience. Folk music and classical music are closely related, so the idea seems natural," says Adam Stadnicki, musical director for the Southern Jutland Symphony Orchestra.
www.bjorneidsvag.no

Kassi Valazza (USA)

Though compared to prominent singers such as Karen Dalton, Joni Mitchell and Sandy Denny, she is totally herself, with a voice that touches hearts. Kassi Valazza grew up in Arizona, but moved to Portland, Oregon, where her deep country roots met a vibrant, diverse music environment. In her 2019 debut recording *Dear Dead Days*, her soulful country songs with their psychedelic undertones saw the light of day. This style continued on the EP *Highway Sounds* from 2022 and the album *Kassi Valazza Knows Nothing* from 2023. The latter took second place on Americana UK's list of best releases and also figured on a similar listing at the English magazine *Uncut*. The critics liked it too, and the magazine *No Depression* wrote: "Valazza's songs, like smooth-edged gemstones, have a healing quality to them." The album is released on Fluff & Gravy Records, which is also Tønder Festival favourite Margo Cilker's label. Kassi Valazza tours a lot in USA and visited Europe in 2023. Her only Danish festival in 2024.
www.kassivalazza.com

Phosphorescent (USA)

It may sound like a band but Phosphorescent is just one chap: the songwriter and multi-musician Matthew Houck. Originally from Alabama, he spent some years in Georgia and now dwells in Nashville, Tennessee. He has recorded and toured under the epithet Phosphorescent since 2001. The style is definitely not country or traditionalist roots, more indie folk, indie rock and alternative rock. Phosphorescent has made nine albums and an EP down the years, and the critics have praised him highly. Sometimes there's a longer break between releases. The album *Muchacho* came out in 2013, and the next, *C'est La Vie*, wasn't until 2018. In 2022 he realised his Full Moon Project, whereby he released a cover song at each full moon. Among them were songs by Bob Dylan, Lucinda Williams, Randy Newman and Nina Simone. In 2024 it's the album *Revelator*. "I got tired of sadness, I got tired of all the madness, I got tired of bein' a badass all the time," are lines from the title song. Matthew Houck follows his own routes, reflecting over reality as he sees it. He is of the opinion that *Revelator* has a weight that is close to "...the grand sadness in life." His only Danish festival in 2024.
www.phosphorescentmusic.com

Tønder Festival 2024 – the story so far:

Rodney Crowell (USA), Skerryvore (SCO), Brent Cobb (USA), Asleep At The Wheel (USA), The Bros.

Landreth (CAN), David Ritschard (SE), Vincent Neil Emerson (USA), Dan Sultan (AUS), Elephant Sessions (SCO), Hush (DK), Jacob Dinesen (DK), Jonah Blacksmith (DK), Jake Vaadeland (CAN), The Hello Darlins (CAN), Xabi Aburruzaga (EUS), Folkeklubben (DK), S.G. Goodman (USA), Julie Fowlis (SCO), Foy Vance (UK), Sivert Høyem (NO), South Jutland Symphony Orchestra with Bjørn Eidsvåg (NO, DK), Kassi Valazza (USA), Elles Bailey (ENG), Hans Theessink & Blue Groove (NL, USA), Phosphorescent (USA).

Tønder Festival 21st, 22nd, 23rd and 24th August 2024

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