

MUSIC BUSINESS IN NORWAY

BUSINESS CONTACTS / LOCAL ACTS / MARKET PROFILE / ESSENTIAL RELEASES
EDITION 13



NORWAY™

MARIT LARSEN

SATYRICON

LORRAINE

ANIMAL ALPHA

SERENA MANEESH

TORD GUSTAVSEN TRIO

ENSLAVED

MOTORPSYCHO

HANNE HUKKELBERG

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NORWAY™

Music fans in countries across the world are catching the Norwegian music bug. In addition to appearances at major international music industry events, Norwegian artists have been filling halls and thrilling festival goers throughout Europe, North America and beyond. And the industry powers that be are taking note.

In a recent feature on Norway the veritable U.K. music industry bible *Music Week* exclaimed that, "...the Norwegian music scene in 2006 should cause executives ... across the world pangs of envy," and gave its readers a sample of the country's "wealth of talent" by featuring 16 Norwegian acts on a CD included with the magazine. Some of those acts, including Animal Alpha, Thomas Dybdahl and Marit Larsen will give Popkomm attendees a chance to experience their diverse talents when they join seven other Norwegian acts during two Norwegian Night showcases, both to be held on Thursday (21 August) at the Kesselhaus/Popkomm Festival Centre. Come join us – but be prepared: You may just catch the bug, too!

Inger Dirdal, Managing Director, Music Export Norway www.musicexportnorway.no



LORRAINE

LONDON CALLING

After first signing to Norwegian indie label Rec 90, Norwegian trio Lorraine has become a British pop act this year. Hardly a week has passed without Lorraine having played a few U.K. venues, including three supporting act dates for the Pet Shop Boys.

Prior to the release of the single "I Feel It," *Music Week* wrote "... following Depeche Mode and Pet Shop Boys before them, Lorraine bring some much needed sincerity to pop music." In November 2005, Sony BMG U.K. landed a global joint venture deal with the trio's new Norwegian label, Waterfall Records. www.lorrainemusic.com



HANNE HUKKELBERG

MORE LITTLE THINGS COOKING

In 2005, Hanne Hukkelberg's debut album *Little Things* was released in the U.K. "A work of sheer delicacy and delight, Norwegian Hanne's vocals are sublime like a Thirties jazz singer, but with a Nordic twang that isn't so far removed from Björk," wrote *Music Week*. The album ended up ranked as one of *The Sunday Times'* top ten albums of last year. This year, Hukkelberg built up to her September follow-up release *Obelix* by visiting festivals such as Wiener Festwochen, Denmark's Roskilde Festival, Supersonic in Birmingham and London's The Luminaire, as well as festivals in Oslo, Madrid, Rennes in France and two of the largest Norwegian jazz festivals.

hanne.hukkelberg.net



ENSLAVED

ENSLAVED BY PROG

Norwegian black metal band Enslaved originated the sound of what has become known as "viking metal." The band's last three albums have seen it expand its sound to include elements of 70s prog rock and Pink Floyd-esque ambience. The albums *Monumentum* and *Isa* were, however, topped by the epic and innovative *Ruun*, an album influential metal magazine *Terrorizer* described as "another triumphant continuation of their powerful legacy." Enslaved and its Norwegian label Tabu Records have planned an extensive U.S. tour for January 2007.

Enslaved is touring Europe this September and the Nordic countries in November. www.enslaved.no

JIM STÄRK



KAIZERS ORCHESTRA



THOMAS DYBD AHL



THIS IS NORWAY IN DENMARK

Kaizers Orchestra seem to have started a Norwegian indies' invasion of Denmark. Kaizers was an instant live scene favourite before Universal Music Denmark released its third album, bringing the six-piece Norwegian-language folk-punk rockers to No. 3 on the Danish album chart with *Maestro*. Despite three consecutive No. 1 albums in Norway, Kaizers gave the Danes the honour of the double live album and DVD recording *Live at Vega*, Copenhagen.

"Scandinavia's craziest live show is finally preserved on DVD ... Live in concert Kaizers Orchestra is a phenomenon whose resemblance simply does not exist," Danish web magazine *Soundstage.com* wrote in a review, giving the band five out of a possible six stars.

While Kaizers still was an undisputable indie band, Danish independent label Copenhagen Records looked to the Norwegian indie scene for inspiration. In January 2005, they released award winner Thomas Dybdahl's third solo album *One Day You'll Dance For Me*, New York City.

"Thomas Dybdahl is without a doubt one of the greatest talents on the Scandinavian scene right now," said product manager Jakob Sørensen.

To be able to release the whole catalogue of the singer-songwriter from Stavanger, Copenhagen Records had the Norwegian label CCAP put together *October Trilogy*

with all of Thomas Dybdahl's releases: Three albums, an EP and a DVD. Following its April 2006 release, the box set took Dybdahl to Danish and Norwegian album charts once again.

Copenhagen is part of the MBO network of independent Danish labels. MBO colleagues A:larm Music started its Norwegian adventure in April 2005 with pop trio Jim Stärk from Oslo. Once again, an Award winning Norwegian indie act made Danish distribution and headlines with its third album after considerable success in Norway.

The *Jim Stärk* album got five out of six stars in Danish newspaper *Berlingske Tidende*, who wrote "American 1970's west coast music has been as criticized as it has been successful ... And along comes a Norwegian trio that plays such charming and organic 70's west coast music, reminiscent of The Eagles and Steely Dan ... Fine goods."

In 2006, both Copenhagen Records and A:larm Music continue their Norwegian adventure. In May 2006 Copenhagen released rock trio BigBang's *Poetic Terrorism*. A:larm added Norwegian rock band Animal Alpha to their roster, and released the Sylvia Massy-produced debut album *Pheromones* (Racing Junior) in June 2006.

www.kaizers.no – www.thomasdybdahl.com
www.jimstark.no – www.smallbang.net
www.animalalpha.com

FROM NORWAY TO BROOKLYN



Ever since Ne-Yo (picture) skyrocketed to the top of the *Billboard* charts with his smooth soul ballad "So Sick," the phone hasn't stopped ringing at Norwegian production team Stargate's studio. In 2006, Tor Erik Hermansen and Mikkel Eriksen have written songs for stars such as R. Kelly and Lionel Richie – and their CV grows everyday.

The duo moved to New York in 2005 after closing the studio in Trondheim where they recorded dozens of hits for Blue, Mis-Teeq, Mario, Elton John, Beenie Man and Atomic Kitten. Their big break in the incredibly hard American market came when Stargate started working for Def Jam and its famous president Jay-Z.

"Jay-Z is a really nice man. Like most other people who run the record industry, he is open to working with new people, whether they are from Brooklyn or Norway," says Tor Erik Hermansen about his new employer.



DIABOLICAL IN THE MAINSTREAM

rock bible *Kerrang*. "It's by far the best album they've ever made; a perfect distillation of past glories, protected by bullet-proof charisma and touched by genius. It's brutal, unsettling and strangely accessible," the magazine wrote.

After Satyricon turned down Ozzfest, the band received another 5K in *Kerrang* for its brief but stunning set at the giant metal festival Download. Most important, however, is that the success comes without softening the classic metal sound that is Satyricon, according to drummer Frost. "The style of music that we're doing now is closer to the original black metal of the 80's and our earlier stuff and of course, we have given it a very Satyricon-touch and have done something very unique to it."

www.satyricon.no

Every now and then, a band emerges from the extreme and alternative outskirts of rock music and breaks into the mainstream – and 2007 will probably see Norwegian black metal veterans act Satyricon achieve huge commercial success with its no-compromise metal. Following the release of its latest opus *Now, Diabolical*, Satyricon received a glowing review and the top score of 5Ks in

IN BRIEF

Along with Sweden and Denmark, Norway has withdrawn from the Junior Eurovision Song Contest (JESC). Still, the Norwegian final attracted viewers and record buyers like never before. Winners qualified for a Nordic Song Contest, which once was what grew into JESC.

Hanne Sørvalg from Stavanger wrote the *American Idol* compilation entry song "My Destiny" for runner-up Katherine McPhee. The Norwegian girl is out with a new radio single "I Don't Feel a Thing," which picks up where she left off under the alias Paris.

Alternative singer-songwriter William Hut is one of the few artists ever nominated for a Spellemann prize (Norway's equivalent to the Grammy) in two different categories with two different albums released the same year. Universal Music Norway has taken the hint, and will release Hut's new album in the fall of 2006.

A PITCH FOR SUCCESS



PHOTO: LARS PETER PETERSEN

In August 2005, Serena Maneesh quietly released its debut album *Serena Maneesh*, a beautifully crafted and My Bloody Valentine-inspired noise-pop album on micro record label Honeymilk. The album earned some great reviews, listeners outside the hipster indie scene started taking notice, and the ball slowly started rolling. An album review by website Pitchfork Media caused an explosion of interest, saying "They get it, Serena Maneesh, their demeanour electric and alternating, built off antagonistic relationships. The band, like the instrument, are apt to prove noise and un-noise are of one cut," the renowned website wrote, rewarding the album 8.6 out of a possible 10.

Manager Vegard Strømsodd regards the review as the band's first breakthrough, but says he was not prepared for the storm of interest that followed. "In the 48 hours after Serena Maneesh was reviewed on Pitchfork, I received 100 serious business mails on the band from 15 different countries!" Serena Maneesh is now signed to Beggars Banquet worldwide, and will tour the U.S. from 8 September to 6 October.

www.serena-maneesh.com



MAGNET



ANIMAL ALPHA



GREEN CARNATION

SCORING THE GAME

Electronic Arts (EA) is known for some of the greatest trademarks in computer games, including *EA Sports*, *EA Big*, *The Sims* and *Command & Conquer*. At the launch of their own music publishing operation at the music business festival MusExpo 2006 in Hollywood, EA put one band on the stage: Norwegian indie rockers Animal Alpha.

The story of Animal Alpha can serve as a textbook example on the games industry's involvement in music. In 2005, EA joined the Norwegian broadcaster NRK P3 in its annual demo competition, Urørt (Untouched). A separate Urørt show was held, where the public voted for their favourite independent band to appear in a computer game. Animal Alpha won, and subsequently the band's tracks appeared in million selling EA games *Burnout Revenge* and *NHL 06*.

As a host of the MusExpo's cocktail reception at The Key Club in West Hollywood on 1 May, 2006, EA's Worldwide Head of Music, Steve Schnur, picked Animal Alpha to appear on stage. Silje Grønli of EA Norway says, "We are extremely proud to contribute in bringing one of Norway's most interesting bands out to the world. Animal Alpha is the world of music's equivalent to the *Burnout* games; total mayhem and rock 'n' roll."

Norwegian games developer and publisher Funcom has risen to stardom in the games world through games such as *Anarchy Online*, *The Longest Journey* and the

upcoming *Conan the Barbarian* game. While developing a sequel to *The Longest Journey* (named *Dreamfall*), Funcom linked up with Norwegian singer-songwriter Even Johansen, otherwise known as Magnet.

"Instead of simply licensing a number of released songs and placing them on top of the game design, like it is done in so many games, we really try to make the music experience in *Dreamfall* both unique and original," says Funcom's Lead Sound Engineer Simon Poole.

So after three albums on the Atlantic label, landing songs in TV series such as *The O.C.* and *Six Feet Under* and in the blockbuster movie *Mr. & Mrs. Smith*, Magnet made his computer game debut followed by the *Dreamfall - The Longest Journey Soundtrack EP*.

On the Norwegian metal scene, 2K Games searched out Green Carnation to appear in the game *Major League Baseball 2K6* and in its POS and ad campaigns throughout the U.S. The game shipped a million copies by its April release, and featured the song "Pile of Doubt" from Green Carnation's 2005 Season of Mist release *The Quiet Offspring*. Prior to the game release, Green Carnation toured the U.S. promoting *The Acoustic Verses*, which was released on the band's own label Sublife.

www.animalalpha.com – www.greencarnation.no
www.homeofmagnet.com – www.ea.com
www.funcom.com – www.2ksports.com



TORD GUSTAVSEN TRIO



TERJE RYPDAL



CIKADA

AWARD WINNERS UNITE

The famous German record label ECM has become a strong channel for Norwegian veterans and talent within jazz, classical and contemporary music. Thus far, 2006 has added some more Norwegian artists to the extensive roster of award-winning Norwegian ECM recording artists.

The second album of Tord Gustavsen Trio's (*The Ground*) won the Australian Jazz Award for International Jazz Album of the Year in competition with Wayne Shorter and Stefaon Bollani. *The Ground* was released in early 2005, and went to No. 1 in the Norwegian album chart – that is, the pop album chart.

Guitarist veteran and Honorary Spellemann Award winner Terje Rypdal was among the 2006 second quarter winners of Preis der Deutschen Schallplatten kritik with

his live album *Vossabrygg*. The album was just short of entering the album Top 40 chart to become the guitarist's second Top 40 jazz album.

The string quartet Cikada was awarded the Dutch Edison Award for the ECM New Series release *In Due Temp*. After a number of remarkable releases with Norwegian award-winning ECM stars such as Trygve Seim and Jon Balke, Cikada is awaiting the fall 2006 ECM release of *So There* together with bassist Steve Swallow and pianist Steve Kuhn.

www.ecmrecords.com
www.tordgustavsen.com
www.cikada.no
www.jeffgower.com/rypdal.html

IN BRIEF

After four consecutive Spellemann-nominated albums (the first three of which she won), Bertine Zetlitz releases her fifth album *My Italian Greyhound* (Virgin/EMI) in September 2006. The first single "500" arrived at Norwegian radio in late June and went straight to No. 13.

Susanna and the Magical Orchestra received rave reviews all over Europe and the U.S., and made *Mojo's* Top Ten with debut album *List of Lights and Buoys*, which will be followed up by the new release this fall, *Melody Mountain* (Rune Grammofon).

Solveig Slettaahjell Slow Motion Quintet has been visiting festivals on both sides of the Atlantic since releasing its third album *Pixiedust* to a No. 15 chart placement in 2005. In addition, the band has been in the studio recording its new album *Good Rain* (Curling Legs).

PERSPECTIVE: ROCK

All countries have bands that through years of releasing strong albums and intense touring have become national treasures. In Norway, that status was cemented by the return of DumDum Boys. The band's album *Gravitasjon* was the only release that could rival Madrugada's triple-platinum album *Live at Tralfamadore*. Brut Boogaloo finally released the 70s rock styled *When the Dog Takes Over*, while hardcore pioneers JR Ewing sadly called it quits with a farewell tour. The hardcore torch is carried on by bands such as Silence the Foe and Jeroan Drive, while punk rock phenomenon Turbonegro started the recording of their follow-up to *Party Animals*.

ESSENTIAL RELEASES:

Brut Boogaloo – *When the Dog Takes Over* (Big Dipper)
DumDum Boys – *Gravitasjon* (EMI)
Bonk – *Bonk Against Nothing* (Racing Junior)
Grand Island – *Say No to Sin* (Racing Junior)
Serena Maneesh – *Serena Maneesh* (Honeymilk)



PROFILE: MOTORPSYCHO

If you check the listing for Motorpsycho on Norwegian music site bandeindex.no, it says only two things about the band: "Rock & Roll Grand Royal! Psychedelic Kings!" Those descriptions really sum up what this juggernaut of a band is all about. Having released a dozen studio albums, many of which were double or triple albums, and a series of live recordings, the band once again satisfied both critics and record buyers with the double CD *Black Hole/Blank Canvas*. Gebhardt, the group's drummer for 15 years, left the band before the album to concentrate on his bluegrass and country projects, and bassist/vocalist Bent and guitarist Snah chose to continue without replacing him. The album, which features Bent on drums, suffered surprisingly little from it, and the following European tour saw the band give their loyal European fanbase the best shows in years.

www.motorpsycho.fix.no

PERSPECTIVE: POP

Prior to December 2005, live albums never reached top hit status in Norway. But that all changed when Madrugada released *Live at Tralfamadore*, which went straight to the top of the chart and stayed there for a record-breaking 11 consecutive weeks. It was the first album in a year to sell 100,000 copies in Norway. The first half of 2006 ended with the next 100,000+ success, yet another live album, *Hallelujah Live*, where Universal Music recording artists Espen Lind and Askil Holm met up with Sony BMG's Pop Idol bestsellers Kurt Nilsen and Alejandro Fuentes. In addition, live albums from Gåte, Kaizers Orchestra and Seigmen all went Top 10 during the first half of 2006.

www.madrugada.com – www.playroom.com

ESSENTIAL RELEASES:

Marit Larsen – *Under the Surface* (EMI Music)
Lorraine – *tba* (Waterfall Records/Sony BMG UK)
Kurt Nilsen – *tba* (Sony BMG)
Jim Stärk – *tba* (Sweet Recordings)
Bertine Zetlitz – *My Italian Greyhound* (EMI Music)

PROFILE: ELVIRA NIKOLAISEN

Singer-songwriter Elvira Nikolaisen is the sister of Ivar (of punk youngsters Silver) and Emil and Hilma of (shoegazer phenomenon Serena Maneesh). Unlike her siblings, Elvira signed with a major label (Sony BMG) and her mainstream soul-pop stirred up quite a hype preceding her debut album release *Quiet Exit*. "As a girl, nobody expects me to focus on creating something extremely good. That really goes for everyone within pop music. But I want to make good, classical songs which will stand their ground for a number of years," Elvira Nikolaisen told *Spirit* magazine. The album entered the chart at No. 2, and has hardly left the Top Ten 17 weeks later when Sony BMG launched the very first TV campaign for the album. Tracks "Love I Can't Defend" and "Egypt Song" reached No. 2 and No. 1, respectively, on the Norwegian radio chart.

www.elviranikolaisen.no



PERSPECTIVE: WORLD/ETHNIC/TRADITIONAL

Even though ethnic and traditional music is distinctly niche music, it has its very own mainstream. In 2006 Sami singer/songwriter Mari Boine saw her third album in the charts, reaching her personal best of No. 5. Universal Music also released the debut album of traditional crossover prodigy Helene Bøksle, which reached No. 11. In the independent arena, erstwhile mail order service Etnisk Musikkklubb (Ethnic Music Club) celebrates its 10th anniversary. For the last eight years, the club has served as a record label (EM) for traditional singers and instrumentalists from all over the world who live and work in Norway. EM has won awards for its information packed releases.

www.etniskmusikkklubb.no

ESSENTIAL RELEASES:

Mari Boine – *Idjagiedas - In the Hand of the Night* (Emarcy/Universal Music)
Helene Bøksle – *Elverhøy* (Universal Music)
Berit Opheim – *tba* (NORCD/Musikkoperatørene)
Kvarts – *Kvarts* (Kvarts/Musikkoperatørene)
Abdulrahman Surihezi – *Love Songs and Trance Music from Balochistan* (EM/Musikkoperatørene)



PROFILE: MARI BOINE

Four years after her most recent album release, Mari Boine made a comeback in the record market in 2006 with *Idjagiedas - In the Hand of the Night*. This innovator in native Sami-language music

included a song sung in English and songs from her film score for the German motion picture *Hänsel und Gretel* on the album. "Sami music is very much about finding an ancient strength within yourself, so I am used to breaking boundaries and experimenting with my music," Boine told newspaper *Aftenposten*. Mari Boine received international attention when her second album *Gula Gula* was released worldwide on Peter Gabriel's label Real World Records in 1990. In 2006, she visited festivals in Norway and abroad, and will even pen the screenplay for the movie *Kautokeino 1852* from *Pathfinder* director, the Oscar nominated director Nils Gaup.

www.pjp.no

PERSPECTIVE: BLUES

There are 68 active blues clubs in Norway, and many of them stage annual blues festivals, with the Notodden Blues Festival being the largest. Last August, 40 bands from all over the world turned the tiny Telemark town into a full-fledged bluesfest. This year, the three big guitarists in Norwegian blues were missing at Notodden. Vidar Busk, Bjørn Berge and Knut Reiersrud have become household names with the mainstream music audience as well as veritable globetrotters in blues. Berge's new album went to No. 25 on the charts in February, while Reidar Larsen's collaboration with Roy Rogers on *Crossing* secured the blues veteran with yet another favourite with the critics.

www.bluesfest.no

ESSENTIAL RELEASES:

Steinar Albrigtsen and the Blue Cats – *Bop 'N Roll* (Grammofon)
Bjørn Berge – *We're Gonna Groove* (Chicken Farm)
Jørn Bøgeberg – *Basstard* (UpNorth Music)
Good Time Charlie – *It's Alright* (Good Time Music)
Reidar Larsen & Roy Rogers – *Crossing* (Blue Fingers)



PROFILE: KID ANDERSEN

If you are into blues, you have probably already heard the distinct guitar sound of 26-year-old Chris "Kid" Andersen. Over the past few years, Andersen has been a steady member of Charlie Musselwhite's band. Thus, the American blues harmonica legend lent his distinct sound to Kid Andersen's second

solo album *Greaseland* (Blue Mood Records). "Kid plays tastefully and with feeling. Some guitarists just seem like playing a lot of technical stuff without really saying anything. They only play with their heads. Kid is playing from the heart first. In addition, he has got a lot of technical abilities to choose from to back up what he is saying with his heart," Musselwhite told *Blues News*. Kid Andersen is also featured on Charlie Musselwhite's new album *Delta Hardware*.

www.kidandersen.com

PERSPECTIVE: METAL

While commercial juggernaut Dimmu Borgir has taken most of 2006 off to gear up for the recording and release of its new album, veteran band Darkthrone returned with its punk inspired *The Cult is Alive*. Reviews for Darkthrone were ecstatic, while fellow metal colleagues Enslaved also achieved mainstream success with the prog-inspired *Ruun*. On the more hardcore-inspired part of the scale, Purified in Blood successfully mixed 80's thrash with hardcore on *Reaper of Souls*. More heavy and doomy than anybody else, Sahg also brought the best melodies to the table with its jaw-dropping debut *Sahg I*, while Stonegard followed up the success of the *Black Album*-inspired *Arrows* with another album of straight forward metal.

ESSENTIAL RELEASES:

Satyricon – *Now, Diabolical* (Big Dipper)

Enslaved – *Ruun* (Tabu)

Purified in Blood – *Reaper of Souls* (Alveran)

Darkthrone – *The Cult is Alive* (Peaceville)

Sahg – *Sahg I* (Regain)



PROFILE: KEEP OF KALESSIN

When Norwegian black metal giants Satyricon applied for a new guitarist in 2000, more than 30 candidates were seriously considered for the job. Keep Of Kalessin boss and guitarist Obsidian C crushed the other hopefuls with immense pace and skill, and also secured the services of Satyricon drummer Frost for Keep Of Kalessin's EP *Reclaim*. Black metal fans could also enjoy the intense vocals of Mayhem legend Attila, but for the recording of *Armada* it was all about the talent of Obsidian C. He created an album superior to all other Norwegian black metal albums since the turn of the millennium. Keep Of Kalessin mixed the best elements from classic recordings by Emperor, Immortal and Mayhem, stirring it up with Obsidian C's raw, fast and evil guitar riffs, all set in an atmospheric and epic soundscape.

www.keepofkalessin.no

PERSPECTIVE: JAZZ

Many Norwegian jazz labels are run by musicians. For more than 20 years, guitarist Jon Larsen and his Hot Club Records has collected, recorded and released a global roster of talents dedicated to the string swing legacy of Django Reinhardt. Karl Seglem made NORCD a hatching box for combinations of jazz and traditional music. Knut Værnes' label Curling Legs has been in the forefront of Norwegian jazz innovation for almost 20 years. Bugge Wesseltoft's Jazzland is celebrating its 10th anniversary. In addition, labels such as Resonant Music, Rune Grammofon, Ponca Jazz, Jazzaway Records, AIM Records, Bergland Productions and Petter Wettre's Household Records contribute to a wider Norwegian jazz market from the hands of jazz performers.

www.musikkoperatorene.no – www.musikklosen.no

ESSENTIAL RELEASES:

Close Erase – *Sport Rocks* (Jazzaway Records/ Musikkoperatørene)

Solveig Sletthjell Slow Motion Quintet – *Good Rain* (Curling Legs/Musikkoperatørene)

Susanna and the Magical Orchestra – *Melody Mountain* (Rune Grammofon)

Tri Ò Trang – *Må* (Curling Legs/Musikkoperatørene)

Wibutee – *Sweet Mental* (Sonne Disk)

PROFILE: MATS EILERTSEN

Bass man Mats Eilertsen was already a veteran at the age of 29 when he released his solo debut album *Turanga* (AIM Records). The debut was named Album of the Year 2005 by Japan's Jazz Magazine. In the spring of 2006 the second solo album *Flux* was released. Eilertsen's C.V spans recordings and touring with bands such as Solveig Sletthjell Slow Motion Quintet (Curling Legs), the Jacob Young Band, The Source and Parish (both on ECM), Food (Rune Grammofon), Håkon Kornstad Trio and Håvard Wiik Trio (both on Jazzland) and Dingobats (Jazzaway Records). Mats Eilertsen's own quartet features Parish drummer Thomas Strønen and saxophonist Fredrik Ljungkvist alongside Dutch cellist Ernst Reijseger.

www.matseilertsen.com



PERSPECTIVE: RAP/R&B

Norwegian hip-hop spent the first half of 2006 bouncing back from a disappointing 2005, especially sales wise. The duo Karpe Diem had a surprise radio hit with their summer anthem "Piano," while the album *Rett fra hjertet* (*Right from the Heart*) sold an impressive 8,000 copies in its first month of release. Karpe Diem's label mate Mira Craig toured festivals with her homemade brew of rap, R&B, dancehall and folk music, while Paperboys spent almost two months in the Top 10 with their retrospective collection *So Far, So Good*. In Bergen, Tiern & Lars geared up for their debut album, while underground collective A-laget created a huge buzz through myspace.com/alaget.

ESSENTIAL RELEASES:

Karpe Diem – *Rett fra hjertet* (Bonnier Amigo)

Mira Craig – *Mira Mira* (Homemade/Bonnier Amigo)

Tungtvann – *Siste skanse* (C+C Records)

Paperboys – *So Far, So Good* (AA/Bonnier Amigo)

DJ Herkules – *Best of Backpack* – The Mixtape



PROFILE: BIG ICE

Few Norwegian artists apart from A-ha can lay claim to earning a gold album for their work on the American market. And few Norwegian business insiders actually know the name of Big Ice, who just received his first American gold trophy for his production duties on the Baby Bash album, *Tha Smokin Nephew*. Even though he has risen to American rap fame virtually unnoticed, Big Ice received his first gold album for his work on the first album from Norwegian pop/rap act Multicyde back in the nineties, but since then he has concentrated on the American market. He's working with Bay Area veteran Jay Tee on his new album *How the Game Go*, and has also given some beats to Portland crooner Arjay and underground rapper Cin'Atra from Seattle.

www.myspace.com/bigiceofdaplayboyfoundation

PERSPECTIVE: ELECTRONICA

In the late nineties, the Norwegian electronica scene was celebrated as the successor to the huge success of French pioneers Daft Punk, Cassius and Air. As expected, some acts (such as sales success Röyksopp and media darlings Annie and Erlend Øye) have enjoyed mainstream attention, while others have kept their focus on supplying quality to the underground. Lindström & Prins Thomas caused a sensation with debut album *L&PT*, which they themselves described as futuristic disco and universal boogie, while pioneers Biosphere once again delivered chilled and reflective ambient music on the CD version of *Dropsonde*. DJ Nils Noa continued to roam the globe with his hot and audience-friendly sets, while Todd Terje surprised everybody with his bossa-inspired remix of Michael Jackson's "I Can't Help It."

ESSENTIAL RELEASES:

Ralph Myerz & The Jack Herren Band

– *Knives n' Loaded Guns* (Virgin/EMI)

Bjørn Torske – TBA

Lindström – *A Feedelity Affair* (Feedelity Records)

Friko – *The Journey to Mandoola* (C+C Records)

Frost – TBA (Frostworld)

PROFILE: RALPH MYERZ & THE JACK HERREN BAND



Inside electronica trio Ralph Myerz & The Jack Herren Band is an electronic act with the soul of a stadium rock band. The band (consisting of beatmaster Erlend Sellevold, drummer Tarjei Strøm and percussionist Thomas Lønheim) produces music that is deeply-rooted in hip-hop and chillout beats, but its explosive live shows more often than not end up as tributes to the pyro-celebrating seventies version of Kiss. Having been signed to American indie label Emperor Norton for its two first albums, *Knives n' Loaded Guns* is the band's first outing for Virgin Records. Ralph Myerz & The Jack Herren Band was also the first band ever to clear a sample for the classic Norwegian rock track "Forelska i lærern" ("In Love With The Teacher" – a huge Norwegian hit in the 80s), simply because composer Torstein Flakne thought the guys made it rock so hard. Not bad for a trio with two turntables and two drumkits.

www.myspace.com/ralphmyerz

THIS IS NORWAY

NORWEGIAN CHARTS 2005

NO. 1 AT THE NORWEGIAN CHARTS 2006 (26 FIRST WEEKS)

ALBUM SALES CHART

ARTIST – TITLE	LABEL	ORIGIN	NUMBER 1
Madrugada – <i>Live at Trafalmore</i>	(EMI Music)	Norway	9 weeks
Olsenbanden Jr. – <i>På Cirkus</i> (Soundtrack)	(EMI Music)	Norway	1 week
David Gilmour – <i>On an Island</i>	(EMI Music)	UK	1 week
DumDum Boys – <i>Gravitasjon</i>	(Oh Yeah/EMI)	Norway	6 weeks
Bruce Springsteen			
– <i>We Shall Overcome, The Seeger Sessions</i>	(Sony BMG)	USA	3 weeks
Tool – <i>10,000 Days</i>	(Sony BMG)	USA	1 week
Red Hot Chili Peppers – <i>Stadium Arcadium</i>	(Warner Music)	USA	1 week
Mark Knopfler, Emmylou Harris			
– <i>All the Roadrunning</i>	(Universal Music)	USA	2 weeks
Espen Lind, Kurt Nilsen, Alejandro Fuentes, Askil Holm			
– <i>Hallelujah Live</i>	(Universal Music/Sony BMG)	Norway	2 weeks

SINGLES SALES CHART

Madrugada ft. Ane Brun – "Lift Me"	(EMI Music)	Norway	3 weeks
Madonna – "Hung Up"	(Warner Music)	USA	1 week
DumDum Boys – "Enhjønning"	(Oh Yeah/EMI)	Norway	3 weeks
Marit Larsen – "Don't Save Me"	(EMI Music)	Norway	5 weeks
Grandiosa – "Respekt for Grandiosa" (Whistle & Hum/Universal)		Norway	8 weeks
Mary J. Blige ft. U2 – "One"	(Universal Music)	USA	1 week
Aleksander Denstad With – "A Little Too Perfect"	(Sony BMG)	Norway	4 weeks
Ravi – "Ås to i Osjø"	(Sony BMG)	Norway	1 week

HIT 40 AIRPLAY CHART (MUSIC CONTROL NORWAY)

Madonna – "Hung Up"	(Warner Music)	USA	2 weeks
Madrugada ft. Ane Brun – "Lift Me"	(EMI Music)	Norway	3 weeks
Robbie Williams – "Advertising Space"	(EMI Music)	UK	3 weeks
Marit Larsen – "Don't Save Me"	(EMI Music)	Norway	6 weeks
Madonna – "Sorry"	(Warner Music)	USA	3 weeks
Elvira Nikolaisen – "Egypt Song"	(Sony BMG)	Norway	4 weeks
Marit Larsen – "Under the Surface"	(EMI Music)	Norway	5 weeks

NORWEGIAN TROPHIES 2006

(Sales figures as of 1 July; figures marked * were very recent releases as this magazine went to print)

DOUBLE PLATINUM (80,000+ shipped units)	
Madrugada – <i>Live at Trafalmore</i> (Virgin/EMI)	140.000
Espen Lind, Kurt Nilsen, Alejandro Fuentes, Askil Holm	
– <i>Hallelujah Live</i> (Universal Music/Sony BMG)	109.000*

PLATINUM (40,000+ shipped units)	
DumDum Boys – <i>Gravitasjon</i> (Oh Yeah/EMI)	69.000
Henning Kvitnes – <i>Ut av veggen</i> (Scandicana/Bonnier Amigo)	40.000

GOLD (20,000+ shipped units)	
Maria Mena – <i>Apparently Unaffected</i> (Sony BMG)	39.000
Elvira Nikolaisen – <i>Quiet Exit</i> (Sony BMG)	34.000
Ravi – <i>Kjøpr gitar</i> (Sony BMG)	30.500*
Div art – <i>Idol 2006</i> (Sony BMG)	30.000
Hellbillies – <i>Rota – De beste</i> (Warner Music)	29.500*
Di Derre – <i>Di Beste med...</i> (Universal Music)	28.000*
Marit Larsen – <i>Under the Surface</i> (EMI Music)	25.000
Minor Majority – <i>Reasons to Hang Around</i> (Big Dipper Records)	20.000

NORWEGIAN AWARDS 2006

SPELLEMANN AWARD 2006

NORWAY'S EQUIVALENT TO THE GRAMMY

www.spellemann.no

General Awards:

Spellemann of the Year: Madrugada (EMI Music)

Hit of the Year: Madrugada & Ane Brun – "Lift Me" (EMI Music)

Music Video of the Year: Robert Post – "Got None" (Universal Music)

Honorary Award: Terje Rypdal (ECM)

Trade Special Mention Award: Jan Paulsen (FONO)

Trade Special Mention Award: Sæmund Fiskvik (IFPI Norway)

Album Awards:

Pop Album, Male: Robert Post – *Robert Post* (Universal Music)

Pop Album, Female: Ane Brun – *A Temporary Dive* (Determine Records/V2)

Pop Album, Group: Røyksopp – *The Understanding* (Wall of Sound/Virgin/EMI)

Rock: Madrugada – *The Deep End* (EMI Music)

Metal: Audrey Horne – *No Hay Banda* (Tuba)

Rap/Rnb: Paperboys – *When Worlds Collide* (Bonnier Music)

Electronica: Alog – *Miniatures* (Rune Grammofon/ECM)

New Artist: Marthe Valle – *It's a Bag of Candy* (Grammar Records/MBO)

Blues: Kåre Virud Band – *Ild og vann* (Bluestown Records/MBO)

Country: The Respalexans – *Shine On* (MW Records)

Dancing Orchestra/Schlager: Ole Ivars – *Vi tar det tel manda'n* (Tyliden & Co.)

Folk: Vamp – *Siste stikk* (Majorstudio/Musikkoperatørene)

Children: Geir Lystrup – *Sangen om Yébo* (Juni/Kirkelig Kulturverksted)

Traditional Music: Sigrd Moldestad, Einar Mjøltnes, Håkon Høgemo – *Gamalnymalt* (NORCD)

Jazz: Hans Mathisen – *Quiet Songs* (Curling Legs/Musikkoperatørene)

Classical: Leif Ove Andsnes – *Rachmaninov: Piano Concertos 1 & 2* (EMI Classical)

Contemporary: Nils Henrik Asheim – *19 March 2004, Oslo Cathedral* (Fabra Records)

Open Category: Nils Petter Molvær – *ER* (Sula Records)

ALARM AWARDS 2006

Nominees are decided by the votes of 60 music journalists, and winners are decided 50 percent by the journalists and 50 percent by votes from the public.

www.alarmprisen.no

General Awards:

The Alarm Award: Sofian (C+C Records)

Song of the Year: "The Kids are on High Street" – Madrugada (Virgin/EMI)

Live Act of the Year: Purified in Blood (Tuba)

Newcomer of the Year: Mira Craig (Homemade Records)

Album Awards:

Rock: Madrugada – *The Deep End* (Virgin/EMI)

Pop: Ane Brun – *A Temporary Dive* (Determine/V2)

Metal: El Caco – *The Search* (Black Balloon)

Rap: Paperboys – *When Worlds Collide* (Bonnier Amigo)

Open Category/Electronic: Cloroform – *Cracked Wide Open* (Kaaarec)

Club: Røyksopp – *The Understanding* (Wall Of Sound/EMI)

Jazz: Shining – *In the Kingdom of Kitch You would be a Monster* (Rune Grammofon/ECM)

NORDIC MUSIC AWARDS 2005

The second pan-Scandinavian awards show NMA was held in Copenhagen, Denmark on 29 October, 2005.

Nominees are decided by sales figures, while winners are decided by votes from the public.

Best Norwegian Artist:

Madrugada (EMI Music)

RECORD SALES 2006

(Source: IFPI Norway)

ALBUM SALES 2006 AS OF 31 MAY (DISTRIBUTOR VALUE IN MNOK):

A huge number of fourth quarter 2005 releases clogged the record market. An overloaded release schedule of international artist top products created an early 2006 rush of return shipments from the largest record store chains and the wholesalers.

A frustrating lack of big international releases in the first quarter of 2006 added to a bad effect on statistic figures. At the same time the sales of Norwegian artist releases set new records month by month.

"Norwegian music has become so extremely good and exiting that something else automatically becomes less interesting – namely international artists," says Managing Director Torstein Syvertsen of record store chain Musikkverket.

Finally, in mid-April the Norwegians got some competition, and by the end of May, local albums were down 3 % year-to-date. However, this was prior to big releases from key Norwegian artists such as Ravi, Paperboys and Hellbillies.

RECORD SALES 2006 AS OF 31 MAY (IN 1,000 UNITS):

As with most of Western Europe, the Norwegian record market suffered a dive in multi-artist compilation sales. As the first true victim of the growing download music market, multi-artist album sales were down 47.6 %, which left an artist album decrease of only 2.5 %. By the end of May 2006, overall album sales were down 9.4 % from 2005 figures.

Record sales and legal download sales alike show a strong surge towards alternative music for dedicated music collectors, such as Minor Majority and Tool, and music for a grown-up audience, such as Johnny Cash and Bruce Springsteen.

"Only music for a grown-up audience reaches our local Top 20 chart. The music young people listen to nowadays is not seen on the chart," says independent record store owner Miklos Patai.

Record companies relying on traditional hit artist releases suffer, which – together with the drop in multi-artist compilation sales – results in the multinational distributors making up more than the total decrease in record sales.

THIS IS NORWAY:

Population: 4.6 million
Capital: Oslo
Currency: NOK 100.00 = EUR 12.72 = USD 16.18
Gold Trophy: 20,000 album units, 5,000 single units
Platinum Trophy: 40,000 album units, 10,000 single units

(Currencies at June 2006 exchange rates, source: Norges Bank)

Approximate regular prices:
CD album: NOK 160.00 = EUR 20.36 = USD 25.89
CD single (2 track CDs): NOK 30.00 = EUR 3.82 = USD 4.85
Track download: NOK 9.00 = EUR 1.15 = USD 1.46
DVD movie: NOK 175.00 = EUR 22.26 = USD 28.32



MADRUGADA landed three Spellemann Awards, two Alarm Awards and a Nordic Music Award for *The Deep End*. Starting off in December 2005, the band's live album *Live at Tralfamadore* went triple platinum and spent 11 consecutive weeks on top of the chart, backed by the duet single "Lift Me" featuring Ane Brun, which topped both single and airplay charts. (Photo: Autumn De Wilde/Virgin Records)



RAVI follow up his double platinum selling album *Den nye arbeidsdagn* with *Kjøpr gitar* (Sony BMG) released late June, already on its way towards platinum.



MARIT LARSEN, formerly of M2M, made a smashing solo debut with the single "Don't Save Me," which spent six weeks on top of Music Control Norway and five weeks on top of the singles chart. Her second single, the album title track "Under the Surface" was holding on to the top of the airplay chart for the fifth week as this magazine went to print. (Photo: Stian Andersen)



SOFIAN BENZAIM was awarded the big Alarm Award and scholarship. The 24-year-old Algerian-born talent from Oslo was met with rave reviews, which hailed Sofian as the great hope for modern soul music. His debut album *This is Sofian* got two weeks in the charts peaking at No. 11.



DUMDUM BOYS made a highly-anticipated comeback with *Gravitasjon* (Oh Yeah/EMI), which topped the chart for six weeks and was the first Norwegian 2006 release to go platinum. (Photo: Stian Andersen)



ASKIL HOLM, ALEJANDRO FUENTES, ESPEN LIND AND KURT NILSEN picked up their guitars at Playroom Management's Christmas party. One thing led to another, and after a sold out tour with Leonard Cohen's "Hallelujah" as the quartet's anthem, popular demand made *Hallelujah Live* the fastest selling album ever in Norway from an initial shipment of 28,000 to 100,000 in just two weeks time.



PHOTO: STIAN ANDERSEN

PHOTO: MARIE SJØVOLD

NORWAY LIVE AT POPKOMM

On Thursday (21 September) you can enjoy a full evening of some of the best Norwegian music has to offer, from heavy psychedelic rock to elegant electronica.

WEDNESDAY 20.09 KULTURBRAUEREI / PALAIS

MARIA MENA 21:00 Pop singer Maria Mena from Oslo made a remarkable debut barely 16 years of age. In the course of the next four years, she produced seven top 10 airplay tracks and 3 consecutive top 10 albums. In 2004 "You're The Only One" spent 4 weeks on Billboard Hot 100 preceding the release of her international album *White Turns Blue* (Columbia). www.mariamenamusic.com

NORWEGIAN NIGHT THURSDAY 21.09 FROM 20:30 KULTURBRAUEREI / KESSELHAUS

CLOROFORM 20:30 A mix between Medeski, Martin & Wood, Primus and Hendrix Experience without the guitars (!), Cloroform is one of the greatest live attractions in Norway. Check out the heavy metal stage antics of keyboardist Kaada, known from his work with Mike Patton on Ipecac Records.

ANIMAL ALPHA 21:30 Can you imagine a cross between PJ Harvey, System Of A Down and Soundgarden, with a healthy dash of A Clockwork Orange-inspired fashion? Animal Alpha melds influences from these and others into the most mind-blowing live rock you will witness at Popkomm.

WE 22:30 "The world is an oyster, and we're ready to slurp it." Hard rockin' rock quartet WE has recently finished several mini-tours in Germany promoting the European release of their acclaimed 2004 album *Smugglers*, including a celebrated gig at Wacken Open Air.

KAIZERS ORCHESTRA 23:30 One of the best live bands ever to come out of Norway, Kaizers Orchestra has accomplished Mission: Impossible. They have attracted tens of thousands of fans at European festivals, even though they sing exclusively in Norwegian.

BJORN BERGE 00:30 Somewhere in between Stevie Ray Vaughan and Red Hot Chili Peppers, Bjorn Berge is pumping out his intense and hard-rocking blues licks. Playing several hundred gigs every year, this travelling blues monster will rock your socks off.

NORWEGIAN NIGHT KULTURBRAUEREI / MASCHINENHAUS FROM 20:00

KARIN PARK 20:00 Norwegian pop princess Karin Park's debut album *Superworldunknown* was a collection of classic pop songs, dressed in a beautiful contemporary production. Stepping her game up, Park developed her rich sound on follow-up *Change Your Mind*.

MARIT LARSEN 21:00 Marit Larsen experienced every aspiring artist's dream when she saw the world with her million-selling duo M2M in her teens. She also saw the dark side of the music business, so when she released her solo debut *Under the Surface* in 2006, this 22-year-old was more than ready to take on the world on her own. Think Joni Mitchell meets Sheryl Crow.

ADJAGAS 22:00 Music Week and BBC contributor Olaf Furnish said it best about the native and haunting sounds of Adjagas: "I thought I have heard most of the music in the world, but this was a totally new language, sound and a way to express feelings which I never have seen or heard before."

BERMUDA TRIANGLE 24:00 Electronica act Bermuda Triangle amazed both journalists and record buyers with its 2003 debut *Mooger Fooger* before follow-up *Secret Pillow* arrived in 2004 to the same enthusiastic reception.

FRIDAY 22.09 FROM 23:00 KULTURBRAUEREI / NBI

EINAR STENSENG 23:00 Singer-songwriter Einar Stenseng, originally from Oslo, has been a Berliner since 2003. His third album *The Truth Doesn't Matter* (released in Norway by Big Dipper Records in September) features the now late British rock legend Nikki Sudden.

www.einarstenseng.com

PHOTOS FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: MARIA MENA, CLOROFORM, ANIMAL ALPHA, WE, KAIZERS ORCHESTRA, BJORN BERGE, KARIN PARK, MARIT LARSEN, ADJAGAS, BERMUDA TRIANGLE, EINAR STENSENG