

copenhagen - the Nordic capital of

DJs who play with Spoonie
Gee? Nationalist rappers?
Warehouse parties?
Welcome to Copenhagen, a
former sex capital of Europe
that is fast becoming the
Nordic capital of rap.

Danish club culture making itself
heard at the Coma Club in
Copenhagen

PHOTO STEEN TROLLE

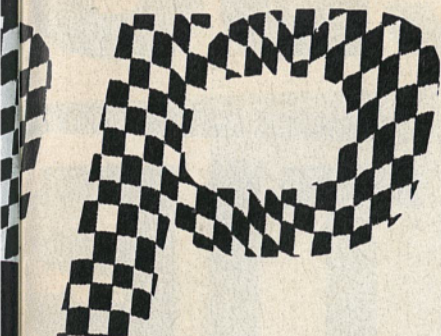


Copenhagen club fashion at the U-Matic
PHOTO STEEN TROLLE



Flower power at the Coma Club
PHOTO STEEN TROLLE

By Jay Strongman



Copenhagen has traditionally been regarded as the 'sex capital of Europe', a city where 'love shops' display sexual aids of all shapes and startling sizes, and newsagents openly sell the kind of hardcore porn that would make Paul Raymond blush. But the strip-joints and porn shops are fast becoming an irrelevance in the Copenhagen of the late '80s, the Danes' indifference to porn now means that the blue videos are mainly exported to Germany and North America, and only the tourists leaf through the copies of *Anal Annie* and *Dana's Donkey Sex*. Derelict sex cinemas and clubs stand as empty monuments to a former era, because the Danish capital is fast developing a new nightclub culture.

For the past few years Danish DJs have been building up an international reputation, some figuring highly in the recent world mixing championships and others working for top New York rap acts. This, coupled with an explosion of club activity similar to the shock waves created in London by the acid scene, has resulted in a flood of homegrown DJ records and rap acts.

Much of the credit must go to the Coma club, the brainchild of top DJ Kenneth Baker, which combines the warehouse ethics of London's best outlaw raves with a mix of the latest upfront sounds and classic soul. Run by a tight-knit organisation of several like-minded clubbers, Coma has used a combination of Denmark's finest DJs and various guest spinners from London to launch Copenhagen's first acid nights, and introduced an element of craziness to a previously stale club scene. Club veteran Baker sees the fact that Danish DJs are finally getting respect in their own country as one of the main factors in Copenhagen's musical awakening. "When I first started deejaying several years ago, the top clubs here would only employ English DJs

and almost all DJs had to speak to their audiences in English. That's all changed now and Danish DJs are finally being taken seriously by the music industry and club owners. Bands like *Rockers By Choice* also rap in Danish, so although we are influenced by what is happening in London and New York, we are actually creating our own sounds and styles both in clubs and on vinyl."

The live music circuit is also thriving. A long tradition of hosting jazz festivals means that the city's

and have just completed an LP 'Oprab (Til Det Danske Folk)' produced by the Coma's DJ Kenneth Baker. The album combines an uncompromising political message, ranting against the inertia of Denmark's politicians, and a melange of dance sounds including house, speed metal, rare groove and go go. Rapped almost entirely in Danish it is one of the strongest European rap LPs yet. *Rockers By Choice* are scheduled to play in Russia shortly. The Nordic rap invasion of the world has already begun.



Napoleon Solo — the best (and only) '60s R&B/ska band in Denmark

jazz clubs regularly attract the finest names in that field, and every weekend there is a plethora of rock and pop gigs across town. From dodgy heavy metal outfits to punk and reggae bands almost every musical taste is catered for, with venues like Lopen in the city's hippy district of Christiania (declared an independent district by squatters in '71 and a thorn in the Danish government's side ever since) packed with enthusiastic crowds and bands like current act of the moment, *Napoleon Solo*. An eight-piece combo, they are Denmark's sole exponents of '60s R&B and ska, and have already been voted the city's 'Band Of The Month'. Such is their reputation that they have just been offered a European winter tour including several eagerly awaited UK dates and have a debut single planned for release in January.

However, it's in the field of hip hop that the Danes are threatening to startle the world. The country's first rap album by MC Einar recently went silver, selling over 25,000 copies in Denmark alone. Comparative newcomers *Rip, Rap & Rock* already have one excellent single release under their belt and are currently working on their debut album. But the act that will probably make the Dane's famous for something other than their bacon, are *Rockers By Choice*. The country's first live rap band, they look set to reach Denmark's top ten with their debut 12" 'Engel/Nedtur'

i-D's Danish DJ Directory

Mick 'Cutfather' Hanson came second at the DMC mixing finals in '88 and fifth in the '86 finals. He has also just started his own record company *Kop Records* and released a 12" single called 'You Know What I'm Saying'.

Kenn (Duke Of Denmark) came third in the '87 DMC mixing finals and was resident DJ at New York's infamous *Milky Way* club after a stint as DJ for *Spoonie Gee*.

Carlsten 'Soulshock' recently deejayed for *True Mathematics* on their European tour and has just signed a recording deal with *First Priority* in New York.

DJ TNT released 'Dope Material — My Material Dope' on New York's *Cutting Records* and is currently in the studio working on a track with *Cutfather Hansen*.

DJ Delgado has his own radio show on three of Denmark's top radio stations, and also runs his own hugely popular monthly all-nighter called *Quiet Storm* playing deep house, soul and funk.

Kenneth Baker deejays at the Coma club, has remixed records for virtually every pop star in Denmark, has his own monthly radio show and is the only DJ to write about the black music scene, hosting columns in two music magazines. He recently produced the debut album for rappers *Rockers By Choice* and is in the studio finishing his own dance single.

DJ Keld Tolstrup deejays at the renowned *Club Fisk* in the city of *Arhus* playing upfront house, hip hop and soul. He has worked across Europe and is finishing his debut single at the moment.

CLUBS

Unlike London, Copenhagen's late night licensing laws are made for the 20th Century and few clubs close before 5

O'Clock with several going on until 7am. There are too many discos and late night dives to list in full but here's a selection of the best.

The U-Matic (Vestergade) Located under the *Cafe Krasnapolsky* and attracting a somewhat laid-back trendy crowd the club's music policy veers between funk and new wave.

Montmatre Known for only having one turntable this jazz club is always rammed with late night ravers, fashion models and musicians. Best nights are the Friday and Saturday night funk/soul sessions.

Annabells Imagine 300 drunk *Dolph Lundgrens* dressed in yuppie business suits and 300 *Brigitte Nielsons* in designer mini-skirts crammed uncomfortably together in plush but humid conditions and you've got a good idea of *Annabells*. A more extreme version of *Stringfellows*, this place is where conformity and money rule supreme. *Boy George* was apparently roughed up here by a gang of yuppies suffering from too much champagne and too few brain cells.

Daddy's (*Axeltorv*) This chrome and mirror discotheque is one of the biggest clubs in Denmark and is packed every weekend with young Danish soul boys and girls. Open til 7am the music policy is actually very upfront with DJ *Tino* spinning the latest in UK and US dance records along with the more obvious commercial tunes.

On The Rocks Open until 8am this is the last stop for the city's hardened revelers. Music is extremely commercial but with daylight just around the corner you won't mind what you're dancing to.

Coma (*Lorry, Guldalderdal, Pilealle*) Setting the pace that others will have to follow, the Coma not only attracts the most fashionable party people but it's also found some of the most unusual venues. First club in Denmark to hold acid parties with atmospheres that most London events would envy.

RECORD SHOPS

Street Dance (*Vestergade 17*) is the best record shop selling the very latest US and British releases and a wide range of Spanish and Italian disco mixes.

Accord Records (*NDR Frihaugsgade 7/Vestergade 37*) sells hundreds of deleted '70s funk and soul LPs between £3 and £6 each.



WORLD TOUR
The i-D World Tour
arrives in
Copenhagen on
February 13 with
DJ Jay Strongman
and surprise acts.