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## Concert review: Taylor Smith & Chris Copen, Mojo, Copenhagen

*Jakob Wandam* (<http://www.bluesnews.dk/author/jakob/>) July 1, 2022

(<http://www.bluesnews.dk/koncertanmeldelse-taylor-smith-chris-copen-mojo-koebenhavn/>)



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*Chris Copen and Taylor Smith*

on the music that Taylor Smith plays with his band The Roamin 'Jasmine. However, the orchestra also draws on country blues and swing jazz and more.

**Blues-oriented**

*Text and photo: Jakob Wandam*

Copenhagen Jazz Festival is in full swing, and if there is one you can always count on finding your way around the city's concert stages during the festival weeks, it is the Danish pianist and singer Chris Copen.

On Wednesday, June 29, he had allied himself with American bassist and singer Taylor Smith. He has lived in New Orleans, Louisiana for a number of years, and the musical traditions of the crescent city make their mark

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However, the concert at Mojo Blues Bar took place as a pure duo event, and very naturally Taylor Smith and Chris Copen focused on the more blues-oriented part of their repertoire. It also fit nicely with the shaved-down instrumentation, which simply consisted of Chris Copen's electric piano and Taylor Smith's double bass. The two then took turns acting lead vocalist.

It gave plenty of room for them both to play the solo muscles - rarely have you heard so many bass solos! - and it also revealed a well-developed ability to play against each other and find a raw core in the songs. There was a fresh energy over the three sets that made up the concert - regardless of the fact that they actually consisted exclusively of cover songs.



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*Taylor Smith*

Of course, there were some of the most famous New Orleans trotters among the concert's twenty songs. Chris Copen, for example, led in a gloomy version of "St. James Infirmary" and played absolutely masterfully, soon with the most beautiful gentle trios, soon with a hard *attack* on the keys.

And Taylor Smith's bright voice was in focus on the standard "Do you know what it means to miss New Orleans". But there were also lesser known songs by, for example, New Orleans bluesman Earl King (the cunning "Feeling my way around" and the rock & roll "You can fly high") and Lil 'Bob & the Lollipops' pressure song "I got loaded".



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*Chris Copen*

### **Balstyrisk**

Chris Copen was in great shape with a perfectly ball-steering right hand; his game was inventive and varied and was delivered with great confidence. Taylor Smith brought a resilient jump blues energy to the day, and both seemed motivated and simply looked like someone having fun.

Taylor Smith in particular also diverted with anecdotes from New Orleans, and both were good at presenting the numbers. The audience acknowledged with good support and enthusiasm, and there was definitely a festival atmosphere this warm summer evening at Mojo.

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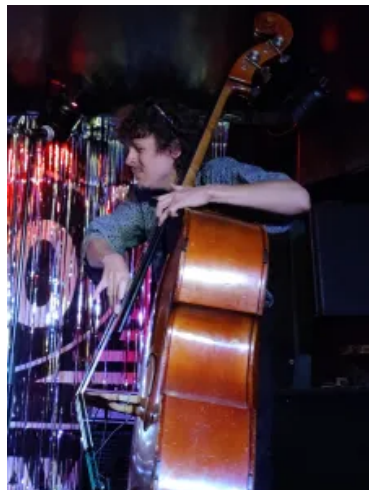
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The blues enthusiasts were serviced with strong interpretations of Blind Boy Fuller ("Step it up and go"), Guitar Slim ("The things I used to do"), Elmore James ("Sho 'nuff I do") and Muddy Waters ("(I'm your) hoochie coochie man"). Among the highlights was also a really strong version of "Goin 'down slow", which they attributed to "Champion" Jack Dupree (it was first recorded by St. Louis Jimmy Oden with Roosevelt Sykes on piano).



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*Chris Copen*



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*Taylor Smith*

funny Ernie K-Doe hit "Mother-in-law".

Taylor Smith sang a handsome version of Fats Dominos' hit "My blue heaven", while Chris Copen was in front of a medley of Dominos' "Hello Josephine" and Roosevelt Sykes' "I'm a dangerous man". And from Dr. The John repertoire came with a funky and carnival-swinging "Somebody changed the lock" and it - in Chris Copen's hands - always excellent "Such a night".



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It was simply just a good night at the Mojo Blues Bar with lots of musical excess, bold vibe and copious amounts of instrumental balance. And even though the concert ended on the night of Thursday, there are still good opportunities to take part in the party.

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*Chris Copen and Taylor Smith*

## **Mardi Gras Copenhagen**

Chris Copen will perform with Jazz Five in MG Petersen's Family Garden on Saturday 2 July at 2 pm, and the same evening with Samantha Antoinette & the Chargers at Charlie Scott's at 8 pm. On Sunday 3 July he will be part of "Dr. John Tribute "at Mardi Gras Copenhagen at Balders Plads at 3 p.m.



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*Chris Copen*

On Monday 4 July, Chris Copen is part of Johan Bylling's Seaside Stompers, which plays on the channel at 5 pm. On Wednesday 6 July at 3 pm, he will take part in Johan Bylling's Lang Quartet's "Tribute to Lee Allen" at Drop Inn, and on the 7th, Chris Copen joins Johan Bylling Lang & New Orleans Funkateers, who play in Krøgers Have at 6 pm.



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*Chris Copen and Taylor Smith*

On Friday, July 8, Chris Copen will play behind Samantha Antoinette Smith at Charlie Scott's at 5pm, and at 8pm at the same venue he himself is the bandleader. And on Saturday, July 9, Taylor Smith and Chris Copen will meet again, first at a duo performance at Restaurant Under Uret at 5pm, and then in the ad hoc supergroup Charlie Scott's Late Night All Star Band. It does not take place surprisingly at Charlie Scott's, it is 11 pm and it is with the further participation of Johan

Bylling Lang, Samantha Antoinette Smith and Rasmus Grosell.

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