

TMC Interviews Heidi Mortenson

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words by Theresa Heath

These days Heidi Mortenson is making brooding, bass-driven electro with the night pop sensibilities of Alpines and introverted paranoia of Fever Ray. The 5 tracks on new EP, *Mørk*, are part song, part soundscape and refuse to conform to any one genre – sidling in next to the synths and samples are a menacing blues bass line and even a brass section. Sung in Mortenson's native Danish, it's music to listen to on a stormy night. TMC caught up with the ephemeral Dane to dig a little deeper...



How did you get into music?

As a kid, when I was tucked into bed, my dad would be repairing cars in the garage right next to my room, lots of metal sounds and rustling around, and my mum would be practicing the organ in the living room. I liked to record sounds and sometimes I secretly recorded my mum on the phone while the radio was creating a backing track. I also recorded my grandmother's funeral. As a teenager I moved to Barcelona and kept recording sounds and that's when I started to make music.

For those non-Danish speakers among us, can you tell us what ‘Mørk’ and some of the lyrics mean?

The music is inspired by a bleak and dark time in a stagnant chaos. Mørk means ‘dark’ or ‘gloomy’. The songs deal with some kind of dark and dreamy double-reality state of mind, displacement of time, coping with realisations and figuring out how to move on...



[watch the video here](#)

What does it mean to you to be singing in Danish for the first time?

After 12 years abroad, where English and Spanish were my main languages, the change to Danish has a special significance for Mørk. The near-primal contact with language helps me bind the music and lyrics to one another and to deliver a sense of accuracy and immediacy.

Who are your main musical influences and who/what are you inspired by?

Nina Simone and Laurie Anderson. I'm not sure how they've influenced me, but I listen to them a lot and find them amazing on so many levels. I'm influenced by my experiences, traces of history and the universe, numbers, time, mystery and live

concerts of other artists. Also I can get inspired by an instrument or an effect – I find that frequencies and acoustics somehow connect to emotions. I think this is the reason I never aim for any particular genre cos’ genres in this sense mean nothing to me.

How is this EP different from your previous material?

First of all it’s in Danish which (for everyone but the Danes) leaves a lot to the imagination – the voice integrates and becomes similar to an instrument because you understand it, not by the word, but by its expression. Also I’ve thrown in a lot of acoustic instruments. I had a bunch of horn players in the studio and Side B of the record is me playing the pump organ and the piano. Mørk is my first release in 4 years and I feel that this EP is somehow mature or perhaps I’m more mature, and this time I have all the tools and skills needed to shape the result to my full satisfaction.

Would you say that you draw on a queer aesthetic, or that queer art and culture in any way influences the music you make?

No. I’m not sure what queer aesthetics would be in a musical sense. I doubt that you could ever find a final definition of that. I’d like to think that queer people and queer artists are more diverse than fitting into one box.

What do you do when you’re not making music?

Run, eat and sleep. I go to Berlin regularly to hang out with friends and get inspired. I also like to go to flea markets in Denmark and buy old crap that I find inspiring. So far I’ve bought 6 pairs of amazing speakers. I gave away 4 pairs to friends who needed a serious upgrade on their listening experience.

What’s next for you?

In May I do a little tour with Rumpistol in Denmark. I’m all about getting a band together for the EP as well as writing new material. And I can’t wait for ‘springtime’ to happen! I will go on an adventure!

Mørk is out on March 5th on Rump Recordings. You can listen to some of Heidi’s [new stuff here](#).