

Welcome to the 41st Tønder Festival

Last year's 40th jubilee was a huge, warm celebration of 4 decades of international and Danish folk roots music in Tønder. It also marked the launch of the Tønder Festival of the future. Hand-made music with roots in folk, country, blues, cajun, world and the rest has seen yet another massive renaissance these past few years. Tønder Festival has been part of this all the way. The rebuilding of the festival is a process that began in 2012, and 2015 sees the topping out.

This year's music programme reflects today's genre-crossing artists, the bearers of the strong traditions and new, young names. International giants in the veteran class side by side with the top musicians of the future.

This year again, Tønder Festival's audiences will find a festival site alive with many different music venues, special thematic zones and a wide selection of restaurants, cafés and sales booths. Four days' immersion in a unique festival atmosphere with its well-defined identity and audiences who love the music and the vibe.

2014 was also the year when the conductor's baton changed hands. Tønder Festival's artistic director Carsten Panduro retired and the new management took over. The new management team inherited a festival that turned loss to profit in 2014, a festival with huge and growing local and regional backing and enormous media attention.

There have been digital changes, too. Tønder Festival has a new website and an intensified presence on social media. Tønder Festival has as its main priority, as always, and more than ever, active contact with old and new audience members, those who buy wrist bands to participate in our unique, close fellowship centred on acoustic music of the highest calibre.

Welcome to Tønder Festival 2015 – have fun!

Adam Holmes and The Embers (SCO)

Adam Holmes cut his musical teeth playing fiddle in the famous folk sessions in Edinburgh. He changed to guitar and released his debut album *Heirs and Graces* in early 2014, produced by John Wood. Often compared to John Martyn because of the similarities in the vocal tone, and the stylish purity of his choice of folk ballads, Adam Holmes crafts songs that resonate. As well as performing with his own band, Adam Holmes plays with the group called Rura, and he will also be appearing with them at this year's Tønder Festival.

www.adamholmesandtheembers.com

Allan Taylor (UK)

His fifty-odd years on the road and his songs, like *Roll On The Day* and *It's Good To See You*, have established Allan Taylor's name among his generation of English folksingers. He has shared stages with the godfathers of folk: Alex Campbell, Derroll Adams, Ramblin' Jack Elliott, Dougie MacLean... In the main, Allan Taylor has stood alone on stage with a Martin guitar and his songs about the longings and loneliness of life on the road. His most recent album is *All Is One* from 2013.

www.allantaylor.com

Band Battle New Orleans Style (USA, DK)

New Orleans street music traditions hit the Tønder Festival site on Saturday afternoon. Horns and drums are the weapons in this band battle between Danish and American musicians, a brass band parade with swinging horns and syncopated snare drum riffs. Tønder Festival 2015 has invited two authentic New Orleans bands, Meschiya Lake & The Little Big Horns, and King James & The Special Men. Musicians from these two bands form the American brigade. From Denmark come musicians from Neanders and Tuesday Night Brass Band.

Bellowhead (UK)

Jon Boden (violin, vocal) and John Spiers (melodeon, concertina) laid the foundation for the present eleven-strong Bellowhead band. In Bellowhead, traditional music is filled out with surprising instrumental settings, harmonic and melodic innovation. Bellowhead toy with the silly and burlesque, morris-dancing in an instrumental number like Sloe Gin, or throwing decorum to the winds in a sea shanty. The summer of 2014 saw the release of Bellowhead's latest album, Revival, which includes a cover version of Linda & Richard Thompson's song I Want To See The Bright Lights Tonight.

www.bellowhead.co.uk

Chris Smither (USA)

In his 50-year career writing songs and singing them, Chris Smither has had his songs recorded by Bonnie Raitt, Emmylou Harris and Diana Krall, among many others, and he has made 20 albums himself. Chris Smither's folk career started in the mid-60s in Boston. In 1971, Chris Smither made his first album I'm A Stranger Too on the same label as Townes van Zandt.

The album Small Revelation from 1997 appeared on the americana hit lists, and Chris Smither toured constantly with, among others, Ramblin' Jack Elliott, Dave Alvin and Tom Russell on a very successful tour entitled Monsters of Folk. To mark his 50th jubilee, Chris Smither put out the retrospective Still on the Levee album, while on the Link of Chain tribute he is hailed by Bonnie Raitt, Loudon Wainwright III, Josh Ritter and Tim O'Brien.

www.smither.com

Danú (IRL)

Danú, formed in 1995 and, with eight albums released to date, are one of Ireland's major international traditional music names. Among their distinctions are Best Traditional Group (twice) at BBC Folk Awards. Danú numbers Benny McCarthy, accordion, Dónal Clancy, guitar, (son of Liam Clancy of the famed Clancy Brothers), Donnchadh Gough, bodhrán, uilleann pipes, Muireann Nic Amhlaibh, vocal, Oisín McAuley, violin, Tom Doorley, flute, and Éamon Doorley, bouzouki and violin. Danú's latest album is Buan, released in January 2015.

www.danumusic.net

Dreamers Circus & The Danish String Quartet (DK, S)

It is rare for Danish folk bands to rewrite the rules of the game. Dreamers' Circus revise and enlarge the folk music concept. Rune Tonsgaard Sørensen, violin, Nikolaj Busk, piano and accordion, and Ale Carr, cittern, are currently collaborating with The Danish String Quartet. Violinist Rune Tonsgaard Sørensen plays in both teams, and the musical cross-pollination is evident in The Danish String Quartet's 2014 album Wood Works, where the classical musicians apply their talents to traditional Nordic folk tunes. Besides Rune Tonsgaard Sørensen, The Danish String Quartet is Asbjørn Nørgaard, viola; Frederik Schøyen Sjölin, cello; and Frederik Øland, violin.

www.danishquartet.com

www.dreamerscircus.com

Eleanor Shanley (IRL)

This is Irish singer Eleanor Shanley's seventh appearance at Tønder Festival. Her huge following in Denmark bears witness to Eleanor Shanley's fine singing voice and her charming stage presence.

In her long singing career, Eleanor Shanley has worked with De Dannan, Ronnie Drew, Sharon Shannon, Christy Moore, The Dubliners, and many others. Eleanor Shanley will be appearing at Tønder Festival 2015 with Paul Kelly, violin and mandolin, and Frankie Lane, guitar.

www.eleanorshanley.com

Fanø/Cape Breton Night (DK, CAN)

Since Jerry Holland and Marion Dewar first played at Tønder Festival 15 years ago, the friendship and musical collaboration between Fanø in Denmark and Cape Breton in Canada has grown. From Canada it's Troy MacGillivray, Allan Dewar, Marion Dewar, Jake Charron, Andrea Beaton, Kinnon Beaton, Betty Lou Beaton, Kendra MacGillivray, JJ Chaisson and Sabra MacGillivray plus The East Pointers. From Denmark we have de Fries & D. Beck, ULC Quintet, Rannok (Michael Graubæk and Theis Juhl Langland, Jesper Rudloff and Fristadskapellet (Peter and Kirstine Uhrbrand, Ole and Jens Mouritzen, Nils Thorlund). Come, listen – and dance!

Fara (SCO)

Jennifer Austin, Louise Bichan, Kristan Harvey, Jeana Leslie and Catriona Price, from Kirkwall in Orkney, armed with four violins and a piano, mount a fiery attack: this is Scottish folk music with special emphasis on tunes from the Orkney islands, many composed by Fara. Though new on the scene, Fara have already won such prizes as the BBC Radio 2 Young Folk Award and the BBC Radio Scotland Young Traditional Musician of the Year. Tønder Festival is not the only major folk festival to have noticed Fara. They are also appearing this summer at the huge Cambridge Folk Festival in England.

www.faramusic.co.uk

folkBALTICA Ensemble (DK, D)

Tønder Festival actively supports the growth of grassroots talent in folk music. folkBALTICA Ensemble began at the folkBALTICA Festival and consists of 50 young musicians from Slesvig Holstein and Southern Denmark. Violinist Harald Haugaard is artistic director of the folkBALTICA Festival and leads the ensemble, aided by Andreas Tophøj and Rasmus Zeeberg. Last year's folkBALTICA concert lifted the flaps in Tent 1. A repeat rave is anticipated this year, and folkBALTICA will also be giving school concerts on both sides of the border.

Folkeklubben (DK)

Folkeklubben stand today between the old and new stars, between rock and folk music. The musicians in Folkeklubben are One-Eyed Mule front man and guitarist Rasmus Dall, percussionist Rasmus Jusjong and singer and guitarist Kjartan Arngrim, whose voice has a nerve and clarity reminiscent of Danish rock hero Kim Larsen. In 2014 Folkeklubben released their second full-length album, Danmarksfilm, which proposes answers to the existential question, "What does it mean to be Danish?" Folkeklubben are very familiar with Tønder Festival and Hagge's Music Pub, where, in the autumn of 2014, they held the release party for the Danmarksfilm album.

www.folkeklubben.dk

FolkSpot: Northern Assembly - Lukkif - Ida Wenøe & The Silver Cords - Erlend Viken Trio (NO) - Jansberg - Phønix - Maja & David - M.c. Hansen

With great respect for the traditions and love for the roots, musical as well as geographical borders are crossed at Folk Spot Denmark 2015 featuring eight Nordic bands – seven Danish acts and one Norwegian act – who cover a wide span of folk and roots. It will be eight concerts with artists at high, international level who are among the most travelled and sought-after folk artists we have. They each represent the vibrant, Nordic folk music tradition, first-rate song writing, crisp electronica and Nordicana at its very best.

In addition to concerts for the Tønder audience Folk SPOT is also an international showcase with key people from the music business abroad being present. They have come to Tønder from as diverse countries as Norway, Germany, England, and Canada to hear world-class music from Denmark and the Nordic countries and obviously to enjoy one of the best festivals in the world at the same time.

The Folk Spot concerts in the P4 Tent on Friday and Saturday are a unique chance to check the live pulse of the Danish folk and roots scene right now!

Greg Russell & Ciaran Algar (ENG)

Two young musicians with wind in their sails, Gregg Russel, guitar and vocal, and Ciaran Algar, violin and vocal, are already established among the best new folk artists in UK. They met in 2011 and soon had a record contract. Their debut album *The Queen's Lover* (2012) was followed by tours of the country's folk clubs and festivals. In January 2013 they won the BBC Radio2 Young Folk Award, playing later that year at Cambridge Folk Festival and Fairport's Cropredy Convention. In November 2013 they released the album *The Call*, which attracted fine reviews. BBC Radio2 also awarded them The Horizon Award as the Best Breakthrough Act of 2014.

www.russellalgar.co.uk

Hans Theessink (NL)

Hans Theessink has appeared at Tønder Festival many times. He must be one of the busiest touring blues musicians in the world. At 67, Hans Theessink can look back on over 7500 concerts, 40 years on the road and a score of album releases. He often plays in Denmark with his trusty Danish pal, guitarist Knud Møller. In the spring of 2015 Hans Theessink and the American singer and guitarist Terry Evans put out the album *True & Blue*. The pair have recorded and toured together for years, this year in Denmark, too. Hans Theessink, who hails from Holland, lived in Denmark in the 70s, now makes his home in Vienna in Austria. At Tønder Festival 2015, Hans Theessink hosts the big Townes Van Zandt Tribute Concert.

www.theessink.com

Hayseed Dixie (USA)

"Rockgrass" is a mix of rock, bluegrass, country and hillbilly. Throw in ample measures of daftness, musicality and thumb-on-nose, and you've got Hayseed Dixie: AC/DC numbers on banjo, mandolin, acoustic guitar and double bass, and up the tempo. Songs by Led Zeppelin, Kiss, The Who and Alice Cooper have also been churned through the Hayseed Dixie blender. Audiences love what Hayseed Dixie do, and they have toured 30 countries, among them Denmark, where the Tønder fans were first zapped by Hayseed Dixie in 2005. On the new Hayseed Dixie album *Hair Down To My Grass*, due for release in 2015, the craziness continues, with versions of Europe's *The Final Countdown* and Pink Floyd's *Comfortably Numb*.

www.hayseed-dixie.com

Helene Blum & Harald Haugaard Band (DK)

Both as virtuoso and a creative inspiration, Harald Haugaard is exceptionally important for Danish folk music. A master violinist, he has also worked tirelessly to lift standards for young musicians throughout the country, while maintaining a twenty-year international playing career that carries Danish folk music throughout the world. Harald Haugaard's latest album *Lys og Forfald* (Light and Decay) contains exclusively Harald Haugaard compositions. In 2014, Tønder Festival had the pleasure of hearing Harald Haugaard with singer Helene Blum, partners in music and in life. Helene Blum has a successful solo career and several album releases to her name.

www.haraldh.dk

Hot Rize (USA)

"...the great modern bluegrass band," (Steve Martin) and "the most important bluegrass band ever," (Chris Thile). Tim O'Brien has been a frequent and prized guest at Tønder Festival for some years now, but it was not until 2010 that we succeeded in bringing his friends in Hot Rize to Tønder. Hot Rize was formed in the late 70s and soon became one of the leading bluegrass bands in USA. When *I'm Free* was released last year and set off Hot Rize's first big US tour in decades. Besides Tim O'Brien on mandolin, Hot Rize numbers Pete 'Dr. Banjo' Wernick, bassist Nick Forster and guitarist Bryan Sutton. Their alter egos, the Western swing band Red Knuckles and the Trailblazers, have often been seen doing a set at Hot Rize concerts.

www.hotrize.com

Jacob Dinesen (DK)

An energetic 19 year-old, Jacob Dinesen from Tønder first sang his folk-inspired songs in the 2012 Tønder Revue, a local cabaret. That year he also appeared several times on the P4 Stage at Tønder Festival. In September the same year, he sang alongside Allan Taylor at a concert in Hagge's Music Pub in Tønder. It is a special pleasure for Tønder Festival to present local boy Jacob Dinesen, who has finished his high school music studies and is already under way with his career as a songwriter and travelling musician.

John Prine (USA)

68 year-old John Prine is not just a veteran, he is a legend, among the absolute elite of great American songwriters. John Prine's songs have been recorded by countless musicians, and among his admirers are Bob Dylan, Johnny Cash and Kris Kristofferson. John Prine's skill at writing simple, ear-catching songs telling relevant and touching stories is quite simply world class. As are his concerts, where he garnishes his songs with fine tales. With songs like *Sam Stone*, *Angel From Montgomery* and *Hello In There*, John Prine has to be one of the most important and influential songwriters of our time. He was recently inducted into The Recording Academy's Hall Of Fame with his debut album from 1971, joining celebrities like Hank Williams and Neil Young. John Prine performed in Stockholm and Oslo in 2013. Now it is Tønder Festival's turn: John Prine and his band are playing on Sunday 30th August.

www.johnprine.net

Jonah Blacksmith (DK)

Don't be misled by the name: this is a seven-piece Danish americana folk band from Thy in north west Jutland. Brothers Simon and Thomas Alstrup sing and play bass, guitar and banjo. Folk music and song has been part of their lives since early childhood, and their band is called after their inspiration, their late grandfather, Johannes Alstrup of Koldby, a banjo-playing blacksmith. The Jonah Blacksmith band play up-to-date indie rock with a broad sound palette and elements of folk and country with a Scandinavian tone. The bandet has been around for four years and release their debut album *Northern Trail* in November 2014.

Kathryn Tickell & The Side (UK)

Kathryn Tickell has been a leading exponent of the Northumbrian small pipes and the traditional music of Tyneside for almost 30 years. The 1991 album *The Kathryn Tickell Band* launched her career, and Kathryn Tickell, alongside Eliza Carthy, Kate Rusby, Nancy Kerr and Seth Lakeman, is a vital part of the English folk revival of the 90s. Most recently, Kathryn Tickell has joined forces with classical musicians, called the project *The Side*, and that is what we will be hearing at Tønder Festival 2015.

www.kathryntickell.com

Kepa Junkera (E)

This devilishly talented and widely celebrated accordionist from Bilbao in the Basque Country was born in 1965, and at an early age took up the Basque diatonic accordion, the *trikitixa*. Kepa Junkera has brought the *trikitixa* and traditional Basque folk music international attention. Kepa Junkera has also collaborated with *The Chieftains* and *Bilbao Symphony Orchestra*. Critics at the British magazine *fRoots* hailed Kepa Junkera's latest album *Galiza* as one of the best of 2014.

www.kepajunkera.com

King James & The Special Men (USA)

The seven musicians in *King James & The Special Men* play sweaty New Orleans rhythm'n'blues in the old style. With their piano, horns, guitar, bass and drums, and singer Jimmy Horn up front, *King James & The Special Men* are the real funky deal and a perfect fit for the Nola zone. The music is a tribute to the classic New Orleans sound as purveyed by Roy Brown, Professor Longhair, Fats Domino and even jazz legend Sun Ra.

La Bottine Souriante (CAN)

Known throughout the world for almost forty years now, *La Bottine Souriante* have bridged the gap between the French Canadian roots music of Quebec and New Orleans jazz. Their mix of fast tunes, foot-percussion and sharp horn riffs won *La Bottine Souriante* a place in the hearts and dancing shoes of the Tønder Festival audience in 1991, and they have been back many times since. Once again it's time to get out your sprung boots and dance the night away!

www.bottinesouriante.com

Lynn Miles (CAN)

From the beginnings in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, Lynn Miles's career has taken her to Los Angeles, Nashville and Austin in USA, then back to Canada. Her travels have left their traces on the country-style song writing that is Lynn Miles' stock in trade. Among her musical influences we hear Shawn Colvin's powerful folk song writing and the sensitivity concealed beneath Lucinda Williams's tough exterior. On her records, Lynn Miles is often backed by top-class instrumentalists, while her qualities as a soloist prevail in the *Black Flower* series, where Lynn Miles sets the focus on her song writing. 2014 saw the release of the fourth in the series.

www.lynnmilesmusic.com

Maja & David (DK/CAN)

Danish Maja Kjør-Jacobsen and Québécois David Boulanger (late of *La Bottine Souriante*), with two fiddles, two voices and foot rhythms, mix very disparate musical styles and traditions to produce a new expression, while their technical supremacy and tight togetherness add power to the experience. When *Maja & David's* debut album *Nord* was released in 2013, *The Living Tradition Magazine* called it "the crispest and purest playing in ages." The duo have subsequently toured in Canada, USA and Europe, and their second album will appear in the course of 2015.

www.majandavid.com

Mames Babegenush (DK)

Klezmer music has been popular in Denmark for years, and one of the bands that has been doing the ground work is Mames Babegenush. 'Mother's aubergine salad' is the direct translation of the Yiddish name, and traditional Jewish dance music is naturally an essential ingredient, but tango, cumbia, rock and electronica are in the mix, too. Mames Babegenush can get a party going, be it a wedding or a Carnegie Hall concert. The band's fourth album Mames Babegenush appeared in late 2014. Tønder Festival's audience has a music and dance treat in store with Mames Babegenush and their tonal landscapes, clarinet, beats and brass.

Mànran (SCO)

Tønder Festival 2012, Celtic Connections in Glasgow 2012-15, tours of Europe, USA and Australia: six-piece Mànran's sound of highland and uilleann pipes, violin, flutes, guitar, accordion, bass and drums is Scotland's traditional music, reels, jigs and schottisches at full tilt, songs in English and Gaelic and an undisguised love of the tradition. Mànran do more than render their musical inheritance, however. They write new songs and tunes, augmenting and renewing their tradition. A roarie bummer o a band.

www.manran.co.uk

Mary Gauthier (USA)

Mary Gauthier was born in 1962 in New Orleans, and lives today in Nashville. Her life experiences – orphanage, adoption, flight at 15, drink and drugs problems, philosophy studies, running a cajun restaurant – all feed her songwriting, which mines the darker seams of American society. When Mary Gauthier performed in Denmark in 2012, Gaffa gave her show six stars. Mary Gauthier's debut album Dixie Kitchen, appeared in 1997. Her latest album is Trouble And Love (2014).

www.marygauthier.com

Meschiya Lake & The Little Big Horns (USA)

A return visit from one of the hits of Tønder Festivals 2012 and 2013. The American singer and her band dust off traditional New Orleans jazz and mix in new elements. The swinging result is impossible to sit still to. Meschiya Lake has won at The Big Easy Music Awards and has toured USA, Canada, UK, Denmark, Holland, Brasil and Russia. She and her band have released two albums, Lucky Devil in 2010 and Foolers Gold in 2013.

www.meschiya.com

Mike Andersen (DK)

One of Denmark's best blues and soul singers, and a brilliant guitarist, Mike Andersen has spent ten years building up from small clubs to major venues. His debut album My Love For The Blues (2002) won laudatory reviews and announced a rarity: a Danish blues talent. Mike Andersen will be bringing his band with him to Tønder Festival: Kristian Fogh, keyboards; Jens Kristian Dam, drums; Kristian Kold, bass; and Johannes Nørrelykke, guitar.

www.mikeandersen.com

Niels Hausgaard med gæster (DK)

When he turned 70, during last year's Tønder Festival, Niels Hausgaard did not make a big thing of it. He did what he does best: he entertained a full house. Niels Hausgaard's evenings at the Culture House are legendary, and he has always a fine selection of guests. The entertainer and songwriter from Northern Jutland is one of Tønder Festival's trumps. Audiences love him. He is one of the few Danish artists who can fill halls all over the country on his long, annual winter and spring tours. He has been a regular annual guest at Tønder Festival since 1977. Folk music is Hausgaard's basis, for, as he said of the Tønder Festival audience some years ago, "They are people who are interested in the fundamental music, the music all other music lives off."

Poul Krebs & friends (DK, N, S)

When Poul Krebs takes the Tønder Festival stage this year, he will be presenting a number of prominent Scandinavian guests. From Sweden, singer Lisa Nilsson, singer-songwriter Daniel Lemma and Krebs' trusty singer-songwriter buddies from Norway, Claudia Scott and Henning Kvitnes. Poul Krebs is one of the most popular Danish singer-songwriters and has often played Tønder Festival. Lisa Nilsson collaborated on Poul Krebs' album Asfalt from 2014. Poul Krebs, Claudia Scott and Henning Kvitnes have been working together for years, and in 2011, Poul Krebs toured with Daniel Lemma.

Richard J. Dobson (USA)

Banging away on his Smith Corona typewriter in the early 60s, young Richard J. Dobson had author ambitions. But the guitar he bought when he was 20 gradually took over and soon he was writing songs. In the early 70s in Nashville he started the career that was to bring him into contact with people like Guy Clark, Rodney Crowell and Townes Van Zandt. The 80s saw Richard J. Dobson still active in Nashville, writing, recording and releasing albums, then in 1990 winning a contract with Swiss label Brambus, with whom he has made a dozen albums. Richard J. Dobson is a natural contributor to the big Townes Van Zandt Tribute concert at Tønder Festival.

www.richard-j-dobson.ch

Richard Thompson (UK)

Richard Thompson is an internationally acclaimed songwriting talent with a unique, personal guitar style. 66 year-old Richard Thompson, who helped define English folk rock music as a founder member of Fairport Convention, has published over 40 albums. His songs, such as I Want To See The Bright Lights Tonight and From Galway to Graceland have been recorded by many artists, among them Robert Plant, Elvis Costello, REM, Bonnie Raitt, Los Lobos, David Byrne, Dick Gaughan and Don Henley. Richard Thompson's most recent release is Acoustic Classics from 2014, offering acoustic versions of some of his very best songwriting. In Tønder he will be solo on stage, in the company of his guitars and his songs.

www.richardthompson-music.com

ROD (DK)

Danish for root, or rogue, ROD is also the name of a folk music youth movement that began as an annual Easter folk music rally for young people aged 15 to 25. ROD's membership has doubled in the past few years, a clear indication that ROD is encouraging growing numbers of young Danes to play and enjoy folk music. ROD's young enthusiasts are playing at Tønder Festival for the first time this year.

Ron Kavana (IRL)

Singer, songwriter, producer, author and multi-instrumentalist, Ron Kavana has been at the forefront of the international folk scene for over twenty years, and a regular at Tønder Festival almost as long. Ron Kavana was born in County Cork in the south of Ireland. A three-time Folk Roots Award winner, Ron Kavana has released 10 award-winning albums. He spent six years working on his 4 cd set *Irish Ways*, that tells the story of the Irish people through their songs and poetry. Musically, his energy and curiosity are legendary. Solo or with a band, acoustic or electric, traditional or folk-rock – Ron Kavana covers them all.

Rura (SCO)

Rura's highland pipes, fiddle, bodhran, guitar, flute and strong vocals have been making waves on the Scottish folk scene since 2010. The four young musicians, Steven Blake, Jack Smedley, David Foley and Adam Brown first drew attention to themselves at the Celtic Connections Festival in Glasgow that year. Their debut album *Break It Up* from 2012, produced by Aidan O'Rourke of the group Lau, was well received by reviewers and won several nominations, among them the BBC Radio 2 Horizon Award. Joining the band will be singer and guitarist Adam Holmes, whom the Tønder audience will also be meeting when he appears with his own band *The Embers*.
www.facebook.com/ruramusic

Sheesham and Lotus & 'Son (CAN)

At Tønder Festival in 2014, Sheesham and Lotus & 'Son from Toronto in Canada laid on shows of great warmth and musicality, with a playfulness that belies the seriousness of their research into the history of the music. This is old-time, folk, fiddle tunes and plenty more, riches from the vast store of American acoustic music, played on fiddle, banjo, jews harp and harmonica - plus sousaphone and various home-made instruments. Their vocals acquire the requisite patina when they sing into their patented Sepia-phonics Monophone, a big metal funnel like an old brass gramophone horn. Their album *1929* from 2012 has given them access to a widening audience.
www.sheeshamandlotus.com

Skerryvore (SCO)

Now seven strong, Skerryvore celebrate their tenth anniversary this year. Building on proud traditions, Skerryvore do not shy away from borrowing inspiration from cajun, country and Americana, and frontman and singer Alec Dalglish always ensures an extrovert show. The band's most recent album is *Chasing The Sun* from 2014. Their 2010 offering *Skerryvore* was their breakthrough, and with *World of Chances* (2012) with its country, jazz and world music input, Skerryvore established their name internationally. Skerryvore is today's hottest contender for a top new folk rock band.
www.skerryvore.com

Spiro (UK)

Spiro is not your average folk band: this English group borrow from classical minimalist music and dance music. Building on a skeleton of folk melodies and bits of the other, Spiro's music also uses repetitive loops like electronic music. The resulting effect can be compared to Danish Dreamers' *Circus* and Scots Lau. Growing out of the Bristol session scene, the group began life as *The Famous Five*, with Jane Harbour (violin), Alex Vann (mandolin), Jason Sparkes (accordion) and Joe Hunt (guitar).
www.spiromusic.com

Sturgill Simpson (USA)

The heroes of outlaw country music, Waylon Jennings, Willie Nelson and the rest, have an heir: Sturgill Simpson. He hails from Kentucky, has played bluegrass, worked on the railroad and studied super string theory, quantum physics and religion. In 2012 he moved to Nashville and, a year later, put out his debut album *High Top Mountain*. Just ten months later he followed up with the next album *Metamodern Sounds in Country Music*. Awarded titles for best album, best male singer and best songwriter, Sturgill Simpson's authentic country songs with psychedelic sidetracks, Telecaster-twang and anti-commercial attitude have the critics calling him 'the saviour of country music.' Sturgill Simpson says, "I'm just trying to save myself."

www.sturgillsimpson.com

Ten Strings and a Goat Skin (CAN)

Three bilingual young men from Canada's Prince Edward Island, Jesse Périard and brothers Rowen and Caleb Gallant, play fiddle, guitar and bodhran – hence the name. The tight phrasing and up-tempo tunes typical of eastern Canadian folk music are augmented here by a powerful folk sound and songs that salute both Canadian language traditions. The trio had their recording debut in 2011, winning awards with *Tri*, and following up in 2013 with *Corbeau*.

www.tenstringsandagoatskin.com

The Barra MacNeils (CAN)

The Barra MacNeils are a musical clan steeped in folk history. Since the 80s, The Barra MacNeils have been taking their concert audiences on a journey through the folk music, history, language, tales and culture of Nova Scotia. The Barra MacNeils have toured the world, released 17 albums and won numerous awards. The Barra MacNeils are: Kyle, vocal, guitar, violin, mandolin; Lucy, vocal, bodhrán, Celtic harp, violin, step dancing; Sheumas, vocal, keyboards, bodhrán, violin, bouzouki; Stewart, vocal, accordion, tin whistle, flute, bouzouki, guitar, step dancing; Boyd, mandolin, violin, guitar, banjo, percussion, step dancing, and Jamie Gatti, bass.

The Bros Landreth (CAN)

The Bros Landreth from Winnipeg in Canada play roots rock: lyrical slide guitar, fulsome soul singing, fine harmonies, tight musicianship. Joey Landreth sings and plays slide with a raw blues feeling. His brother Dave plays bass, Ariel Posen plays guitar and lap steel, and Ryan 'Rhino' Voth sits at the drums. Their debut album *Let It Lie* appeared earlier this year and launched The Bros Landreth towards the heights. "Stars in the making," wrote *Washington Times*.

www.thebroslandreth.com

The East Pointers (CAN)

Koady Chaisson on banjo and his cousin Tim Chaisson, fiddle, from Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, are sixth generation folk musicians. Third man is guitarist Jake Charron, from Ontario. This young trio live and breath traditional Scots music in its Canadian incarnation.

The East Pointers released their debut EP *The East Pointers* in October 2014. It won two prizes at the Prince Edward Island Music Week in May 2015. The trio is in full swing making a name for themselves in Canada, and in June they tour England. A new studio album, recorded in the spring of 2015, is on its way. The East Pointers appear in the big *Fanø* / Cape Breton evening on Friday at Tønder Festival.

www.eastpointers.ca

The Great Malarkey (UK)

Out of London's indie underground scene comes an eight-piece band, The Great Malarkey, fronted by singer Alex Ware, rousing audiences all over with a concoction of gypsy punk, Balkan, ska and all sorts. Festivalgoers in Tønder were treated to hefty blasts of The Great Malarkey in 2013. Inspired by musicians like The Pogues, Mano Negra, Fanfare Ciocarlia and Tom Waits, The Great Malarkey's debut album, from 2013, is *Badly Stuffed Animals*.

The Hot Seats (USA)

The five genial Virginian gentlemen who call themselves The Hot Seats should feel right at home at the Tønder Festival. They have all the necessary qualifications: they are musicians, entertainers and raconteurs. The Hot Seats are a string band with an excess of energy and generous helpings of musicality. Their original blend of bluegrass, old time, ragtime and rock'n'roll wrestles new tones from Appalachian music, delivered with a touch of irony and dash of madness. Guitar, banjo, fiddle, mandolin, bass, washboard and a tab of acid. Welcome to The Hot Seats in Tønder.

www.thehotseats.net

The Lone Bellow (USA)

When The Lone Bellow return to Tønder Festival this August, it is with a new album *Then Came the Morning*, which reveals a more atmospheric side of the Brooklyn trio. Zach Williams' songwriting is central to The Lone Bellow, while Kanene Pipkin and Brian Elmquist contribute sparkling harmonies and a musical setting that stretches from sensitive folk ballads to straight rock'n'roll. A busy concert schedule proves The Lone Bellow's growing popularity in their home country, and their popularity is growing rapidly in Scandinavia – starting in Tønder.

www.thelonebellow.com

The Sexican (DK)

Since 2006, Danish quintet The Sexican have been working up to their current status as one of the country's leading world-rock bands, with a potent blend of Balkan, klezmer, rock, punk, Mexican mariachi, and pure energy. Singer and guitarist Mike Hecchi, whose raw, hoarse vocals belt out the satirical lyrics, fronts the sound that has Danish music magazine *Gaffa* comparing The Sexican to Gogol Bordello and Kaizers Orchestra. The Sexican toured the home of mariachi music, Mexico, in the summer of 2014, and their latest album *Conscription* from 2013 won critical praise in the Mexican edition of *Rolling Stone*.

www.thesexican.net

The Stray Birds (USA)

From Pennsylvania, USA, come Maya de Vitry, guitar, violin and lead singer, Oliver Craven, singer and violinist, and Charles Muench on bass, all classically trained musicians. They have also listened carefully to loads of folk, country and bluegrass: the blend is unmistakable when the trio are on stage. The Stray Birds' three-part harmonies are razor sharp, their instrumental technique is virtuoso. They have been compared to Crooked Still and Gillian Welch, and Stray Birds' songs often show that high, lonesome, dreaming quality. The Stray Birds have recorded several albums, the latest being *Best Medicine* from autumn 2014.

www.thestaybirds.com

The Wailin' Jennys (CAN)

Harmonies that ring pure and clear, voices that reach for the sky: Nicky Mehta and Ruth Moody from Winnipeg in Canada and Heather Masse from Maine in USA have taken country and bluegrass roots and blended them with elegant pop-folk. Award-winning albums, solo careers including singing with Mark Knopfler – these successes ensure that The Wailin' Jennys are well known throughout North America. Less so here. So far.

www.thewailinjennys.com

The Wood Brothers (USA)

Oliver and Chris Wood from Boulder, Colorado, USA were introduced early to folk music and blues. Oliver Wood played blues guitar with the Atlanta phenomenon Tinsley Ellis, while Chris Wood formed the experimental jazz trio Medeski, Martin & Wood. 2005 saw a musical reunion for the brothers, centred on the music of their childhood. Oliver Wood's song writing and Chris Wood's experimental approach, inspired by the musical icons of their youth. The Muse (2013) presents swinging Americana, with The Wood Brothers, now with drummer and all-rounder Jano Rix, recorded by star producer Buddy Miller.

www.thewoodbros.com

Three Tall Pines (USA)

Three Tall Pines from Boston USA offer an exciting new take on bluegrass. Prizewinning songwriters, these four musicians are also top flight instrumentalists. Three Tall Pines have released *Short While Ago* (2008) and *All That's Left* in 2011. An EP *Taproot* appeared in late 2014. With their guitar, mandolin, violin, double bass and tight vocal harmonies, Three Tall Pines fit perfectly into the Tønder Festival ethos, presenting new, up-and-coming folk roots music.

www.threetallpines.com

Townes Van Zandt Tribute (NL, USA)

This is something very special: a Tribute Concert to Townes Van Zandt. Anchorman is blues & roots veteran Hans Theessink, who has been playing at Tønder Festival for almost forty years. American songwriter Townes Van Zandt, who died in 1997 just 52 years of age, is uniquely deserving of a tribute like this. Townes Van Zandt wrote a whole collection of songs that inspired a generation of singers, among them Bob Dylan, Emmylou Harris, Norah Jones, The Avett Brothers and Lyle Lovett. Among the musicians on stage at Tønder Festival's Townes Van Zandt Tribute Concert will be his eldest son, J. T. Van Zandt, Butch Hancock, songwriter and guitarist and former member of The Flatlanders, and Richard Dobson, songwriter and guitarist. Chris Smither and Mary Gauthier will also be taking part.

www.theessink.com

Usher's Island (IRL)

As part of bands such as Planxty, The Bothy Band and Moving Hearts, Andy Irvine, Dónal Lunny and Paddy Glackin were the trailblazers who revolutionised Irish music in the 1970s. On a foundation of pure traditional music, they built up a new and progressive sound that inspired the next generations. Among the younger musicians who sat up and took notice were Michael McGoldrick and John Doyle, who, in Lúnasa and Solas respectively, gave Irish music a fresh intensity and magic. Come and enjoy the ultimate folk concert experience, the best of Irish folk music played by the masters.

www.andyirvine.com
