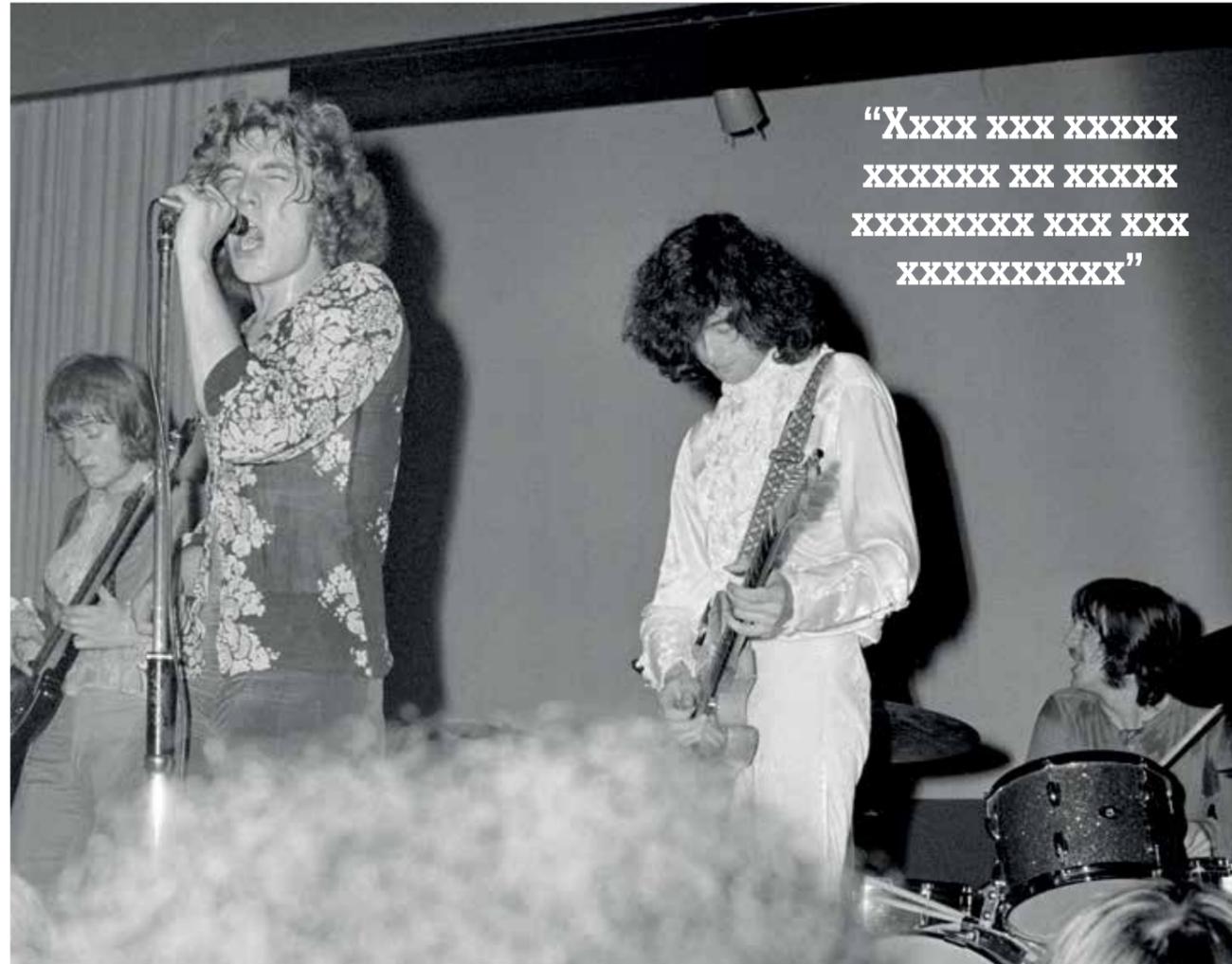


THE FOUR NORSEMEN

When **Led Zeppelin** came to Denmark in the late 60s, the locals barely knew what hit them. Photographer **Jorgen Angel** was there. Here, he talks to **Dave Lewis** about his new book, one that captures the band at their most thrillingly raw and explosively potent.



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Danish born Jorgen Angel has the distinction of being the first photographer to capture the fledgling Led Zeppelin live onstage. He was at a school gymnasium in Gladsaxe on the afternoon of 7 September 1968 to see Messrs Page, Plant, Jones and Bonham (then billed as the New Yardbirds) perform their first gig together. It began a long association with the band that has now been profiled in a new book: *Led Zeppelin Denmark 1968 – 1970*.

The book collates Angel's subsequent Led Zep photographic experiences with

accompanying text by Soren Vangsgaard. It spotlights the development of the band from those early days through to 1973, by which time they had established themselves as the world's top rock attraction. Angel also shot many of the acts of the era including Jimi Hendrix, Deep Purple, Pretty Things, John Mayall and Queen. Here, Zep author Dave Lewis caught up with Angel to talk through some of his most impressive captures.

7 September, 1968: Teen Club, Egegard Skole - Gladsaxe, Denmark
First of two shows that day on a tour of

Scandinavia a billed as The New Yardbirds
 “The Gladsaxe Teen Club was run by volunteers and there were all sorts of jobs for the volunteers. Some sold soft drinks, some cleaned the toilets and my job was to be the in-house photographer. I was there most Saturdays, from when it opened in September to it closing the following April. I was lucky enough to be there on 7 September, 1968. On the night the venue, which was just a primary school gym, had a sign outside saying The New Yardbirds were appearing. I was worried about this as I had previous experience where a band breaks up



and adds new members and it is not as good. I'd been lucky enough to take photos of The Yardbirds at Holte Hallen in April 1967. However, the moment they hit the stage I was not disappointed at all – in fact, I was very impressed with their energy and the vitality and the whole sound. It was loud but very clear and I was right in front of this very first performance of this new line-up.”

“Despite it being their debut show, Robert was pretty confident: I think it helped that he had his old mate John Bonham with him. When you look at the other photos of that show, he was really acting out the role of the lead singer. They did some old Yardbirds numbers and new material. They were still getting to know each other as they had only had a couple of rehearsals. There were about 1,200 kids in there – and they went on to play another show in the evening. This was not unusual as the promoters in Denmark would book a band for as many dates as they could. They did, in fact, perform a rehearsal in the early afternoon. A few of the volunteers were getting things ready and Jimmy asked if they could come in and rehearse. So they played to around 15 people. Unfortunately, I was not there yet and missed that.”

“I was very close to the stage and had the freedom to shoot from where I liked. I was therefore able to take photos at the side of the stage and, as you can see in this photo, I was right next to John Bonham. At the time I was only just turned 17 and the only camera I had to use was my mother's holiday camera. It was an old-fashioned camera where you check the photo in one screen and shoot in the other. I could adjust some focusing but I didn't have any sort of telescopic lens. I walked in front of John Paul Jones to get right in the middle of the stage and was standing maybe six feet from Bonzo. I was incredibly close to the action - In those days you could do that quite easily. In 2001 I did a limited-edition lithograph of photos of the first show and when I sent a copy to Jimmy, he wrote back saying, ‘Jorgen, thanks for being there.’ There's no doubt Jimmy was pleased that I



was there to capture that historic gig and over the years I have contributed photos to his books.”

15 March, 1969: Teen Club, Egegard Skole - Gladsaxe, Denmark
A return visit to Denmark that includes the recording of a half-hour TV performance for Danish TV in Gladsaxe, two days after this show

“The thing with being a photographer is that you have to be very focused on the visual part of the show, so I wasn't always listening too intensely. However, it was more than evident on this second appearance I witnessed, that there had been a significance change from that first gig. Back then, Jimmy had seemed very introvert, concentrating hard on his guitar playing. When it came to seeing them some six months later, it was clear that touring in America earlier in the year had really established their reputation. Jimmy had gained a lot more self-confidence, often

moving about the stage, and you can see him in the photos interacting with John Bonham.”

28 February, 1970: KB Hallen - Copenhagen Denmark
Legal action from airship designer relative Eva Von Zeppelin sees them performing under the name The Nobs for one night only.
 “I cannot recall them being named The Nobs on the night – that may have been something only the press were informed of. The posters and tickets had been printed before as Led Zeppelin. I only heard about it sometime after. I can tell you it was a brilliant concert. I can see looking at the negatives how I felt about this concert. I was a freelancer and I had to pay for film and photographic paper so sometimes I held back from taking too many photos at a concert. Not so at this show - I shot four rolls of film as they were so good that night, I just could stop shooting. Jimmy subsequently used photos from this gig in his book [??] and as a limited art print series on



his website. One of the photos from this gig was also used by Jimmy for a Musician's Union advert."

3 May, 1971: KB Hallen - Copenhagen, Denmark

Highlight of a short European tour previewing material from the forthcoming fourth album including Stairway To Heaven.

"This was really when they started to experiment, with the addition of acoustic numbers in the set. They were also getting a really wild reaction from the crowd. I do remember that the concert was stopped briefly. It was the behaviour of the so-called security guys. The way they treated the kids at the front forced the band to stop and tell these guys to cool down. On this night they performed songs that would appear on their fourth album, which was not released until

later in the year. One of them was Stairway To Heaven with Jimmy using a Gibson double-neck guitar. To be honest, I cannot remember it standing out much at that point. Again, it didn't really transcend to my lens. I was concentrating on getting my photos right."

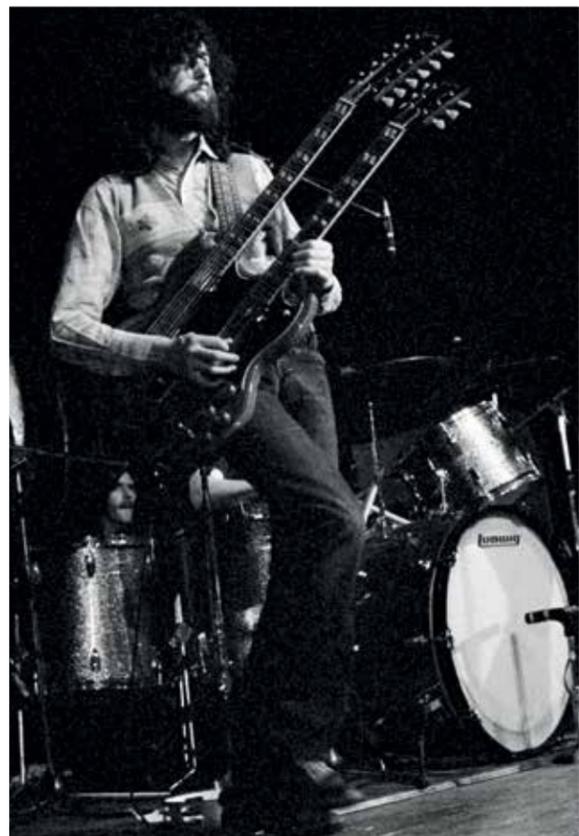
1 March, 1973: Birch Gallery Press Event - Copenhagen, Denmark

A pre-gig visit to the Birch Gallery to conduct press interviews.

"I don't think they really wanted to be there. The reason it was staged at the Birch Gallery was that Jimmy was known to be fond of art. Some of the Danish journalists kept harassing Jimmy with questions about how much money he had made and about his interest in black magic. Some tabloid papers were thrown out. The gallery had a new exhibition that was opening the next day. Some of the artist's work had just been painted so the paint wasn't dry yet. Mischievously, Bonzo tried to improve the painting by adjusting it with his fingers. Years later Jimmy did hint that more than one of them helped re-arrange the paintings. This caused a bit of drama as they thought I had got pictures of that moment. They wouldn't let me leave until I handed over my film. I refused and got the Danish promoter to step in. Luckily, the situation cooled down."

2 March, 1973: KB Hallen - Copenhagen, Denmark

Well on the way to becoming the world's greatest rock attraction following the release of their fifth album, Houses Of The Holy.



"They were now moving away from some of the rock'n'roll that I'd enjoyed in the earlier days. There were no photographer pits in those days, we were just on the floor. Back then, photographers were able to move around in front of the stage. So it was easy to get close up to take something like this shot of Jimmy playing acoustic guitar. They were certainly now ready to move into the big arenas. They did return to Copenhagen in 1979 for a couple of warm-up shows before they played at Knebworth. Jimmy once asked



why I didn't do those shows – and the reason was, at the time they didn't want any press there. So on that occasion he was missing my photos - but he only had himself to blame!

Overall, I'm very pleased with the book. It's a very close-up view of their early days which is why the title proclaims '1968 – 1970'. There are also a lot of side-stories in the text. It's the first time all my Zep work has been put into one book – for this English version there are 16 more pages. For me, after 1980 the business did change and the freedom for photographers became severely restricted. It wasn't always like that and, looking back, the access I had in shooting those Led Zeppelin concerts made for some amazing photos. As Jimmy put it: I am glad I was there..."

Led Zeppelin Denmark 1968 -1970 by Jorgen Angel & Soren Vangsgaard is published on 28 May by Flying V Books, £20.

