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Following the more recent entries you'll find abbreviations which will give you a clue about the nature in the respective articles. The abbreviations are:

[A] = analytical remarks
[B] = extensive book review
[BT] = blindfold test
[C] = concert review
[D] = discography
[F] = feature article
[I] = interview
["I"] = article written by the respective musician himself
[O] = obituary
[R] = extensive record review
[T] = transcription

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Asmussen, Svend (vln * real name: Harold Christian Asmussen; b: 28.Feb.1916, Copenhagen/Denmark {alt.date: 16.Feb.1916, Copenhagen/Denmark [Rough Guide]}; Lexikon: Feather [1955,1960,1966,1976,1999]; New Grove [1988,2001]; rororo [1988]; Reclam [1989]; Dictionnaire [1995]; Rough Guide [1999,2000]; Yanow [2000]; Politikens [2003])

Asmussen, Svend (b Copenhagen, 28 Feb 1916). Danish violinist, entertainer, and singer. He began playing violin as a young child. As a schoolboy he heard the popular violinists Eli Donde and Otto Lington, but did not at first consider music as a career. He completed studies in sculpture (at the Academy of Arts in Copenhagen), dentistry, and law, and during the same time led amateur orchestras. In 1933 he made his professional début at the Apollo Theater in Copenhagen, and the following year he formed a sextet, along the lines of Joe Venuti's groups, which first recorded in 1935. In 1936 he heard Stuff Smith's contemporary recordings; these exerted a great influence on his understanding of how the violin might be used as a jazz instrument. Asmussen played with the Mills Brothers (1937) and Fats Waller (1938) when they toured Denmark, and he recorded with Oscar Alemán (1938). During the early 1940s he performed throughout Scandinavia and opened a club, My Blue Heaven, in Stockholm. He then temporarily forsook jazz for acting and vaudeville. He was imprisoned in Berlin as a hostage against a threatened general strike in Denmark, but resumed his musical activities after World War II, when he successfully combined a career in jazz and popular music. While leading groups on the cruise ship MS Kungholm Asmussen visited

the USA at least twice, and in 1955 he was photographed while taking part in a jam session with Smith and Jonah Jones in New York. From 1958 to 1963, with Alice Babs and the guitarist Ulrik Neumann, he played and sang in a trio, the Swe-Danes, which toured and recorded in the USA. He performed with Smith in Denmark, Sweden, and Switzerland (1965-7) and with Stephane Grappelli, Ray Nance, and Jean-Luc Ponty at the Monterey Jazz Festival (1967), and recorded with John Lewis (1962), Duke Ellington (1963), and Grappelli (1965), and in several sessions with Babs; later he recorded with L. Subramaniam (1978). In autumn 1986 he made an American tour with David Grisman, and he continued to perform, mainly in Scandinavia, through the 1990s. Asmussen acted or performed in, or recorded soundtracks for, films, documentaries, cartoons, and television shows, including telecasts during the 1980s with Benny Goodman at Tivoli Gardens, Copenhagen, and a concert with Kenny Drew, Niels-Henning Ørsted Pedersen, and Ed Thigpen in 1986. His style is individual and musically intricate, though it reveals its debts to Venuti and the early work of Smith. His many recordings show that he lacked the biting attack of Smith for which he had once strived, but that his tone was characterized by a veiled, almost muted, quality. On one of his most moving recordings he plays only pizzicato in a sympathetic accompaniment to Sathima Bea Benjamin. --- Selected Recordings: --- Duos with U. Neumann: "Danish Import" (1961, WB 1408). --- As leader: "Tiger Rag" / "My Blue Heaven" (1935, HMV 1327); "My Blue Heaven" (1940, Odeon 404); "Sweet Sue" / "Limehouse Blues" (1940, Odeon 448); "It don't mean a thing" / "My Old Man" (1943, Tono 4329); "In Ellington Mood" / "Rhythm is our Business" (1950, Odeon 5531); J. Lewis: "European Encounter" (1962, Atl. SD1392); with S. Grappelli: "Two of a Kind" (1965, Met. 15177); of Violin Summit (with S. Grappelli, J.-L. Ponty, and S. Smith): "Violin Summit" (1966, Saba 15099); with A. Babs: "Alice Babs and Svend Asmussen" (1972, RCA LSP 10370); "Amazing Strings" (1974, MPS 20223736); with K. Drew, N.-H. Ørsted Pedersen, and E. Thigpen: "Prize/Winners" (1978, Matrix 1001); "June Night" (1983, Doctor Jazz FW39150); "At Slukafter" (1984, Phontastic 8804); "Fiddler Supreme" (1989, Intim Musik 006). --- As sideman: O. Alemán: "Sweet Sue" / "Limehouse Blues" (1938, HMV 6212); E. Moseholm: "Erik Moseholm Presents Jazz Strings 1958" (1958, Sonet 2011); D. Ellington: "Jazz Violin Session" (1963, Atl. SD1688); S. B. Benjamin: "A Morning in Paris" (1963, Enja 9309-2); L. Subramaniam: "Garland" (1978, Sto. 4075). --- Selected Films and Videos: "En lille tilfaeldighed" (1939); "Solv giver arbejde" (1942); "Musik om bord" (1958); "Monterey Jazz" (1968); "Svend Asmussen Quartet" (1986). --- [David Flanagan & Anthony Barnett, in: *The New Grove Dictionary of Jazz*, 2nd edition, London 2001]

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