

ASTRAL DOORS

It begun in 2002 in the town of Borlänge, Dalarna, Sweden. One year later there was a record deal signed and the album "Of the Son and the Father" was released. Since then it has all been running by itself according to singer Nils Patrik Johansson, a man who's voice is often compared with the late great Ronnie James Dio. According to wikipedia he is even the subject of critical acclaim and often compared with Dio, something that hasn't been too easy to verify although there are instances where this occurs. Since said debut album the band has released five more albums and an EP and in august the band's seventh album "Notes From the Shadows" will see the light of day. Which is why we have asked Nils Patrik Johansson, maybe the clearest voice of the band, some questions about the coming album and the band.





WRITTEN BY DANIEL KÄLLMALM
 PHOTO: PRESS PHOTO
 PUBLISHED ON 2014-08-05

Classic hardrock influenced by the legends of the genre is who Nils Patrik Johansson describes the music of Astral Doors. He talks of a family tree and some selective breeding to create a bit of a metallic bastard.

-If you take Black Sabbath, Rainbow and some bastards of the eighties: then you will probably have bread Astral Doors.

That is how Johansson Describes it. And he is not alone namedropping Rainbow, Dio, Black Sabbath and their likes. In fact it seems as though most

agree on that, retro hardrock is mentioned both once and twice amongst reviewers. I also red references to a nasal Dio or Dio-wannabee in some reviews. The research seems to indicate that we gravitate towards classical hardrock/metal inspired by some of the great names of the past.

You may be forgiven to think that the inspirations of the band lies amongst these bands often mentioned in reviews and such but as a reply to the question as to what inspires the band no other band is mentioned.

- What inspires us are probably ourselves and our desire to make music we can be proud to play in

front of other musicians without being ashamed of it.

And seen over time the inspiration has not changed much over the years says Johansson, but with experience some things evolve.

- Nowadays we maybe give less of a shit about what others think and play it more from the heart.

They have become more independent over the years. Johansson thinks they might have become more experienced, for better or worse but when asked about how the band has evolved until now he doesn't really have a good answer. On the other hand when asked about the difference between Astral Doors anno 2002

and 2014 the answer is much more definitive.

- I don't think there is any difference. We have done our thing since the start and we have been sticking to it ever since.

Notes from the Shadows

29th of august 2014 is the release date of the seventh album of Astral Doors, it is called "Notes From the Shadows" and is released on Metalville just like its predecessor. An album of darkness and a bit of hope, an album that was finished very quickly. Perhaps too quickly?

- It was written and recorded in just three months. Maybe it was done a bit too fast but according to

my opinion the result is awesome. It is a pretty dark album, yet with a glimmer of hope. I think every band member did a great job and I am proud of every one of them.

But before we look ahead, if we start by looking back at their latest effort "Jerusalem" which did receive an average rating by us at Hallowed. Is there any difference? Does "Notes From the Shadows" signify a musical step in some direction? have the band moved forwards or are they standing still at the same spot perfecting their craft? according to Johansson we should not expect any musical revolution.

- I don't know if there is any difference. We do our best to

make good songs and if there is any difference or not doesn't really matter to us. Our fans like what we do so we are sticking to that.

So, they are a band thinking of their fans, at least of what their fans enjoy. Johansson didn't want to risk saying that it is the magnum opus of Astral Doors, he thinks it is best to leave to time to judge which of the Astral Doors' albums that has made the biggest impression in the history books of the hardrock/metal genre. At least he wasn't silent on the favourite song:

- The nine minute, fifteen seconds long *Die Alone*. It is one of the best songs I have been a



part in making. If you like **Black Sabbath** you should buy the album just for that one song.

Maybe that is why this album seems fairly heavily promoted by Metalville, the question is however if that has generated any interest for "Notes From the Shadows" amongst the metal and hardrock fans out there.

- As usual the interest has been great. Especially in Germany. Guess we are never going to be that big at home but abroad they know how classic hardrock should sound.

So the Germans are eagerly awaiting the album and will prebook it like mad while we

Swedes sit around having other stuff to think about. Sort of. As anticipations go, the one review I could find at the moment is undoubtedly very positive and should raise expectation quite a bit. Though Johansson's own expectations are fairly modest.

- I only want people to like what we are doing. He says.

Astral Doors Live

Astral Doors is a band who also loves to tour and has done so in relation to all their previous albums, the thought is to do that this time as well. There is a small but at the moment though.

- The drummer (Johan

Lindstedt) has hurt his hand so we'll see how fast we can get out there.

For those of you who wonder when that will happen I recommend that you have a look at the band's own channels as we have not found anything about this yet. If you are still wondering and think **Astral Doors** are brilliant on record, are they worth seeing live? Are they better one record or stage?

- Trick question (laughs). I'd say record even though I myself, does sing better live than on record.

A double edged answer there, what if we rephrase the question asking: is Astral Doors a good live

band?

- We are a damned good live band. We sound just as good on stage as on the album. The reason to me saying we were better on record than stage is because we do not have any grande stage show. But when looking at the sound we are a damned good live band.

When visiting Astral Doors you will not see a crazy light show, any impressive stage production with fireworks and explosions. You will get an impressive musical show and a sound not many bands can produce from their great stage show. The biggest memory you will retain

from an Astral Doors show is the memory of a world class sound says Johansson.

- Many goes for a great show but sounds like shit. We think the music is the most important thing.

With that obvious fact it is time to round off this article. "Notes From the Shadows" is out on the 29th of August and will be reviewed here at Hallowed soon. It is an album that according to Johansson keeps within the traditional sound of Astral Doors so you know what to expect.

It could be an interesting album to take a closer look at perhaps. With that we thank Nils Patrik

Johansson for his time and wish him and Astral Doors the best of luck on their adventures.

On the Internet

Official Website
Metalville
Review Testament of Rock
Review Jerusalem