

# W.E.T.

RISE UP



Once upon a time not too long ago a project was awoken, a project where musicians Erik Mårtensson and Robert Säll drafted in to write six songs each that was to be sung by Jeff Scott Soto. From there it all evolved into a band that was given the name W.€T.



BY DANIEL KÄLLMÄLM  
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It is W for Work of Art where Robert Säll normally performs, and Eclipse which is the musical home of Erik Mårtensson and T for Talsiman which is famed for the vocal prowess of Jeff Scott Soto. Since our Hallowed reviewer was so impressed with W.E.T. he got the pleasure to speak with Erik Mårtensson about the new album "Rise Up" and W.E.T. in general. And as we wrote in the opening, it all begun with a project where Erik and Robert was hired to write music for Jeff Scott

Sot, something which Eric describes as a great pleasure and later he also was asked to handle the production of the album. It was at that time he found out that it would not work if he and Robert wrote the songs on their own.

- I had made a few songs, maybe three and Robert had something similar. I realised then that this could never work since my songs were a lot heavier while Robert's were quite soft. It was then we decided that we should write together instead of on our own which is why we wrote the remaining together in order to make it a really good album that doesn't pull in every conceivable

direction like many projects tend to do.

And the result with the debut album was a successful one as they could conclude and so could Jeff Scott Soto when he got the material to which he should put his vocals, according to Erik he was very impressed by the songs he got to put vocals to.

- Everyone was very surprised about how good our debut album turned out and didn't want it to be a project anymore and it was then we conceived the name W.E.T. to put ourselves in it and make it more than a project.

Jeff Scott Soto is a well known name while Erik and Robert

knows one another since long ago so according to Erik their collaborations between them works really well so we could probably describe it as a perfectly composed group.

- Robert and I have gone music school together and we have been speaking for years about doing something together, I even turned down being a singer in Work of Art at one time because I could not see what I should sing when Lars was already in the band so we figured that we'll do something different together and then the years passed. It eventually became W.E.T. so when we did an AOR project together

it was done in style. Jeff is also quite easy to work with, he wrote nothing for the first album and it is now for the new album that he has been part of the writing process and then mainly lyrics.

The project was to begin with for Jeff Scott Soto but he had nothing to do with writing for the first album, later to the second one he has been more a part of the creative process now that it all has grown from being a project into a real band.

### Rise Up

"Rise Up" is the second album of W.E.T. and it is according to Erik a development compared to the

debut and is so in many ways, amongst others it is a more focused album than its predecessor.

- For the second album we wanted to take the parts we liked the best and focus on those, the first album maybe was a bit more incoherent. We wanted to develop that which we thought was the most W.E.T. and make it even more unique in the genre so that this album got an even stronger identity.

And you will recognise W.E.T. from earlier but it is a more focused W.E.T. and a more straightforward W.E.T. and maybe also a bit more W.E.T. explains Erik. He describes it as a more homoge-

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nous album than the predecessor and which was more incoherent due to the songs not always fitting perfectly together but they had to somehow make it work anyway and the result was the acclaimed self titled debut album.

- I would like to say that this time we had a better vision of what we wanted to do. It is not like we just wrote from some template but we had a better feel for where we wanted to go with it.

And that the trio now knew one another better was hardly a problem since the collaboration worked better already from the beginning and Erik explains that they are very satisfied with "Rise Up" and that there isn't anything with this new album they aren't satisfied with.

- More time wouldn't make it better, it would make it different but not better. It feels like a good follow up to the debut.

But what is the best thing with this sequel then? Our reviewer said that the track *Shot* is the favourite but what about Erik?

- I like many, *Learn to Live Again*

is fantastic I think, and I like *Rise Up* very much.

He also agrees with my opinion about *Shot* and explains that there were more tracks of that character which was thrown away but some of those will be heard on a coming live DVD which I will say something more about later in this article. Erik explains that they had to throw some songs away in order for people to be able to manage to hear the entire album.

- We made sixteen songs in total but no one can listen to sixteen songs on one album so we had to throw some of them away whether we wanted or not. It was very difficult to choose this time, something I think often is quite easy to do.

### A Buzzed About Album

The interest for "Rise Up" has been rather big around the world and Erik explains that he has never been in the process of releasing something laden with such great expectation and has been so much talking about as it has been for this album. It has also led to

him having to make loads of interviews like for instance the one used for this article, he says he does about ten a week and that despite him not even being the lead singer of the band. It is a big buzz around the second album of W.E.T. and that isn't really that strange considering how the debut struck like a bomb a few years ago.

- Absolutely, the first one did very well and sold a lot which is why many expects another one. Some might expect, I don't really know what they expect some of them but the surprise factor of the first one is gone which is why I think that it is good that they sound a bit different. I like that it doesn't sound quite like the first one but has its own identity because one has to evolve and make little changes all the time, You can't make the same thing over and over so it is good to start changing a bit from the beginning.

Erik goes on to explain that if you just thread the same tracks you end up being something like AC/DC and no one will like

the new album as much as the one before it since it is in reality just the same album and people has a relation to the earlier work which leads you to only release albums considered worse than the one before if you get stuck in that loop which is something that W.E.T. is not looking to be.

And undoubtedly it seems like they haven't gotten stuck in any such loop since the reviews I have seen are all very positive and Erik says the same thing even though he hasn't seen too many reviews yet.

- I have maybe read six or seven of them so far, the big number hasn't started to come yet but what he have gotten this far has been fantastic.

So far the band has done one show for this album and that one has been filmed and will be released on DVD in a quality better than Erik had expected, any release date has yet to be announced though. Songs from "Rise Up" are there in numbers at this show for which they sold out Debaser in Stockholm and got a very good response from the fans present

and the new songs were very well received by these fans.

- It was fantastic, it is incredible how people listen concentratedly to the songs and the songs really did well live too. We played 8-9 songs that no one had heard other than the two singles we had released, we asked a lot of them but they came true really well. When the DVD is released the album will have been out for a while so we had to do some new stuff since we only had one album from before and you can't play that one from start to finish, can you?

No, not many venture into such a thing as playing one album from start to finish on a show and W.E.T.'s debut album as good as it is might not be the most suited album for such a show. But the band is aiming to be more visible and to get out more and play now that the new album is released.

### W.E.T. Live

As I was touching on earlier, the goal for the band is to get out and play more live but as the members are at different locations and busy with other bands it becomes

a bit of logistics to handle with Jeff in the US and so on.

- We have to wait and see what becomes of it, if we don't tour we will do some shows and festivals, although we are a bit wrong in timing for festivals this year since the album is not released yet and most is already booked. When one releases an album in the beginning of the year one sort of gets a bit behind in festival bookings. But there are definitely plans, we talked as late as last week about taking that thing up.

Erik also says that it is fun songs to play live and that would hardly come as a surprise considering their catchy style and songs that are very easy to take to.

- Yes, they are childishly simple and to me it is a positive that they are. It is a target to never make it more complicated than necessary.

But it is songs that holds on well in the longer run if we are to believe our reviewer which something that Erik might not always agree with since he says he is a bit tired of it after doing all that job with mixing and writing and all of that. He says however,

that he returns to the albums later when he might have gotten some more distance to it.

- I tend to return to them once they are released in physical form half a year later, it is then when one first really listens to it.

An album being released the day I write this so I guess he will have to get himself a copy and listen a bit, to see if there is anything we want to bring to a coming W.E.T. album because there is such a thing in the plans according to Erik even though he didn't say much about it.

- Yes there is, and there are plans to get out and play live as well. Everyone in the band likes playing this and it works incredibly well live as there songs are distinct and live friendly.

**Some numbers to end it all**  
W.E.T.'s second album "Rise Up" is out on 22/2-2013 and it is recommended in many medias, not least here in our own where it is only the fifteenth seven point rated album of a good bit over a thousand reviewed (1290 as I write this, it is counted on the

Swedish, it is probably about 100 less in English). It is the first one since september 2011 when Dream Theater's "A Dramatic Turn of Events" achieved that rating and since then over 450 albums has been reviewed. And if we only count the albums released during the little over five years that Hallowed.se has been running it is one of only eleven seven point scorers and then if we count in the debut album of W.E.T. we see that they are one of only seven bands to have received a six or better rating for two of their al-

bums, and only one of five where one of those is a seven. Of all the bands we have reviewed at Hallowed W.E.T. definitely belongs in a very exclusive group.

It is a band Hallowed thinks you should have a closer look at and in this article you probably have gotten some more information about this band, and we thank Erik for answering some questions and recommends anyone who is more curious to look up the links in this document. The second album of W.E.T. called "Rise Up" is out now.

#### **W.E.T.-related links at Hallowed.se:**

- Review of Rise Up
- Review of W.E.T.
- Article about Eclipse
- Review of Eclipse - Bleed and Scream
- Review of Work of Art - In Progress
- Review of Jeff Scott Soto - Damage Control
- Review of Jeff Scott Soto - Live at Firefest

#### **And some W.E.T. links**

- Jeff Scott Soto
- Eclipse
- Work of Art

