

DORO

RAISE YOUR FIST

Will it be lucky thirteen for the queen in october? Hallowed was granted an audience with The Queen of Heavy Metal to talk about the just released EP, the album that will see the light of day in october and the fact that she will celebrate 30 years as a musician next year. Can anything be more interesting than speaking with the forever young and attractive Doro Pesch?

Before we move into the newer stuff lets have a look back at some points in the history of The Queen, it begins in Düsseldorf almost half a century ago (which is hard to believe by looking at the recent press photos). With a girl named Dorothee who had her love of travelling awakened by a father who was a lorry driver that took her with him on his trips, the love of music started maybe at the same time around the age of three.

- I heard the song *Lucille* by Little Richard, it was that which caught me. I had to play it again and again and again, the music became like a drug to me.

In her teens however the goal was not set to become a heavy metal royalty, she wanted to be working with graphics. This however was when the clouds around her were getting darker and darker and things weren't really right with her health, at least that was her feeling although doctor after doctor said the same thing: that there was nothing wrong with her. It would seem that it is like in Sweden today then with the doctors, she visits them for fun in their opinion and maybe being told to take an aspirin and then being sent home, unlike cases around here where people die because of lazy doctors she was persistent enough to finally get a diagnosis which turned out to be a little worse than nothing wrong.

- I was diagnosed with pulmonary tuberculosis and was given a 50% chance of survival which of course came as a shock for me. You know a girl in her teens missing all that fun and not knowing if she will survive.

As you probably can deduce, she did survive that ordeal and it was there, during that year in

hospital she figured that she had to do something with her life. And just about a week after being released from hospital she started her first band called **Snakebite**. Doro remembers that they were very loud and didn't really know that they were playing heavy metal before some people enlightened them about that fact.

A Demo was recorded with **Snakebite** and later one with a band named **Beast** which she later left to form the band **Warlock**.

Warlock

Warlock was formed by more or less the same people that Doro had been working with earlier in bands like **Beast** and **Snakebite**, they did even hang around in the same concrete bunker in Düsseldorf where the other bands had been. There was a difference between **Warlock** and the other bands however, **Warlock** had a fanclub who helped them become what they became.

- They recorded cassettes which they sent to labels and there wasn't long before we were offered contracts with some different underground labels and we soon decided for Mausoleum because they had the coolest logo.

This independent Belgian label released the **Warlock** debut album "Burning the Witches" in 1984, it was later rereleased by Vertigo who went on to release the rest of the **Warlock** albums as well. One could say that this album did exceed the expectations of the band somewhat.

- We thought we would sell something like 200 copies to our fanclub or something, but we did sell like 20'000 albums and it was now things started happening when we got to play with **Metallica** and metal was getting really big.

It was now





the gates opened for Doro and Warlock, it was now things they could only dream of when forming the band to play around youth clubs and similar around Düsseldorf started to happen. She had to do what everyone hopes to do, quit her day job.

- Our manager called and told me to quit my job because he had found a really good tour for us, we were to tour with one of the greats, Judas Priest. And the next day I got up to my boss and told him I had to quit as we were to tour with Judas Priest, he had no idea who they were and just looked like a question mark but wished me the best of luck anyway.

Warlock then went on to release three additional albums all of which charted in Germany and the last one "Triumph and Agony" even broke into the hot100 at the Billboard charts and was certified gold in the home country.

However, this medal had a bit of a backside with the label deciding everything which led to members coming and going Doro explained and as that wasn't enough she lost the rights to the name Warlock which was taken by her ex-manager who sued them for that and won and since then it has been an ongoing process. She has however gotten the rights to the name back after many years of battling with lawyers and stuff, but back then it led to the band having to change the name to Doro so that they could go on playing.

Doro Raises a Fist in the Air

Fittingly the first album under the Doro moniker was named "Force Majeure" and was released in 1989, and since that album there has been eleven more albums with the thirteenth due out on October 19. All of those albums have charted well in Germany and the two first did reach the

Billboard200 in the US but none as successful as "Triumph and Agony". But enough history now, lets look at the present instead.

- We have just released a single and it is called "Raise Your Fist in the Air" and it's three songs on it. One is *Raise Your Fist in the Air* and it's like an anthem that kind of reminds me a little bit of *All We Are* and I have played now a couple of times and I think it is like wow.

The fans seem to have taken to this song already Doro explains, the EP or single as she says, ends with a French version of the opening *Raise Your Fist in the Air*. But in between there are two tracks which like the opening will be found on the album as well, the French version is the only track unique for the EP.

- The second song on the single is called *Victory* and is another anthem and there is a ballad on it and it's called *Engel* which is a song about a guardian angel.

The EP is called "Raise Your Fist in the Air", the name of the album is a bit shorter where "in the air" is removed, it will as we have touched upon earlier, be out in October and it features some guests.

- It has a duet on it with Lemmy from *Motörhead* and it is a ballad which is one of my favourite songs on the album, it is called *It Still Hurts*. And then we have a guest guitar player on the album, Gus G (known for playing with *Ozzy Osbourne* and *Firewind* amongst others).

Doro explains (and I have heard) that it is an album with a good mixture of songs between anthems, fast songs, ballads and so on. There is even a song for a good cause on the album, it is called *Freiheit (Human Rights)*.

- I want to dedicate it to this organisation called "Terre de Femmes" who take care of human rights especially for young girls

and I think that is good because I know that in Sweden or Germany everything is pretty cool but in some other countries there's so much bad stuff going on so I thought that I definitely wanted to write a song about it, I love to rock out but sometimes I want to get a message out as well.

But this song is not one of those she counts as her favourites on the album, at least not when I am asking. However, she did need a few seconds to think it over before answering.

- *Rock 'til Death* is pretty cool from the rock songs and from the ballads we have the duet with Lemmy, *It Still Hurts*, I would say they are my favourites. And *Raise Your Fist in the Air* of course, I think it reminds me of *All We Are* and it will probably never leave our live setlist anymore.

And why should it? It is after all a song which character is just perfect to play live with the fans jumping and singing along. In the ballad with Lemmy we hear the ugly old man in a slightly different way than we are used to from *Motörhead*, which is something that falls very much into the tastes of Doro.

- Yeah, and Lemmy from the soulful side, I love it so much, we did a couple of duets together for the "Calling the Wild" album. It was *Love me Forever* an old *Motörhead* classic and *Alone Again*. I love Lemmy when he sings that way, bluesy and ballady song, I love it. I think he is so soulful, it always gives me goosebumps.

A Fist in Triumph

Bands/artists usually rave on about how an album is always their best and so on, last time I spoke with Doro she said she didn't have a single favourite album and that she loved them all for different reasons even though she seemed to have a softer spot for the "Triumph and Agony"



Photo by Stig Pallesen

album. That album is also something she compares this new one with and with right as the characters of songs are rather similar with the huge anthem in *Raise Your Fist in the Air*, the lovely ballad like *Für Immer* in *Either It Still Hurts* or *Engel* if you want it in German. But is it the best she has ever made?

- I think it came out great and I am just hoping that the fans love it as much as I do. It is a little bit different from the "Fear No Evil" album from 2009, I learned from some things there which I thought I could have done better and it was mixed by some-

body great, Jakob Hansen and I think it came out great especially on the rock songs. I think it is a good package, a good album and I hope it is the best and I hope the fans love it the most but to be honest I love each and every album for different reasons.

And it looks as though it could be successful as Doro explains that the reception so far has been very good even though they haven't really tried everything live as of yet.

- So far it has been great, and when we play *Raise Your Fist in the Air* live it gets the biggest response and I think it will be great

for the upcoming tour. We feel out which songs the fans love the most but so far it has been great, I haven't played the other songs live yet but I want to try to pull *Engel* the ballad off live. But so far the EP has gotten a very good response.

One thing you don't really need to hear the album for it to appreciate the great album cover of the coming album, I think it is definitely one of the best we have ever seen on a DORO album and she seems quite satisfied with it as well. The artwork is made by Geoffrey Gillespie who has done cover art for DORO since the "Tri-

umph and Agony" album back in 1987 and since then they have been working together with the artwork, or maybe we should say that Geoffrey Gillespie has magically created covers for DORO since then.

- Usually we talk early and I told him that I had something in the making and told him it is called "Raise Your Fist". Then it came out with the fist and everything and I thought: "that is the album title" it was just the work title to begin with. But I always tell him ideas and what the music sounds like and what they are all about and then he does it and sends it. Every time I am so happy it has not been any time where I have thought that I expected something different I think we have a good open channel and a good vibe, he always knows what I like or what I am up to, he feels it somehow.

She explains that he trusts Gillespie for doing the best and that he is an Englishman living in France who has done almost all sleeve paintings for DORO since 1987 when she got to know him.

- He is one of my favourite painters and he did this new one and I am so happy he did it, I think it is so cool with all the skulls and the terminators. We probably have enough stuff to pick and chose from to do a really nice live performance and for the backdrop and everything it will be perfect.

Live and New Label

Speaking of backdrops, DORO will as usual be touring quite extensively around the world to promote this new album and also next year to celebrate 30 years doing music (well to be honest it is more than that but the first demos were released 1983 according to wikipedia, they recorded the first *Warlock* album that year as well).

- We will start in october-no-

vember when we will go all over Europe and then we will do the 70'000 tons of metal next january and then we do the american tour in february next year and then we come back to Scandinavia in march-april and then I hope we will play the Sweden Rock Festival and all the festivals. And next year I celebrate 30th anniversary and want to do some spectacular shows with something really unique.

30 years is quite a long time, can it really be the same feeling to be touring after all these years and all these shows. According to the woman still extremely young at



heart it is.

- I love it so much and I think I can appreciate it a little bit more for every passing year. I think it is my only mission in life, I want to make the fans happy and tour and meet the fans, get there feedback, that's heaven to me.

Which is why she probably never has grown old, never settled into the dull, tedious and boring life of an average person. She lives for the now and for the fans.

- Yes, totally. That is why I have



never been married or never had any kids, I am married to metal and to the fans.

Think how much fun it can be never to grow up, how life is better without all the responsibilities and all of that, but of course there are some for a musician as well and one is producing new music, is that as much fun still?

- Yes, yes I love writing songs, I love recording but what I love most is playing live. But it is all different, it is all introverted when you are working on a record and then when you go out and play it live it's totally different. I always feel like I am a totally different person and seeing the fans and connecting with them is what I miss when being in the studio.

To me
the

fans are always the most important ingredient that is why playing live is always the best, the studio can never really beat the live feeling.

Speaking more of live and all of that, "Raise Your Fist" will be Doro's first album on Nuclear Blast, who did release her live DVD "25 Years in Rock" in 2010. It is one of the biggest labels for heavy metal and metal music and one that has some real muscle to promote music, but also a label we at Hallowed have a bit of a so-so experience with as most of their music never reach us for some reason. But what does Doro expect from the collaboration with this giant label?

- I am very excited we did the 25 year anniversary DVD, it was the first release and it was really, really great and now I am happy. I think it will be good I feel tremendously supported which is always great like you always want the best for your baby and every record is like a baby I think. I am so happy so far and I couldn't ask for more, I think it was the best move we've ever done. But I had to wait a little while because I had another contract with AFM and they were very good to me too and I am always a very loyal person and when I say or sign something I always fulfil that. And I did and when that was finished I was hoping that I could work with Nuclear Blast and so far it is great.

30 Years, and Final Words

New label, new ways of working and new times in the reality of the musical business but still The Queen is holding her reign over the metal world while still remaining young at heart (and look). Of course there will be celebrating but looking back again, we have established that the "Triumph and Agony" album probably is the finest and most well

known but which is the proudest moment seen over this long career?

- I could only say one thing there, "Monsters of Rock" in 1986. It was the first time we did something that big. It was at least 100'000 people there and it was really an amazing experience.

She adds that it was a bit nervous as well but the fans made it work for them, the fans which seems to be something she lives for the good old Doro. She never really gets used to being labeled the Queen of heavy metal as she says she is just a regular metalhead but as long as it is meant as anything positive it is great.

- It is like when somebody has something really positive to say I am so happy and whatever it is when it's meant in a positive way it makes me so happy. There are so many great women in metal out there but I am so happy when fans love it.

So, what will she do for the fans to celebrate this momentous occasion that 30 years should entail? Something big of course.

- I want to celebrate it on the open air festivals like in Wacken and I want to celebrate it in my hometown Düsseldorf, maybe two nights there. And I hope in Sweden to get a chance to do a big show there and next year I will probably do a couple of anniversary shows with the biggest stage show live with pyrotechnics and many guests. I want to do one in New York City as well, it is my second home and I love it so much. That will maybe be a good time for those who has never been to New York to see the city, do some shopping and watch the show. I hope that we can reach or even top the level we had for the 25th anniversary DVD because it was so great with so many guests and I definitely want to do something unexpected that blows everybody's minds. Something

that would make them go like wow and get really excited and some unforgettable concerts for the anniversary.

It will probably be something worthy of a queen I presume, with Doro we cannot expect anything else. And with that not much really remains to be said other than her majesty's speech to her subjects:

- I want to say thank you to the fans for all the great support and all these years and I always promise to do my best and I hope to see them all very soon. I hope they love the new album as much as I do and hope to see them at the next concerts or the festivals. We promise to always give our best during all our shows and hope we can go on for ever. At least I want to be making music for as long as I live.

And with that we thank Doro for her time this time around, a few replies and facts are taken from a previous interview made in -04 when she had released her "Für Immer" DVD-set. The New album "Raise Your Fist" will be out on Nuclear Blast on october 19, the EP "Raise Your Fist in the Air" is out now, there is a video on that song as well that you can check out. Our review of "Raise Your Fist" will be published in october.

Links:

<http://www.doro.de>

<http://www.doropesch.com>

<http://www.nuclearblast.de>

Raise Your Fist in the Air video

<http://www.hallowed.se>

