



Grande Luxe

Debut of the year?

"It was magical" - says Mattias Eklund about our review of Time Measured in Bitter Chapters.

"One of the ten albums to remember from 2011" - says Hallowed's magical review of the same album.

Time Measured in Bitter Chapters is the Swedish band Grande Luxe's debut album, an album they have released on their own with no assistance from a record label. We on Hallowed got ourself a chat with Mattias Eklund guitarist of the band and the singer Anders Lidgren, they talk a little about Grande Luxe and their Time Measured in Bitter Chapters.



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Atmospheric rock with a touch of pop rock ever present is how the band themselves describe how it sounds to listen to their music. Cinematic is another word used by Mattias to describe how Grande Luxe sound, but not everything conform to that style when tracks like *Cold* and *Lay* are said to be more regular rock songs without oddities. The ending track *Buried* is said to be one of these more advanced tracks with big atmospheric feel and some

advanced chords says Mattias.

- For it is very much feeling, like cinema, pictorially that is, it is not so much music I think of when I write music but very much feeling.

- We often get that question now and for a start we just counted lots of bands and started referring to those. The inspiration for me is the state of mind when creating a song, it is more a sort of general life experiences than music.

That is how Mattias first and then Anders describe the inspiration when it comes to creating music. Anders adds that it can be

a bit weird at times but says it is much emotion involved and it is very genuine thanks to this.

- So, the inspiration is probably more a sort of experiences of life and events, Anders explain.

The Debut Album

Grande Luxes debut album is called 'Time Measured in Bitter Chapters' and it was well received by us at Hallowed, but how is the feeling within the band now that they have released their debut album? Mattias means it is a relief to be rid of it now.

- Maybe not be rid of it but for it being released because it has

been so close for quite some time when we have been working with it and it always becomes ones children in a way that it hard to let go of in some ways. In the end it was finished and we have released it and that feels great. If that was the answer to the question I don't know but that is how it feels.

Filled with emotion, thought through and genuine, that is how they describe their debut album. An album that has been a long process for the band to finish, first they should find their musical niche and then the rest of the elements in the creation of an al-

bum should fall into place.

- It was some and then it has been the sort of technical things as well, like "shall we play with real drums here, shall we go to a studio, should we do this..." yes, it was lots of that, if we should use synths, we had to try our ways to find the sound that was ours - Mattias explains.

Speaking of synths, it is nothing the band has used on their debut album, some piano here and there explains Mattias but nothing else and that is a conscious choice by the band but also something that doesn't exclude the use of those things in the fu-

ture.

- Next album might well have synths and electrical drums with some 908 trummachines.

Anders and Mattias agree on calling the album organic; pompous, melancholic rock music it was called in our review. When it comes to the song writing of this album, it is in Grande Luxe a process that include all band members as they do not want any one man show, instead the songs go through the band machinery where all members put their traces on the ideas. Often it begins with a simple idea that runs through the machinery and comes



out on the other side quite different from what it was to begin with, Mattias explains.

Opinions

'Time Measured in Bitter Chapters' was reviewed at a very high rating here at Hallowed, but before moving onto what the band have seen from other reviewers and fans, lets look at what they themselves think.

- Yes, me and Anders who sits here anyway, Mattias replies to the question I asked if they were pleased with their album. Anders adds that he thinks that they are all pleased with the album, but even if they are satisfied there are things that Mattias thinks about.

- It is always things on would

have wanted to make more of, or better but that is always the case, I have never ever been completely satisfied with anything I have made. But we are already on the next album now, that is what it is all about being creative, to move to the next step all the time and use the experiences from before to be better.

- It was that Mattias was talking about earlier, a little "kill your darlings" because in the end one must say that it is enough and lets finalise this, and call it enough, Anders adds (wonder if he reads Hallowed normally since one of the favourite expressions for the Hallowed review is "kill your Darlings" writer's note).

Extremely pleased they still

wants to move on in the process that will lead to the next project for them, but they are proud of what they have achieved with their debut album. Besides that the album has been well received by both press and fans this far but the band adds that they have not sold thousands of albums and it is mostly a small group of people, like for instance objective reviewers or other people the band doesn't know who all have positive things to say. So far they have not heard anything negative they both explain, something that would have made Steve Hackett worried but Anders and Mattias explains that it is really nice.

Positive words also means a

lot for them says Mattias who admits that they are affected in some part by what people think.

- Well, even if one in some way wants to be this artist who does his own thing and blah, blah, blah, it is still so that you are affected by reviews, to hear that people like you is very flattering.

- Yes, it is just great, really and that Hallowed review I was really happy about, Anders adds.

- Absolutely, it was magical, it was great, really, thanks for that! Mattias agrees.

Hallowed of course thanks for these friendly words, exactly like Mattias says we how crate are affected by other people's opinions even if it does not mean that much for me, it is always flatter-

ring which is why I can subjectively add that I understand that feeling of praise from those one doesn't know.

Favourite Song

In our review of 'Time Measured in Bitter Chapters' we mention the track *Say Something* as the big favourite, the tracks *Cold*, *Lay* and *Lucid* are also mentioned by name in that part of our review. Most of these are also mentioned by both Anders and Mattias when we speak of the favourite track on the album. Mattias mentions the ending track *Buried* as his favourite track while Anders holds his money for the opening track *Broken*, which Mattias agrees is a very good track.

- They are very different, I can call Mattias and say, damn it sound great, *Say Something*, it is so damn beautiful, it is a little for every frame of mind I think - Anders means and explain that it varies which of the tracks that feel like the favourite, maybe depending on the occasion and such.

- I like more the songs like *Broken*, *Say Something*, *Buried* if I am to chose, more than for instance *Cold* and *Lay* and those but I do like those very much even though they have not been my real favourites. But it is for me and we are all different, but I am more this atmospheric, cinematic and musics guy and then *Broken*, *Say Something* and *Buried* suits



better than *Cold* and *Lay* if one looks at it that way, but I still like those songs very much as well - Mattias points out.

The favourite songs can be summarised to the trio *Broken*, *Say Something* and *Buried* if we use what the band says and Hallowed's review as sources.

On Their Own

Grande Luxe works without a label, something that is becoming more and more usual in today's music business since it is quite difficult to get a recording contract and the once that are offered to unestablished artists are often not that good for the artist. According to Mattias this is because the labels don't make any money today, unless we talk big artists which means that there is not much money in it. They themselves have not had enough interest from the labels which might in part have something to do with them not doing anything to reach out to the labels.

- Not one demo album, we decided that early on with the opportunity we had with Mattias at the helm thinking of mix and production with all of his studio capabilities, that we can decide everything for ourselves which we love to do - says Anders.

In stead of having a label behind themselves the band has done everything themselves and put their money on promotional companies to create press around the band, something that has led to them being both reviewed and interviewed for Hallowed.

- And then it is difficult to know, but if a label comes to us, of course we are interested but it also depends on the conditions, Mattias explains to show that the door for cooperating with a label is not closed.

The advantage with not having a label behind means that the band gets everything from the sales, but then there is the disadvantage with not getting their music out as well on their own.

That of course require the label to push for that artist which is something that doesn't always happen even if it has a valid contract. That is why the band has elected to do things their own way, Mattias explains.

- We try it our way to get it out now and see if it is possible, simple as that.

The band does not have any physical distribution but sells those albums through their website, so you can contact the band if you want your own copy. The story is very different with digital distribution which is something they have arranged for, something Mattias describes as quite easy today and says that it is just to sign for a distributor and then you can reach all the big digital markets like iTunes or Spotify to name a few examples of where you can buy 'Time Measured in Bitter Chapters'.

Anders means that the band works with the distribution like they work with their music, they

build from a solid foundation to make everything well founded when the finished product stands ready. They have no illusions and builds no castles in the sky Anders explains, their music builds from a solid foundation in that core of loyal fans they have already managed to build he explains.

Mattias means that the release of the album was as expected as they had not built up any of those since experiences from the music business has taught them how hard it can be even if one has managed to build a fan base and been doing it for a long time.

- We don't believe anything until we see it and it is not like we are walking around thinking that we will get that break.

- But I think it is undoubtedly exceeds expectations, I never thought people would appreciate it this much - says Anders and forces Mattias to revise what he first said to include that he meant that the sales and things around that has been as expected while people's reactions have been very much above expectations.

Live

- It was fantastic, unreal can I almost say, says Anders about the the band's USA adventure where they visited two mythical rock clubs (Molly Malones and Genghis Cohen) where the experience of playing was fantastic both for the band and for those who were there, according to Anders and Mattias.

- We recorded the two concerts we played in Los Angeles so we can mix those and maybe we might release some songs from there, Mattias explains.

In other words there is the chance that all of you who were not there will get the possibility to hear what the band were describing as special and fantastic. If you do not want to wait for them

to finish that will soon get the chance to see them on home turf both in Stockholm and in Umeå and on top of that there will be an adventure to Finland for some shows.

- Yes, we will be in Umeå to play in the beginning of october and then we are going to Stockholm at the end of november and play at Pet Sound I think it was called. We are also going to play in Umeå some time november, it is not decided when yet but it is then we are going to have the release party for the album. Then we are also going to Finland and play too but no dates confirmed yet.

For you who wonder about dates the author has managed to confirm that they play november 30th at Pet Sounds in Stockholm, the other dates you will have to look out for on the band's website. Anders points out After Mattias' answer that the band has a hard time keeping much going at the same time which might explain the lack of dates this far.

- It is the thing with having a job at the side, now it has been focus on the album and nothing else and then the next focus was on USA and now the next focus is on the release party. We are a bit poor at keeping many things in the air even though we are four in the band, everything just takes its time.

Future

The future of the band is as much vague as the dates of their coming concerts,



Per Lönnberg - bass



Niklas Flyckt - producer

which means that nothing is decided yet; or just maybe they don't want to reveal anything yet. Closest now is the release party Mattias explains but also says that they are rehearsing once or twice a week and works on new songs but does not know how to release them yet.

- If we are to release one song at the time or to make a complete album, it maybe points towards making a song at the time to finish it completely with production and everything and then release it, many are doing it like that nowadays and it is a quite funny idea - Mattias explains but adds that the closest focus is on the shows that are waiting.

One thing they have decided

is that the process with the next album shall be shorter than it was for 'Time Measured in Bitter Chapters', partly because they are better at everything but also because they have noticed that there is a demand for their songs

"What is it that I am listening to, is it U2, is it Pink Floyd, Radiohead..."

Anders does not know what he is listening to...

and that is something they wish to appease with more music.

Mattias also means that much of the process is streamlined already since the first album as much of the time with that album was about finding themselves and their musical direction which is now done. Anders adds that even if the process has been long, it has been worth it since

the reception has been and also the frustration at the music journalists to place them.

- "What is it that I am listening to, is it U2, is it Pink Floyd, Radiohead..." it was someone who mentioned a band I had never heard of. So it has really been worth the time even if we have been frustrated at times - Anders explains.

Maybe he was thinking of Hallowed's similar bands or that we mentioned Porcupine Tree in the text but on the other hand, he should have known about Porcupine Tree.

In the future maybe we can expect the songs being released one by one which are released as soon as they are finished even if it was spoken about a new album which makes it all a

classical "we'll have to wait and see what comes". The hopes of the band for the same future is about getting the chance to make longer tours or get the chance to be played on the radio. Mattias also points out that his hopes are to continue developing and don't stagnate since it they do not want to be that band that does the same thing over and over again.

- We don't want to be that band that does sound the same on every record. We can of course not change our musicians but one can still sound different and I don't think any of us is alien to that.

With that Hallowed thanks Anders and Mattias for the time they have taken to tell us about Grande Luxe, the author also wants to thank for the record.

That will have to be the last word and if you do want to know

where and when the band will play or get some band news you should turn to the band's website where you also can order the new and celebrated 'Time Measured in Bitter Chapters' which is out now.

Some Useful Websites:

Halloweds recension (länk)

<http://www.grandeluxe.se/>

<http://www.youtube.com/user/GrandeLuxe1>

Grande Luxe are:

Bass - Per Lönnberg
Vocals - Anders Lidgren
Drums - Lars Lundström
Guitar - Mattias Eklund