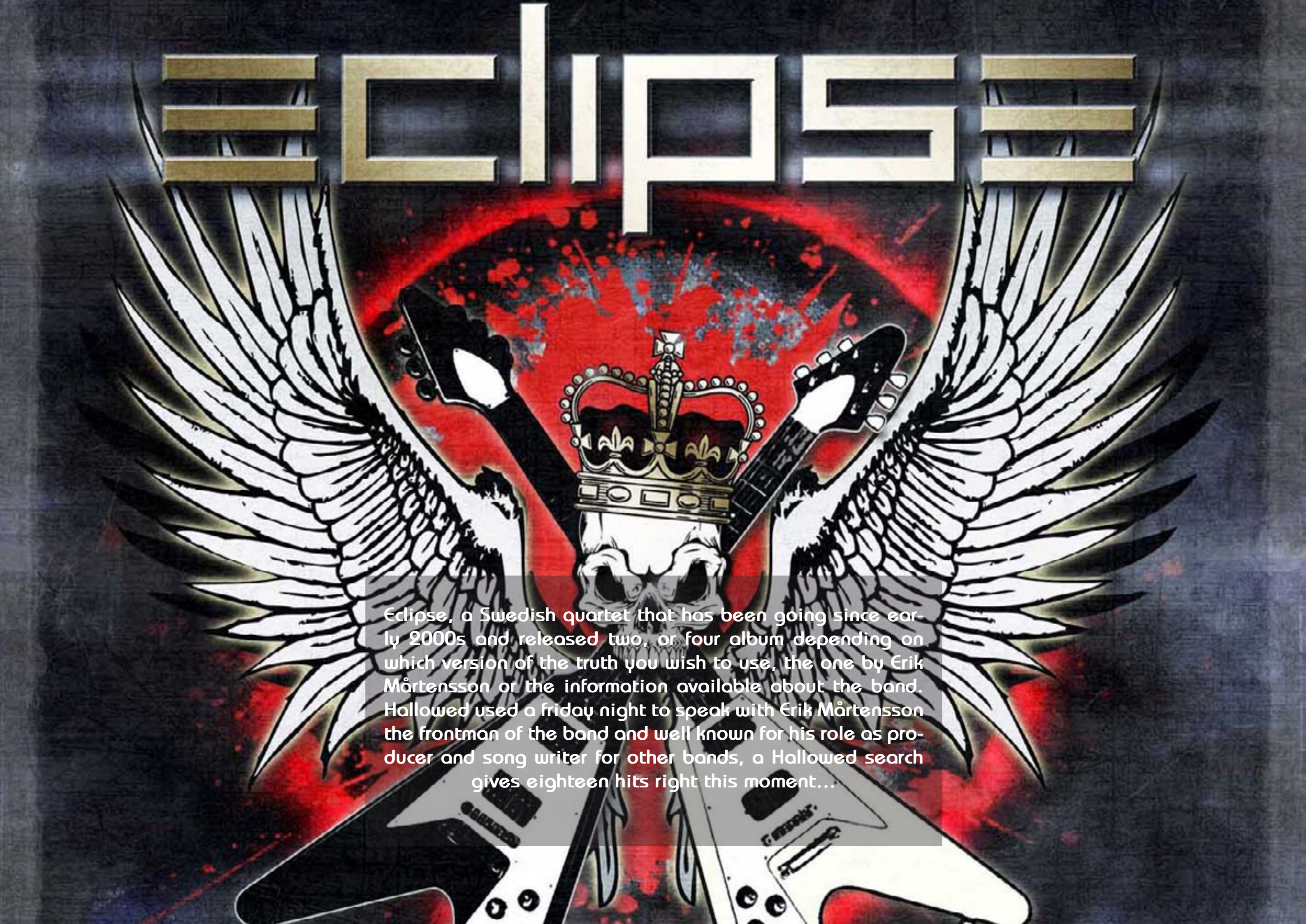


Eclipse



Eclipse, a Swedish quartet that has been going since early 2000s and released two, or four album depending on which version of the truth you wish to use, the one by Erik Mårtensson or the information available about the band. Hallowed used a Friday night to speak with Erik Mårtensson the frontman of the band and well known for his role as producer and song writer for other bands, a Hallowed search gives eighteen hits right this moment...



BY DANIEL KÄLLMALM
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Toby Hitchcock, Lionville, W.E.T., Primal Fear, Jaded Heart, Golden Resurrection, and of course Eclipse is what shows. I wrote two or four albums in the introduction as the band themselves sees the album "Are You Ready to Rock" from 2008 as their first album, which makes the new album "Bleed and Scream" their second album, Erik explains:

- We see it as our first album even though we did some very official demos before, then as a very unstructured band which is why we see this as our second album. The first two were very low

budget and simple recordings, and we were very young and recorded them without any guidance.

Eclipse is a band that does not care what others think, they make their music as they desire and if someone likes their music it is a bonus, explains Erik. It is first and foremost to be music that they themselves likes to put in the stereo and listen to, that is what drives them in their music making.

- It is always the measure for us, it is lots of guitar and vocals and such that we like, things that we ourselves likes to hear.

When it comes to the musical style, Eclipse are not bound to a certain style as such explains

Erik but points out that they do things a certain way and cannot mix styles at random. He also say that the band clearly demonstrate what they are all about and as that type of music is what they desire to make which is why making such a music is no compromise on their side to keep the material uniform.

- We want speedy songs and me myself does not like albums that are too incoherent, I (we) like albums that are clear with what they are. So even if it is like one might think a bit much of the same with lots of guitar riffing and all of that but we like it and we go for it, flat out.

From where does the inspiration come, from themselves or are

there other bands that inspire?

- It is from ourselves but ourselves is always a part of the music that we grew up with and what has formed one musically is after all oneself. No one creates music or any kind of art from nothing, everyone is inspired by something and all that says otherwise are lying. So, of course we are formed by the classic rock bands that we grew up with like AC/DC, Whitesnake, Deep Purple, Thin Lizzy, I like all the classic bands.

Bleed and Scream

Eclipse's second album is called "Bleed and Scream" and saw the light of day in august, the work with the album however started

much earlier than that.

- We really started working during fall, when I collected the ideas we had that were already written and we decided to make a new record. And we went in completely for the songwriting and were looking for songs that we really liked so if someone did not like the song we threw it away and made new ones all the time. Then we recorded and mixed which took us in total about a month and a half.

The band's earlier album "Are You Ready to Rock". They were very pleased with that album as well, but with this new album "Bleed and Scream" they have taken it to another level by developing the parts they were most

pleased with from the earlier album and then build the new album from those. They were also looking for a more serious tone on that new album, trying a bit to get away from the glammy party rock which they showed on the predecessor.

- It should have more atmosphere through the album with more heaviness in that. More energy and heavier music, when we wrote the ending song *After the End of the World* it became the measure on which sound we were looking for. We had the title track and a few more songs already when we made that one but we then got a measure for which sound we were to look for, a unified sound emanating from that



song. It felt very much Eclipse to us and there isn't too many that makes that thing in that way, we tried to find an own path so even if it is classic we make something of our own with it.

In our review we wrote about clichés, something that Eclipse's music builds a lot upon. And for Erik clichés isn't something negative since those become clichés because many appreciate them and that is why they are used a lot in hard rock, very much so on "Bleed and Scream" as well.

- We want to use clichés since that is what we like and want to hear, but then of course it is also

important to make something of your own with it as there is no point in it otherwise. But it is an important ingredient in the pot, sort of.

And these ingredients mixed in the pot leads to a gang of songs that make out an album, from these songs Erik holds a bit higher regard for the last song they wrote which is called *Bitter Taste*, but he also points out that none of the songs are bad as such a song would not sneak through their selection process. When Erik tells of his favourite track I point out that I enjoy *Battlegrounds* as probably my favourite on the album,

a track that he explains is a tribute.

- It is our tribute to Gary Moore who died around the same time as we were making that song and we were a little inspired by Gary Moore to make that song. It is no theft as we had a song that was a bit keltic and pulled it slightly more in that direction, so it is our personal tribute to Gary Moore.

Gary Moore probably deserves to be tributed as well considering how many artists he has inspired with his music, take Eclipse as just one example.



Reception & Touring

Hallowed rated the album a fine number of points and Erik explains that we are not the only ones positive towards this album because that seems to be view as they have even receive full marks from some reviewers.

- Those who understand our thing and who really likes the genre, it feels like many of them has put their fingers on what we have wanted to achieve, and as usual it is the Swedish review that are the most cautious.

What Erik has been able to see, the album has not been dissed anywhere and he means that

they themselves are so much fans of the genre that they know what is good and that they are honest enough with one another that they can tell each other if they think something is bad to weed such stuff away. Moreover he (along with our reviewer) means that even if you do not like the genre you will still hear that it is well made.

The target of the band is to go on a tour, they have signed with a new booking agency that has very good contact which they hope will help them to a good tour.

- They are extremely enthu-

siastic and thinks that our new album is fantastic so they love to work with us, that looks very promising to us. For the moment we are working with the booking so we will know in the coming weeks if it leads to anything. It will probably be a support tour or a club tour, we have some requests for gigs already, both in Sweden and abroad. But we will let the release have its run and keep tabs on which interest there is and then we'll have to put together a tour when the time is right.

Earlier Eclipse hasn't tried their wings as a live band too much,



Erik Mårtensson



Johan Berlin



Magnus Henriksson



Robban Bäck

on the other hand all of the members are full time musicians and used to playing live with many different artist of different genres. This does according Erik mean that they are experienced and will be a good live band as they have the competence for it despite the fact that they haven't really been out doing too many shows as Eclipse which is down to economics as it isn't just for a band to go on a tour through Europe or something like it.

- Some people do and take loans to do it and they get big debts but we don't want to do that as it will not pay in the long run. What we hope for now is that the new booking agent who has many contacts and many bands and has worked for 20-25 years in the business, can book us into such

places where you usually have to pay to play.

According to Erik they hope to have a tour that can pay off for them and he says that the agency believes in Eclipse and their music which of course the band themselves does. And that their music has a style that makes it suitable for the stage can hardly be said to be a negative either for their hopes to reach out, and besides that being seen on the stage is still a good way marketing oneself and ones music as a band.

- Yes, and first and foremost it is very funny to go out and play. And one rather plays ones own music in front of ten people than playing someone else's in front of 1500 people. It feels a lot more worth to perform your own music than just stand there and play so-

meone else's for money and that is something I think anyone who makes their own music think.

And they are going out to play, that is something Erik guarantees, if no bigger tour they will go out on a club tour.

Sales and stuff

To go on tour might be good for the band's sales to reach higher levels, but they have been on the Swedish album list and reached as high as a seventh place on the hard rock list so it has done alright in Sweden. Erik has no sales figures and have no idea how the album done in other countries but he points out that it is no million seller. However, that is probably nothing to expect from an album being released these days either.

- No, I heard somewhere today

that if you are to be top ten on the Swedish album list you should sell more than 300 albums. It is that bad.

A development which Erik sees as very positive for the consumer but not so much for the business and the artists or the quality of the music in general. For a small amount of money one can today get access to a whole lot of music but even this is too expensive for some according to Erik. This easy access kicks the feet out from under the artists who creates the music, as recording an album isn't exactly cheap or effortless which in the end makes into something requiring some return in form of money.

- If one earlier sold 15-20'000 copies it created an economic ground for going on tour and re-

ording albums and such. And those bands that were selling 20'000 copies are now selling something like 2'000 copies and that really changes the possibilities to make good music. To record music isn't free, it is not possible to do it for free unless one makes it in a cheap home studio and that usually sounds. You can hear on many smaller bands, it does sound pretty poor.

Erik means that the music is a bit undervalued today, that it becomes just something that is there like television, internet and all of that. Just another thing one has that competes about one's free time, it is in a way like you no longer appreciate the effort behind the music.

- Exactly, I make records on an industrial scale almost, maybe

not so but I make lots of records since I run my own studio. And I see what an incredible amount of work it is behind a record, from that time when you have the first idea until it is there mixed, mastered, finished and pressed, it is an incredible amount of work to do that. It is like when you first put your spade into the ground when building a house, when you build your first house you might be naive enough not to realise how much more there is to do and is happy to begin. But when one has made some houses one starts to realise that after that first shovel of the spade there is a lot of work left before putting the lock on the front door and everything inside is installed and ready. It is in a way like building a house.

Besides playing live one way to



make albums more attractive to buy is to make them more attractive with special packaging, extra material and so on, something that gives the record buyer something more than just the songs. Something that gives the record some value, Erik tells me about a record he ordered from the USA for a fair bit of money but it didn't contain much other than the songs just a one side inlay and a plastic cover. That is not the case with "Bleed and Scream" which has a bit more exclusive design.

- It is a double folded digipak so it is an exclusive package so if you are a record buyer you will really get some value for your

money. It is a nice record and exclusive.

That along with Frontiers that does a fair bit of advertising gives the band a good possibility to be seen and reach potential buyers and Erik tells me that he is really pleased with their label. The same label his band W.E.T. shares with Eclipse and he tells me that they have a new album in the works that will be released in the early part of next year. An album that will develop on the sides he liked with the earlier album and make those better, explains Erik.

So to finish this article we can state that Eclipse's Bleed and Scream is out now and soon we will have a new album by W.E.T.

so there is undoubtable reasons to keep your eyes on Erik and his many projects.

More from Eclipse:

Our review
Officiell webbsida

W.E.T.

Our Review, by Daniel
Our Review, by Caj
Webbsida
myspace

Eclipse Are:

Erik Mårtensson - Bleeding vocals, guitar & bass
Magnus Henriksson - Screaming lead guitar
Robban Bäck - Roaring drums
Johan Berlin- Epic synthesisers