

DEEP IMAGINATION

"My influences range from Dead Can Dance to Pink Floyd".

Northern Art Music

Interview with "Deep Imagination"

If you like a mix of bands with Dead Can Dance, The Mission - Wayne Hussey, Shamall, Enya, Florence and the Machine, early Vangelis, Loreena Mc Kennitt, Fields of the Nephilim, Clannad, later Pink Floyd, RPWL, Tangerine Dream and many other smooth artists from the field of world music, guitar progressive goth/wave/neo folk with an 80/90s touch, this is exactly the right place and you should definitely risk an ear.

The fulltime record sounds absolutely professional to me, you just notice that "old experienced hands" of the business are at work here. My personal opinion after listening to it several times is that you really notice that Thorsten and his team have put a lot of heart and soul into the project and that in every form from A to Z. The mystical art rock tracks sound absolutely professional.

The mystical art rock tracks and spherical sounds and folky, rocky soundscapes, as well as the great voices come across very authentically, elegiac and emotional as well as creative and are just really fun. The themes of the tracks are also very exciting and interesting, generally a very successful release, the step to the greats of the genre is not far away or even already completed.



01 - Hi Thorsten, thank you very much for your latest release "The Children Of The Moon", for me personally it's another great release in this genre and already one of the highlights of 2023.

So maybe first of all the information for the readers, how did you start with the music, how did you find each other and did you come to the Progressive Goth Folk music direction and how would you describe your sounds yourself?

Thorsten Sudler-Mainz: Thank you very much for the invitation to the interview with Northern Art Music. I would describe the sounds of the new album as atmospheric dark wave gothic of the 2020s. I grew up near Frankfurt am Main and live in Central Hesse. I started playing music in 1982. First as a drummer in bands and later as a guitarist and singer, before I had my first own 8-track recording studio in the 90s. Since 2004 I have released a total of 10 albums through BSC Music/Prudence. Besides the six albums of my solo project Deep Imagination Alben, there were also four albums of the Cologne-based ambient music project Art Of Infinity, which I co-founded.

There is a little story behind the new Deep Imagination album. In 2020, I invited my old friend Achim von Raesfeld, with whom I had founded a gothic band in the 80s, to my studio. What happened then was magical, because an old fire was rekindled and I suddenly felt how much our style back then had influenced me and how well we still understand each other musically. Then I just had to do it and produced an album with Achim as guest guitarist that musically harkens back to the 80s. The whole thing with the experience of 40 years of music. In addition to the complete production, I also took over the lead vocals.



02 - First of all, how did you come up with the grandiose opulent artwork of the release? The artistically high-quality booklet with all the lyrics and photos - which remind me strongly of the Fields and Sisters (on purpose?) - is a testament to your creativity and love of your work, who is responsible for that?

Thorsten Sudler-Mainz: When you talk about Dark Wave and Gothic of the 80s, of course you can't avoid the Fields or the Sisters. Achim and I were at the Sisters Of Mercy concert at the Batschkapp in Frankfurt am Main in 1984, at that time nobody knew them in Germany and we were blown away by

the sound and the concert. At that time we also saw Dead Can Dance or The Chameleons at the Batschkapp. They were all still in their early phase. The music from that time with Post Punk, Dark Wave, Gothic and New Romantic had a deep impact on us and inspired us at that time to also make music ourselves and to form our own Gothic band, The Silent Waters.

The photos in the new Deep Imagination booklet were taken in the last two years. We didn't give it much thought and just wanted to get cool photos to go with the music. The CD cover is based on an idea by Achim von Raesfeld and then we realised and finalised it with our record company BSC Music.



03 - Please explain to the readers the concept (which stories are behind the songs) of the new album - which concepts are behind it and how much working time did you invest in the production and how did the working process work?

Thorsten Sudler-Mainz: The lyrics are about dark romantic moments. Conceptually, it is an album of classic length, which you can listen to very well in one piece and then also grasp completely as an album. The album title "The Children of the Moon" is a metaphor, it practically describes ourselves, because inside we are still these young guys who express a certain attitude and idealism through their music. As always with me, there's an immense amount of effort that goes into the production, I'm a slow, uncompromising and detail-obsessed worker. I almost always create the basic compositions on the keyboard and then the vocal lines and lyrics are written. The actual production follows with the recording and working out of vocals, guitars, bass and percussion and the final mix. During a production it's sometimes good to leave a track and work on it later with a fresh ear. I finished "The Children of the Moon" within two years.

04 - Which track means the most to you, is there a favourite and do you like to write something about the individual songs.

Thorsten Sudler-Mainz: That's really hard to say, because I'm totally satisfied with all seven titles. If you wanted to single out one, then maybe "The Silence of Winterland". It's about a love and the realisation that it can't last forever, because life doesn't last forever either. But there is consolation

and there is a place in our imagination, the winterland, where the lovers meet again one day after they die. It's a way of dealing artistically with the realisation of finitude.

Or take "Catching the Shadow", this piece is about the fact that almost all of us have days like that, when a kind of dark shadow hangs over us that doesn't want to disappear. But at some point during the day the mood changes, a voice speaks to you well and reminds you of your goals and that it is only you who can get yourself out of it. In "Catching the Shadow" I describe a perpetual struggle between doubt and euphoria.

05 - What instruments were used to record the album (I'm still a fan of the analogue times) and what is in your studio today, so what is your production environment/ DAW like with equipment in the studio?

Thorsten Sudler-Mainz: I've practically always had my own studio for recording and production. But we used to mix in big studios in Cologne. Since 2018, I have had my own completely self-sufficient studio, the Imagination Studio near Frankfurt am Main, where the new Deep Imagination album was also produced. We used keyboards, guitars, percussion, microphones and a qualitatively and sonically very good audio interface. The rest is intuition and hard work, but a lot of fun.



06 - What are your musical influences, do you have role models, what is your motivation and inspiration?

Thorsten Sudler-Mainz: My biggest musical influences are Dead Can Dance and Pink Floyd, you could also say Dark Wave and Art Rock. My motivation is that I simply love to create my own music. There's something fascinating about that for me and in the end something comes out that you can't buy. Like love and friends, you can't buy those either. These and my musical work are the most precious things to me, which can never be outweighed by anything material.

To the second part of your question. When you develop an album project, there must of course be an inspiration, an idea behind it. With the new album, it was my old friendship with Achim von Raesfeld and, since we didn't have any recordings worth listening to from our time back then, to make up for that. That was the big goal and now I am very happy to have made this album.

07 - What is the difference between this new release and the previous ones, where are the differences from your point of view?

Thorsten Sudler-Mainz: Maybe the one that this time it is a Dark Wave and Gothic Rock genre album. The two previous albums by Deep Imagination from 2017 and 2020 are still strongly influenced by Art Rock and Progressive Ambient and the style we once developed with Art Of Infinity. That worked out quite well especially on "My Silent Celebration" from 2020. But I didn't want to repeat myself and producing "The Children of the Moon" was then a very natural process. It may well be that it turned out too dark for some people. But I meant it the same way and wanted to make a genre album in the area of Dark Wave, in which I also take over the lead vocals myself.



08 - What about videos - is it important to produce clips / spots for the tracks for e.g. Youtube and other channels?

Thorsten Sudler-Mainz: Yes, of course, video clips have been part of Deep Imagination's overall package since 2015. We appear in the videos ourselves and I see YouTube as an important stage to play on. I produce the videos in collaboration with Wortwind. We've just released "Make the Moon Appear", the first video for the new album, and there will definitely be more to come. The next one will be released in autumn 2023.

09 - Have you already played abroad, at which locations/festivals in Germany would you/you most like to play?

Thorsten Sudler-Mainz: There are plans to present the new album live. The concept for it is already in place and I already have interesting locations and festivals in mind. But since nothing has been confirmed so far, I can't announce anything concrete.

10 - Are there any cover tracks that would appeal to you?

Thorsten Sudler-Mainz: Last year I worked on designs for a cover of The Cure and The Sisters Of Mercy. But I'm not sure yet if I really want to do something like that. Although I've never published a cover version before and that would certainly be an interesting new territory.

Sven Hauke Erichsen
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