

## DEEP IMAGINATION interview (english version)

Northern Art Music

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► NAM: Hi Thorsten, Thank you very much for your latest, brilliant coup called "My Silent Celebration", with this creative and timeless monumental release you have once again surpassed yourself.

If the world were fair, you would have to go through the roof with this work of sound art and achieve sales figures that even the big names in the scene can only dream of. You have been producing atmospheric, progressive soundscapes and electronic sound cosms "a la Dead Can Dance, Pink Floyd, Tangerine Dream" in the direction of Art Rock / Trip Hop / Ambient for a long time.

How would you yourself describe your sounds from the record and how did it come about that you present us with these sophisticated, highly professional 8 tracks?

Thorsten Sudler-Mainz: Hello Sven, you've already included such high praise in your question that I'm almost at a loss for words. The album came about because after the last album in 2017 I immediately felt the urge to tackle the next album, maybe because I knew I could do even better. The overall sound of "My Silent Celebration" comes from the individual ingredients and that's where I prefer to use inspiring synthesizer sounds, vocals, percussion and guitars. The result is usually very atmospheric, slightly dark and melancholic pieces.

► NAM: You've certainly done quite a few live performances, have you ever played in a planetarium or where would you like to perform live?

TSM: Not that many, but yes, I have already performed twice in the Bochum Planetarium. It's the perfect place for an atmospheric show. I'd like to play there again sometime and present my new material live together with guest musicians when the times for concerts return. But of course such mystical locations as old castles can also be very appealing places.

- NAM: Who does the extremely creative design / artwork for the releases, such as the current CD cover, photo booklet, flyer etc.?

TSM: I produce everything myself with the support of my dear friend Oda Reiter from Wortwind and the graphic designer from my label. When I re-conceptualised Deep Imagination in 2013, it was clear to me that the media presentation with photo, video and website had to be a high priority. Since 2015 I have produced ten video clips and many photo series, which is also great fun. With "In My Memory" and "Longing For Peace", which was shot on La Gomera in January 2020, I have just released two new video clips. Many people often want to see the musicians behind the music and then video instead of concerts can be a good and timeless thing. You can also see many of my guest musicians in my videos, like Torsten "Hardy" Hartmann, who did the lead vocals on "In My Memory".

- NAM: Which instruments did you use specifically for the work on the new record and which DAW was used here?

TSM: On this album, apart from the wonderful contributions of my guest musicians and the mastering, I did everything myself, including the mix. The production is completely uncompromising. The most important instrument on it is my new frame drum. Except for maybe three percent, the percussive sounds are all real and not samples. I played and recorded them myself. I like to improvise and then build loops from the best parts. These natural sounds give warmth to the music and make it more unique and earthy. They have a spiritual sound. I love this mystical ethnic and archaic touch that these, I call them primal instruments, give you. Then I started playing guitar again for a long time and got myself a wonderful instrument with a Hagström Viking Black. The electronic sounds come mainly from a virtual synthesizer, an Omnisphere from Spectrasonics, whose sounds and possibilities I am also enthusiastic about. The production and the mix happen in Cubase by Steinberg.

- How much time did you invest in the production of the album, how is the realisation in the studio, what concepts do you pursue with your releases?

TSM: For a production like "My Silent Celebration", the time factor is very important. I am one of those people who work something out quietly. My way of working requires a lot of humility and patience. But when you are rewarded with a good result, whether small or big, it's like a small silent celebration and in the end that has also become the theme of this album.

The cover depicts a stylised fire and represents the power and energy that is released in the creative process. Basically, it's this spiritual thing that I'm all about when I produce music. It's a kind of quiet celebration for me when things happen and come out of you that are magical and that ultimately you can't explain to yourself. It's not something material, it's something spiritual and fascinating. And once they are there, they stay with you forever. That is something that makes me very satisfied and happy. And with "My Silent Celebration" this was more intense than ever before. I had the feeling that I just had to do it and there was also a certain lightness in composing. I composed the song "In My Memory" with the keyboard. Later I realised that it is also super good to play on the guitar. That was a very cool experience. All in all, I worked on the album for two and a half years.

- ▶ NAM: Where does your fascination for electronic music come from and who are your musical idols?

TSM: I would say Brendan Perry from Dead Can Dance with his universal approach is a big influence. And of course the great Rick Wright and David Gilmour from Pink Floyd. All these musicians have continuously used electronic sounds in their productions. When you then combine them with vocals, percussion and guitars, it can become very mystical and atmospheric. I've always found this combination fascinating and it's something I've been following since the 80s, when I got my first synthesizer and a drum machine as the guitarist in my goth band at the time.

- ▶ What else can we expect in this crazy year 2020, are you planning to release anything (side project Art Of Infinity?), people (unfortunately) have more time than usual?

TSM: I don't know exactly what will happen next. After a complex production, I enjoy the state of freedom from which new things can arise, but don't have to. Anyway, I'm very happy with the new album and it feels a bit like I've arrived somewhere I always wanted to go. As you may know, my former main project Art Of Infinity fell very gently into slumber in 2012 and I don't know if it will ever be kissed awake again. But you never know what's to come.

Sven Hauke Erichsen  
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