Interview: Cold Night For Alligators @ Euroblast 2022

It was a mild Saturday and the second day of the 2022 edition of Euroblast festival. Cold Night For Alligators's Drummer *Niklas Schrøder* and Vocalist *Johan Pedersen* spent some time sitting down with Betreuer *Gilles* to talk about weird names, the depth of their music and what it means to put everything into one album!

Lets start with the band name? It is, to say the least, a bit weird. Is it a metaphor? A feeling? err…..WHY?

(laughter)

Niklas: It's not a great story.

Oh? Ok…my next question is…

(laughter)

Niklas: Actually, the band goes quite a way back in time. (Looking to *Johan*) Before both, you and I, joined, everything was a bit more loose and there were lots member changes back then. The first bassist of the band saw something online what he thought was funny, which was "Cold Night For Alligators". And then he left two months later. We stuck with it, because it sticks out.
Johan: Later we shortly thought about changing the name, because we thought people might not take us serious. Because its a kind of silly name, you know.



“Course of events” is a very heavy album. The Hindsight notes are way more divers. What made the band going in this direction?

Johan: When we made “Course of Events”, we were in a different time and place in our life. Niklas wasn’t with us. The other guys already had written all the music and I just came in and sang the songs. So, I wasn’t that invested in that album as well. It was just another period compared to today. This time around we are doing it, because we love it. We are doing the music we want and not what others wants us to do. And exactly the way we want to do it.

And reach a broader audience maybe?

Johan: Hmm, yeah.
Niklas: Actually our previous record that came out after “Course Of Events” obviously, that was sort of the moment when we got the idea to go into a different direction. Be more dynamic and with *Johan* as singer, which doesn’t have to scream

all the time. But with “Fervor” we still had the idea that we were a metal band with songs that no one can follow. (laughter) But you know, what is really hard is not writing a song no one can gets heads and tail to it but writing a song which takes someone on a journey, is experimental but which also keeps up that attention. And that is so hard. I know people who write pop songs for a living. And that is not simple only because the music might appear simple. Sometimes you have ten people writing one single pop song. So, for this album we decided to not fit into a genre. Let’s write music we actually would listen to ourselves. Let’s utilize we can do, what we can execute.

I sense a certain sadness in the songs. Where is that coming from?

Johan: I am writing the lyrics. And I only can write about things that make sense and mean something to me. I think, I have always written that way. And it’s always emotional. There are songs about people in the band losing loved ones. Me almost losing my son. Me of one time losing my home. So, very personal stuff. I think, once you get emotional and honest, people can feel it. So, I am always have been on the emo side, an emotional guy. That’s how I am. And it’s just nice to get the space to talk about these things. not get judged about it and just let it flow.



It’s probably easier to pretend instead of being honest?

Niklas: Yeah, well and maybe back then you were screaming about being sad, now you are crying about it. (all lying on the floor laughing)

Johan: It’s also a joke in the band, that they say I always cry. You have to have a laugh about it, otherwise it will be too serious. I mean, we have fun if we go out and as a band. It’s not like we are sad all the time. But it’s definitely something I can relate to.

What’s behind the “worn out mannequin”? I could think of an actual mannequin, but I believe, there is something underneath this meaning.

Johan: It’s pretty much about myself. And being vulnerable. Being vulnerable to someone who is not respecting what you are putting out there, asking for more. And I also wrote it about the fear I have sometimes when playing live.

worn out?

Johan: No, not worn out, but, you know, we are putting so much time into the band. Travelling 20 hours to a show and then playing in front of 20 people. Asking myself “Why am I doing this shit?” this kind of “worn out”. It’s a feeling I had before from time to time. Like if the people were laughing about what I have done. And that can be very hard if you put a feeling on this.

Niklas: Like when travelled many hours to a show, standing in the venue at two in the morning packing our stuff. Then you drive all night to get back and ask yourself: “What am I doing here?”
Johan: It’s about finding a meaning in all that. If it’s worth all the boring, not-so-fun stuff.
And please, I really love being in the band don’t get me wrong. (All laughing)

“Arising Empire” as record label, SPV as management?

Niklas: Arising Empire are a sublabel of Nuclear Blast and they run their own shop. And SPV was our former record label.

To me the music sounds “major”. The whole production, execution and the big sound. I see especially the latest production as “potentially major material”, if you know what I mean. So, was a specific decision to work with “Arising Empire”?

Niklas: It was pretty much after the release of “Fervor” that we agreed that it didn’t work out with “Long Branch”. I think they won’t be mad, that I said that. So, we then decided to make the best possible record we can and make us proud as possible, which meant we spend a lot of time on the songs. And we put soooo much effort in the production compared to the old records. We also stepped up in terms of the collaborators we had helping us to produce and mixed it. We hired a choir, we had session players, we hired a ton of great people working

with us. We wanted to have a killer product. I mean, why would you go through all this trouble of writing a great song and then half-assing in the production? So, we shared that with “Arising Empire” and they liked it.

Yeah! Do you have been involved in the technical aspect of the creation of the product?

Johan: A lot of it was actually done by us, because basically we wanted to get a professional production as we could with our means, which means that we did as much as we could ourselves. We recorded the guitars and bass ourselves. Then we hired one of our good friends, who has a studio in Copenhagen, *Chris Kreutzfeldt*, who produced and record all of the additional stuff such as cello, saxophone and the vocals. I mean, we wrote all the electronic stuff ourselves, but we hired a guy who is a big pop producer and then Mike, because he had just like this awesome sense of creating cool sounding electronic soundscapes. We also hired *Jacob Hansen*, who’s the biggest metal producer in Denmark to mix it.

Niklas: And we insisted that who mixes the record should also record the drums, because knowing the acoustics of the room and being into work with that is so important in the mix. So I went to his studio and recorded the drums, but I mean he’s not cheap. So we wanted to use him as optimally as we could. So that meant that there were a lot of moving parts and only us to keep track of everything. So we just put in an insane amount of work to make it all fit together at our budget.
But again it’s then I’m gonna be slightly in stress for a week or a month and then for the rest of my life, the album’s gonna sound worse because of that? I’m not going to make that. And again: Why would you go through all this trouble of writing a great song and then half-assing in the production?

Indeed. Thank you very much for your time!



Interview-Foto: *Chris Bretz* (Köln, EB)
Live-Fotos: *Chris Bretz*