

## Childhood dreams on the shelves

When Mads Eriksen was in his early teens, Manfred Mann was his idol. Presently he is living his dream and on 1 June he is releasing his first concept album together with his childhood hero Chris Thompson.

Indeed the two have collaborated earlier on Eriksen's album "Red Handed", where Thompson surprisingly showed up as singer on a couple of tracks. Since then, the two have had a close collaboration.

Now this collaboration has proven to be fruitful and the fruit is the fresh out of the press album "Rediscovery – a musical journey", an album where both musicians have written and composed together. The guitarist per excellence from Bergen and the former singer from Manfred Mann have made an album which is conceptualized and follows a history that runs like a theme from beginning to end through 26 tracks. The band touches on a musical landscape consisting of hip hop, blues, rock and traditional Maori folk music from New Zealand. This is very different from what these guys have recorded earlier.

### Crowded House and 50 Cent

In the process of creating "Rediscovery" Eriksen travelled to New Zealand to team up with Thompson to gather inspiration for the project. Eriksen was accompanied by his band consisting of Frank Hovland (bass), Steinar Krogstad (drums) and Gunnar Bjelland (keyboard).

- For one week we travelled around the country enjoying the landscape, Eriksen tells Bergensbladet.no when we meet him in his "office" on the fourth floor near the Nordnes peninsula in Bergen.
- "Rediscovery" is recorded in the York Street Studios where among others Crowded House, Foo Fighters and 50 Cent have recorded albums. The band was in a creative period and the album was recorded in only eight days. I returned in January and March to add guitars and finish work on the mixing, Eriksen tells us.
- Apart from this, the album is produced by me, Chris and sound engineer Clint Murphy together. Murphy is a man with an ear for music and may have a brilliant career. He is presently in London working with Manic Street Preachers, says the guitar player and praises Murphy for his work on the album.

### A privilege

- How is "Rediscovery" different from your previous albums?
- First of all, this is not a regular Mads Eriksen album. This is a Thompson/Eriksen product. Apart from this, it is different in that it contains fewer instrumental tunes at the same time as the actual guitars and techniques are not as prominent as on my former releases. Also, you will find

a variation of musical genres on this album. For instance, we have King Kapisi doing rap. He is big in New Zealand and Australia.

- How has it been playing together with Thompson?
- I feel it has been a privilege, and so does the rest of the band. Chris is a relaxed guy and very easy to be around, I think you could say he is cool. At the same time it feels a bit strange performing on the same stage as my childhood hero – the man I watched on TV in my teens. But actually it is great.
- In many ways “Rediscovery” reminds me of Roger Waters, the way he communicates his music on “Amused to Death”. How do you feel about that?
- That is true. I think we have all been a bit influenced by Pink Floyd. This is especially noticeable during the concerts – they are more like a performance. The strange thing is that I have not been into their music until recently.

### European Tour

In connection with the release of “Rediscovery”, Eriksen and Thompson will embark on a tour of Norway, Germany and parts of Europe. On this tour, the audience will be met by a multi-media show on a big screen. Alongside the new material the band will play the old hits like “Quinn the Eskimo” from when Chris Thompson was with the Manfred Mann’s Earth Band.

The dynamic duo has no plans for ending the collaboration in the foreseeable future. They aim to keep working together for at least two more years. Thus, in the meantime, a new instrumental Eriksen album may surface.

- I have some material and I am sure I could have released an album during this time. One idea that I have been toying with for a while, is releasing a pure acoustic album. On the other hand, I have somewhat moved on. I have long felt the need to do something new. I feel that I have not got “Rediscovery” completely out of my system yet, and I think I had better finish this first, Eriksen says.

### Great feed-back

Even if Mads Eriksen and Chris Thompson work well together, the father of two from Laksevåg, Bergen, still gives guitar lessons. It is no easy job getting rich as a musician.

- It is a harsh industry and we depend on good sponsors and a good management. Since the album is finished and is just waiting to be released on the market, I have used the spare time to teach. This way I make some extra money as well.
- How do you think the record will be received by the audience on 1 June?

- Colleges have already given me great feed-back. We depend on the audience buying the story and the concept. This is one of those records that grow on you. If the audience really allow it to grow on them, I am sure it has great potential.

Those who were present at the two concerts Thompson and Eriksen gave in Logen during the Ole Blues Festival in Bergen know what they have in store. "Rediscovery" is an exotic album with huge musical span delivered with soul and insight. What you will find on the shelves is a mature childhood dream.

Written by Kjetil Høva Larsen for Bergensbladet.no 29 April 2004  
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