

TOBIAS SJÖGREN

Biography



Tobias Sjögren was born October 23, 1970 in Göteborg, Sweden. He started playing classical guitar at age twelve, and stayed in that zone of interest until moving on into the jazz territory (or somewhere near) a few years later. Ever since then he has divided his attention and developed skills in both guitar-playing and composition. He got a Master of Fine Arts at the School of Music in Göteborg in 1996 after six years of loose schooling, mostly spent intensely working on two major recording projects; a solo album *Hymn*, and a co-led CD-project *Ord På Golvet* (see the discography). The direction of working on longer projects, often spanning over a few years, is evident through Sjögren's career. Another example is the huge recording project that resulted in the CD *The Thule Spirit* (Virgin Records, 1997) featuring Norwegian singer extra-ordinaire **Per Jørgensen**. It consists of music based on traditional Greenlandic melodies that saxophonist and longtime collaborator **Christian Vuust** and Sjögren collected and recorded on a three week visit to Thule, Greenland in 1995. Altogether, Sjögren has got more than 50 compositions recorded of his own to date, spread over nine CD albums.

From the starting-point of playing an acoustic instrument, Sjögren has embraced and incorporated much of today's modern technology into his working; using tools like computers and synths; treating the recording studio and its inherent possibilities as an instrument of its own; playing electronic guitar instruments like the vg-8 etc.

The aim of trying to form fusions between different opposites — improvisation and composition; real-time interplay of musicians playing together and pre/post production like overdubbing; acoustic and electronic instruments — stands out as being a connecting thought in Sjögren's works.

Other examples of project-oriented activities that Sjögren has been a part of is the ballet *Meget Kraftigt Glemmt*, choreographed by **Thomas Eisenhardt**, for which he composed the music, performed in Copenhagen in 1996. A more recent project with a Sjögren soundtrack to it was *Mörker*, a 20-minute light & sound performance that took place in Göteborg in 2000 with lighting design by **Kent Flood**. An extensive recording project that has been in the works for a long time is the one of female pop singer **Jennianna**, for which Sjögren is co-responsible for the composing and the producing above playing many of the instruments.

In addition to the above mentioned undertakings, Sjögren has been touring around, above all with his own band **Northern Voices** (formed in 1998 and co-led by Christian Vuust, and with **Audun Kleive** as the original drummer), and played concerts in Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Finland, Greenland, England, and Germany. Besides being a bandleader, Sjögren has been a sideman in various contexts like in bassplayer **Lars Danielsson's** band **European Voices** — including drummer/percussionist **Marilyn Mazur** and trumpeter **Nils Petter Molvaer** among others. This band made a double-CD in 1993 (see the discography).

Although the main instrumental attention has always been on the guitar, Sjögren has developed a parallel path with his percussion playing and synth/sampler work which periodically has been his predominant occupation.

Sjögren's most recent commitments have been Northern Voices' second release *Shaman*, and his own second solo-album entitled *Tobias Sjögren*, to be released on the new German label **Q-RIOUS music** in October 2002.

"Mainio kitaristi Sjögren kuulosti ensin hieman Pat Methenyltä, sitten hieman John Scofieldilta ja lopulta ehkä eniten Bill Frisellilta volyympedaaleineen." — Helsingin Sanomat, September 1992