

new album:

# unspoken songs

13 stories for Expanded Duo

TOBIAS SJÖGREN - acoustic guitar, composer

PER JØRGENSEN - vocals, trumpet

TOBIAS SJÖGREN &  
PER JØRGENSEN

unspoken songs

13 stories for Expanded Duo

Press Release October 2005

www.tobiassjogren.com  
tobias@tobiassjogren.com

---

**unspoken** [ún'spowkun] expressed without speech; especially because words would be inappropriate or inadequate

---

## INTRODUCTION:

Norwegian trumpeter/singer Per Jørgensen joins Swedish guitarist/composer Tobias Sjögren for the new effort, UNSPOKEN SONGS, an album featuring 13 new and haunting compositions of great diversity displaying the duo in fullness.

With acoustic instruments in forefront and subtle orchestrations from synths supporting the musical story, the duo delivers a rich interplay exposing their personal approach to jazz.

## THE DUO:

After collaborating on the "The Thule Spirit" album project back in 1996, it's now time for Tobias Sjögren and Per Jørgensen to team up again for a new exciting album — UNSPOKEN SONGS. In contrary to the previous album, UNSPOKEN SONGS is a live-in-studio album focusing the exploration of the duo setting, emphasizing the possibilities of close interaction — all through the lens of 13 new compositions, written by Sjögren.

Says Sjögren "Per is really one of the most exciting, singular improvising musicians around. He has managed to build a spot for himself that is his alone. Ever since I heard him in 1990, singing and playing the trumpet, I've been dreaming of and imagined myself playing with him. It first happened in 1996 on the "The Thule Spirit" album project, and on the following tour. Per

joined forces with Christian (Vuust, Danish saxophone player) and me in this recording project, and became the leading voice for that album. That music was dense and highly produced with lots of overdubs layers, with the exception of two songs where Per and me played as a plain duo. There was something special about it. So the idea of coming back to a collaboration within the duo setting was a logical continuation of our working relationship."

"Now with UNSPOKEN SONGS the focus is on the two of us playing live in the studio, which was quite a challenge for us as instrumentalists, as there's no hiding — everything is exposed. The idea of maintaining this focus on the duo, while bringing in some synth orchestration overdubs after the fact here and there, was important — especially regarding the volumes in the mix. The instrumentation variation comes mainly from Per alternating between the trumpet and the singing. I play the same acoustic guitar throughout except for two songs ("Ever Since That Day" & "Nearby the End of the Road") where I play the vg8 guitar."

"There's something very appealing about the duo format. You've got lots of room for interplay between the two. Everything you do is being heard, and you can really "get paid" for all the nuances you put into the music. Every dynamic gesture is put on display, which could be frightening — but with Per it's just wonderful to delve into this zone of details and interaction. He's so much about being in the moment."

## THE NEW GUITAR:

A significant aspect of UNSPOKEN SONGS is how the guitar is sounding — unusually full and rich.

Says Sjögren "In late 2001 I began experimenting with new tunings for my regular acoustic nylon string guitar. This led to discovering a tuning which makes the guitar a new kind of guitar/bass hybrid instrument, where the two lowest strings are tuned one octave down from normal tuning."

"What is particularly engaging about this tuning is that the notes relationships on the fretboard are the same, there're only octave displacements. The adaptation to the new tuning is for that reason not a big one — but the sound difference is huge. The instrument is sort of divided into two instruments, where you've got the low register of the two bass strings and then a big leap to the next four guitar strings. I can, in a sense, play guitar and bass at the same time and have a register that's a lot wider, more like a piano — a relief, and a lot of fun."

"In a duo situation like this with Per where my first and foremost function is to serve as an accompanist, it's real easy as a guitar player to feel inferior to what a piano could do in the same situation. The range and the dynamic and harmonically possibilities are a lot greater on the piano in comparison (to the guitar). This new tuning made it possible to reduce the lead, so to speak, that the piano has. This new guitar became my main instrument."

## THE COMPOSITIONS:

A broad range of compositions are presented on UNSPOKEN SONGS to fully take advantage of the duos potential.

Says Sjögren "After finding the new guitar tuning, the new guitar/bass hybrid instrument became my main forum for my compositions. The primary positive effect of having the new guitar around was the amount of new music that I wrote on it, and featuring it. I experienced an outburst of energy composing lots of new music just through the effect of playing this new instrument. Each of these new compositions were like their own research projects into defining what this new

instrument could do. That's how I feel in general about music making anyway — it's an exciting journey into discovering what it is, and especially what it could be."

"To have a confining concept and try to find the variety within that, has always been very important for me. This time I couldn't achieve the variety by timbre so much as I'm used to be able to do, since the instruments used are the same throughout. So it had to come from the compositions themselves to a larger extent. There's some help from the subtle orchestrations though. I thought it was appropriate to involve some after-treatment orchestrations to fulfil the story, and to let the ear have some change. Therefore the Expanded Duo."

"As much as this album is about the playing-together-ness, it equally is about bringing forward and serving the compositions. Especially since there's lot of substance to them, and a pretty high rate of information flow. The duo context was the point of departure for the compositions, however the compositions was the starting-point for the recording."

Finding a good balance between those two great-nesses — context and composition — seems to have been of high priority to Sjögren and Jørgensen."

"To try to balance the fact that we have to do everything for what's best to make the compositions blossom, together with our wish as musicians to benefit from what the duo's strengths are, is quite an undertaking, and a hard combination to make happen. At best, one should feel that everything is done in service of the composition, while at the same naturally going to the musical areas where the duo sounds the best. If those two criterias can be fulfilled, I think one has succeeded in some way."

*Please also read:*

*"Comments on, and free associations from each track of UNSPOKEN SONGS, by Tobias Sjögren". click [HERE](#).*

**go to [www.tobiassjogren.com](http://www.tobiassjogren.com)**