



indigo cd 115672
upc 70530462829
file under: singer/songwriter

Release January 22, 2016

Aino Löwenmark

Human

Aino Löwenmark: vocals, piano, wurlitzer

Sandro Giampietro: guitars

Friedrich Paravicini: cello, hammond, wurlitzer,
fender rhodes, ondes martenot

Omar Rodriguez Calvo: double bass

Jürgen Spiegel: drums, percussion

Michi Kiske: vocals on "Halleluja"

Aino Löwenmark - Human

"I had the feeling that there were still other creative facets in me, that wanted to be expressed," Aino Löwenmark explains her impulse for *Human*, the first album under her own name. In the last ten years the singer, composer and pianist celebrated international success with her duo Fjarill. Their latest album *Tiden* was released in 2013 and after its release tour, Aino Löwenmark and Hanmari Spiegel decided on an artistic break, without breaking up Fjarill for good though. "Hanmari and I harmonize perfectly and thus of course the records we make together are very harmonious as well," Aino Löwenmark states. "On my own album I wanted to create new soundscapes and extend the familiar combination of piano, violin and vocals."

Therefore the Swedish born and in Hamburg living musician brought in her life partner early on in the process; the drummer Jürgen Spiegel, known for example from the Tingvall Trio. "After I had written and recorded the first ten songs, these didn't go enough into the direction I had in mind yet," Löwenmark remembers. Subsequently Spiegel contributed new ideas and eventually became the co-composer. In addition, they searched for further musicians and established themselves new structures. "This time we really produced the music in our home. For half a year we transformed our apartment into a studio, full of instruments, equipment and cable-chaos," Aino Löwenmark points out as a significant difference to the comparatively spontaneous Fjarill working method.

Now several of the arrangements on *Human* are also still devised acoustically, but are not reduced to unamplified sounds. Piano, cello, double bass and percussion are enriched by oscillating sounds of Wurlitzer- or Rhodes-piano, Hammond organ and electric guitar. Not only in the more zestful pieces Jürgen Spiegel sets rhythmic accents with drums and percussion. There is also a very unusual instrument played on this album: the Ondes Martenot, developed for an orchestra in France as early as 1929. "We discovered it through our cellist and keyboarder Friedrich Paravicini and have since been using it quite often," Aino Löwenmark tells, "it sounds a little

bit like a musical saw, but much more variable of course.” Despite the many keyboard instruments the musical aesthetics of *Human* mark a turning point for Aino Löwenmark, “in the direction of more guitars and more powerful rhythms.” Stylistically the songs unite the direct warmth of folk with the precision of a pop production and carefully interspersed bursts of rocky energy.

“The red thread throughout the album is the mystery of being a human,” Aino Löwenmark smiles and states more precisely: “I concern myself with the different aspects of humanness. Every human is different; nonetheless we all have a sense of hearing and intuition to understand each other. Furthermore, we all carry a sound in us, a primordial sound, which on the one hand gives us foothold and on the other resonates with the world.” With *Human* Löwenmark has in a way freed some of her inner voices that hadn’t had their say yet until now, she says. “They have now found expression through the various musicians,” Löwenmark explains her enthusiasm for the band and the newly found overall sound. “It is inspiring, to work with good people. Without exchange, there is no development.” Together with Jürgen Spiegel double bass player Omar Rodriguez Calvo makes up the rhythm section of the Tingvall Trio and already played on Fjarill’s *Tiden*. The guitarist Sandro Giampietro is also among Löwenmark’s longtime friends and is part of Helge Schneider’s band. New among the circle of familiar faces, is Friedrich Paravicini, who plays cello with Annett Louisan, for the Thalia Theatre and for the “Hamburger Schauspielhaus”. “Men always want to know everything exactly and like having clear structures,” Löwenmark asserts somewhat amusedly, “which was also a significant difference compared to productions with Hanmari, where we often work very intuitively.”

Aino Löwenmark grew up in Falun, about a three-hour drive north of Stockholm. This largest city of the region was under the influence of a copper-mine for a long time and is rich in tradition and culture. “The residents have high opinion of themselves and there it is almost taken for granted, that you make music,” Aino tells. “My parents always encouraged me and already in elementary school, I could perform my self-penned songs. I love being a singer/songwriter, but also singing with others in a choir.” After studying in Spain, out of love Aino Löwenmark ended up in Hamburg in 1995. But till this day, she hasn’t completely abandoned her Swedish socialization, which cannot only be detected in her particular way of handling the German language. For a long time Astrid Lindgren’s timeless child idol Pippi Longstocking was an inspiration for Aino Löwenmark. “She has no fear of anything, because she can rely on her strength,” Löwenmark determines. “Of course I am grown up today and don’t give in to every desire for freedom, but I can still be spontaneous and direct. And creativity is as important to me, as food and drink.”

Even though *Human* wasn’t formed spontaneously, but rather in a long process, the songs still reflect Aino Löwenmark’s thoughts and emotions quite directly. Furthermore, the album marks an artistic development that almost incidentally proves, that convergences towards pop music can also exhibit depth.

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