



“Catch The Moon”

“No. 90 Kleist”

“Made In China”

“Flygblad över Berlin”

## From Carlsten’s Fortress to the Shores of Normandy - The historical concept albums by singer/songwriter Stefan Andersson (By J. Granstrom)

2020 marks the 75th anniversary of the end of World War II. Stories relating to the role of Sweden and individual Swedes in the war have been beautifully compiled and composed by Stefan Andersson, one of the most prominent and celebrated singer/songwriters of historical events involving Sweden or Swedes in some capacity, in his most recent concept album and show “Flygblad över Berlin (Flyers Over Berlin)”. The show received widespread praise from audiences and critics after its premiere at Kajskjul 8 in Gothenburg on January 11 2019, including rave reviews in the national “Dagens nyheter (The Daily News)”, and the show will be staged again at Kajskjul 8 with a premiere on January 17 2020.

Stefan Andersson’s musical career spans almost 30 years, and got off to a great start with the radio hit “Catch The Moon” in 1992. Between 1992 and 2008, Stefan released several albums in Swedish and English and toured extensively throughout Sweden and the rest of Europe. In 2008, while on a boat vacation at Marstrand - a seaside resort about 25 miles northwest of Gothenburg - Stefan experienced a magical minute during a guided tour of Carlsten’s fortress. Following the Treaty of Roskilde in 1658, Carlsten’s fortress was built on the orders of King Carl X of Sweden to protect the newly acquired province of Bohuslän from hostile attacks. Stefan fell in love with the history behind the fortress, and the following year he released the concept album “No. 90 Kleist” on his own label and staged a show based on the album at Carlsten’s Fortress. It has been staged annually since then and is now in its 12th season. Following the success of “No. 90 Kleist”, Stefan has recorded and staged five more historical concept albums, most recently “Made In China” in 2015 and “Flygblad över Berlin (Flyers Over Berlin)” in 2018.

The title song for “Flygblad över Berlin” describes the meeting between the Swedish diplomat Göran von Otter and the SS officer Kurt Gerstein on a night train between Warszawa and Berlin on August 22 1942. A sorrowful Gerstein has just witnessed Jews being gassed to death. He asks von Otter to pass on this information to the Swedish government, with the wish to have the Allied forces drop fliers with information about the concentration camps over Berlin. According to Gerstein, this would lead to the German people overthrowing their own government. Von Otter hands over the information to UD (the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs), but it is not known if it is forwarded to the Allied forces. “Flygblad över Berlin” is filled with these types of deeply touching stories, with captivating and emotionally poignant lyrics written to a well-rounded and intricate musical score, often with hauntingly beautiful melodies, from the stirring arrangement “Hart Blå X” (with a chorus that would blow the roof off any theater- or music venue) to the somber and fateful “Normandie 13”. My personal favorite on the album is possibly “Sådant går i arv (Such things are inherited)”, which may be both the most universal and personal song on the album. It is a story told by Stefan’s grandfather regarding his experiences of fleeing Norway during World War II, and how he will not pass down the bitter taste it left in his mouth to Stefan. From Carlsten’s fortress to the shores of Normandy, Stefan Andersson has demonstrated a tremendous ability to capture history in memorable music and deeply thought-provoking lyrics, lending dignity to all the people who lost their lives or had their lives forever shaped by events that define individuals and societies until this day.