

**ACT****Magnus Öström****Thread of Life****ACT 9025-2**

LC 07644

Magnus Öström **Thread Of Life****German Release Date: February 25, 2011**

“**‘Thread of Life’ is the energy that keeps everything alive** and also gives me the spark for my music. But we have to be aware that it is only a thin thread that can be cut off any minute, so we better take good care of our time here on earth and the people around us and of course also the environment that surrounds us.” This is how drummer Magnus Öström explains the title of his first album as a leader on ACT. How would the thread of life can be and how happiness and suffering can be entangled, are experiences that Öström has dealt with on this album.

**As its drummer Öström experienced how e.s.t.**, Esbjörn Svensson Trio, rose from among unknown bands competing for club gigs to one of the most influential and successful jazz ensembles of the last decade. But he also experienced the sudden end of all dreams when his friend and bandleader Esbjörn Svensson tragically died in an accident two and a half years ago. With ‘Thread of Life’ he has faced the challenge to preserve the musical legacy but also to follow his own path – as a composer, arranger and producer. “I needed to do it that way to show what my musical universe is all about. Also because I really love composing and being in the studio producing.”

**Already the song titles ‘Weight of Death’, ‘The Haunted Thoughts and The Endless Fall’ or ‘Between’** imply that this is not just any album. Although e.s.t was a truly democratic band, – Öström recalls that “in the end all three of us always worked on the arrangements of Esbjörn’s melodies, so depending on the song mine or Dan’s input could be substantial” – simply continuing without Esbjörn and his compositions was unthinkable for Öström. Joining up with an old friend, sound engineer Janne Hansson, he began to shape the compositions that he had written after the dissolution of e.s.t.. He asked Andreas Hourdakis (guitar), Gustaf Karlöf (keyboards) and Thobias Gabrielson (bass), all leading musicians in the music scene in Stockholm, to join in. “I couldn’t have asked for a better line up to record with,” Öström says.

**Although Magnus Öström’s distinctive grooves** and circular way of playing with the dynamics make you think of e.s.t., ‘Thread of Life’ still sounds fundamentally different. Öström focuses on sounds instead of melodies. The extremely diverse electronic effects, vocal parts (‘Alifia Mi’) and different guitar sounds, at least in the up-tempo songs, are closer to art rock or jazz rock than they are to e.s.t.. If e.s.t. was a pop band playing jazz, as Esbjörn once said, then Öström’s project could be described as a rock band playing jazz. Colourful, gripping and convincing through the continuous involvement with its own musical origin.

**The threads of end and beginning merge into another**, and therefore it is logical that Öström’s new music is arranged around a very special song that is the centerpiece of the album, namely his ‘Ballad for E.’ “When I composed “Ballad for E” I already had a perfect line-up for this song in mind. I could have recorded it with my new band as well, but I felt that this song demanded those exact persons: Magnus Öström on drums, Dan Berglund on bass, and Pat Metheny on guitar. Pat was one of very few musicians ever to join e.s.t. as a guest to perform with us live on stage, and there was and still is huge respect for each others’ work. So when I asked him, he immediately said ‘yes’.” Magnus, Dan and the former e.s.t sound engineer Åke Linton went to the Avatar Studios in New York with Pat Metheny and recorded the song. It is the highlight of the album as well as a lasting tribute to his lifelong friend and musical companion Esbjörn Svensson.



Magnus Öström



**The CD:**

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**Line Up:**

Andreas Hourdakis / Electric and Acoustic Guitars

Gustaf Karlöf / Grand Piano, Keyboards, Vocoder

Thobias Gabrielson / Electric Bass, Bass Synthesizer, Keyboards, Trumpet

Magnus Öström / Drums, Percussion, Electronics, Additional Keyboards, Vocals

Pat Metheny / Acoustic guitar and arrangement on Ballad For E

Dan Berglund / Double Bass on Ballad For E

**Tracks:**

01 Prelude 02:48

02 Piano Break Song 08:53

03 Longing 08:42

04 Afilia Mi 07:14

05 Weight Of Death 10:37

06 Ballad For E 09:55

07 The Haunted Thoughts And The Endless Fall 04:00

08 Between 06:23

09 Hymn (For The Past) Part I 02:55

10 Hymn (For The Past) Part II 15:42

All songs composed and produced by Magnus Öström

Recorded and mixed by Janne Hansson at Atlantis Studio in Stockholm in October and November 2010

Except Ballad For E recorded and mixed by Åke Linton at Avatar Studio C in New York City on December 3, 2010

Bob Mallory - Assistant Engineer

Tyler Hartman - Second Assistant Engineer

Additional recordings by Magnus Öström in Islandstream Studios and Kultivator Studios in November 2010

Mastering by Classe Persson CRP Recording

**Distributers:**

edelkultur (DE), edel Musica (AT), Musikvertrieb (CH), Challenge Records Int. (Benelux), Harmonia Mundi (FR), Harmonia Mundi (UK), Cosmos Music Group (SE/FI), Allegro-Nail Distribution (US), A&N Music (GR), Andante Music (RO), Apostrophe (RU), AS Jahipaun (EE), C&L Records (KR), CD Bar (HU), Dargil (PT), DC Comp (UA), Outside Distribution (CA), Divyd (SK), Dukyan Meloman (BG), Egea (I), Equinox Music (TR), GIGI Distribution (PL), Gramofon (BA), Intek (SI+HR), Jassics (ZA), Jazzworld (HK), JSC "Bomba" (LT), Karonte (ES), Musikklosen (NO), One-Hifi (RS), Planet MGM Distribution (AU), Southbound Records (NZ), Sundance (DK), Videoarts Music Inc. (JP), 2HP (CZ)

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