

April Divine - Biography

For a group that's been together for a decade now, the hard-rockin' Swedish four-piece April Divine is surprisingly reticent about discussing their past.

This despite the fact that they quickly caught the attention of the discerning ears at P3, Sweden's biggest rock radio station, whose listeners voted the group "Best Unsigned Swedish Rock Band." It also conveniently ignores the legions of energetic, sing-along audiences that rabidly populate some of the biggest festivals and venues in their native land, courtesy of a booking arrangement with touring behemoth Live Nation...and even their debut effort, the aptly titled *Chapter One*, which was released through Ninetone Records/Universal Records Sweden in January 2007 to rapturous reviews, receives seemingly short shrift.

However, even a single listen to the group's forthcoming sophomore effort swiftly explains their preference for peering forward. Whether it's the monstrous guitar riffs percolating throughout songs like album opener "No one" or "Water & Wine," the magnum opus "Copycat" and the anthemic "Alibi," or the gorgeous piano melodies and haunting lyrical phrases of numbers like "Redemption," and the panty-moistening ballad "Faced Down," April Divine's new work represents the culmination of a decade's worth of blood, sweat and beer-stained gigging throughout Scandinavia.

Now based in Umeå, Sweden after originally forming in the small town of Örnsköldsvik, the members of April Divine--vocalist/guitarist Joakim Åström, drummer Per Karlsson, guitarist Johnny Johansson and bassist Peter Uvén, are eager to spread their musical message beyond the bounds of their native land, with their sights firmly set on conquering the biggest music market in the world: America. "The only things that you can do here is you can go to church or play ice hockey," says founding member/drummer Per Karlsson. "We didn't want to do that so we started the band and we got real good at it."

To further that goal they signed on with Los Angeles-based Sinergy Management and determined it was time to take the plunge, cross the Atlantic and record in the United States. "We'd been looking to get to the States for a long time, if for no other reason than to get away from the cold in Sweden," laughs Karlsson. "We'd talked to producers in L.A. and New York, but [album producer] Rick Beato has a great track record and we ended up coming to Atlanta. It was great; the recording process went so well, and we even had a guest spot on harmony vocals from Sevendust's Clint Lowery."

Indeed, Beato, who's previously worked with Shinedown, Dark New Day and Vince Neil, amongst others, brought some great perspective to the studio.

Beato's judicious ear also influenced the length of the album, with his advocacy gaining a spot on the final tracklisting for the song "Seven Seals," a sly reference to a Swedish cultural touchstone (the classic Ingmar Bergman film "The Seventh Seal," in which a wandering knight engages Death in a game of chess) that's buoyed by a fist-pumping

main guitar riff and a chorus that practically begs the audience to chant along. “We said we were going to record 10 songs and we had 16 or 17 songs when we went into the studio,” Karlsson shares. “We went through all the songs with Rick and he really liked ‘Seven Seals,’ but we still planned on 10 songs. However, the recording process went so well, and we had some time on our hands, so we decided maybe we should do another track. So, we went with ‘Seven Seals.’”

Back in Sweden April Divine recorded 3 songs: No. one, Faced Down and Seal cover “Kiss From a Rose” with rock producer Tobias Lindell (Europe, Mustasch). “When Lindell- and Beato session was done, Stephen Marcussen did his work on the mastering which made everything come together to become magic. We are more than satisfied with the result, Joakim notes.”

Now that their sophomore album is in the can, the members of April Divine are looking forward to the future. They’ve previously demonstrated a broad cross-generational appeal, having opened not only for such 21st Century trendsetters as Staind and Black Stone Cherry and Karnivool, but also by being chosen for supporting slots by such classic rock acts as Thin Lizzy, Alice Cooper, Skid Row and Europe. Having been cooped up in the studio, the bandmembers are more than eager to get back out on the road and begin the next phase of their career. “We want to get out of Sweden, go to the US and get some kind of momentum going,” Karlsson avers.

The message shared in the final words of album-closing number “3 Drops” should resonate across the world: “The time has come to change.” Regardless of whether that’s true in political or environmental terms, one thing remains obvious: the time has come for April Divine to spread their music and message to the masses worldwide...and this is just the album to do so.