

John Norum (Europe): "Now we know to appreciate what we have created in the past"

Thirty years have passed since the singer Joey Tempest (Rolf Magnus Joakim Larsson) and guitarist John Norum, or born in Norway (Ward), in Upplands Väsby Stockholm, founded the group in which they gave the name Force.

Later they were joined by bassist Peter Olsson and drummer Tony Reno and the models they were Thin Lizzy, Led Zeppelin, UFO, and similar bands. Then not even dreamed that laid the foundation from which will grow into one of the biggest musical names, and at least the band is Swedish, and even the whole of Scandinavia, he joined a rock all the atlases.

A is fifteen years, as they had then, it's hard to have something, and these were loaded. Not that before there was rock bands in the area, but European appearance, in which the Force evolved a few years later, completely changed the image of the country that until then the music talks almost as a rule, mentioned as ' the one that comes from ABBA. Force a few years, mainly playing cover, unless another club svirki them not just happen, and guys almost gave up everything.

And then them in 1982. Joeyova girl was persuaded to contact the competition 'Swedish Rock Talent' in which they won with two poems, "In The Future To Come" and "The King Will Return". In addition, there was Joey named best singer and guitarist John best, no matter ključnija of these was that there was another, more important prize, and it was a contract with the Hot Record. And since it all started.

Something behind that competition Force changed its name in Europe, 1983. The debut album of the same name published in Sweden and Japan, which entered the Top 10 and delivers the first hit in the history of the band, "Seven Doors Hotel", which is also the single version, found among the top 10 in Japan. The second album, "Wings Of Tomorrow" (1984.), Is best known for the song "Open Your Heart" (published in remasteriziranoj version on the album "Out Of This World"), but also by the fact that for him then CBS, and Epic today, showed great interest in the band, which meant his 'internationalization', given that the first two albums were not available in most markets.

After that album came the changes in the set, and Mic Michaeli (Gunnar Mathias Michaeli, ex-Avalon) has become a keyboardist and Joey could fully devote singing, while drummer Tony Reno replaced Ian Haugland (Hakan Jan Haugland, ex-Trilogy). Before that, the band arrived bassist John Gunnar Levén (ex-Rising Force) and for Marcel Jacob (earlier this year committed suicide), who was briefly replaced by Olsson.

Crucial year for Europe was the 1985th in the first with the song "Rock The Night" participated in the soundtrack for the film "On The Loose", then Joey says "Give A Helping Hand" for the Swedish Band Aid (producer Kee Marcelo from Easy Action , later a guitarist of the band), and the money from the sale of the single was, as well as the entire project, intended for the hungry in Ethiopia.

More importantly is that in that year began recording the album "The Final Countdown" which was published 1986th and that Europe is the relatively unknown band, virtually overnight, promoted to one of the biggest stars of world music scene. "The Final Countdown" is 'woven' number of hits, the title of the composition, for which the introductory part klavijaturistički Joey wrote four years earlier than "Rock The Night", "Cherokee" and "Carrie," was the first in even 25 countries, sold millions in circulation, and to this day remains one of the most popular albums of all time.

Also, their album was a 'stumbling block' in interpersonal relationships in the band, and apparently the main cause of the departure of John Noruma in October 1986th which was it, despite everything, he was dissatisfied. He thought (and said), among other things, that they departed from the hard rock as it marked the first two albums, the production with keyboards too, and that Europe has become a band of teenagers.

He was replaced by the above-mentioned Kee Marcelo, after a successful tour on the order comes 1988th years and their fourth album "Out Of This World", which, although successful, does not pass any closer as "The Final Countdown", and is famous for its song "Superstitious" and the fact that the critics circles characterized as 'mainstream rock album' .

Unexpected decline in popularity, more drastic decline in album sales, bringing new "friction" within the band, but it's still good to go and live performances, after the new tour, 1991. was taken from "Out Of This World" a lot rockerskiji and personally one of the best European album, "Prisoners In Paradise". There are many good, solid, impact hard rock songs or ballads like the title "Girls From Lebanon," but most people remember him for the single "I'll Cry For You".

Europe moving at the end of the year on tour, called "Final Countdown '91," which, instead of being back in the days of greatest glory, on its completion brings somewhat expected and as was said, prepared, but still shocking end of the band, who arrives 1992nd year.

In coming years the European members were involved either as solo performers (mostly Tempest and Norum), either as members or guests of their other bands (Levene, Michael and Haughland up in the project Brazen

Abbot, Bulgarian guitarist Nicholas Kotzeva), so again began to return 'rustle' when the New Year, 1/1/1999., performed in Stockholm and performed the song "Rock The Night" and "The Final Countdown." Then, with Joey, Kitten, Ian and John Leven, playing both guitar players, Norum and Marcelo.

However, to complete the return had to take almost five more years, and he was officially confirmed 2/10/2003, when it was announced that Europe returns to the 'classic' or 'The Final Countdown line-up in' - Tempest / Norum / Levén / Haughland / Michaeli and plans to tour and record a new album. And so it was and immediately following, 2004. The outputs may be the best European album, "Start From The Dark."

Next tour, and "Secret Society" (2006.), One seventh the total, and the second comeback album, again tour (sold out almost as a rule) and in the end, in September this year, and the ninth studio album "Last Look At Eden .

It was completed trideseta anniversary of the band, which has left deep traces in the rock, thus, to music in general. Whether hard or just a rock band, pop, sweet, hair, teeny metal, or how it all is not called. Therefore, it was more than a great pleasure to analyze the events of the co-founder and musical institutions, guitarist John Norumom.

John, during the playback of her new album noted that there are a lot lighter and medium paced songs. Is quite melancholy, sad. Do you have such a feeling and you now when you hear after the end?

Well, yes! But it is strong album (laughs) and I think that is probably the best rock album at the moment. Very, very good sound, but somehow it rockerskiji than its predecessor, which were more metal urac. So it is a return to the roots of one, with what you have encountered in the late seventies.

Does the name of the true meaning or is merely symbolic?

Joey came up with the idea of the song "Look At Last Eden" and asked us if we think that it could be a good title for the album. Personally, I'm not too zadirao in the text and its meaning, but the more I spoke to my 'foreplay' (laughs). So that probably has a deeper meaning, which I still found.

Significant effect for orchestral arrangements, which can be heard from intra opening "Prelude", through the title track, and several other titles they have.

Yes, actually we use a symphony orchestra, which never before have not worked, and it was really exciting to combine with a rock. Therefore, we recorded with the Czech Symphony Orchestra, with whom he previously worked our producer Tobias and thought it would be good to work with them

on a few songs, so we tried something new in the.

I must admit that I'm a fan of guitar solos, and lots of them have even said that he would give special force of some songs, like "Last Look At Eden," "Gonna Get Ready" or "The Beast".

Europe has always had guitar solos in each song. It is simply part of the history of the band, that's what we do, that's what I want to do, try to get to some new tunes. Really love every single song from each of our albums.

I am led some songs that appeal to me, he would also "Catch The Plane", which according to me there are some neo-classical and progressive elements of the ballad "In My Time." Do you have one that you would like to particularly single out?

I really like all the songs, very well balanced album. I think the most powerful title track, and "The Beast", which is one of the fiercest songs that we ever recorded. However, favorites change from week to week.

The album is produced very well, you tell me who had produced little to describe his record?

Yes, it sounds great. As I said, I think this album sounds like the best of all that we have made and I think that things are great. Guitars are oriented in a lot of 'Greek štihá', which I like, and I think Joey has made best vocal so far.

About it seemed as if we went to test the pile of songs and start playing. We thought that we could record them so that they sound like live in the studio, we played at the same time, which is unusual nowadays. The rest of the recording was so much simpler. We have already tested a time of new songs and everyone knew what it seems.

We worked the first time with producer Tobias Lindell and a 'write' we have blood, but it was fun and quite easy to record this album. And I was a great studio, located in stančiču in outside Gothenburg. There are, moreover, played a great bands like Iron Maiden.

Many musicians say that their last album was just the best they made. Do you think that the "Last Look At Eden" your best album?

I mentioned that this is our best album and all songs are really strong, which is why they are the dominant guitars, which I really like it. Also, I think that Joey vocals, I'm just saying, the best so far, and are unlikely to improve over the years. Definitely this is the strongest album that we made.

When we talk about the album, I am a big fan of the first two, "Europe" (1983.) And "Wings Of Tomorrow" (1984).. When you have recorded albums and you had some problems with publishers, I think?

Well, honestly, I do not remember some of the problems we had. Our first album we recorded a very fast, in just a few days and we recorded it live. With this we have acted similarly.

The only real problem you can think of is that when we filmed the "Wings Of Tomorrow", the bassist John Levén had a little embarrassing for a mix of desk and spilled Coca Cola on it. Nothing is done, all channels are gone, so that the engineer had to stand to separate the parts, cleaned all the 'skoreni' sugar and stuck parts, which has taken a long time. That's all he remembers.

Subsequently in 1986. arrived, "The Final Countdown." Are you hoping you have achieved some success with it?

However that it is svevremenska song that will truly live forever and we are very happy that we had such a great album that has helped us to 'break' in the world. We are very fun to see how these songs 'live'.

When you see people jumping and field to your song, it is very exciting. It was a lot of fun time, but I think we are now even more fun, because now we know to appreciate what we have created in the past.

In the era of greatest popularity of the band have decided to leave, to open a new page, i 1987. The recorded first solo album "Total Control". How was it, after bands of Eddie Meduza & The Roaring Cadillacs and Europe, to start again from scratch?

It was an exciting time. It was great to have the opportunity to go to the studio, produce, write and mix your music, but one treatment ("Back On The Streets" by Vinnie Vincent Invasion, remark). All prices today because that very album. When I listen to it, it sounds outdated, I think the production of all, there are a lot of superficiality, a lot of reverb and echo, but as it was in the eighties. Full of twists, echo and the typical elements of the eighties, which were then also work out. I sat with him in the first place in Sweden, so it's really one successful album.

Last solo album "Optimus," you made 2005th year, and I read somewhere that you should call a new "Playyard Blues." Given that his name was mentioned in the blues, does that mean something new?

Yes, this is completely different. On the new album (out 31.12., Remark), unlike earlier, there will be more elements of rock and blues and I sing to him in all the songs except two. Therefore, different from what I did in the past. Although the way, blueserski, will have two, three fierce, heavy tracks and one instrumental.

Let's go back to Europe. In the opinion of many, Europe is one of the few bands that have successfully returned after Réunion recording an album, has sold out tour and the audience loves you. Whose idea was to gather again and have you worried that you forgot the old audience, and may not accept new?

We did not know what will happen, but we agreed to some songs that we had from earlier and get them 'out of the darkness. Therefore, it is a very strong and dark album ("Start From The Dark", remark), the darkest time. We went 'out' with him for a long time been on the tour, made about 150 concerts, and everywhere was very good response from the audience. All the places we played were sold out, so it was interesting to return.

Returnee after two albums, last year you published an acoustic live album, "Almost Unplugged". How did you come to this idea?

We wanted to do something that we never before and never done anything acoustic, so we all decided to mix and play a half acoustic and half electric. I think this is one great idea, to combine rock with the 'wired' instruments like violins and cellos.

In addition, we wanted to pay homage to some of my heroes, so we did some processing, such as the songs of Led Zeppelin and Pink Floyd ("Since I've Been Lovin 'You" and "Wish You Were Here", plus "Love To Love" by UFO, remark), so it was a small tribute concert these bands. DVD comes out soon and "Almost Unplugged" and it will be just great.

I recently had the opportunity to hear your concert this year in Santiago de Chile and I can say that I was pleasantly surprised - Europe live sounds very powerful and convincing. Are you now fully sazrjeli as people and as musicians and you think that you have years when you show up on stage?

Oh, yes. There is a big difference between us now and in the Eighties. Today we sazrjeli, done a lot of concerts, were in different bands ... I was in the American band Dokken is they recorded two albums ("Up From The Ashes" (1990). With Don Dokken, and "Long Way Home" (2002.) With the band Dokken, remark). Much we were on tour together, over time we became better and better and a lot sazrjeli with age. Sad really know how to get a good live sound, which in the eighties we did not know. Over the years we have become all the better.

The plan is a European tour, which will act with the Gotthard.

Germany plans to play twenty concerts, and in November we are on tour with the Gotthard, which will be an exciting combination. I think the Gotthard very similar to our style and will be fun to play and return to Germany. I look forward to going there and meeting with fans, for a long time we were there.

I hope you will come to Croatia because I saw that play in January in Vienna, and currently have more free date. Do you have any information about our contacts with promoters.

I personally do not have it work management through our booking agency in England. But it would be awesome and very fun.

And finally a private matter. Last year you suffered a great family tragedy, considering that I was dead wife (Michelle Meldrum, frontwoman of the band Meldrum, author's remark), and on this occasion, I express condolences. How music helps you to prevladaš difficulties and if you are in some songs may enter their emotions caused this tragedy?

Yes, I experienced a tragedy last year, died my wife and it was difficult, a different year for me and our four sons. We live from day to day and try to overcome this terrible tragedy. But it is not visible from the outside, so in some way through to experiencing the music sometimes.

Last song on the album, "In My Time" is actually dedicated to Michelle and the song was about her. When you hear it in you awakens awakens feelings of sadness.