

ALFONZETTI

Swedish vocalist **Matti Alfonzetti** has had a long career in music, from humble beginnings as a bass player in a local rock band called **Heavy Waters**. Switching to vocals, he helped form the band **Hardware** before that act morphed into the **Bam Bam Boys**. After that band split, Alfonzetti successfully auditioned for **Scott Gorham's** band **Western Front**, which unfortunately failed to materialise into anything.

Matti ended up joining **Myke Gray** in **Jagged Edge**, a terrific melodic rock band that released an EP called **'Trouble'** and an acclaimed album **'Fuel For Your Soul'**. Sadly **Jagged Edge** split after this record, with **Myke** going on to form **Skin**. **Matti** meanwhile performed with **SkinTrade**, **Boxer** and **Road To Ruin**.

He also found time to start a solo career, releasing his first album **'Ready'** in 2000 and a follow up **'Machine'** in 2002. As well as honing his skills writing for other acts such as **The Poodles** and becoming a skilled producer, **Matti** now brings us his third solo CD, **'Here Comes The Night'**. To find out all about it, and discuss **Matti's** new venture with **Myke Gray**, **James Gaden** got in touch...

Your new solo album 'Here Comes The Night' is a strong, well crafted melodic rock album. Did you have a specific style or influence in mind when you began writing these songs?

After I did my solo album **'Ready'**, I had a lot of fans asking for another album just like it, so **'Here Comes The Night'** is for all of them! Most of the songs were actually written over the last ten years, so I had a lot of time to get them right!

The songs were all written by you - how do you typically begin writing? Do you use an acoustic guitar to start off with some chords, or are you one of those artists who comes up with melody lines first?

Well, it depends a lot on what instrument I'm using. If it's a piano I tend to look for a melody or at least a top line to get me going. On guitar, an instrument which I'm more comfortable with, I usually just play riffs and chord progressions until a melody pops up... However, when I get to the production stage, I strip everything down and focus on melody. If that's not up to scratch then I will just start over again - at the end of the day, it's all about the melody, isn't it?

Absolutely! There are some excellent tracks on offer, my favourite being 'I'll Wait For You'. Is there a stand out track for you on the record?

That's one of my favorites as well! I'm also particularly pleased with **'Why Can't You Love Me'**, because that one only took me like five minutes to write and it made it on the album!

The album is performed by yourself and Daniel Flores, with guest appearances from Marcus Jidell (Evergrey) and Emil Fredholm (Plankton) on lead guitars. How did they become involved?

We are all mates and I have done session work with them before. I really like the way they play and the fact that **Daniel's** studio is just across the street from mine made it very simple! To be honest, I think **Emil** and **Marcus** are two of the best guitar players we have in Sweden, so I was delighted to have them on board.

Do you get a buzz out of handling many aspects of the album, such as bass, vocals and production, or is it more of a necessity these days due to cost?

It's a mix of all those things really. When I write, I tend to put parts down for keeps straight away - and since I play both guitar and bass it's easier to just record it myself rather than calling people up, having them to learn the parts, booking studio time, etc. etc. Besides, the money record companies pay these days for an album is a lot less than, say, ten years ago...

On the subject of that, this album has been released via AOR Heaven. How does an artist like yourself typically approach releasing a solo album these days - do you finish the record first and then look for label support, or are there still labels willing to help fund a new album?

For me, I'm lucky to be able to have the support of **AOR Heaven** and that they were good enough to release this album. I sent a couple of demos to them a while back, they liked it, and that was it! Very old school...

You are also the lead singer in a fantastic new band, Red White & Blues, with Myke Gray from Skin, who you used to be in Jagged Edge with. Was it strange going back to working with Myke after so many years apart?

A little bit... simply because we had not seen or spoken to each other in a very long time! It took all of about twenty minutes to get back to where we left off...! He played me a song he was working on and instantly we were connecting, so we had no problems there! I am very excited about **Red White & Blues** because it's a band thing and the music is inspired from our musical roots. This is something I've wanted to do for a long time!

You play bass on the Red White & Blues album too, as well as handling lead vocals. Do you play bass live with them as well?

Yes! I am officially also playing bass with **Red White & Blues** full time. I love playing the bass and it's actually how I got started in music all those years ago, so I have truly gone full circle!

