

"Heavy Metal is a feeling!"

A TRANSLATION OF THE ARTICLE "HÅRDROCK ÄR EN KÄNSLA" - FIRST PUBLISHED IN SWEDISH DAILY NEWSPAPER HALLANDS NYHETER, THURSDAY 9 SEPTEMBER 2004.

Mattias Ström has received his share of thorns in life. But he has always had something to make it worthwhile: Heavy Metal legend Ronnie James Dio. - He says that I'm one of the "Rock'n'roll children" just like he is, says Mattias who dreams of having his buddy - the world famous rock star - playing in Varberg.

Mattias Ström from Veddige was only seven years old when he first heard the voice of Ronnie James Dio. The year was 1981, the band was Black Sabbath and Mattias was hooked.

- It's hard to explain. I was only seven so I wouldn't say that I understood the whole concept of heavy metal... It was more of a feeling, kind of. That feeling would remain. Not only to the voice of Dio (which is often said to be the most powerful in the world of rock) and his music, but to everything that Heavy Metal stood for.

- When I grew up in the 80's there was a lot of aggression towards Heavy Metal and a great debate in the Media and in TV with Sivert Öholm.

- To me, Heavy Metal has always been something positive. What it is about is to stand up for yourself, realising no dreams are too big. And *that* is what Dio stands for!

While other metal bands sang about crusaders or yelled "I fuck like a Beast", Dio had something to say. The song "Rock'n'Roll Children" could very well have been about Mattias Ström. After a somewhat problem filled period in school Mattias joined a merry-go-round of alcohol and destruction. A ride that would take years to get off.

- Finally, I made a so called "Hetfield" (James, front figure in Metallica, who after years of violence and drug abuse got expert help to get on his feet) and today I'm sober, Mattias says.

Except for professional help he has got a lot of help from his friends. Mattias



ROCK'N'ROLL CHILDREN. Mattias Ströms intresse för rockbandet Dio började redan i sjuårsåldern. Nu träffas världsstjärnan och Veddige-bon så fort bandet är i Sverige - här i Västerås, dit Mattias åkte efter att kvällen före sett bandet i Malmö. Kanske får han polaren att spela i Varberg.

Above: Rock'n'Roll Children. Mattias Ströms intrest in heavy metal band Dio came at the age of seven. Now, the rock star and Mattias, meet every time the band comes to Sweden. Västerås (above) is where Mattias traveled after having seen the band play in Malmö the night before.

Ström also believes in God but his faith remains on a personal levels. (I meet him in church, he's wearing a Dio t-shirt that says: "Dream Evil".

- To me, Heavy Metal is "for life". Ofcourse you can buy a t-shirt that says "Rocker", but I've got it tattooed on my back.

- And Dio has always had a little more depth than others. So finally I just knew: I have got to meet this man! Said and done: Mattias got in contact with the Fan Club and they helped him in getting a backstage pass on Dios' next tour visit in Sweden.

The year was 1997. The location - a shabby dressing room in the darker parts of Småland.

- I think it was in Ljungby. Me and my brother, we were the only ones on the guest list, and all of a sudden we

stood there, face to face with Ronnie James Dio.

- Ofcourse I had read the papers and I too was a bit prejudice. But the person we met was incredibly professional and humble.

The first meeting was basically just a matter of getting as much memorabilia as possible signed. But they kept "in contact", and since that first meeting, this guy from Veddige and the rock star, have met about twenty times. The last time was in July 2004 when Dio played in Gothenburg. And their conversations no longer just evolves around music, usually the subject is simply "life".

- He knows that I'm a fan, but in the sense that I wouldn't do anything he told me. When I tell him about my life, he says that I am one of the "Rock'n'Roll Children" just like him.

Fem måsten med Dio	
- enligt Mattias Ström	
1.	"Gates of Babylon" med Rainbow (Long live rock'n'roll, 1978)
2.	"Holy Diver" med Dio (Holy Diver, 1983)
3.	"Heaven and hell" med Black Sabbath (Heaven and hell, 1980)
4.	"The sign of the southern cross" med Black Sabbath (Mob rules, 1981)
5.	"Rock'n'roll children" med Dio (Sacred Heart, 1985)

FIVE "MUST-HAVES" BY DIO - ACCORDING TO MATTIAS STRÖM

1. "Gates of Babylon" with Rainbow (Long live rock'n'roll, 1978)
2. "Holy Diver" with Dio (Holy Diver, 1983)
3. "Heaven and Hell" with Black Sabbath (Heaven and Hell, 1980)
4. "The Sign of the Southern Cross" with Black Sabbath (Mob Rules, 1981)
5. "Rock'n'roll Children" with Dio (Sacred Heart, 1985)

“Heavy Metal is a feeling!” ...continued.

A few days ago Dio released their eleventh album. But it has been without any marketing at all. Well, that's not completely true because the band has got a personal promotor in Veddige, Sweden.

- When I heard that the record stores wouldn't get any promotion material I offered to take care of it. The record store “Rocks” in Varberg liked the idea so now Mattias is filling a complete display window with Dio stuff. The goal is simple:

Getting the people in Varberg to buy Dios' new album “The Master of the Moon”.

The final question is obvious: When will Dio visit Varberg to do a show?

- Well, I've never asked him.

They have a tight touring schedule when they're on the road. But, the Fan Club are aware of my project so who knows? Maybe Ronnie thinks it would be fun coming here. You know, nothing is impossible!

Krister Svahn

(translation by Anders Ström)



Right: *Stuck for life. Heavy Metal is not a hobby. It's a way of live. At least it is to Mattias Ström, 29 years old from Veddige.*

Below: *Heavy Metal for life. Mattias Ström from Veddige has got two passions in life. One is heavy metal. The other one is even heavier metal. He has now become rock legend Dios' own “promotor”. He will try get his buddy to play in Varberg.*



SITTER FÖR LIVET. Hårdrock är ingen hobby. Det är en livsstil. Åtminstone för 29-åriga Mattias Ström från Veddige.



HÅRDROCK FOR LIFE. Mattias Ström från Veddige har två passioner i livet. Den ena är hårdrock. Den andra ännu hårdare rock. Nu har han blivit rocklegenden Dios egen “promotor” – och ska försöka få kompisen att spela i Varberg. **SIDAN 12**

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