

EGJ

skär upp magen skär upp magen och tänk inte på morgondagen
skär upp magen det är din egen invärtes sorglighet som går åt helvete

låt altaret bli vattenklosett låt pek fingret mjukna¹

cut open your stomach cut open your stomach and don't think of tomorrow cut open your
stomach it is your own inner sadness that goes to hell

let the altar be a toilet let the index finger soften²

I woke up. With those words ringing in my mind. What did they mean?

"...cut open your stomach cut open your stomach and don't think of tomorrow..." Those
words. Those words. By the Swedish poet Gunnar Ekelöf.

It was all music to me. That shit hit me like thunder and lightning.

I have known Edward Gustav Jarvis my whole life. We went to the same school in Umeå
from the first class and onwards.

His paintings and doings have inspired me. Deeply.

They were all music to me.

To see and hear the connections. In art. In music. In literature. In life. I think the music was
the glue. What we needed.

We listened to music all day long. Vinyl after vinyl. LOUD. INTENSE. With closed eyes. And
yet we wanted more. And more.

We listened to (free) jazz every Thursday night at the local jazz club, Scharinska Villan, in
Umeå, until we were thrown out, falsely accused for drinking beer underaged. We
continued to listen outside the club, through the double glass windows, in freezing
winter cold. And yet we wanted more.

We set up performance pieces at a local gallery in town, "Ets Ets Ets". Together with local
artists and the percussive mastermind of Kjell Nordeson. Action-art performed in (!) the
torrent local river "Umeå älven". OR Jumping naked in snow in minus 20 degrees Celsius
outside the gallery. Throwing ourselves out of a window from the 2nd floor. OR with
primitive make-up in a water-damaged bomb shelter(!). OR in an old storage for potatoes
(in the small basement of the actual gallery) where the police jumped in on us, thinking
there was some kind of illegal activity going on. And more. And yet we wanted more.
Much more.

Edward is, together with the conceptual artist Leif Elggren, the most uncompromising
visual artist I have ever met.

Already from the start. When we were kids. Repainting the walls of his mother's house with
scary images.

Images that were made because they were needed to be done. They still are needed.

The continuous research and curiosity took Edward – some years later – to classic Icon painting techniques. I think this is the ultimate media for Edward. To be able to combine his symbolic themes, thoughts and perspectives into a world entirely of his own. Old-school techniques and gestures combined with sharp and complex commentaries on the present world, society and human behavior. I love those complex thematic perspectives and how they combine poetry with image on a deeper level. Edward knows his history. His – story (thank you Le Sun Ra). Our history. It is all in there. It is all there.

Of all the common projects we have been working on over the years, this is the – so called – shit. Icons and flutes. Who would have guessed?

The chance of doing real research together over these icons and their content and meanings, has been mind-blowing.

To add music to those images. To those texts. Never as an illustration, but as a comment. We have chosen to follow some numeric strategies and forms and leave the rest to the viewer and listener. It is all up for grabs.

To use the flute as my primary axe has been logical, but hard. It is a real love-hate relationship I have to this instrument. My first instrument of use. My first instrument of trying to express anything that could be called a personal reflection on... music... life. It does have its limitations. The flute.

Limitations are good.

The “Hypnagogic Puzzle” is a ...puzzle. Old school. Do what you want and need with it. Hold on tight to your individual piece of the puzzle. Listen to the music commentary. In any order you want and need. 18 short pieces (of electronics and flute) and 2 longer pieces (of bari sax actions) with a looooooong pause between each piece of the puzzle (Is it the shadow of one Bengt Nordström entering the matters???)

Time enough to, in any order of events, combine it freely:

1. Sit still and listen to it all.
2. Guess where your included bit of the puzzle would fit (one of 500 pieces!).
3. Walk up to the turntable and change the order of music pieces in whatever order you

want, according to your own version of how you want to hear the puzzle.

4. Turn the music off and just enjoy the images.

It is all up for grabs.

“The Guide to the Underworld, Nine Icons” (from the Diwan trilogy – an excellent and most amazing reading). The music is recorded in mirrored form and commented with different instruments at hand. The order of events is: electronics, baritone sax, fluteophone, flute, electronics, flute, fluteophone, baritone sax and again... noise electronics! A symbolic mirror, up for interpretation and free association.

The fluteophone as an instrument and concept, was born in 1979, when Edward and I were joined by some friends drinking alcohol in the deep forest of "Nydalaskogen" in Umeå. At an open fire in the middle of the forest we were having a good time, singing and playing along with our consumption (of which Edward always was in the lead quantity-wise). I wanted to bring my newly rented tenor sax, but it was impossible to combine with schlepping beers and wines. So, I took the flute and a sax mouthpiece instead, easier to carry. Free improvised reed noises in the forest, accompanying some folk singing and guitar playing. We were pretty sure it sounded cool.

When the fire went to rest, the darkness took over. It was beautiful. Edward reached for a large unopened bottle next to the diminishing fire. He drank it all in one go. Olive oil. Edward always impressed me. And still does.

"The Final Judgement" is a free musical study with the bari sax at my hands. My favorite tool. This is a central piece in Edward's work the last years. I have seen the starting moments of this painting in Edward's studio. I have seen it being born. Now it is beyond comprehension. It is an exact image. On many levels. In my eyes – in my mind. Can an image be exact? Can music be exact?

The connections. What are they? Where are they? Why are they?

The research continues. The music has always been there. The images have always been there. The words have always been there. The connections.

That was a real insight for me. Early on. Thank you, Edward. Thank you, Gunnar.

It never ends. And yet, we want more. And more. It never ends. One difference though – these days we use the olive oil a bit differently...

Mats Gustafsson, November 2019