



Interview **GODDESS SHIVA** & Marco / AOR Heaven 1/2007

Who from the **GODDESS SHIVA** camp is going to answer my questions?

Armin Sabol the guitar player of Goddess SHIVA and producer of the album.

Any deeper sense in naming the band (**GODDESS**) **SHIVA** or did it just sound cool?

We decided to rename the Band in 2006 to avoid being mixed up with other bands called SHIVA. When we founded the band SHIVA back in 1977 there were probably no other bands with the same name around. So despite the presumably older rights, we chose to change the name into GODDESS SHIVA. Although I am interested in eastern religions and philosophies in general, there is no deeper meaning to this name.

The band was actually formed in spring 1977 and you already tried to record a debut album in 1978 and 1980. Why didn't work it out back then?

We were simply too young and unexperienced to produce a studio album on our own back then. Unfortunately we were also not lucky enough to find an experienced rock producer in our area to come up with a competitive production. But Mat Sinner and I had always remembered the enormous power of our live gigs in the late seventies and early eighties. That's why we decided to produce this late debut-album.

You played live shows as opening act for **WHITESNAKE** and **COLOSSEUM II**. What kind of memories do you have about these days?

Those gigs were very important for us. It was almost like dreams coming true to play with some of our heroes. We were greatly accepted by the fans of our idols and found out that WHITESNAKE or GARY MOORE (back then in COLLOSSEUM II) were totally nice blokes. A tremendous experience for a young band like SHIVA back then.

The promo info says you were inspired by 'power trio' acts a la Jimi Hendrix and Frank Marino's Mahogany Rush. What made the 'power trio' constellation so special for you?

The challenge to produce „a wall of sound“ with only three instruments. This is harder to do than with four or more instruments. But when it happens, it has got enormous musical tension. Some of my alltime Favourites were three piece Bands or trio-plus-singer formations. This goes for the JIMI HENDRIX EXPERIENCE, VAN HALEN or ZZ TOP as well as ROBIN TROWER and FRANK MARINO & MAHOGANY RUSH. But also timeless pop icons as the POLICE were classical three-piece guitar band. The sound and sense for unique instrumentation of the POLICE is still unequaled. In a trio you can't „hide“ a weak musician. Every one of those three matters a lot. Plus: You can actually hear

exactly, what every guy is playing. I hate guitar solos disappearing in a wall of rhythm guitar.

I also hear some classic THIN LIZZY in your music (for example „Down On Luck“). Would you name them as another influence?

Absolutely! Mat and I have always been great fans of THIN LIZZY. Their sense of making a great song work with simple means, was terrific. I still think, they were completely underrated. It is a sign of an outstanding band to develop a „sonic trademark“. This means: You hear the first four bars of the song and you know who's playing. AC/DC have got this kind of sound, METALLICA do have it, the STONES have it...you name it. I think THIN LIZZY had it too, especially in their earlier recordings. Plus, the baritone voice of PHIL LYNOTT showed that, as a male rock singer you don't necessarily have to scream in higher female regions all the time to make a good song happen. This is really encouraging for people like me who could never sing LED ZEPPELIN'S „Immigrant Song“, although I love LED ZEPPELIN.

In 1980 the band split and each of you went separate ways. Did you stay in touch through all the years

Yes, we stayed in touch. There were various collaborations in all those years. Mat sang on a benefit production against racism („Kein Hass im wilden Süden“) that I produced in the early nineties. We worked together on the SINNER album „No more alibis“ and we met now and then to write songs or make demos. One song of that period on the GODDESS SHIVA Album is „This ain't love“.

In 2004 you were asked by G. Trugenberger of the „Aidshilfe Stuttgart“ if there's a possibility for SHIVA to reunite to play some charity festivals. Were you surprised that someone could still remember the band after all these years?

I must admit, no. I knew that SHIVA were remembered as a legendary band in the Stuttgart Area and the south of Germany. Playing live we were able to produce some sort of magic and power that was felt in the depth of perception of the audience. People remember this for many years. What really was surprising for me, was the fact that Mat immediately accepted to reunite. We are all involved in various bands. Mat is working hard with PRIMAL FEAR and SINNER. But the enthusiasm for Shiva or GODDESS SHIVA is still there.

Can you describe the feelings you had when you played together again after such a long time?

I must admit, first this felt like a time travel with uncertain destination to me. But when we got together in the rehearsal room, we soon found out that the sort of undefinable power was absolutely there within moments. We plugged in and rocked hard. A fantastic moment.

How did you find new drummer Martin Schmidt? Did you make any auditions?

I knew Martin from various collaborations before and I was sure, he was the right man for this three piece lineup. Martin is groover from hell who has got his shit together. He's a tremendous drummer for a trio because he can fill possible gaps in the sound with his powerful and energetic playing. I love playing with

him.

When did you write the songs for the album? Are they old material from the early days of the band or did you write totally new stuff?

We came up with a mix of old and new songs. Songs like „Red“ „Same Old City“ „Heat of the Nite“ or „Ali Baba“ derive from the early SHIVA days in the seventies or early eighties. „Down on Luck“ or „This ain't love“ were written in a „Mid-period“ between the mid-eighties and early nineties. „Barefoot and Naked“ „Mind of a killer“ or „Walking on thorns“ are new songs, written for GODDESS SHIVA.

Mat Sinner and Armin Sabol are sharing lead vocals. How do you usually decided who sings on which song?

On the old tunes we stayed with the original vocal share. The new songs were sung by whoever seemed to be“the guy to do it“. One of the nice things about this albums is, we had absolutely no pressure to fullfill any expectations or to think strategically. We did what we liked and just as we liked to do it.

Mat Sinner is very busy with his other bands SINNER and PRIMAL FEAR. Do you think there is enough time left in his schedule for future activities with GODDESS SHIVA?

I truly hope so. I would absolutely love to play live shows with GODDESS SHIVA and I hope we will find ways to realize this in the near future.

