

ØST FOR PARADIS PRÆSENTERER:

a-ha

af Thomas Robsahm



PREMIERE: 25. november 2021

LANG PRESSE: 10. september 2021 kl. 9:30 i Grand Teatret

KORT PRESSE: 17. november 2021 kl. 9:30 i Grand Teatret

Øst for Paradis Filmimport Aps
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“De har alle sammen brug for en psykolog. Én til dem hver især og én til bandet”

- Lauren Savoy, Pål Waaktaar-Savoy's hustru



Foto: Magne Furuholmen

FOREVER NOT YOURS

a-ha er Norges eneste internationale popband, og deres hit "Take On Me" er stadig en af de mest afspillede sange nogensinde. Filmen følger bandet over en periode på fire år og fortæller historien om, hvordan tre unge mænd fulgte deres umulige drøm om at blive norske popstjerner. Da "Take On Me" blev nummer 1 på toplistene i USA i 1985, blev deres drøm virkelighed. Eller gjorde den?

Næsten 35 år efter deres gennembrud, skaber a-ha stadig magi på scenen med deres melankolske og tidløse musik. De tre medlemmer turnerer stadig rundt omkring i verden, men bliver kørt i hver deres bil og har hver deres garderobe. De mødes kun på scenen, hvor de gør det, som de elsker allermost.

Filmen giver et intimt indblik i de udfordrende kreative og personlige dynamikker i gruppen bestående af tre stærke individer, som er vokset op sammen, men i hver sin retning. Hvad gør succes ved et venskab? Hvorfor kan de ikke længere skrive ny musik sammen?

Dette er en historie om musik, store ambitioner, brudte venskaber – og måske tilgivelse.



Foto: Motlys

INSTRUKTØREN FORTÆLLER

Det er 1985, og a-ha er nummer 1 på toplistens i USA med "Take On Me". Det er allerførste gang det sker for et norsk band eller artist. En barndomsdrøm er gået i opfyldelse. Eller er den?

Et særligt venskab startede, da Pål Waaktaar Savoy og Magne Furuholmen kun var 12 år gamle og begyndte at spille musik sammen, mens de drømte om international succes.

Da britiske bands som Soft Cell, Yazoo og Depeche Mode fik succes i de tidlige 80'ere, tog Pål og Magne – nu teenagere – til London uden en returbillet. I 70'ernes Norge ville dette ikke blot blive set som naivt, men slet og ret som en umulighed. Ingen nordmænd havde nogensinde været internationale popstjerner.



Foto: Henning Kramer Dahl

Drengenes idol var Jimi Hendrix, der havde rejst fra USA til London for at få sit store gennembrud. Pål og Magne ville gøre det samme. Deres drøm var ikke unik, men viljen til at opnå det var uden lige. Timer, dage, uger og måneder brugte de i London uden succes. Hver eneste arbejdstime handlede om ambition og ethvert setback var hurtigt glemt. De gav simpelthen aldrig op.

Efter ikke at være kommet nogle vegne i tre måneder, hvor pengene var sluppet op, blev de nødt til at blaffe hjem til Norge. Der fandt de det, som de havde manglet: Sangeren Morten Harket. Tre år senere blev "Take On Me" nummer 1 på toplisten, og succesen fortsatte med en række hits.



Foto: Magne Furuholmen

Men de drømte aldrig om at være teenageidoler med skrigende piger foran scenen. Deres plan var et have et hit og derefter gøre det, som de gerne ville. De havde ingen idé om, at de aldrig ville slippe for "Take On Me" og det image, som fulgte med i de glittede magasiner. Og så var de heller ikke forberedt på, at forsangeren Morten ville få meget mere opmærksomhed end dem. Og mindst af alt var de forberedt på, at deres venskab skulle slutte pga. skænderier over credits, penge og ære.

Efter fem albums gik a-ha hvert til sit i starten af 90'erne, og de flyttede alle fra London. Morten og Magne flyttede tilbage til Oslo, mens Pål tog til New York med sin hustru Lauren. Selv da de fandt sammen igen i 2000 med hits som "Summer Moved On", "Analogue" og "Foot of the Mountain" var deres venskab stadig i stykker.

De turnerer stadig rundt i verden i separate biler og med separate garderober. De mødes kun på scenen, hvor de gør det, som de elsker allermost. Denne kollektive ensomhed – men med en fælles kærlighed til musikken – er fascinerende at iagttage. Og jeg håber, at filmen vil være i stand til at kommunikere dette paradoks ud til publikum.

OM A-HA

a-ha blev grundlagt i Oslo i 1982 af Pål Waaktaar-Savoy (guitar, keyboard), Magne Furuholmen (keyboard, guitar) og Morten Harket (vokal). a-ha opnåede deres største succes med debutalbummet "Hunting High and Low" i 1985. Albummet opnåede både en førsteplads på hitlisten i hjemlandet Norge, en andenplads i Storbritannien og en førsteplads på den amerikanske hitliste, og fik hele tre singler på internationale førstepladser: "Take On Me", "The Sun Always Shines on T.V." og "Hunting High and Low". Albummet skaffede dem en Grammy-nominering for "Best New Artist".

Musikvideoen til "Take On Me" blev en af de mest letgenkendelige og populære musikvideoer i verden og vandt hele seks priser ved MTV Video Awards i 1986 – blandt andet for "Best New Artist in a Video", "Best Concept Video", "Best Direction", "Best Special Effects", "Viewer's Choice" og "Best Video of the Year". Deres seks MTV Award-priser var mere end dobbelt så mange, som Michael Jackson vandt for sin musikvideo til "Thriller".

a-ha udgav "Scoundrel Days" (1986), "Stay on These Roads" (1988) og "East of the Sun, West of the Moon" (1990) med hits som "I've Been Losing You", "Cry Wolf", "Manhattan Skyline", "The Living Daylights", "Stay on These Roads" og "Crying in the Rain". I 1994, efter at deres femte album, "Memorial Beach" (1993) ikke formåede at opnå samme kommercielle succes som deres tidligere albums, tog bandet en pause.

Efter en optræden ved Nobels Fredspris i 1998 indspillede a-ha deres sjette album "Minor Earth Major Sky", der udkom i 2000 og blev nummer et i både Norge og Tyskland. Dette album blev efterfulgt af "Lifelines" (2002), "Analogue" (2005) og "Foot of the Mountain" (2009).

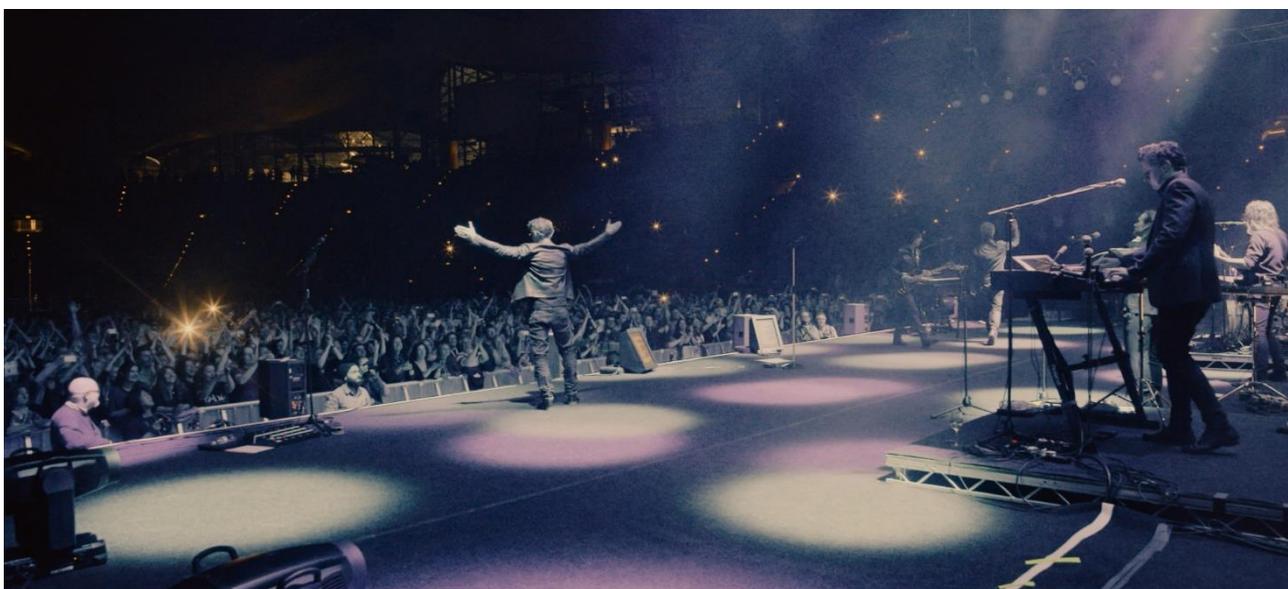


Foto: Motlys

I 2009 annoncerede bandet, at de ville gå hver til sit efter deres verdensomspændende "Ending on a High Note" Tour. Tusinder af fans fra mindst 40 lande og seks kontinenter samledes for at se a-ha en sidste gang. I slutningen af 2014 havde a-ha annonceret deres deltagelse ved Rock in Rio i 2015, hvilket fejrede et 30-år jubilæum for ikke bare arrangementet i Rio men også a-ha som band.

I 2015 blev det så annonceret, at bandet atter ville finde sammen, og deres tiende album "Cast in Steel" blev udgivet, og bandet turnerede nu som en del af lanceringen af albummet.

a-ha har udgivet i alt ti albums, adskillige opsamlingsalbums og fire livealbums. Bandet er i Guinness Rekordbog for at have spillet den mest indtjenende koncert nogensinde; nemlig da de spillede for intet mindre end 198.000 på Maracanã Stadion under Rock in Rio. Deres præcise salgstal er kontroversielle; Ifølge deres pladeselskab Rhino Entertainment har de solgt 55 millioner albums, men andre kilder påstår, at de har solgt mere end 100 millioner enheder i alt, hvis man kombinerer både albums og singleudgivelser.

CREDITS//

INSTRUKTØR: Thomas Robsahm
FOTO OG CO-INSTRUKTØR: Aslaug Holm
KLIP: Hilde Bjørnstad
PRODUCERET AF: Yngve Sæther and Thomas Robsahm (Motlys)
CO-PRODUCERET AF: Tore Buvarp (Fenris Film), Matthias Greving (Kinescope Film),
Clementina Hegewisch (Neue Impuls)

GENRE: Musikedokumentar

Distributør: ØST FOR PARADIS Filmimport Aps

Lanceres m støtte fra Nordisk Film & TV Fond



Foto: Warner

FIND MATERIALE:

Pressebilleder: <http://distribution.paradisbio.dk/film.asp?id=339>

Trailer og EPK klip: <https://paradis.digitalepk.dk>

Brugernavn: presse - password: film

EKSTRA: INTERVIEW MED INSTRUKTØR THOMAS ROBSAHM (PÅ ENGELSK)//

Instruktør Thomas Robsahm fortæller om umulige drømme, sin kærlighed til musik og a-ha.

I = Interviewer

TR: Thomas Robsahm

I: You're an established film producer, with Joachim Trier's new film coming up, and an award-winning documentary director. What can you not live without, film or music?

TR: *Music.*

I: Your former project as a director was a series about Norwegian punk. Is this a film about your guilty pleasure from the 80s?

TR: *Things moved fast in those days, so I was into punk in 78, new wave in 79, ska in 80, synths in 81, and by the time I heard a-ha in 84, I was in a band which also was synth based with drum machines. Our music was darker, but bands like The Human League and Soft Cell inspired both my band and a-ha, so we were not that far from each other. At the time Take On Me came out the first time in 84, I was not 100% convinced, but when The Sun Always Shines on TV was released later there was no doubt: This is the best music ever made in Norwegian pop. And they are still the best, they are simply in their own league.*

I: How did the project come about?

TR: *Ever since I saw Let It Be about The Beatles when I was 10, I've always wanted to make a film about a band making a record. I almost got a project like that started in the early 90's, but it didn't happen. After seeing Some Kind of Monster about Metallica, I started thinking about it again, and by that time I had had a premiere of a feature where both Morten and Magne attended. Then many years later, in 2009, Magne attended another premiere of a film I produced, and he complimented me sincerely about the film music I made for that film (we did not have any money left in postproduction, so I just had to do it myself). A few months later I asked him if I could film the recording of a-ha's new album. He was positive, but there was only one problem; they were gonna split up... Of course, they came back together after five years, and we started filming in 2016. But they still haven't recorded a new album, so the film is a bit different than I imagined*

I: Do you remember when you first heard Take On Me? Did you instantly know it was a hit?

TR: *I heard it on the radio and recorded it. I did not think it would become a world hit, no... But I liked it.*

I: Can you describe the Norwegian music scene in the early 80s when a-ha started?

TR: *Before punk I felt it was horrible. I did not listen to Norwegian music. It was mostly Eurovision Song Contest and cover versions of American and English songs. Now as a grown up I have discovered there were some good music before punk, but not much.*

I: What has a-ha meant for Norwegian pop culture?

TR: *Everything.*

I: What's so great with a-ha?

TR: *They make beautiful, melancholic music with great lyrics and the singer... Well, it's Morten Harket. For me they are one of the best bands ever in pop history and I'm saying that as half Italian. What attracted you with making this film? I like to make life difficult for myself. It's a habit.*

I: Besides music, what's the film about?

TR: *It's about having big, impossible dreams together when you are young and when the dream actually comes true, all the problems start. So, you get the story of how the band got successful and how they handled it.*

I: You have followed them for a long time, besides that what was your strategy as a filmmaker?

TR: *I tried my best to get them to record new music, because I know there's still so many great songs in them.*

I: You have stated that your ambition with the film was to have them make new songs again. Do you think they will ever record anything together again?

TR: *Yes, they are all making music all the time, so at one point they will get in the studio again. I only wish it had happened during the filming. Almost everybody in the world knows Take On Me, and it's recently been used in everything from La la Land to Deadpool. What's the magic with that song? The drum programming, the synth riff, the verses, the chorus, the middle eight, the music video... Even the lyrics with simple, nice lines like «Slowly learning that life is ok». It was also very courageous to be a Norwegian band and insist on releasing a song which has a title that is grammatically wrong. They were stubborn from the very beginning.*

I: Is there a question you didn't dare to ask them?

TR: *'Can I produce your next album?'*

I: How would you describe Pål, Morten and Magne, as persons and artists?

TR: *I really like them all three. They are really nice people, and I know people in the film industry with bigger egos. But the band as a whole is quite difficult to deal with...*

I: The wife of the guitarist Pål Waaktaar, Lauren Savoy, says in the film: 'They all need a shrink, both individually and as a band.' Was the film your way of having a therapy?

TR: *I tried. And failed. Not many bands stick together for 40 years, what has kept them together? The love of music, money and more success.*

I: Not many bands stick together for 40 years, what has kept them together?

TR: *The love of music, money and more success.*

I: Are you surprised they still are such a popular live band all over the world?

TR: *Yes, because they are bigger than many bands you would think are bigger. Since a-ha are not British or from the US, they are very underrated in the music press. I mean, they are much, much better than Depeche Mode...*

I: A lot of great contemporary bands, such as Coldplay and the artist The Weeknd, recognize a-ha as a big inspiration, or is obviously inspired, why do you think?

TR: *If you don't like music from the 80's you listened to the wrong artists... When you are a teenager and grow up with a certain music it naturally inspires you and a-ha were so big in the UK and had a massive hit in the US, so naturally many bands were inspired by them. Including U2, Oasis, Kanye West, Keane, Weezer and Echo & The Bunnymen. Ian McCulloch of the Bunnymen even said to me that they were better than The Smiths. That's pushing it, but still.*

I: What's your personal favorite a-ha song?

TR: *I have to say three: Memorial Beach, Stay On These Roads and Hunting High And Low. But now I already regret not including Living A Boys Adventure Tale, Summer Moved On or The Sun Always Shines On TV. Tomorrow I would probably say I've Been Losing You, Manhattan Skyline and Lifelines... Oh, I almost forgot Take On Me.*

I: Can pop music change the world?

TR: Of course. Nelson Mandela would never have gotten out of prison without that song.

I: If you could be a pop star for a day, who would that be?

TR: *I've already been that. It's much more fun than being a hustler, which is what we need to be in the film industry.*

I: What's your dream project as a film director?

TR: *To make a film about a-ha recording an album.*