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Bio information: **LARS HOLLMER**

Title: **WITH FLOURY HAND (SKETCHES) / MED MJÖLAD HAND (SKISSER)** (Cuneiform Rune 340-341)

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**FILE UNDER: WORLD / AVANT-PROGRESSIVE ROCK / FOLK / 21<sup>st</sup> C. GLOBAL**

*"... he worked out an unmistakable and distinctive design, hybrid music he used to call it, which zigzags between different styles and influences. It also offers everything from jazz, rock and Zappa-inspired improvisation to rock balkan music, classic melodic loops and nonsense singing in falsetto. ....*

*While Lars Hollmer created music for the whole world, he never denied his roots in the Swedish music tradition. ....one of our most iconic world musicians"*  
–Malcolm Dixelius, *Fokus Magazine*

*"...it's his accordions that dominate, and there are few others, aside from Guy Kulcevsek, Richard Galliano and Jean-Louis Matinier, who can make the instrument sing the way Hollmer does. ...Hollmer's humanity shines through..."* –John Kelman, *All About Jazz*

The Talmud teaches that the loss of a single life is like the destruction of an entire world. But the passing of the prodigiously productive, beguilingly creative Swedish musician **Lars Hollmer**, who died at the age of 60 after a brief and sudden illness, is more like the end of a steadily expanding galaxy. The posthumously compiled album, **With Floury Hand (Sketches)** makes a compelling case for the vast scope and idiosyncratic humanity of Hollmer's kaleidoscopic musical vision. A composer of astonishing range and depth who combined earthy folk forms with a wide torrent (rock, jazz, film scores, carnival and circus music, classical and more!) of contemporary musical currents, Hollmer's music transcended any single musical genre and evoked the heart and soul of traditional Scandinavian music. Like **Astor Piazzola** (Argentina), **Ivo Puposav** (Bulgaria), and **Fela Kuti** (Nigeria), he was a musician/composer who created radically unique, modern music that paid homage to indigenous folk forms. Beloved in his native land, which awarded him a **Swedish Grammy** for 1998's **Andetag**, and long revered internationally by the musical avant-garde, he died on Christmas Day 2008, on the verge of gaining overdue popular recognition on music's global stage.

An accordionist, keyboardist, vocalist and composer who has written scores for film, theater and dance projects, Hollmer played a central role in numerous bands, while sustaining longstanding relationships with a global array of musicians. In a four-decade career defined by a gift for passionate collaboration, he was a galvanizing force in an array of musical contexts, from the Nordic progressive rock of **Samla Mammas Manna** and the Japanese collaborative ensemble **SOLA** to the international genre-exploding conclave of **Accordion Tribe** and the guitar explorations of **Fred Frith**. A charter member of the hugely influential **Rock In Opposition (RIO)** movement launched by **Henry Cow** in the late 1970s, Hollmer performed with Samla Mammas Manna at the first RIO festival in London in 1978. He continued to work with Frith (Henry Cow), **Michel Berckmans (Univers Zero)**, and other globe-trotting RIO stars throughout his lifetime. Shortly before his death, besides membership in the international Accordion Tribe supergroup, Hollmer was performing at festivals and touring on three continents with an unprecedented number of ensembles from Sweden, Japan and French Canada (**Jean Derome**, **FanFare Pourpour**, **Miriodor**), and appearing on numerous recordings. At the same time, he was collaborating with the Japanese **Disk Union** and American **Cuneiform** labels to release a solo album. In May 2008, Cuneiform released the beautifully brooding **Viandra** world-wide (excepting Japan). Hollmer's 12<sup>th</sup> solo album and his first-ever released in the USA, **Viandra** was greeted with a deluge of positive reviews in the international music press.

On the cusp of greater recognition following **Viandra's** release, Hollmer was stricken before he had a chance to record a follow-up. Assembled by his son, **Gabriel Strand Hollmer**, **With Floury Hand** provides an unvarnished look at a brilliant composer whose work is so protean that an uninitiated listener might swear it was the output of half a dozen artists. The two-disc package features a CD of fascinating studio odds and ends gleaned from Hollmer's personal archives, and a DVD of two 2005 live performances, including a sensational set from the **Gouveia Art Rock Festival** and an intimate duo performance in a Northern European cafe.

Listening to the CD is like stepping into Hollmer's legendary home studio in Uppsala, the **Chickenhouse**, and watching his capaciously inventive mind at work. Recorded between the early 1980s and 2008, the 26 tracks encompass a myriad of moods, styles and textures. Constructed via multitracking as he employed his full arsenal, including accordion, keyboards, melodica, ukulele, mandolin, sequencers, drum machine, percussion, and vocals, the music touches on the full range of human experience. Achingly beautiful, sardonic, gloriously grooving, manic, tender and ferocious, the tunes feel lovingly hand made, as if he pulled the various influences, themes and traditions out of his toolkit and worked them together to see how they fit.

From track to track he evokes the rapidly shifting meters of a Balkan brass band, the galumphing oompah of a polka combo, the sinuous pulse of a Latin dance band, and the steady churn of drum 'n' bass. He croons like a tipsy waiter and then offers a poignant tribute to a family pooch whose dog years ran out too early. Among the curiosities are some gems that will delight and amaze Hollmer fans, like his original studio version of "Franklåt," which was previously documented on 1993's live album **Door Floor Something Window**. And there's a lustrous version of "Vendelvarianter" from the classic 1987 album **Vendeltid**.

More than a bonus, the DVD is a real treasure that brings Hollmer out of the studio and on to the bandstand, where he was also entirely in his element. With excellent sound and professional, multi-camera production, the video from Portugal's Gouveia Art Rock Festival opens with Hollmer on stage solo, a riveting performer accompanying his evocative vocals with accordion and melodica. With his instrumental prowess and rock star charisma Hollmer doesn't need anyone else, but when joined by bassoonist Berckmans he's energized by the company, whipping through even fiercer tempos ("We are brothers in many senses...Some people you just feel this with," Hollmer said of Berckmans in an interview).

*[press release continued on verso]*

P . O . B O X 8 4 2 7 • S I L V E R S P R I N G , M A R Y L A N D • 2 0 9 0 7 - 8 4 2 7 U S A

In one of *Floury Hand's* many fascinating subplots, the Canadian band **Miriodor** appears for a rousing version of "Talrika," a song included on the CD in a much darker solo incarnation. Cuneiform labelmates Miriodor headlined the Gouveia festival that year, celebrating their new 2005 album, *Parade*, which included several collaborative tunes with Hollmer.

Less essential but highly entertaining is the bonus footage of Hollmer with accordionist **Fizzè** (aka **Victor de Bros**), in duet at a Swiss restaurant. What the footage lacks in production values it more than makes up for with Hollmer's consistent power as a performer. The set includes a gorgeous rendition of Hollmer's most popular song, "**Boeves Psalm**," which secured him a place in Sweden's classic songbook and cemented his reputation across Scandinavia.

Hollmer's relationship with **Cuneiform** dates back to 1999, when the label released *1983*, a stellar live session by the masterly avant progressive band **Von Zmla**, recorded by Radio Bremen and featuring **Michel Berckmans** on bassoon and oboe, guitarist **Eino Haapala**, **Hans Loelv** on keyboards, bassist **Wolfgang Salomon**, drummer **Mårten Tiselius** and Hollmer on piano, organ, Korg, and accordion. *20<sup>th</sup> Century Guitar* hailed *1983* as a revelatory session, "clear proof that back during the heyday of the late '70s European dominated 'rock in opposition' movement, von Zmla were in fact, one of Europe's great instrumental rock sensations, a band that defied musical structures while building new ones."

After releasing numerous solo albums on **Krax**, his private label, Hollmer and Cuneiform decided to collaborate again for *Viandra*, his first solo CD on an American label. Featuring old comrades like Berckmans and violinist **Santiago Jimenez**, it's a startlingly beautiful album, introspective, reflective, and openhearted. Recorded and mixed over the course of seven years (2001-7), the album showcases Hollmer on keyboards and accordion, melodica, glockenspiel, digital drums, percussion, wordless vocals, mandolin, and more. *Dream Magazine* described *Viandra* as "songs that feel like chamber music renditions of forlorn lullabies, lost Gypsy hymns, Aksak Maboul trading jokes with Penguin Cafe Orchestra, or soundtracks to nonexistent films from some dark corner of Europe."

Born on July 21, 1948, **Lars Gustav Gabriel Hollmer** was a largely self-taught player who made his first experimental forays on a zither given to him by his grandmother. He came of age in the late 1960s, when rock was rapidly taking on the sophistication of art music. While often pegged as a progressive rock pioneer, Hollmer found inspiration in folk, avant-garde, cabaret, world, and Western classical music. Elements of all these traditions can be found in his playing and composing, which gained authority and scope with each passing year.

Nothing better reveals the personal and welcoming nature of Hollmer's music than the way his home studio became a Mecca for an international cast of artists. He first gained attention playing keyboards in the progressive rock band Samla Mamma's Manna, which gathered at the Chickenhouse to record its eponymous 1971 debut album. Ever since, just about every band, project and important musical relationship of Hollmer's unfolded at his cozy Uppsala studio, which he built (and rebuilt) himself.

It wasn't until 1981 that he released his first album under his own name, *XII Siberian Bicycles*, and it was truly a solo effort, with Hollmer playing all the instruments. The session included his "Boeves Hymn," which has since been recorded by everyone from classical orchestras to accordionists. Throughout the 1980s and '90s, Hollmer composed music for numerous films and theatrical and dance performances, while also performing. He gained a new audience in 1985, when he formed **Looping Home Orchestra** to perform his solo music.

In 1996 Hollmer reached yet another audience when American accordion master **Guy Klucevsek** recruited him for a new international project, Accordion Tribe, an all-star quintet that also featured Finland's **Maria Kalanemi**, Slovenia's **Bratko Bibic** and Austria's **Otto Lechner**. Performing widely around Europe and Canada, the group released three acclaimed albums on **Intuition** and was the subject of Swiss filmmaker **Stefan Schwieter**'s award-winning 2006 documentary film, *Accordion Tribe - Music Travels*.

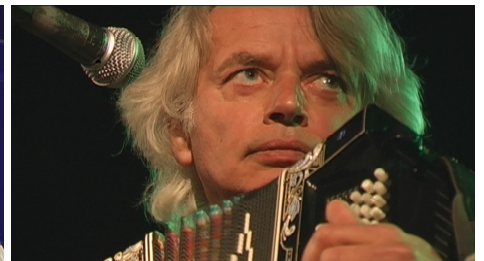
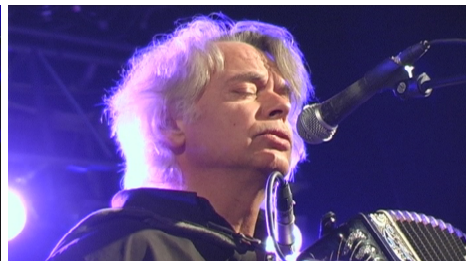
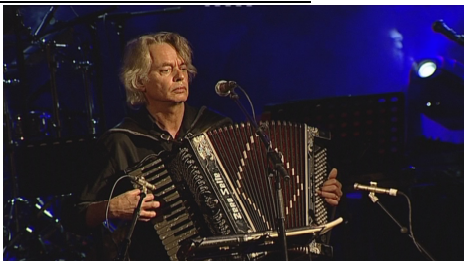
Hollmer's status as a musical renegade took a hit when his album 1998 *Andetag* won a **Swedish Grammy Award**. In presenting him with the award, the Swedish Music Academy recognized the prolific nature of his creative output, writing, "from Samla Mamma's Manna to 'Boeves Psalm' to the new CD *Andetag*...there's always wonderful music coming from the Chickenhouse."

Hollmer explained that he composed the music on *Andetag* while going through a difficult phase of his life. Recording served as a means in the process of creation rather than an ends, a means toward further creation. "When I make music it's in my head and I can't get rid of it until it's on a record," he said. "Only then can I leave it and go further. It's like a vernissage for a painter somehow. The CDs I make are my vernissages."

By the time he released 2008's *Viandra*, one of his most introspective and emotionally probing sessions, Hollmer seemed on the verge of further international recognition as both a virtuoso performer and immensely resourceful composer. All who had the pleasure of working with him are still coming to terms with his loss. Klucevsek decided that ultimately Accordion Tribe couldn't continue without Hollmer, and he offered a fitting tribute to his musical comrade.

"Lars was an autodidact and multi-instrumentalist who was completely fearless in his approach to music," Klucevsek said. "He could be unabashedly sentimental ('Boeves Psalm,' 'Soon Song'), write incredibly dense and complex counterpoint with the best of them ('Pas de Valse,' 'Utflykt med Damcyckle'), and the mischievous and joyfully wacked-out ('Circus I, II')... What is the common element in all these? To quote Lars from the documentary film 'Accordion Tribe: Music Travels,' 'It all begins here,' he says, pointing to his heart. 'It may go through here eventually,' he points to his head, 'but it all begins with the heart.'"

## **PROMOTIONAL PHOTOS**



Digital [High-Resolution] versions of these images are available for download on [www.cuneiformrecords.com](http://www.cuneiformrecords.com)

## BIOGRAPHY RESOURCES:

WIKIPEDIA, English: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lars\\_Hollmer](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lars_Hollmer) // Swedish: [http://sv.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lars\\_Hollmer](http://sv.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lars_Hollmer)

ALL MUSIC GUIDE - "Lars Hollmer: Biography" by Dave Lynch, *All Music Guide* <http://www.allmusic.com/artist/lars-hollmer-p87468/biography> [Dave Lynch's excellent biography is the most comprehensive biography of Hollmer available.]

"Given his longstanding membership in the quirky Samla Mamma's Manna, he was often considered a progressive rock performer, but Hollmer could just as easily be placed in folk, avant-garde, world, or even classical categories. Upon hearing his music...it's also easy to understand how he rendered labels meaningless, since his many influences were united by such a singular artistic persona. ...his music is also tuneful and accessible, and often disarmingly lovely.

...In Hollmer's compositions of this time one may hear the echo of classical works of a magical mood...but with a rustic quality entirely absent from the concert hall, as if the...folk themes Bartók discovered and used in his compositions had been wrested away from the classical setting and returned to their earthier points of origin, while also somehow maintaining a contemporary feel."

...paradoxically comfortable and challenging, traditional and cutting-edge" – Dave Lynch, *All Music Guide*

CUNEIFORM RECORDS: Press release for Lars Hollmer's *Viandra*, text/bio by Joyce, 2008, <http://www.cuneiformrecords.com/press/index.html#LH>

THE HISTORY OF ROCK MUSIC, "Samla Mamma's Manna: biography" by Piero Scaruffi, <http://www.scaruffi.com/vol3/samla.html>

## DISCOGRAPHY RESOURCES:

ALL MUSIC GUIDE - <http://www.allmusic.com/artist/lars-hollmer-p87468/discography/main>

DISCOGS - <http://www.discogs.com/artist/Lars+Hollmer>

## WHAT THE PRESS HAS SAID ABOUT LARS HOLLMER + VON ZAMLA RELEASES ON CUNEIFORM:

### LARS HOLLMER

### VIANDRA

### 2008

### CUNEIFORM

**Line-up:** Lars Hollmer (accordions, keyboards, melodica, percussion, mandolin, mandola, voices, and more)

Michel Berckmans (bassoons, English horn, oboe, melodica (on "Baladeis"), Santiago Jimenez (violins), Andreas Tengberg (cello)

and Morgan Ågren (additional drums on "Snabb"), Coste Aptrea (mandolin on "Alice"), Ulf Wallander (tenor sax on "Påztema"),

Love Hollmer, Viggo Hollmer and Klara Pellas (voices on "Lilla Bye" and "Alive")

"...*Viandra* is -- astoundingly -- Lars Hollmer's first solo album to be released stateside. ...despite the appearance on various tracks of old friends...

...*Viandra* is truly a solo Hollmer endeavor in a way not heard since 1997's *Andetag*...

The music on *Viandra* (which translates as "We + Others") was recorded and mixed between 2001 and 2007... The music itself is as wide-ranging as that [cover] photo collage and as strangely -- sometimes as magically -- wonderful as anything Hollmer has recorded... Lars dominates on keyboards and accordion and can also be heard on melodica, glockenspiel, digital drums, percussion, wordless vocals, mandolin, and more, while the strings and Berckmans' double reeds are secondarily the most dominant voices -- almost as if the more chamber-esque elements of *Utsikter* were married to Hollmer's '80s solo work. *Viandra* thus suggests a sweep back from 2007 through perhaps a quarter century of Lars' solo music, but more striking is the mood that he brings to the 16 compositions here... a sense of reflection sometimes touched with melancholy, a side of him sometimes lost in his collaborative projects with others.

"Alice" recalls the joyful innocence of "Simfågeldans"...written for an Alice in Wonderland theater project...but its conclusion turns harmonically dark... Even the briefest and gentlest of interludes, such as the wistful "Moldaviska"...mixes simple beauty with elements of sad knowledge... Other pieces tinged with darkness, melancholy, or a sense of life's fleeting treasures include "Fosta 05," ... However, Hollmer doesn't drown all of his lighter aspects in a sea of despair; *Viandra* is far more nuanced than that, and there are occurrences of untempered joy, innocence, and fun on the playlist, such as the uptempo polka-informed "Strutt." ... Still, on *Viandra* Lars Hollmer's music speaks of journeys away and back home again to a place...where emotions run the deepest, but where life stories don't necessarily have happy endings. [4.5 stars out of 5]"

–Dave Lynch, *All Music Guide*, [www.allmusic.com](http://www.allmusic.com)

"... The originator of Samla Mamma's Manna is an artist with incontestable transparency of intent, and *Viandra*...is great; perhaps not on the masterwork level of...1997's *Andetag* (Krax), but pretty close. Hollmer's aesthetic remains consistent: childish candor enhanced by a harmonic sagacity equally indebted to Bach and Scandinavian folk music, boosted by the intricacy that made SMM stalwarts of Rock In Opposition. The compositions on *Viandra* unleash a Wonderfalls-like series of surprises... Hollmer knows how to astonish through dissonant activity on the periphery of apparently innocuous lullabies. ... Best of all is the superb triptych of "Påztema", "Prozesscirk" and "Konstig (Strange)" at the CD's midpoint: prototypical specimens of the Swede's craft, these pieces alternate mystifying compositional devices (with Berckmans adding pinches of UniversZero-esque, bassoon-fueled mystery) and sudden openings onto poised consciousness, a poignant backwards look toward an unrepeatable, long-gone merriment."

–Massimo Ricci, *Paris Transatlantic Magazine*, October 2008, [www.paristransatlantic.com](http://www.paristransatlantic.com)

"...his beloved accordion...the most prominent feature in this gentle and easily accessible set of traditional and modern compositions, gathering musical pollen from the realms of folk, jazz, pop film, theatre and dance. Lars is joined by a stellar set of musical talent...

Lars' work is always rhythmically interesting...with the title track which has a quirky mix of time signatures rattling the framework of a solid folk melody. Pre-war silent cinema could be the setting in "Mirror Objects" whilst "Snabb" is indeed fast, with its theatrical idiom and dense dualled drums supplemented by Morgan Ågren.

We could be at the circus in "Konstig"... I'm reminded...of Canada's Miriodor... They share a humorous and optimistic take on life... The doomy cello and bass drum of "Första 05" are set off by a violin lament and semitonal accordion in this dirge.

...the collection is completed by..."Folkdron Menad"... Orchestra and choral parts are used to exquisite effect...a fittingly exotic closing piece in what is a highly personal work exposing the many facets of Lars Hollmer's talents."

–Richard Barnes, *Classic Rock Society*, Feb/March 2009 & *Sea of Tranquility*, September 2008

"A really enjoyable set of sixteen tracks by Swedish composer/accordionist/multi-instrumentalist Lars Hollmer with the assistance of a core quartet (including himself), augmented by a half a dozen additional players and voices.... Songs that feel like chamber music renditions of forlorn lullabies, lost Gypsy hymns, Aksak Maboul trading jokes with Penguin Cafe Orchestra, or soundtracks to nonexistent films from some dark corner of Europe."

–George Parsons, *Dream Magazine*, #9, [www.dreamgeo.com](http://www.dreamgeo.com)

“Veteran keyboardist-accordionist’s chamber quartet is informed by a wide range of folk traditions: Swedish polka and eastern among them with classical elements and improv...”  
–Selwyn Harris, *Jazzwise*, Issue 124, October 2008

“...This was a pleasant surprise. ...Swedish keyboard and accordion player Hollmer has instantly captured my fancy and I want to hear...his other 11 solo albums. ...

...You’ll find world music, folk, jazz, rock, Swedish pop tunes, minimalism, Fellini-esque film music, and Romantic period classical influences. There is also an innocence and simplicity a la The Penguin Cafe music, plus a Zappa-esque sense of humor. ...

... Contributing to the innocent sound of much of the music is the predominant use of simple instruments such as the melodica and mandolin. ...”

–John Henry, *Audiophile Audition*, June 26, 2008

“...there is wit, raucous good fun and a sense of joy in Lars Hollmer’s music... With Hollmer, one can always expect a quirky...take on a crazy quilt of folk, jazz and of course, prog. The music is smart, sophisticated, even complex, though the melodies may be simple and folk-inflected. As intelligent and clever as his compositions can be, never does Hollmer cross over into...pompous self-importance. ...

When he wants...Hollmer can be thoughtful, serious, even introspective, as he is in “Overdago” and “Folkdrömen Menad.” As in virtually all of his music, the results are magnificent.”  
–Dean Suzuki, *Progression*, Issue 55, Fall/Winter 2008

“new and noteworthy... Lars Hollmer *Viandra* (Cuneiform)” –Alexander Gelfand, *Jazziz*, Vol. 25 No. 08, October 2008

“Swedish multi-instrumentalist and co-founder of one of the earliest Rock in Opposition (RIO) groups, Samla Mammas Manna, Lars Hollmer has always been a melodic contrast to the...more outré explorations of companion groups like Henry Cow, Art Zoyd and Univers Zéro. Living in a universe of his own making, Hollmer's 2005 performance at Victoriaville, Canada's FIMAV festival drew heavily on his Scandinavian roots and there's no mistaking Hollmer's origins on *Viandra*. Still, it's a far more cosmopolitan affair that manages to be strangely innocent and frequently joyful despite being a more far-reaching sonic and emotional collage that's far deeper than its singable melodies might suggest.

...the involvement of Univers Zéro's Michel Berckmans...provides a direct tie between Hollmer and his RIO cousins. Even when its subject matter is dark...his music possesses an overarching joyful, albeit occasionally bittersweet, optimism that's in sharp contrast to Univers Zéro's darker landscapes.

There are more dramatic passages, with the serpentine melody of "Prozesscirk," performed in unison by Hollmer, Berckmans, violinist Santiago Jimenez and cellist Andreas Tengberg... Hollmer's idiosyncratic sense of humor surfaces on the aptly titled "Konstig (Strange),"... The interlocking counterpoint of the melancholy "Baladeis" still retains a compelling beauty that juxtaposes with the bright, polka-esque "Strutt (Strut),"... even when the mood is dark, there's an unmistakable poignancy that keeps *Viandra* thoroughly accessible. Folkloric elements imbue the title track, and the upbeat "Alice" reflects a happy exuberance... Hollmer's multi-instrumentalism lends this set a broad palette, but it's his accordions that dominate, and there are few others, aside from Guy Kulcevsek, Richard Galliano and Jean-Louis Matinier, who can make the instrument sing the way Hollmer does. ...Hollmer's humanity shines through...”  
–John Kelman, *All About Jazz*, July 30 2008, www.allaboutjazz.com

“...the music is composed by starting from the accordion. The most melodic and also happy pieces seem to be born out of ideas of mostly Swedish folk music (an occasional klezmer/jazzy flavour is also noticeable). These pieces sound a bit like instrumental “songs”. ... The arrangements...are rather a bit linear...and stay close to the same melody, just texturing some depth into it (sax, violin, bass, keyboards,...), or extra colours (mellotron). But they’re more often leaning to a slightly classical flavour. ... A few attempts are made for a more classical-chamber/“symphonic” approach of a Rock In Opposition nature (like with Samla Mammas Manna)... there are also the more dramatic or melancholic parts, with orchestra...”

–Gerald Van Waes, *psychevanhefolk*, www.psychedelicfolk.com

“While the album itself comes across as being sonically saturated throughout evenly, the lineup varies from...Hollmer doing everything on his own...to a quartet, with...Michel Berkman (of Univers Zero), Santiago Jimenez and Andreas Tengberg – on about a half of the tracks. ... it’s Lars’s accordion that is in most cases in the focus of this recording’s overall sound. ...the music on “Viandra” belongs to several genre domains... On six of the tracks... Lars seems to pay homage to his native folk music... these are emotionally uplifting... Of the two tracks featuring vocalizations, *Little Bye* and *Alice*, ...both are strongly reminiscent of songs for children... There is one more bunch of stylistically kindred compositions...*Prozesscirk*, *Baladeis*, *First 05*, *Ovendago* and *Folkdrömen Menad*... are filled with a deep sense of drama. ...each of the compositions is a real thing of beauty... imagine classic Art Zoyd performing something halfway between Modest Mussorgsky’s “Pictures at an Exhibition” and “Messe en re-Mineur” by Wapassou with elements of Igor Stravinsky’s “The Firebird”. Finally, *Strange* brings together all the styles ever available on the recording plus Rock-In-Opposition... think Univers Zero, Art Zoyd, L’Ensemble Raye, the Hamster Theatre and Samla Mammas Manna... ...Lars Hollmer’s music has a strong identity to it...”  
–Vitaly Menshikov, *Progressor*, January 10, 2009, www.progressor.net

“...Lars is a unique amalgam of folk music from Sweden and lots of other countries, rock, pop, jazz, experimental, improvised, cabaret, film, circus music to name but a few. At ... Krax home page it is described as 'music as eccentric, avant-garde, extreme, intelligent, intimate, crazy, adventurous, bizarre, progressive, elusive, childish, capricious and as difficult to define as ever'. It still is, and more! Listening to *Viandra*, I might add...some sombre moments, too. ...

... a few tracks ...seem closer to new/contemporary "serious" music... Almost small chamber compositions for accordion, keyboards, violin, cello, bassoon, oboe ... Lars' wilder accordion excesses and quiet melancholic pieces still dominate... My favourite tracks range from the short and bitter-sweet melancholic... "Moldaviska", via the sweet melancholic lazy "Påztema"...to the happy-go-lucky "Strutt (Strut)"...and so on.... The only element I miss compared to other solo albums by Lars is his voice. ...

... The album is Lars' first to be released by the great US independent label Cuneiform... *Viandra* is ... one of my top three favourite albums of 2008 so far and might be as convenient an introduction to his unique music as most of his other solo output. After all, 95 percent of his melody lines here couldn't have been written by anybody else and all the arrangements are 100 percent pure UNIQUE LARS HOLLMER. ...”

–Luna Kafé e-zine, 8/16/08, www.lunakafe.com/moon146/se146.php

## VON ZAMLA

1983

CUNEIFORM

1999

musicians featured on this CD (on both performances):

*Michel Berckmans* - bassoon, oboe / *Eino Haapala* – guitar / *Lars Hollmer* - piano, organ, korg, accordion  
*Hans Loelv* - piano, organ, korg, melodica / *Wolfgang Salomon* – bass / *Mårten Tiselius* - drums

“The music contained on *1983* is clear proof that back during the heyday of the late ‘70s European dominated ‘rock in opposition’ movement, von Zamla were in fact, one of Europe’s great instrumental rock sensations, a band that defied musical structures while building new ones. ... Covering

many of the group's styles -ranging from scintillating progressive rock overtures and Zappa-inspired madness to folkloristic journeys spanning epic proportions -1983 is a fine live document finding the mid '80s Zamla is their prime... a valuable live document captured in fabulous sound by the engineers at Radio Bremen. Cuneiform Records should be commended for including some fabulous artwork, photos and track data."

—Robert Silverstein, *20<sup>th</sup> Century Guitar*, December 1999

"Cuneiform, bless them, released this, recorded from two concerts in 1983... The music on here takes whimsical, pretty melodies and arranges them in complex and novel ways. The addition of Michel Berkman's wind instruments...really does it for me...in many songs he takes center stage, and in fact the disc opens with a slow, thoughtful oboe melody... The ensemble overall is tight and focused, the arrangements are very interesting...and the compositions are pretty good. ... Definitely a worthy release, for RIO fans as well as those that like more accessible music – there are plenty of great melodies here."

—Brandon Wu, *Ground and Sky*, www.progreviews.com

"...records this good aren't supposed to be released any more. Records which give you a very recognizable version of music you have enjoyed for decades which somehow is nonetheless completely fresh and utterly delightful were long ago...by...many very large record companies, deemed unreleasable. ..."

All determinism and structure...Von Zamla could meld together riff-happy Passport hooks, hot organ/synth solos a la Keith Emerson in a subtle mood for once, dryly humorous bassoon work, and a National Health/Happy the Man-like sense of musical architecture. In point of fact Von Zamla was the premier prog band in the world in the early 1980s and most of us bloomin' well never even realized it. ...listen to the crazily varied ditties on these...performances and you hear: a wittily drunken carousel melody informing "Harujanta," complete with lovely oboe from current Univers Zero woodwind honcho Michel Berckmans...to say nothing of a Thijs van Leer homage...and some hot accordion too; or Hans Loelv's tart bit of Herbie Hancock-like electric piano running riot throughout the Magma-with-a-wink structures of "Forgeetyde"; whizzy Zappa-like guitar from Eino Haapala nudging some more tonsil-clearing vocal...on "Temporal you are"; the opening "Ten Tango," which IS ...blinding rifferama but which is most assuredly NOT a tango; and there's another 9 tunes here that are as good or better. Simply classic in their support are Wolf Salomon (bass) and drummer Marten Tiselius... And most important of all, these by turns arid and/or lush melodies are very much this band's own... If you buy only one "prog" record this year, 1983 must be it. ..."

—Ken E., *Tone Clusters*, #74, Dec. 1999

"1983 is a recent release of live recordings from 1983... Half comes from a radio session so the sound is immaculate, and half from a live concert, but even these are very well recorded with very little audience noise. All beautifully played and if you already know the band you'll definitely want this."

—Alan Terrill, "the Zamla/Zamla/Hollmer legacy," *Audion*, #44, Spring 2001

"The TONE CLUSTERS Top 40 And Then Some Best Records of 1999: #41. Von Zamla - 1983 - Cuneiform-USA"

—*Tone Clusters*, Issue 75, March/April 2000

"...More than any other RIO group, the Zamlas loved to juxtapose in their writing a sense of contrast between light and dark, dissonance and consonance. Give them credit...for never trying to pawn themselves off as Swedish "folk" music... Nevertheless, that distinctive flair of Scandinavia is always there hidden in the depths of their sound. 13 selections...reveal those signature twisting spiraling melodies, the bursting of creative spirit, captured here in a live recording of pristine sound quality, and immaculate performance ability. A few keys to the light-handedness of Zamla's style: the bassist plays melodically; guitar is kept down to a dull roar; and the drummer eschews bass drums. Seminal and essential music of the RIO strain though it may be, it possesses a jolly, jovial persona, whose emphasis on instruments spares us the kind of strident Marxist ideology that made the British RIO wing so irritating. It's going to be a tough hill to climb for any other contender to dethrone *Live 1983* as archive release of the year."

—Mike Ezzo, "Roundtable reviews", *Exposé*, Issue #18, November 1999

"...there is wit, raucous good fun and a sense of joy in Lars Hollmer's music... With Hollmer, one can always expect a quirky...take on a crazy quilt of folk, jazz and of course, prog. The music is smart, sophisticated, even complex, though the melodies may be simple and folk-inflected. As intelligent and clever as his compositions can be, never does Hollmer cross over into...pompous self-importance. ..."

When he wants...Hollmer can be thoughtful, serious, even introspective, as he is in "Overdago" and "Folkdron Menad." As in virtually all of his music, the results are magnificent."

—Dean Suzuki, *Progression*, Issue 55, Fall/Winter 2008

"This is a rather special album. Created through the collaboration between Krax/Chance Production, Cuneiform Records and Radio Bremen, it is a recording from two concerts Von Zamla played in Germany in 1983 – hence the title. ..."

Listening to the music I am reminded of a National Health-sound with more instruments. The music is complex without being inaccessible. The ambiance wavers between quasi-classical and freeform jazz fusion. Sometimes...electric guitars are the fore...then suddenly we are listening to bassoons and oboes. Likewise there is a wide variation in the seriousness of the sound. ..."

...the quality of the recording is tremendous. I will accept that this is a live recording because the sleeve notes tell me so. But to be honest, this is studio quality and then some! ...most musicians playing live add a few bum notes... These guys don't, the whole sound is spot-on..."

This is an excellent album. For something as complex, it is not only very accessible – but it drips with fun and enjoyment. ... "

—Frank Blades, *Alternate View*, 2000, prog.rockhaven.co.uk

"...bands like Genesis and Yes may never be forgiven by many of the musical press but if some of those who knock the genre so freely heard albums such as this they would surely think again. ...These musicians surely never intended to be Genesis clones and never sold out, creating movements such as rock in opposition. ..."

...Von Zamla integrated more traditional instruments such as melodica and accordion along with oboe to team with the proforma instruments!! ...progressive rock with more extrovert and intense nature... The vocals, where there are any, are quite like a madcap Thijs Van Leer, but this just adds to the fun."

—MH, *Wondrous Stores*, Issue 94, Nov. 1999

"This sharp live recording captures two peak performances by Sweden's Von Zamla, a progressive sextet... [who] never fell prey to the labored pseudoclassicism of their UK counterparts, turning instead to the buoyant, tweaked melodies of Scandinavian folk music for inspiration. Von Zamla's crunching rhythmic profile and puissant ensemble playing generate an infectious, floor-stomping energy, counterpoised by the ominous undercurrents of Michel Berckman's oboe and bassoon. At once arch, anthemic, dark, and rhapsodic, *1983* proves an ideal introduction to Von Zamla's challenging, yet ultimately tuneful musical language."

—Michael Draine, *Vendetta*, #13, 1999

"Von Zamla, an offshoot of the wonderful Swedish ensemble, Samlas [Mammas] Manna, creates music that is extraordinarily technical, humorous and multifaceted. ... Through the course of these 13 tracks, the group incorporates aspects of modern Classical, Jazz, Swedish Folk and progressive

music delivered with joyous abandon and virtuosity. Suffice it to say that *1983* captures the band in fine form and is a delight from start to finish. Much credit goes to Cuneiform for presenting such consistently superb and challenging music. Indeed, theirs is a labor of love!"

–Paul Lemos, *Under the Volcano*

"Von Zamla is, in many ways, Zamla Mammaz Manna without the zaniness and humor, a less-rock oriented line-up that is quite sober and often somber. ... The sound quality is pristine and of very high quality, and as one moves through the 13 songs, one is treated to a strange heaping of folk and experimental rock, heavy on the RIO influence, and played immaculately by some great musicians. ...for high originality and excellent musicianship, this one definitely fits the bill nicely. A welcome archive." – Mike McLatchey, "Roundtable reviews", *Exposé*, Issue #18, Nov. 1999

"Best of 1999: Michael Draine (Vendetta): Albums: Von Zamla 1983" –*Vendetta*, #14

"...Keyboard and accordion-wielding wonderboy Lars Hollmer and Zamla-era guitarist Eino Haapala's post-Zamla Mammaz Manna ensemble Von Zamla are operating at the very apex of their abilities. ...Von Zamla are nothing less than a force of nature. There's a severity and even darkness to some of this (something anathema to Samla Mammaz Manna) that moves *1983* closer to the acute, angst-ridden drama of *Univers Zero* or *Present* than anything their previous work would lead you to expect. It's goosebump-inducing artistry of the highest order."

–Eric Lumbeau, *Alternative Press*, #131, April 2000

"What a pleasant and tasty surprise! From the archives of Radio Bremen comes this CD of live performances circa 1983 by Sweden's Von Zamla... Von Zamla's music shares similarities with that of *Univers Zero*, featuring a similar jagged quality with piquant, even dissonant harmonies akimbo, frenzied energy, careening melodic lines, and craggy rhythms.

Whereas *Univers Zero*'s music had a somber, swarthy tenor, Von Zamla's tack was full of wild humor and good-natured mayhem. On top of that, there was a folk element imbedded in the music – the accordion played a pivotal role here – giving it an undeniable Scandinavian patina.

... The playing is tight and impassioned, proving Von Zamla to be a terrific, hot live band. Great, clean sound, splendid music, superb playing ... sounds like a winner to me."

–Dean Suzuki, *Progression*, #33, Fall/Winter 1999

"...my expectations were very high when I pressed play on my CD player. I wasn't disappointed when Von Zamla's well-recognized music came out... The cover artwork "Halvtid" is made by Tage Åsén who also did the art work for Samla Mammaz Manna's albums..."

Fans of Samla Mammaz Manna / Von Zamla have had very much to enjoy this year, as Samla Mammaz Manna has released a new album this year... Both these releases are indispensable stuff. Highly recommended!"

–Greger Rönnqvist, *Prog-Reviews*, Yahoo! Groups

#### **ARTICLES & FEATURES & CONCERTS:**

"Lars's music is hard to pigeonhole. It is experimental, blending the serious, the joyful and the absurd with an honesty that borders on the naive. There are elements of rock, ballad, comic song, art music and hymn, often with echoes of world music."

–*Swedish Performing Rights Society*, February 1, 2005

"...a highly inventive solo artist..."

His solo work...is characterized by an unsurprising dominance of accordion and keyboards, avant-garde sensibilities tempered by a superb understanding of harmony as well as disharmony, an abundance of folk, jazz and classical influences and a playful sense of humor.

...The music of Lars Hollmer is highly recommended to fans of RIO who still know how to appreciate a good melody..." –*ProgArchives.com*

"...this is Edgefest's 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary. That calls for a celebration..."

...artistic director and festival co-founder Dave Lynch... may be most excited about Saturday' night's...performance from Swedish composer and musician Lars Hollmer..."

"This is perhaps the single most ambitious concert that I have personally organized," he says. "Lars Hollmer's been recording, composing and performing music on keyboards and accordions since 1969, and has been compared to everyone from Astor Piazzolla and Nino Rota to Brian Eno. There are elements of everything in there. It's too rock to be considered folk, and it's too folk to be considered jazz, it's too classical to be considered experimental, and it's too noisy to be considered... Lars Hollmer could be one of the leading musicians and composers of the late 20<sup>th</sup> century and early 21<sup>st</sup> century. And everyone inevitably loves the music."

–David Lynch interviewed by Johnny Loftus, "Close to the edge: Edgefest celebrates 10 years of music and creativity," *Metro Times*, [www.metrotimes.com](http://www.metrotimes.com), 10/11/06

"...In a new world in which rock is no longer just guitars, jazz is no longer simply about trumpets and saxophones, and the very genres all blend, every instrument gets its due, and accordionists have hit back with a vengeance. ...

Sweden's Lars Hollmer is one of the most original members of this new tribe. ... What has made him stand out from the beginning, however, is his compositional and conceptual ability; as with Astor Piazzola...his instrumental work and compositional work are inseparable. ...the main characteristic of his art is that it defies all attempts at facile classification.

...to choose one word...kaleidoscopic. Rock rhythms, various European, South American, and Asian folklike refrains, jazz riffs, nineteenth- and twentieth-century symphonic strains, and schmaltzy Swedish pop swirl by. The word eclectic does not do this justice; he is more what the French call a bricoleur... What makes this all work is Hollmer's strong sense of musical form. He is, above all, a disciplined composer, and his work is constantly changing, as he seeks out new collaborators in this native Sweden, in Canada, or in Japan. "

–Piotr Michalowski, *Arborweb*, October 2006, [www.arborweb.com](http://www.arborweb.com)

"My influences? Hard to tell. Of course I like artists like Robert Wyatt, Albert Marcoeur, Tamla Movton, Wagner, Beethoven, Prokofieff...even some stuff of Michael Jackson."

Lars Hollmer is a true original. From his home base in Uppsala, Sweden, Hollmer and his accordion explore sublime regions of varied musical worlds, drawing on rock, prog, Scandinavian folk music, circus music, organ grinders and other cultural traditions. ...

... Just about any sounds or rhythms that may enter his world seem to be fair game and may eventually turn up on a composition. ... "I always write the music down on paper," he said. "I need to do it to be able to communicate with other musicians. I compose everything myself from the heart. ..."

–William Burke, "Outside the Chicken Shack: Lars Hollmer Brings Samla Mama to the U.S.," *The Squid's Ear*, 2003-12-15

"Luna Kafé concert review: Lars Hollmer: Bla, Oslo, September 30<sup>th</sup> 1999 ...



... The music of Lars Hollmer is not easy to pin down. It includes traces of the folk music of Sweden and lots of other countries, rock, pop, jazz, experimental, improvised, cabaret – in a Kurt Weill kind of way, film – Nino Rota (of Fellini and *The Godfather* theme Fame) is not too far away, circus music, etc. This mix includes slow melancholy, humour, ominous omens, breathtaking tempo and sounds like no one else. It's pure Lars Hollmer music. This evening most songs were taken from Lars' latest solo offering *Andetag*... Most of the songs have a certain film quality. They are almost small movies by themselves.

The musicians appreciated each other's company... there was a certain kind of good-time magic in the air. ...” – JP, *Lunakafe*, www.lunakafe.com

**OBITUARIES** (Compiled & Swedish text translated by Sara Heineken, Publicity & Promotion Department Intern, Cuneiform Records, 2011)

“Lars Hollmer: Musiker, dog den 26 december, 61 år gammal.” *FOKUS Magazine*, January 30, 2009 by Malcolm Dixelius, <http://www.fokus.se/2009/01/lars-hollmer/>  
“Gradually he worked out an unmistakable and distinctive design, hybrid music he used to call it, which zigzags between different styles and influences. It also offers everything from jazz, rock and Zappa-inspired improvisation to rock balkan music, classic melodic loops and nonsense singing in falsetto. ...

While Lars Hollmer created music for the whole world, he never denied his roots in the Swedish music tradition. On the contrary, he created one of today's most popular and played holiday songs, “Boeves hymn”, melodically soft and melancholy in a highly popular tone. And when in 1998 he received a Grammy for the CD “Love,” it was of the folk music class. ...to one of our most iconic world musicians...” –Malcolm Dixelius

*Sverige (Sweden) Radio*, December 29, 2008, by Stefan Wermelin, <http://sverigesradio.se/sida/artikel.aspx?programid=1012&artikel=2536717>

Multiinstrumentalisten och kompositören Lars Hollmer är död. Han började som medlem i progrockbandet Samla Mammas Manna för att så småningom spela musik i de mest olika stilar. Sådär minns Sveriges Radios Stefan Wermelin Lars Hollmer. (SR Mim 29/12)

*Stim.se* by Mattias Franzen on February 1, 2005, Stockholm, <http://www.stim.se/sv/PRESS/Intervjuer/Lars-Hollmer-samlar-manna/>

“It is difficult to determine the genre of Lars' music. It is experimental and mixes seriousness, joy, and absurdity with an almost naive sincerity. There are elements of rock, show, pop, couplet, classical music, and hymns, often to a coloration of world music. Sometimes his music was called prog rock, but it is a classification that Lars does not agree with.

*Dagens Nyheter (Daily News in Sweden)* critic Ingmar Glanzelius once wrote that Lars' band “Samla Mammas Manna” should have their own section in record shops. That could really apply to all of Lars' music. He recorded over thirty very different discs since his debut in 1971.

“Lars Hollmer var en unik musikanter,” *UNT.se, (Uppsala Nya Tidning, Uppsala's New Newspaper)*, December 29, 2008 by Andreas Jakobsson, Uppsala <http://www.unt.se/inc/print/quotlars-hollmer-var-en-unik-musikanter-249806-default.aspx>

“ He was a unique musician with an extremely broad phrase book, says Uppsala musician Claes Janson. Clearly one of the greats, although he appeared in a small format. ... His friend [Hans] Loelv played with him in Samla Mammas Manna in the early 80's and since then has steadily been with him. He describes Lars Hollmer as an extremely creative and humorous musician. ... In the case of Lars Hollmer's importance as a musician and composer he does not hesitate. - Ten years ago I predicted that he would be declared a genius after his death and I am still convinced, he says.”

“Lars Hollmer 1948–2008,” *Blaskan: din tidning på webben!* (your newspaper on the web!) by Dr. Indie

[http://www.blaskan.nu/Blaskan/Nummer77/In\\_memoriam/in\\_memoriam59.html](http://www.blaskan.nu/Blaskan/Nummer77/In_memoriam/in_memoriam59.html)

“Lars Hollmer. He is one of our few real world musicians who really played world music in the right context in which we see styles blend together and shock people. Lars Hollmer was the founder of the most experimental band Samla Mammas Manna. ... One can go on forever detailing Lars Hollmer's different projects that he inspired others to participate in. We know the biggest hit, most likely in all of world music, is his song Boeves Psalm that was popular for a long time in the 80's. ...

“Dödsfall.. Mångsidig musiker i många band: Dödsfall Musikern Lars Hollmer avled under julhelgen efter en tids sjukdom, 60 år gammal.”

*Sydsvenskan (Southern Swedish Newspaper)* by Alexander Agrell on December 29, 2008,

<http://www.sydsvenskan.se/familj/dodsfall/article402102/Mangsidig-musiker-i-manga-band.html>

“A giant in the Swedish music scene.” He motivated the Grammy-jury in 1999 that awarded him the show/folk Grammy for his album “Love.”

“Lars Hollmer - XII Sibiriska Cyklar” & “Guy Klucevsek Q&A”, Jan. 17, 2011, *Clockwork Orchestra Blog*, <http://www.clockworkorchestra.com/blog.html>

[This contains a review of one of Lars' CDS along with a superb interview by Guy Klucevsek, who discusses Lars' music]

“I adored the music! It was heart-felt, complex and naively innocent at the same time. Wonderful counterpoint, beautiful melodies, wacky sense of humor. ...I felt an immediate kinship with the music, though we came from very different background--Lars an auto-didact, playing in bands; me with classical accordion training. ...

Problem is that we get pigeon-holed as “non-commercial,” and that limits our possibilities for success in the mainstream. But I don't think Lars concerned himself at all with that. He kept creating music non-stop, for the pure joy and wonder of it. ... As a performer, he brought an intensity and focus to everything he did on stage with us, but he also had a wonderful sense of playfulness, zaniness, and a willingness to try anything. And raw, explosive energy!” –Guy Klucevsek

“In Loving Memory of Lars Hollmer,” *Hoedown Artist Representation*, <http://hoedown.com/main.site?action=siteupdate/view&id=5>

“Dec 25, 2008 : Lars Hollmer ... It is with deep sadness to report the passing of Lars Hollmer. A member of Accordion Tribe as well as many other projects and ensembles, he was known as one of the most adventurous musicians in the world for the past forty years, starting with the Swedish band Samla Mammas Manna and continuing forward to his most recent album Viandra. His energy and passion for adventure and fun in music was matched by his generosity and unlimited energy. His spark, in music and character, was unique in the world and will be deeply missed.

Fellow Accordion Tribe member Guy Klucevsek sends this tribute to his friend and fellow musician.

“My dear friend and Accordion Tribe colleague, Lars Hollmer, passed away on Dec. 25, 2008, at the age of 60.

Lars was an auto-didact and multi-instrumentalist (accordion, keyboards, voice, melodica, etc.) who was completely fearless in his approach to music. He could be unabashedly sentimental (Boeves Psalm, Soon Song), write incredibly dense and complex counterpoint with the best of them (Pas de Valse, Utflykt med Damcyckle), and be mischievous and joyfully wacked-out (Circus I, II). And that's only the Accordion Tribe repertoire! He managed to record about 30 albums in all, mostly in his legendary home studio, the Chickenhouse, both solo (11), and with his many groups, including The Looping Home Orchestra and Samla Mammas Manna.

What is the common element in all these? To quote Lars from the documentary film, “Accordion Tribe: Music Travels” (Stefan Schwieter, Maximage Films, 2002), “It all begins here,” (he says, pointing to his heart); “it may go through here eventually,” (he points to his head), “but it all begins with the heart.” - Guy Klucevsek

“Lars Hollmer” by Richard Barnes, *Classic Rock Society*, Issue 170, Feb/March 2009, England

“Lars died of cancer at the age of just 60 on Christmas Day... Lars was a great inspiration and help to many musicians pushing the boundaries of rock and jazz but it was equally at ease with folk music and traditional Nordic tunes at his home studio in Uppsala called The Chickenhouse. ...”

– DN.se (*Dagens Nyheter*, Today's News) 12-27-2008 by Nils Hansson, Stockholm: <http://www.dn.se/kultur-noje/musikern-lars-hollmer-har-avlidit>

– “Internationellt kände dragspelaren Lars Hollmer har avlidit,” *Lira Musikmagasin*, Karin Jacobson, Jan 6, 2009, Göteborg, [www.lira.se/article.asp?articleid=2898](http://www.lira.se/article.asp?articleid=2898)

– *World Music Central*, January 6, 2009 by TJ Nelson, <http://worldmusiccentral.org/2009/01/06/2008-music-obituaries-december/>

– “Lars Hollmer har avlidit,” *Dödsfall* 2008-12-29, *Barometern.se* OT.se 12-29-2008 by (TT Spektra); *Barometern Oskarshamns-Tidningen*, Oskarshamn

<http://www.barometern.se/familj/dodsfall/lars-hollmer-har-avlidit%281058010%29.gm>

– “Lars Hollmer” by Om Rakotozafy, *Rakotozafy Sweden*, 28 december 2008, <http://rakotozafy.wordpress.com/2008/12/28/lars-hollmer/>

– “Lars Hollmer Passes Away”, *Let's Polka*, December 29th, 2008, <http://www.letspolka.com/2008/12/lars-hollmer-passes-away/>

**[Lars Hollmer on Rock In Opposition (RIO)]**

“[*Exposé*:] Can you relate any specific unique memories when Samla performed at the RIO festival in the UK? How many gigs did you do in Europe under the same banner? How was your band received?”

[Hollmer:] It was the first time we went outside Scandinavia. We had been playing a lot in Sweden, Norway, and Finland. So it was an adventure, but the main thing was that we suddenly discovered that we were not alone. Other groups in Europe were fighting themselves also, with their music to survive. Suddenly we got a lot of new friends that gave the future a new direction. So it was a lot of good meetings. I can't point out anything specific. We traveled together with Etron Fou LeLouban, so we got the best contact with them of course: Guigou Chenevier, Ferdinand Richard etc. We invited them to Sweden and they invited us to France. Stormy Six invited us to Italy, Univers Zero to Belgium and we invited them to Sweden and so on. We met Albert Marcoeur in London. He is a musician who would invite us some years later to France who had a big impact on me. And so on and so on – beautiful times.

... I met Fred [Frith] for the first time in 1976... we became close friends...when he made *Gravity* in my old Chickenhouse in 1979. Then we kept in touch over the years and finally I invited him to join the Looping Home Orchestra II in 89. ...

Oh Michel [Berkmans]! He is one of my oldest and closest friends. We are brothers in many senses you know? Some people you just feel this with. And we will never stop our relation. We will always play together from time to time; we share so much. The first time I met Michel was in London 1978 in the RIO times. He was in Univers Zero and I was in Zamla. But we really came close when Eino Haapala and I invited him to play in our group “von Zamla” 1982. ...

**[on music titles/life experiences]**

... For me the titles on my albums are very important, and I try to find names that fit the music and reason for it. All my records are a reflection on what experiences I've had in life: the important things that happen to me and my near ones. ...

**[on composing music]**

... *Andetag* was made during a period in my life when I had a hard time for personal reasons... All music on the CD is influenced of my present situation then. ...when I make music it's in my head and I can't get rid of it until it's on a record. Only then can I leave it and go further. It's like a vernissage for a painter somehow. The CDs I make are my vernissages. On *Andetag* I used more electronic instruments than before, still focusing on real instruments up-front like accordion, melodica, and violin. It was just continuing like before, but more electronics...

**[on the Chickenhouse]**

“I use Chickenhouse (CH) for both demos and final recording studio, and mixing. It's a rehearsal place and all around my musical activities. ... All groups with me have started and rehearsed here except Accordion tribe... Samla started in the old CH 1969 as well as Zamla, Von Zamla, Looping Home Orchestra, Fem söker en skatt, Andetagen, Utsikter. And other constellations came from here. ... Mostly I have ideas ready for groups where I am the main composer and musicians like Michel Berkman, Wolfgang Salomon, Santiago Jimenez etc. comes here and visit me. Musicians...from abroad use to stay around one week in my house (just beside CH) and then we work hard with recordings and concerts here... Yes, songwriting for me has been more and more an isolated activity. It's just me and myself in the CH. ...

**[on music genres/categories & his music]**

...tell us what it felt like for you to win the Swedish Grammy? ...

It was a real surprise for me and I was honored of course. ...I got the Grammy for *Andetag* in the category of Visa / Folk (kind of a folk music troubadour category). ...visa in Swedish is not only a name of a specific vocal songs, visa means “show” also and folk means “people,” so I said to the audience at the Grammy award party that I have been searching all my life for what kind of music I made since it is so hard to categorize, but now I know what it is and I said, it's “Show People.” ...

**[on his children & importance of family]**

Are your children involved in music or the arts...?

They have been influencing me more than anything else. I'm sure my music would sound completely different if I didn't have children. Actually I have been a papa since 1969 (as long as Samla). Listen to my records and you see tracks from them everywhere.

**[future wishes for his music]**

Folk music is an essential element to all your works and possibly to your positive outlook despite only having a cult audience. What other elements would you like to incorporate into your band work going forward (or solo work)?

Whatever comes to mind actually; I use what I have. Sometimes it may be similar to classical music or sometimes folk oriented or avant-garde. I would still like to make a big group with strings, full band etc. who is able to play every voice and every line in my bigger and more complex pieces... Now I always have to make compromises...that's on my wishing list. ... I make music from what I experience in my life; it's as simple as that.

**[on his favorite composers]**

Who is the most important composer you admire and why?

That's hard to say. If you speak about all music I can't avoid mentioning Bach, Wagner, Beethoven, Prokofiev, Stravinsky, Arvo Pärt and many of the classical composers. Other composers as well: Albert Marcoeur, Robert Wyatt (*Rock Bottom* is beautiful), some Magma, and Univers Zero. There are too many to mention. ...

**[on Global Home group]**

...you meet some musicians for the first time and suddenly, after playing together you feel that you have known each other for a long time. The magic of music is the real global home. ...

**[on upcoming work with Miriodor]**

We have just exchanged some material. Miriodor sent me some pieces that I made some overdubs on. It's not easy to come into their sound since it is very complex and full already. I decided to use only acoustic instruments and I hope they like my efforts. I also sent them a piece that I thought could fit. Lets see what it gives in the end; great group—Miriodor.