

RÖHSSGATAN



MIKE MAGILL

# RÖHSSGATAN

Now & Then  
The wall on Röhssgatan  
Silent observer

On being Tyson  
An hour later  
An hour older

All the tracks were recorded and mixed by Magill in Göteborg during 2005 with a few exceptions. *Now & Then* and *Silent observer* were instead recorded in Freehold in the spring and summer of 2004. Also, *The wall...* was recorded by David Suss in West Orange in October of 2005. *Now & Then* and *The wall...* were recorded to  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch tape. The rest were recorded to hard drives. All were mixed digitally.

The bass on *Now & Then* was played by Alexander Leshner. The mandolin and voice on *The wall...* were played by Suss. The bass on *Silent observer* was played by Thomas Rudczynski. The drums on the same track were sequenced by Christopher

Smedley. In order of appearance, the electric, Hawaiian, and acoustic guitars were played by Magill.

A sample of Dragon Combat's *A harvest higher than our heads* has been extracted for *Now & Then*. Also, a sample of Crayon Rosary's *Candle* has been inserted into *On being Tyson*. The final two tracks are divided by a sample of the New Jersey Turnpike. Everyone noted wrote whichever part they played, and their actions were met with much gratitude. The photos are by Magill of Röhssgatan.

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When Mike Magill asked me to jot down a few notes for this album, I asked him to tell me about the title. He told me of the little street in Göteborg and of the graffiti that can be found there. As he described it, I knew that I needed to see it. What follows is an account of how the songs struck me as I gazed upon the strange portraits of Röhssgatan.



The ethereal whimsy is merely a façade for the portal to new dimensions that *Now & Then* opens. The progression of harmonic indulgences seems to increase the temperature of my frontal lobes. Extreme warning is given while listening to the epic crescendo of this track. Could violins be played with rust-enrobed truth instead of bows? Magill does just this, with no need for rosin. The coda's non-créateur vocals are new for Magill, and the choice of his vocalist was superb. Empyrean vocals reverberate against their own power through the golden caress of Magill's production.

Raw and organic pulses draw the listener into the vortex of *The wall*

on *Röhssgatan*. Like the wall itself, a story is told by the imprint of the collected sounds. One wonders how Magill convinced the ocean-god Ægir to lend his mighty, moss-covered baritone. The momentum of sound created is as powerful as the wall, physically and ephemerally; condemned to retell its story to the few who listen. The rage of conveying nothing is a perpetual prison of our champion.

As the carnival known as *Silent observer* phantasmagorically reels into town, we see the dreams of past audiences etched on the nomads' kind, yet disfigured faces. The sad songs they entertain with could be a lament for their lack of constancy, but are more

likely a mournful mate to the way they hold up distorted fun-house mirrors to their hosts. The inability to see oneself in this sad tale is the most human of all conditions. And the caravan leaves, the bubble of other imagined futures following close behind.

The stumbling dissonance of *On being Tyson* is like watching this same carnival perform a ballet while drunk. For some reason, a beauty of the almost differentially chaotic note structure seems more beautiful than the crudely arranged arrow to foot movement charts. One could interpret the lament against constancy becoming a pæan for caprice.

Could it be that Martians use *An hour later* as a soundtrack for exercising? The notions of the song do not seem terrestrial, yet they arouse ones pulse with their energy. Perhaps the aliens can tap this energy by becoming all-encompassed within a moving tube of sound. Using the continuous movement surrounding them, they draw the energy out and the energy they exert nourishes the song. Music in flux as

a sustainable resource! It feeds itself like Ourouborous.

Finally, the calculated missteps of *An hour older* are cut with such care that it is almost an honor to be deceived by them. This experience is similar to strolling past the graffiti on Röhssgatan. What once was a stone, becomes a mournful face upon inspection. Where once there was a steady beat, there is now an echoey noise. What one thinks may be an image turns out to be shadow on a rock.

—Pablo Valencia, *Los Angeles*,  
March 12, 2006

