

GUSH

GUSH was born on May 12th 1988.

An initiative from Sten Sandell and Raymond Strid. Inviting (young) me to join a special project of playing drone-related music inspired by Armenian duduk- magic (please check out the music of Dzjivan Gasparjan!). Raymond and Sten needed me on soprano sax. To play the drone. I loved it. Some other sax players were involved at start, playing beautiful melodic lines. Jörgen Adolfsson and Johan Petri. But, we soon started to explore more. To go deeper. As a trio. NO way back. No way to stop that train (trane).

We went through a lot in the early days. An insane amount of rehearsing and playing together. Weeks in a row. Learning it all. By doing it. Sharing it all. By sharing. Travelling together. Spending TIME together. It is all about time, you know.

A lot of water has been passing under the bridges since then. A lot of vinyl records have been added to my archive.

GUSH was set on pause. But, always wakening up and exploding / imploding at certain occasions over the years. We loved every moment of it all.

We are now set to start rehearsing again. I am ecstatic about it all. Set to play. Set to travel. Together. Togetherness.

Raymond found these recordings on a cassette tape, while transferring music to hard drives on his advanced sound system at home, in Heby. He has transferred 1000s of vinyls, cassette tapes, CDRs and DATs on a level never previously heard about. The archive. The ARCHIVE. Research and re-search are essential. The digging into the past. For a better understanding. Of now. And what will come. To develop. To go deeper. And yet, deeper again.

We found out that Sten still had the original DAT. And we thought the general sound was pretty spectacular for a live recording. With the genius mastering works of Martin Siewert, we are proud to present this recording, 25 years after it was recorded. At that point we had been working intensively as a trio for 10 years already.

In 2024 we celebrate 36 years together as a group...

The free improvisation was always the focus of the group after those initial drone – attempts. When we now listen back to this live recording from Jazzclub Fasching in Stockholm we could not believe our ears. Pieces. Drone based structures with clear harmonic centers. Composed ideas. Even a Mongo Santamaria piece (made famous by the great John Coltrane). What happened here? What happened there? Why did we not continue that path?

We really have no idea. We cannot really remember any longer. It was a fantastic period. So much going on in Sweden. The birth of a scene. Record labels, clubs, festivals and a huge number of younger players. All hungry for more. The first generation of improvisers still being very active and willing to share their experiences: Dror Feiler and Lokomotiv Konkret, the Iskra collective with Sune Spångberg. It was a real community. No reason to be nostalgic and sentimental though. We all need to move on.

Always and forever. The future is in front of us. The turntable is spinning.

We are just delighted to share this music with you all. To share. Sharing. Now, let's explore it all. Where can we take this, now? NOW is the time. NOW is always the time. It is ALL about TIME. It is all about now...NOW!

Mats Gustafsson, Sep 2023