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Meet “The Happy Cowboys”



Henrik Strömberg

I am a Gothenburg-based native of Skåne with Norrland roots, a 61-year-old father of two, with a partner, two bonus sons, a grandchild, two dogs and a cat.

What do you do on weekdays?

When I'm not working as a journalist or freelancing as a graphic designer, I like to play tennis and go for long walks in the woods and fields. And I devote a lot of time to music, both as a listener and as a performer.

When did your interest in playing music begin?

An important factor was when I saw Jesus Christ Superstar in Copenhagen. I was eight years old and was completely knocked out. Soon, Deep Purple came into my life and I borrowed my mother's nylon-stringed guitar to find my way through the Smoke on the water riff, which became my very first notes on the instrument. Later, Pink Floyd opened up a world that has expanded in all directions since then, towards everything from folk music to jazz and art music.

What significance does playing music have in your life?

It has somehow created my entire existence, I can't imagine life without playing. I also have music to thank for my years the years living together with my sweetheart as our relationship began with us playing and singing together.

How did you come into contact with The Happy Cowboys?

Through my youngest daughter who worked in a store that the Happy Cowboys leader Hans used to visit. When I was there to shop, he came into the store, we started talking about dogs but soon got into music and that's how it is.

What interested you in being part of it?

The songs have their roots in a musical environment that I feel at home in and like. And it's fun to play together with others so I usually try to take advantage of opportunities for musical socializing when they arise.

What instruments do you play and which instrument do you play in The Happy Cowboys?

Over the years I have mostly played guitar, both electric and acoustic, but I also like to explore other instruments, in recent years a lot of mandolin and piano and the electric bass that I play in The Happy Cowboys.



Lars Melin

I am 58 years old person, married since 2000. We have two daughters together who have now moved away from home. I have also been a birdwatcher since I was seven and I spend some time fishing (mostly for pike and perch).

What do you do on weekdays?

I work as artistic director and director at Backa Teater in Gothenburg. In the evenings and weekends when I am free, I don't work. I hang out with my wife or my daughters sometimes. I also try to find time to be out in nature and fish or watch birds.

When did your interest in playing music begin?

I formed my first band when I was nine years old with my best friend Martin McFaul. We have since had different bands together over the years.

What importance does playing music have in your life?

Music has meant an incredible amount. I went to various punk gigs and black clubs during my teenage years. I saw a lot of bands live, bands like The Clash, Stranglers, 22-Pistepirkko, Theatre Of Hate and others that have probably helped shape me into who I am today.

How did you come into contact with The Happy Cowboys?

A friend told Hans about me. He got in touch and we had a coffee together.

What interested you in joining?

I liked the songs, I love to play and the chance to play some good music. I simply liked the project.

What instruments do you play and which instrument do you play in The Happy Cowboys?

I play drums as my main instrument. Then I also play a little melodica, a little piano and omnichord. With The Happy Cowboys I play drums.



Hans Westman

Raised in California, is a family man and currently lives in Gothenburg.

What do you do on weekdays?

I wanted to be a musician, but ended up studying to be a teacher in visual and digital media subjects, but now I have time to devote myself to my own interests in creating art and music.

When did your interest in playing music begin?

We always had music in our house, but it was not until the 60s and the "British music invasion" that I realized I wanted to play drums, until my brother got a guitar that I took over pretty quickly. I still play guitar today.

What significance does playing music have in your life?

Music has always been a refuge and a source of comfort. For as long as I can remember, writing songs has been a way for me to process thoughts and feelings and to be able to share them through the music.

How did you come into contact with The Happy Cowboys?

Before "The Happy Cowboys" there was "Split by Musical Impressions", a project in collaboration with various musicians who came together to record musical ideas and then disband. "The Happy Cowboys" started as a solo project that has now become on collaboration with other musicians and taking advantage of the moment before it slips away.

What interested you in joining?

What's better than creating music together with like-minded people?

What instruments do you play and which instrument do you play in The Happy Cowboys?

Guitar, I also sing.



David Ståhl

Lives in Gothenburg.

What do you do on weekdays?

A/V technical expert

When did your interest in playing music begin?

Since childhood.

What importance does playing music have in your life?

Everything.

How did you come into contact with The Happy Cowboys?

Hans and I live in the same city neighborhood, Kungshöjd (Kings High). We met through my girl friend.

What interested you in joining?

Liked the music, which sounds simple but throws unexpected curveballs in the compositions.

What instruments do you play and which instrument do you play in The Happy Cowboys?

Pedal steel