

---

Attached you find the original Interview before the translation from english to german between Markus for Soundmagnet.eu and Sami Hinkka from Ensiferum.

---

**Markus A. (Soundmagnet):** Thalassic is a loose concept album, all songs are about the sea and, in general, about water. How did you come up with this concept and what fascinates you so much about it?

*Sami Hinkka (Ensiferum): That's true that this time we had a theme for an album. I was listening to the raw demos we had on my long walks and because Helsinki is by the sea, I often found myself on the seashore and I guess that inspired with the theme. Sea and water are present in all mythologies around the world and it's the cradle of life so it felt like a perfect theme.*

**Different stories, myths and fairy tales are treated. How was the selection made and why did exactly those stories end up on the album?**

*There obviously was a problem because there were just too many interesting topics. As the songs progressed we could see much better the mood of each song so then it was quite easy to find the right topic for each song.*

**I picked out two songs with nordic backgrounds. In Austria people don't know Sampo and Midsummer is for many people just a term from the IKEA commercials. Please explain to us what "The Defence of the Sampo" and "Midsummer Magic" are all about.**

*True, those songs are quite Finnish plus "The Cold Northland" is based on Kalevala, our national epic. "The Defence Of The Sampo" tells a part of one story of Kalevala where the mighty old man Väinämöinen and his troops go to the far North to steal back magical item called Sampo. The witch of the North and her troops are put to sleep magically while Sampo is being stolen. When they wake up, the witch turns into an eagle, her troops get on her back and they fly to fight Väinämöinen and his men who are escaping with a boat. In the end Sampo is broke down and it falls into the waves.*

*"Midsummer Magic" tells about, well, midsummer. In Finnish this is called Juhannus and people had lots of superstitious believes and they did different magics during this time to get a better crop or guarantee that they get married within the upcoming year and one very legendary belief is that if you watch into lake during this night, you might see a reflection of your future spouse. It's still an important feast in Finland and many people have big bonfires when they gather on their summer cottages to celebrate this day with families and friends.*

**How did you like it, for the first time, to deal with a continuous concept? Has the songwriting changed and can we expect this from you more often in the future?**

*As the main lyrics writer I really liked this way of composing. With my power metal band called [Metal De Facto](#) we have theme on our every album so it was easy to use this method now with Ensiferum. We haven't decided that will we continue doing this with Ensiferum, time will tell.*

*The songwriting hasn't changed that much. Everyone brings ideas to rehearsal room and then we'll arrange the songs together. It takes time but it's lots of fun and then everyone can stand behind every song 100%.*

**With Pekka Montin (Keyboard & Vocals) you have a new member in the band. How big was his influence on the album?**

*Yes, it was so great to find such a great person and brilliant musician in to the band. He arranged the songs with the rest of us as an equal member. I can't wait to start composing some new material with the new line-up.*

**Thalassic is a typical Ensiferum album for me, but also somehow not. It sounds more epic and multifaceted. How do you judge the album compared to your previous releases?**

*I think the arrangements on "Thalassic" worked out really well. I mean, we have been cutting down the amount of tracks for long time now and use big orchestrations and choirs more effectively. This way, the more epic parts really sound bombastic.*

**The inevitable question: Much has changed since spring due to the Coronavirus. How do you deal with it as a band and how has the virus changed your plans?**

*COVID-19 really screwed up our plans. We had lots of festivals and tours booked and all were cancelled and some were rescheduled to next year. Personally I used the quarantine time to record my first solo release which I hope to get out during this summer. We have also talked about starting to compose new Ensiferum material. No point to waste your time for being angry or sad about things that are not in your control and focus on things you that are in your hands.*

**On release day, you played a stream gig. Livestream concerts have been held more and more often since Corona. How do you feel about playing for cameras and fans in their living rooms instead of playing for present fans? Can you imagine to play stream gigs from time to time in a Corona-free future, too?**

*It was fun and a very weird experience, but Ensiferum has always been a live-band who loves the interaction with fans and gets energy on stage from crazy crowds. So once the real touring starts, there is no chance that we will do a stream show.*

**You used the time in lockdown to work on a solo album. Can you give us some details about this album? When will it be released and what can we expect?**

*My solo EP is still being mixed because of COVID-19 I had to take a dayjob and it really slowed down all my music projects. The original plan was that the EP would have been released in June but there wasn't enough time to finish everything by then. The music is very different from my bands. I guess you can call it industrial metal. I've always liked electronic music like The Prodigy and some metal bands who use this kind of elements, for example Pain and NIN. I actually already have a concept for the next solo album and a few songs are already on demo stage and I hope I can get the album out in 2021. Who knows, maybe I'll make some shows with this material someday, hah!*

**In May 2021 you will perform at the Vienna Metal Meeting. Are there more concerts planned in Austria?**

*There are lots of plans at the moment but not that many are announced because the whole world holds it's breath with COVID-19. Crossing my fingers that the vaccine is found soon.*

**What can the fans expect from you and which songs from the new album will make it into the setlist?**

*We have some shows announced and like I said there are lots of shows/tours planned but let's see if those happen. Meanwhile we are planning to continue composing new material for Ensiferum, we have few raw songs already so maybe the next album will come out sooner than everyone expects.*

*Great thing about "Thalassic" is that all its songs are playable live. In the stream show we played almost the whole new album. Let's see what kind of setlist we come up with once the touring starts. Of course there will be old songs too because we always want to have songs from every album on a setlist.*

**A question for you as music fans: Which Finnish bands can you recommend to us that are maybe not so well known in other countries?**

*My friends have few cool bands called [Everfrost](#) and [Thy Row](#), check them out!*

**Many thanks for the interview! The last words are yours.**

*Enjoy summer, check out "Thalassic" and my solo EP once it's out, stay safe and stay metal!*