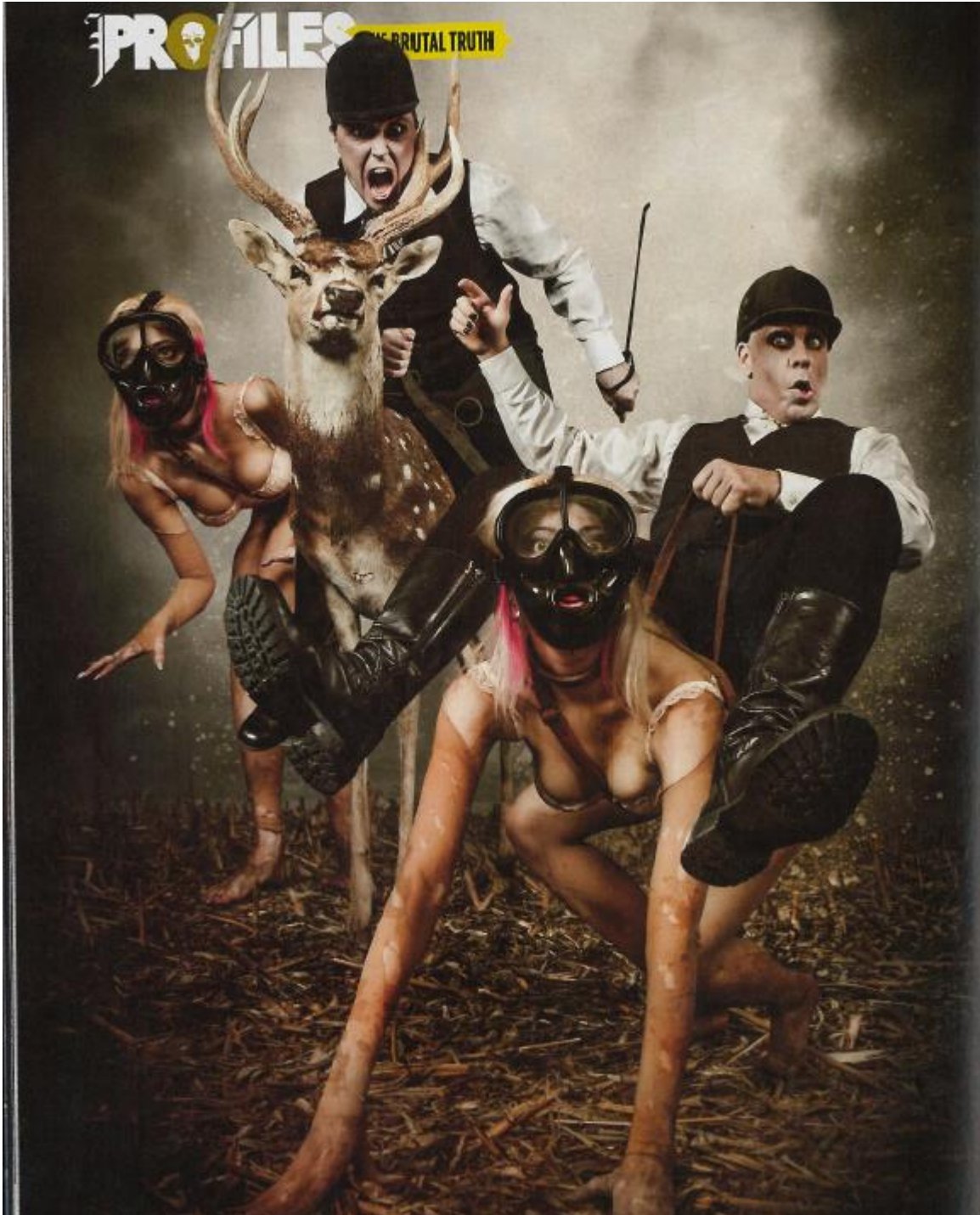


REVOLVER

THE WORLD'S LOUDEST ROCK MAGAZINE

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LINDEMANN

THE **RAMMSTEIN** FRONTMAN
AND **HYPOCRISY** MASTERMIND
GET DOWN AND EXTREMELY DIRTY
ON THEIR NEW SIDE PROJECT

FOR MANY LISTENERS, TILL LINDEMANN IS GERMAN HARD ROCK. For over 20 years, Rammstein has shaped their motherland's musical landscape with their ferocious brand of pounding industrial metal, and so much of the band's appeal has been Lindemann's chasmically deep voice singing in authoritative German. But last year's announcement that they would be taking time off from the studio left fans wondering when they would next hear new material from Deutschland's greatest export. So when Lindemann announced he would be releasing a solo record, the horde rejoiced.

But the new Lindemann record, *Skills in Pills*, is more than a Rammstein clone. The album is a collaboration with Peter Tägtgren, frontman of Hypocrisy and Pain and producer of such underground metal icons as Immortal and Dimmu Borgir. Driving, dramatic, and dripping with sexual deviancy—song titles include “Golden Shower” and “Ladyboy”—*Skills* feels like a distillation of the Till Lindemann way of life, expressing both filth and purity, strength and weakness. And while it's still full of the goose-step riffs, gothic choral moments, and bizarre erotic fantasies that Rammstein fans love, the singer's choice to trade in his signature harsh German for English will no doubt give some headbangers pause.

Speaking to Lindemann and Tägtgren is like trying to have a polite conversation with Dracula and Dr. Frankenstein—one is all atmospheric baritone, describing music with colors and flavors; the other is full of nuts-and-bolts enthusiasm, referencing bands and genres. Both of them laugh a lot, and seem genuinely stoked to discuss the new record. When *Revolver* asks the singer why he waited until 2015 to write a solo album, he seems unsatisfied with the term. “It's not a solo album,” he says. “It's a side project.”

Q: It's interesting to discern a solo album from a side project. That implies that you wanted to create a new band entirely.

TILL LINDEMANN Really, me and Peter never thought about making a whole record—we just started with a song, and then another song, and all of a sudden we found ourselves with seven titles, and we decided to continue. And all of a sudden, a record was done.

PETER TÄGTGREN We've known each other for a long time, and we always knew we wanted to do something together. Then in 2013, Till invited my family and I to a Rammstein show in Sweden, and afterwards he said, 'Now is the time to do it.' We'd been talking since

2001 or 2002. Till had done some vocals on my Pain project. So we figured we'd just write some songs together and put them in the bucket, as we say. All of a sudden, we found ourselves sending MP3s between each other. One thing led to another.

Q: Till, did you ever worry how Rammstein fans would respond when they found out you were doing something different, especially in English?

LINDEMANN At first, I didn't like the English sound of my voice, and so it took some time getting into it, because I never really did it before and wanted to experiment. But now

I've become very proud of the way it sounds. I wanted to use this language to represent English-speaking people. Nobody speaks German outside of Germany. So I wanted to provide more access to my thoughts and lyrics to the people in Chile and Russia and France or whatever. It's a new horizon right now.

Q: That's brave. Many of the fans, especially in America, love the guttural sounds of you singing in German.

LINDEMANN Yes, but I think the whole aesthetic of the music is totally different. It's more gothic, filled with more melodies, and isn't as harsh music as Rammstein. Rammstein's music demands German lyrics. But I feel that Peter and I found a great way to frame the English vocals. It's a big difference. Doing this with English, it was like a totally new garden was opened. In German, there are only so many things you can write about. With English, I opened the gates and I entered the garden, and I plucked my cherries. Everything was totally new.

Q: Peter, was there Hypocrisy or Pain material that you put on this record, or were all of the songs brand new?

TÄGTGREN There were a few things I was working with, but I'm not even sure I used them on this album. It was more or less just dropping everything I was doing and focusing on this. When we had four or five songs we went to my studio and put vocals down, and realized, 'Holy shit, this might work.' So I didn't even pick up the Pain stuff after that. The main thing was that we kept it a secret so there wouldn't be insanity from the record

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PROFILES THE BRUTAL TRUTH

companies and management. And then when we were ready, we told people we had something...and all hell broke loose.

Q: Was that difficult? You're both such high-profile musicians.

TÄGTGREN We kept them all out of the loop. Only the closest friends of ours heard about it. Now, I dunno. We might have to go to fucking Siberia to write another album. We have plenty of ideas, but for this record we wanted no pressure, and we had none. After this, we'll have to go to fucking moon!

LINDEMANN And that was the fun part. Now, the work comes.

Q: You guys are known for different sounds—Till for the gothic industrial music, Peter for straight-forward metal. Where did the music fall between those two?

TÄGTGREN I don't know, I like gothic stuff as well. I grew up on Sisters of Mercy and Fields of the Nephilim, and I think if you put a Hypocrisy album and a Rammstein album next to each other, they're not so different. But we meet in the middle, and somewhere in between you get Lindemann.

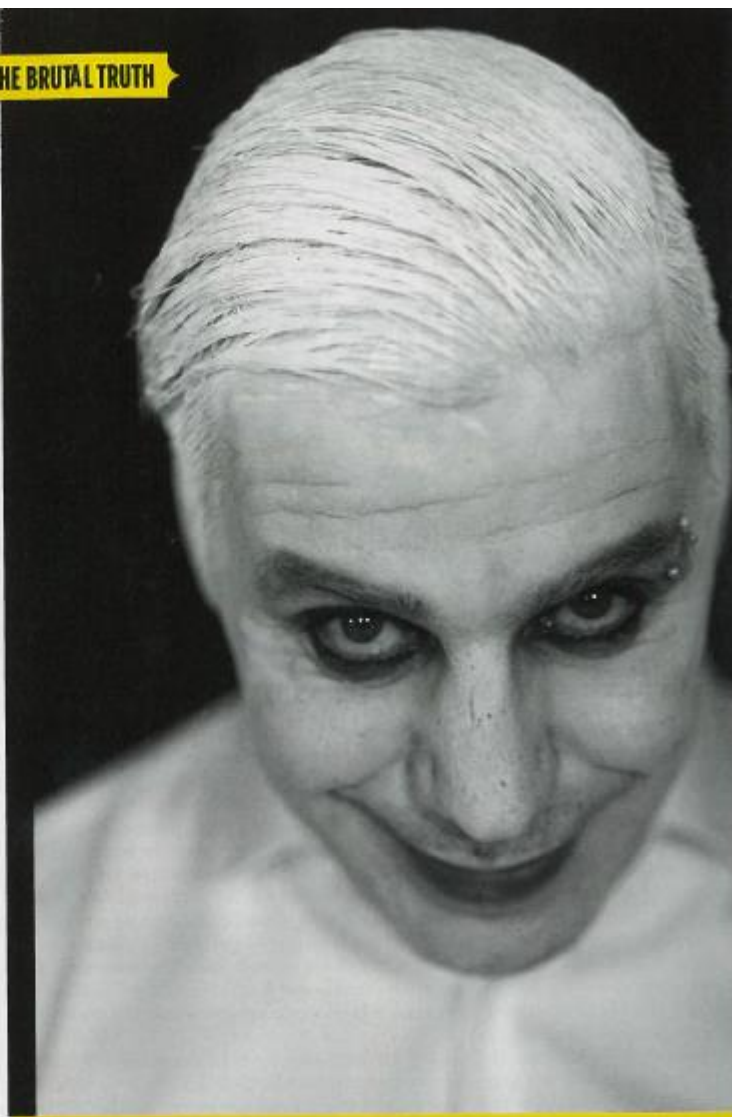
Q: It's surprisingly happy music. There's kind of a jolliness behind the songs on *Skills in Pills*.

TÄGTGREN It's a party album, man! It's what you put on to get in the mood before you go out for the evening. I'd say it's sort of like Billy Idol on speed. It blows your mind! People definitely aren't prepared for it.

Q: "Cowboy" is a great example. It has a strong childish feeling to it.

LINDEMANN ...very interesting!

TÄGTGREN I think that's something all of us feel. We always wanted to be badasses—to shoot people, to beat people up—and all of a sudden, by the last verse, we're getting old. We're sitting in the rocking chair, putting the tea in the Tupperware.



Q: What's up with the promo pictures of you two as dirty schoolboys in the arms of a naked fat woman?

TÄGTGREN It's just another picture, of the

madness. We have so many pictures in the booklet, describing every song on the album. That one is obviously for "Fat," in which Till describes how he romances big ladies. Everybody got it totally wrong. We just sent out a picture to some people and everybody freaked out and thought it was the cover. It's not. There's more shit coming—trust me.

Q: I'm not surprised. The album seems very focused on some of the more indulgent sexual perversions.

LINDEMANN Yes, but we try to bring in many colors of life with this music. There is one song, "Home Sweet Home," with a description of a river. Many, many colors. There's a diverse spectrum. But of course, the...bad bits always rise to the surface. Because I like them! [in a deep, terrifying voice] I like to fuck.

CHRIS KROVATIN

“**WITH ENGLISH, I OPENED THE GATES AND I ENTERED THE GARDEN, AND I PLUCKED MY CHERRIES. EVERYTHING WAS TOTALLY NEW.**”

—TILL LINDEMANN