

NI ROCKS Interview with ELIZE RYD from AMARANTHE

Written by NI ROCKS

Saturday, 22 August 2020 10:06 - Last Updated Saturday, 23 January 2021 23:06

Swedish band Amaranthe release their sixth studio album called "Manifest", through Nuclear Blast Records on 2nd October. I had the opportunity to chat with singer Elize Ryd via Skype on 7th August. We talked about the new album, the four tracks from it that have been released so far and much more.

That interview was featured on the Friday NI Rocks Show on 21st August and later 2nd October. That first Show is available from the NI Rocks MixCloud page - <https://www.mixcloud.com/NIROcks/interview-with-elize-ryd-from-amaranthe-on-the-friday-ni-rocks-show-21st-aug-2020/>



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Amaranthe are Elize Ryd on clean vocals, Nils Molin on clean vocals, Henrik Englund Wilhelmsson on harsh vocals, Olof Mörck on guitars and keyboards, Morten Løwe Sørensen on drums and Johan Andreassen on bass.

Check out the band's website for album pre-order details etc - <https://www.amaranthe.se/>

The interview has been transcribed and posted below.



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Playlist

TRUCKER DIABLO – Party Like They Started The End of the World

QUIET RIOT – Metal Health (Bang Your Head)

W.A.S.P. – Forever Free

UFO – Lights Out

WAYSTED – Love Loaded

APOCALYPTICA – Talk to Me (ft Lzzy Hale)

IT'sALIE – Wind

AD INFINITUM – Fire and Ice

AMARANTHE – Do or Die (ft Angela Gossow)

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Interview with ELIZE RYD Part 1 (8 min)

AMARANTHE – Viral

Interview with ELIZE RYD Part 2 (9 min)

AMARANTHE – Strong (ft Noora Louhimo)

Interview with ELIZE RYD Part 3 (6 min)

AMARANTHE – 82nd All The Way

BEYOND THE BLACK – Wounded Healer (ft Elize Ryd)

KAMELOT – Sacrimony (Angel of Afterlife)(Live)(ft Elize Ryd & Alissa White Gluz)

THE DEAD DAISIES – Unspoken

LEZ ZEPPELIN – The Battle of Evermore

THIN LIZZY – Emerald

LO MEJOR – The Jackal

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BLACKWATER CONSPIRACY – Atlanta Smile

BLUE PILLS – Rhythm in the Blood

OVERLAND – Closest Thing To Heaven

HONEYMOON SUITE – Find What You're Looking For

ARTISTS FOR RECOVERY – Maybe It's Time

{youtube}iZweNFWbegI{/youtube}

NI ROCKS – Hi Elize, thanks for taking some time to talk to Rock Radio NI.

ELIZE – Thanks for taking the time to talk to me.

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NI ROCKS - Amaranthe release their new album "Manifest" on 2nd October, and we'll talk more about that shortly. Back in February you released what was called a preview single which we have just played. "Do or Die" features Angela Gossow and Jeff Loomis. What can you tell us about that track?

ELIZE – With the video and the song we wanted to illustrate the worst case scenarios from the consequences of human actions basically. Life can change really fast and we end up in a crisis situation. The Corona (virus) is actually a little bit, a taste of that! How people need to change their lives. The song was actually written after Angela Gossow started to talk about her thoughts that she had about these environmental questions; like how the future will look if we continue to treat the Earth the way we do. She painted the concept for the video and asked us if we could write a song based on that idea. With Olof, we wrote the song and sent it to her and she liked it a lot.

NI ROCKS – Angela hadn't actually recorded anything in quite some time, but she is the band's manager. Did she need to be talked into actually singing on the track, or was that her idea?

ELIZE – I cannot remember 100% if it was us asking her, *why don't you do the growls*, or if she said, *I can do the growls* (laughs). It's so weird, I cannot remember 100% if it was her asking or if we asked, but (laughs) you can ask her or I can ask her in case I get the question again!

NI ROCKS – You mentioned, that there was a great video for the track "Do Or Die" as well. Where did the concept for that originate?

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ELIZE – That was artistically, painting a picture of an apocalypse situation. That was actually Marcus Overbeck who wrote the script for the video, together with Angela. They had discussed what they would like to have. Me and Olof of course wrote the song and the lyrics. Then we came to Spain and did the recording there.

NI ROCKS – It's a great song and great video. I believe there is a different version of "Do or Die" on the new album? Is that right?

ELIZE – That is correct.

NI ROCKS – And who sings on it?

ELIZE – It is Nils and Henrik.

NI ROCKS – Is the other version going to be a bonus track or something?

ELIZE – Actually, the version with Angela will be the bonus track.

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NI ROCKS – As I mentioned, the new album “Manifest” is released on 2nd October. This will be your first album since signing with Nuclear Blast last year. How has that relationship been with Nuclear Blast and what has it been like working with them?

ELIZE – It has been absolutely amazing. They have so many creative ideas – the whole team that we work with is amazing. They are so inspiring and loving and caring. It feels amazing to be under Nuclear Blast. We are, so far, extremely happy.

NI ROCKS – You’ve worked once again with Jacob Hansen to record the new album. Was there ever any thought given to working with someone else?

ELIZE – We did talk about it many times. Discussing if we would go to New York or L.A. I know a lot of metal and rock bands, and other genres – there is a big market there and a lot of producers. And it sounds cool – *yeah let’s go to New York or we recorded the album in L.A.* and stuff like this, but we actually thought why would we want to do that? There is no reason for us, at this point, to change to someone else rather than Jacob Hansen. Actually, overall, we have such a good connection with him, since we’ve been working since the first album together. It’s such a quiet and calm place and we feel like we can get 100% focused in that surrounding. And most of all he knows our sound, like perfect, and we’d be scared to try someone else.

NI ROCKS – I’ve spoken with quite a few people who record with Jacob and they all say the same thing. They all seem to have a great relationship with him.

ELIZE – Yeah, he’s like a brother or a father...well he’s not that old (laughs).

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NI ROCKS – Olof has been quoted as saying that “Manifest” is a logical continuation from the previous album “Helix” which was released in 2018. But he says that you have pushed to 13 and it is the band’s heaviest album to date. How would you describe it?

ELIZE – I would also describe it like that. It is very powerful. There is no weak points I think on this album. Maybe because we grew up even more, like people do, every year or every now and then (laughs). We talked about how we could resume our career and our sound so far basically. We came up with this and one of the parts we lacked the most was the heavy part. For me, I love the metal in our music and I felt we had to give that space. Also, of course, we still use the other influences, but we paid a little bit more attention to the metal part and the heaviness. So I would agree with Olof on that.

NI ROCKS – When did writing actually start for “Manifest” and does the band have a specific process or method for writing tracks or does each track get written differently?

ELIZE – It’s different. Sometimes I’ll be sitting at home alone writing a song, only with a piano, and recording it. Then I’ll bring it to Olof the next day and explain to him the concepts and the ideas behind it. If he gets inspired he will make the arrangement in one hour. Then sometimes I’ll get to his place and we sit down together and we’ll search for things in atmosphere (laughs) that we can bring down. We usually work based on the current mood and what we like to talk about or what the day brings, so to speak. And also, of course, Olof has some riffs pre-recorded. He makes them at home – normally in the middle of the night actually! He wakes up with a riff in his head – at 6 o’clock or so, or 4 o’clock. Then he’ll record that and the next day I’ll come and listen and be like, *oh my god, that’s so great; let’s write this song now!* (laughs)

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NI ROCKS – The single “Viral” was released at the end of June. We’re going to play that now. What can you tell us about that track?

ELIZE – “Viral” is a statement on how to handle crisis on social media. The riff was written first for this song actually. Then I added the vocal melodies afterwards and we wrote the lyrics. It’s kind of an obvious theme I think. It was inspired by one of our older songs “Digital World” where we celebrate and criticise at the same time. It’s a current song I would say!

{youtube}-A7BPXEBh1Q {/youtube}

NI ROCKS – Not long after the release of the video for “Do or Die” the band released another video. This time it was the track “Endlessly” from the “Maximilism” album released back in 2016. It featured footage from Olof’s wedding last year. Why was it decided to release that video then?

ELIZE – We went to Olof’s wedding last summer. It’s almost exactly one year since he got married. They had a video team, videoing the whole wedding; which is very common in Romania. They go all-in I would say. This guy was filming the whole day and Olof and Catalina used “Endlessly”...well, I sang “Endlessly” on the first dance, and I can say I’ve never been as nervous in my whole life singing that song. It was a once in a lifetime opportunity and it has to be good, because it is such an important moment. They asked this guy that cut all the material if he could cut together a little video, just for them actually, to the song “Endlessly” and he did. They loved it so much and Olof showed it to the rest of the band of course. We all started to cry (laughs) and we said please can we put this on our YouTube channel? It just has to be seen. We’d love to show the fans and in general it would be sad not to show it to more people than just within the family. We asked Spinefarm if it was OK and they said *yeah go for it* and we put it up. There was no special plan for that; we just wanted to show people how cool the wedding was

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(laughs).

NI ROCKS – This week the band Kamelot released a photo of yourself with Alissa White Gluz, Charlotte Wessels and Lauren Hart taken just before doing a live recording. There are a lot of strong, influential female artists in the rock and metal scene these days. That must be great to see?

ELIZE – It is amazing. I'm so happy about that, my heart is singing. They are all lovely and it feels really, really nice to feel that we have a team. We're not so lonely anymore. There is a bunch of cool, amazing chicks out there and that, like you said, the feeling is great.

NI ROCKS – And all very talented too obviously.

ELIZE – Exactly. Of course talent brought us all here.

NI ROCKS – When you were first getting into the music scene who were the singers that were influencing you and was there any female singer specifically that inspired you?

ELIZE – Yes, I have to confess that it is actually Amy Lee who inspired me probably the most. I felt that I could relate to her. How she writes the

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songs and how she uses her voice. She was the first inspiration. Then, of course, I was also very inspired by Tarja Turunen from Nightwish.

NI ROCKS – You've performed with Kamelot quite a bit over the past ten years. What can you tell us about your involvement in the live album and DVD that Kamelot will release next week – called "I Am The Empire – Live From the 013". What was your involvement with that?

ELIZE – I'd toured with them for so many years and we'd recorded the video for "Sacrimony"; many years ago now, I can't remember how many (laughs). That became actually one of their most popular songs. So it was obvious to play it on the live DVD and they asked if I was available and if I could come over and perform it with them live. And I made sure I was available.

NI ROCKS – Over the years you've made many guest appearances on different tracks. One of the most recent was on the Beyond The Black album where you sang on the track "Wounded Healer". How did you become involved with Beyond The Black?

ELIZE – Well, we actually got in contact with them because of the tours we were planning to do together. As we meet, we thought why not just start collaborating even before. They had their album coming out before the tour and the label and the band were asking Angela if she could talk to me and ask me if I wanted to sing with her. Of course it's so fun to collaborate with other bands and it brings us even more close together, which makes sense if we're going on a tour. Then we could also possibly sing it together live. It just links us together in a different way. I love that mental idea behind it – that let's get together kind of feeling. They had, I think, a few songs and they were the ones of course choosing the specific parts for me. They sent it over and I recorded it straight after the Sabaton tour.

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NI ROCKS - I'm guessing you get lots of requests to be involved in different projects. How do you decide which to accept, or which to get involved in?

ELIZE – Aha, yeah that's a very good question, and I've been thinking the same! (Laughs). I have to confess, it's mostly about timing and my personal emotions towards the relationship with the band. I want to feel that this is personal. For example, I got a request recently from one of my colleagues from Raskasta Joulua, which is a Finnish band. If you don't know what it is you can check it out – it's called Raskasta Joulua Christmas Show with me and Marco Hietala and Floor Jansen and a lot of other very great artists. The drummer there has a project and he contacted me. It's not a big thing and it doesn't have.....I never think business in these situations you know.....I thought of my god we've worked together so long and he's such a nice guy and I love him a lot. He said can you sing a song on our project and I was like hell yeah! I didn't even think about it, I just said yes because it's such a great feeling to work with friends. That's actually the most important thing for me. So if there is a band I don't know I would probably say no unfortunately. Or, if there is someone I don't know, but I hear something in the song that I can't let go of and I feel that I want this song to get out; then I'll take the responsibility to make sure that people get to hear the song.

NI ROCKS – We were talking earlier about strong female singers and musical collaborations, which takes us nicely on to the next track. The latest single to be released from "Manifest" comes out next Friday on 14th August and it is called "Strong" and features Noora Louhimo from Battle Beast. What can you tell us about that track?

ELIZE – The "Strong" song is like – the idea with the song is to encourage people to be strong, and to accept your mistakes. It's not necessarily a bad thing. We can't become strong by telling ourselves that we're the best – you become strong by admitting your mistakes and flaws; and work from that perspective on yourself to become stronger. It's like an encouragement and motivation song most of all. It's ok to admit weaknesses and don't get brought down by it. People, I think, should see it as a positive thing – like I realise that this is not perfect, so I can

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work on this.

{youtube}59Ny29nNh2A{/youtube}

NI ROCKS – We've mentioned guest appearances by Noora as well as Angela Gossow and Jeff Loomis. Who else makes a guest appearance on "Manifest"?

ELIZE – We have Perttu (Kivilaakso) from Apocalyptica. He is featured on the song "Crystalline". And we have Elias (Holmlid) who is a very old friend of ours. He arranged the piano and keyboards on "Amaranthine", which is a very popular song (from the "Amaranthe" album). So we thought, we need to bring him back and he is also featured on "Crystalline"; he did the arrangement for the piano parts again. And we have a little...it's such a tiny part...but, a small part of Heidi (Shepherd) from Butcher Babies (on the track "Boom1"). And Noora.

NI ROCKS – The Covid pandemic has obviously had a devastating impact over the past few months and on the music industry in particular. Has the band any plans remaining for 2020 or is the focus now on touring in 2021?

ELIZE – The focus is on 2021 at the moment. We had to move everything forward and we're really hoping that we can pick it up again from early 2021.

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NI ROCKS – What are the band's plans moving into the next year? Touring, festivals or studio time?

ELIZE – We are focusing still on the live thing as we've just finished and releasing the album soon. We want to tour, we really want to play those songs live. That is the main focus – doing the tours that we had to cancel this year. Together with Battle Beast and Beyond The Black. Then we have a Plan B as you would call it. If we are not allowed to tour, at all in 2021 then we are going to do all these live streams and maybe we'll ask Nuclear Blast if they interested in releasing a cover album. Maybe we could write some singles and record a lot of videos. All the things that we can do. We have to stay creative no matter what, but the focus is to get the tour started.

NI ROCKS – “Manifest” is the band's sixth studio album. Has there been any thought given to recording a live album at some stage? Maybe when the band get back out on tour again?

ELIZE – Oh yes! I would love that. Personally, that is my dream I would say. I can say that we are very good live and it's a shame that we haven't released a live recording yet. That's something that we have to do I think. We need to make it happen very soon. And a live DVD would be amazing.

NI ROCKS – The band have a reputation for being great live, so it would be great to have something out there.

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ELIZE – Thank you very much.

NI ROCKS – The new album is being released in a number of vinyl formats. There are a couple of coloured versions on the Nuclear Blast website and on the band's own website there are six limited edition splatter vinyl versions. One for each member of the band. What can you tell us about those?

ELIZE – This is another extremely creative idea from Nuclear Blast. To give each member a signature colour and personalise the vinyl. That was the idea and it became a reality. I think it's amazing.

NI ROCKS – I noticed that your clear / red version has already sold out on the website.

ELIZE – It is sold out yeah. I think it sold out in two days. It was fun to design your own and red is my favourite colour of course and I think the clear looks really cool on vinyl.

NI ROCKS - I've actually ordered Olaf's red and gold version. So I managed to get hold of one of them.

ELIZE – Oh my god, that's also very nice! I think all of them are super cool. The only thing I can say is that I didn't order one for myself and I cannot get it now because it is sold out (laughs). I might order one of the other guys'.

NI ROCKS – Get the rest of them! Maybe Nuclear Blast will do an extra one for you? A test one?

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ELIZE – No they can't. I already asked (laughs). Maybe I can buy one from some other person who has bought it!

NI ROCKS – We've played three of the singles that have been released from the new album. Our final track was actually released at the very start of the year and appears as a bonus track on "Manifest". It's your cover of Sabaton's "82nd All The Way". Why did the band decide to cover that track?

ELIZE – Pär (Sundström) and Olof have been in contact for a few years now actually. We've toured with them many, many, many years ago in Sweden. They stayed in touch and since we were going on tour together, Pär asked if we would be interested in making a cover and of course we said yes. So it was his idea. He played a few songs to us, and I chose "82nd All The Way" because I thought it was the most fitting for our sound and the band.

NI ROCKS – And that appears as one of the bonus tracks on the new album. That's all the questions that I have time for unfortunately. Thanks again for taking the time to talk to us. I hope we'll see you back in the UK or Ireland some time soon.

ELIZE – Oh yes, we really hope so too. Very nice questions. Thank you very much.

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