

A NEW BEGINNING / Upon turning the new millennium Elin Synnøve Bråthen started afresh. It was time to pursue her dream of becoming a performer, recording artist, and singer & songwriter. Elin Synnøve moved from the north of Norway to start what would turn out to be a 5-year long music education at the University of Agder. From being a “local talent” in small-town Northern Norway, she now found herself in a situation that allowed her to really explore her music dream, and find her voice as performing artist and songwriter. There were a thousand tales to tell.

DISCOVERING THE VOICE / Growing up in the north, Elin Synnøve sang with a lot of choirs, especially church repertoire and classical repertoires; mostly using her soprano voice. Little by little she started experimenting, stretching the voice into a much deeper range, and sometimes using full chest voice in a semi-high range, producing a nearly Bulgarian-esque ethereal sound. Elin Synnøve made a point of writing music without any set rules, going with a flow of creativity without limits. This goes for melodies and arrangements as well as lyrics. After having struggled with lyric-writing, she found unexpected help in her dreams. For some time, Elin Synnøve had taken interest in dream interpretation and started keeping a dream-journal. The dream-notes kept piling up by the bedpost until she linked them with the music; she basically turned her dreams into pop-lyrics. The lyrics sometimes have a surreal flair, but are at the same time deeply personal.

THE BAND ELIKSIR / Between 2000 and 2003 Elin Synnøve created her own world of pop-songs in which she mixed elements of pop, rock, jazz, world, and Celtic music. She now needed a band. In the school environment of Southern Norway, she connected with four talented male musicians: Hilmar Kristoffersen (keyboards, vintage synthesizers, grand piano), Trygve Tambs-Lyche (drums and percussion), Glenn Phillip Nilsen (electric bass and double bass), and Haldor Røyne (guitars, often spiced up with signature sound effects). The band-name “Eliksir” is not taken from the dictionary (where it means ‘magic potion’); it is taken from Elin Synnøve’s childhood, when she misspelt her own name. Elin Synnøve and the band introduced the first Eliksir concert during the Dark Season Festival in the city of

Kristiansand in fall 2003, and followed this up by a number of concerts in Norway. They received overwhelmingly positive feedback everywhere; after a concert in Melbu Eliksir received their first fan-letter, which ended with a heartfelt and inspiring request: I hope this fantastic music will be recorded and released soon!

ØYSTEIN SEVÅG AS PRODUCER / In 2004 Elin Synnøve asked one of her university mentors, saxophone-player and recording artist Bendik Hofseth, for advice. She had songs and a band and now she wanted to record and publish the material. Who would be the right studio recording producer? After pondering for a few weeks Hofseth suggested Øystein Sevåg who resided in Germany at the time. Elin Synnøve had never heard of Øystein Sevåg, but was taken by surprise when doing some research. This man’s international merit-list was very impressive. He was released on SonyBMG and legendary Windham Hill in the USA; and chart-listed on Billboard for 36 subsequent weeks. Apparently it would be a scoop to have this man produce her record! The challenge now was money. How on earth would she be able to pay for a professional studio recording with a star producer? Self-confidently she dialled Sevåg’s number and laid the cards on the table. Sevåg asked her to send a demo, saying the artist and the music was ultimately more important than money. A couple of weeks later Elin Synnøve got a call from Germany: Øystein Sevåg was in!

EP BECOMES DEBUT-ALBUM / With producer Sevåg on board Elin Synnøve and the band started recording 5 tracks for an EP. Sevåg was so impressed by the song-material that he insisted extending the EP into a full album. The band members moved the production to Musikkloftet Studio in Oslo, where they resumed recording the debut album “Earthly Things”. A number of esteemed musicians made additional contributions on this album: Kristin Skaare (accordion), Aage Kvalbein (cello), Bente Bråthen (vocals), Trond Tellefsen (keyboards and programming), Knut Andreas Alnes Antonsen (guitars), Bendik Hofseth (vocals), and Øystein Sevåg (additional piano and programming). Elin Synnøve travelled to Portugal to have photos taken for the cover, and to collect sound samples of whales and dolphins from a whale-

watching base on the Acores; the animal sounds are used as sound-design on one of the tracks. "Earthly Things" was released 7 May 2007 on the producer's label: Siddhartha Records. Distributor in Norway was SonyBMG, and thereafter Musikkoperatøren. (The album is available online on iTunes, Amazon, Spotify, and other online music outlets. ) The release concert in Oslo took place in front of an enthusiastic audience with high expectations. A music journalist wrote the following in his review: *"Earthly Things" is a strong album with 10 great songs that leave you painting mental pictures; it conveys the feelings of sorrow, longing and pain, but also joy and comfort. I believe many people far beyond Norway's borders will find this music both exotic and exciting.*"

Elin Synnøve's music has been likened to artists like Genesis, Peter Gabriel, Kate Bush, Sting, Roxy Music, Radka Toneff, Mari Boine, Renaissance, Tori Amos, The Corrs, Clannad, Enya, Bel Canto, October Project, Mary Black, Keane, Sarah Fimm, Jethro Tull, Pink Floyd, Joni Mitchell, Loreena McKennitt, just to mention a few points of reference.

#### EARTHLY THINGS GOING ABROAD

In 2007 and 2008 Elin Synnøve Bråthen presented the debut album at the music trades MIDEM in Cannes and POPKOMM in Berlin. Her newly established music contacts shook their heads upon the artist "representing herself" at professional music business trades; at the same time, they were intrigued by the daredevil-mindedness and perhaps a little bit charmed by a certain "Norwegian naivety"? Whatever the reason, Elin Synnøve enjoyed some hectic days in the European big cities, because a lot of people wanted to meet "Eliksir, the voice of the Arctic north", who seemed so exotic to some of them that they hardly raised the eyebrow when she told them (as a joke!) she was brought up by wolves and had no language until she was 13...

Meeting the world's music business has given positive exposure, single track licensing and airplay in a number of countries, primarily the UK and Ireland, but also Southeast Asia, Germany, the USA, France, the Netherlands, Portugal and Spain. The track "Fairytale" is released on the compilation "Simply The Finest Vol. 2" in Hong Kong, and in December 2009 the radio edit of the track

"Harbour Song" was included on German release "Soundtrip Norway" alongside Vamp, Mari Boine and other famous Norwegian artists. This year title song "Earthly Things" appears on another German compilation containing international female artists, "Uncompressed World Vol. II". An American licensor and promoter has encouraged Elin Synnøve to get in touch with the movie industry, as he believes her voice is perfect for soundtracks.

AWARD AND CHART LISTING IN THE UK / Elin Synnøve was nominated for Best International Artist with the track "Harbour Song", and she won the EMA UK award Best Video for the track & video "Fairytale" – a low budget video that the Exposure Music Awards jury fell in love with because, according to the jurors, there was a certain "Twin Peaks quality" about it. The footage for the video (directed and cut by Harald Sandø) was filmed on locations in Oslo: Røa, Uranienborg Church and in the director's bathtub... Following up the EMA, Elin Synnøve Bråthen was guest at SKY TV (Birmingham), where the video-show Cuetracks aired the video for three subsequent months alongside Coldplay, Katy Perry, and other world-renowned artists. The exile London-paper "The Irish World" used all superlatives available in its review of the debut album: *"stunning debut"; "... an altogether ground-breaking album"; "spectacular"; "... so beautifully and sensually sung that words simply cannot describe the experience that awaits the fortunate listener. There is certainly a great creative intelligence at work here throughout this album - wherever it hails from - and the listening experience simply gets richer and more absorbing with every play. An amazingly talented Composer / Singer / Songwriter, herself hauntingly beautiful with such an incredible voice, she can most certainly take her place among the top contemporary female artists of today."*

The track "Feel It" is included on two different compilations in the UK, and a trance remix (by Alien in Transit) is released on "Poolside Anthems Vol. 2" in the UK. This version was "pick of the week" on the radio, and reached spot 14 on the UK House Chart.

ELIN SYNNØVE BRÅTHEN AND OTHER PROJECTS / Previously, Elin Synnøve has

been sort of a musical chameleon. The list of various concert collaborations and recordings is long and versatile. Without any classical training she has been a soprano soloist with a baroque ensemble performing Händel's "Messiah". She has performed with artists like Mari Boine, One People, and Karen Jo Fields at the world concert "[Wiping the Tears](#)". In the very north of Norway Elin Synnøve delivered the opening number for the festival "Riddu Riddu", she performed an improvisation concert with rock musicians in the City of Tromsø; she has visited jazz-club scenes with jazz versions of her own material; she has done guest vocals with big bands and solo parts with a number of different choirs. On several occasions she performed in Øystein Sevåg's band with musicians like Bendik Hofseth, Paolo Vinaccia, Lakki Patey, Rune Arnesen, Audun Erlien, Audun Kleive and others. Among recent recordings, Elin Synnøve Bråthen contributes on Øystein Sevåg's "[Caravan](#)" and jazz saxophone-player Petter Wettre's "[Hallmark Moments](#)". She has performed with the band "Rebels" (Irish traditional music), and appeared live on Irish radio with Gaelic songs after having been spotted singing in an Irish pub long after closing hours...

**THE ANCHOR AND THE DREAM – WITH MEN'S CHOIR, MANDARIN SONG, AND FOUR VIDEOS** / Fall 2008 throughout 2009 was a creative working period for Elin Synnøve. She wrote about 20 new songs at the same time as she started a doctorate research project within popular music performance (at the University of Agder). Most of 2010 has been dedicated to recording and releasing the album "The Anchor and the Dream", this time with Øystein Sevåg as recording producer. The recording has taken place at Musikkloftet (with Vidar Lunden) and Fersk Lyd in Oslo, final production – mix and mastering – is done by Giert Clausen in collaboration with Elin Synnøve. This somewhat extraordinary pop-album includes 12 tracks and 4 music videos, including a track sung in Mandarin, a task that eventually brought in a Chinese language coach. A label manager and friend from Hong Kong, returned the tape twice tagged with the following remark: "*You sing like an angel, but I don't understand a word of what you are saying.*"

Another "oddity" on this pop album is men's choir, male singers from the Oslo choir Gli Scapoli. This adds a special flavour to this production, along with guest musicians such as Øystein Sevåg (piano), Åshild Watne (lyre and Norwegian folk harp), and Gisle Torvik (guitar). Four music videos were filmed for this album on locations in Ireland (Carraroe in Connemara and Dublin). Elin Synnøve brought a crew over from Norway: the fantastic cameraman Nils Petter Lotherington, the exceptionally creative stylist Cårejånni Enderud, assisting producer Sevåg and photographer Astrid Lunke. The Irish actor Seamus Hughes is co-acting with Elin Synnøve in two of the videos. The visuals are cut by Erland Edenholt and sound finish is by Giert Clausen. "The Anchor and the Dream" is released on the label [Curling Legs](#), distributed by [Musikkoperatørene](#) and Phonofile, and promoted by Atle Bøckmann and Glenn Larsen (Kult AS, now Indianer AS). Album design is by Øivind Madsen. The album is available on [iTunes](#).

**TIME TO CROSS – LAUNCHED WITH A CONTROVERSIAL SHORT MOVIE** / The 2012 single "Time to Cross" was recorded with the band musicians at Musikkloftet Studio at Skaugum in Asker outside Oslo. The melodious and catchy song is about letting go of things that hold you back, and moving on in life. Sometimes this involves stepping out of the comfort zone, challenging yourself, breaking out of conformities and daring to face fears. Elin Synnøve decided to work with PR & production company [Komodo](#) when promoting this single, and the unanimous opinion was to give the song an extraordinary music video. After its premiere, the music business described it as a short movie, packed with scenes depicting different layers of the song's core theme, featuring famous Norwegian actors Ingar Helge Gimle and Per Christian Ellefsen, champion body builders, and a nice bundle of extras. The single and the music video was first released on June 6 at Hard Rock Café in Oslo, accompanied by a solo performance by Elin Synnøve. Since its thematic can be interpreted as social critique the video was shown as debate opening at the final day of the Protest Festival in southern Norway. As a result, the production company had to take it off the internet although the viewings hit the roof. The single is still

available on [iTunes](#). Re-mastered track and revised version of the music video will be re-launched as part of the current album-release, "Perfect Addiction".

