

GÖRAN FRISTORP – Master Craftsman

The Artiste

Goran Fristorp was born [May 26, 1948](#) in [Örebro](#), Sweden and has been a resident of [Skillinge, Sweden](#) for many years.

He first made his name singing with the duo [Malta](#) who won the 1973 Eurovision Song Contest. But after the accolades of international competition, Göran Fristorp performed more as [a solo artist](#) and went on to establish himself as a gifted songwriter, even turning down an offer to work full time as staff songwriter for Tijuana Brass legend Herb Alpert in the USA.

As a solo performer, Fristorp has emerged as one of Scandinavia most important singer-songwriters, graduating from his early days as an electric guitar player to become one of Sweden's finest acoustic guitarists.

His talents on the guitar are such that at one stage he was accepted as one of 21 candidates for a seat at the world-famous Framnäs Music College and then went on to Gothenburg Conservatory, from where he set off on his career as a folk musician first and foremost, but ready to embrace any style of music he could comfortably relate to. Not surprisingly, some of his finest work outside the folk tradition has been on the edges of the world of jazz, working with some of the best names in Scandinavian jazz.

His extensive discography is evidence of his love of moving between genres to feature music and the styles he truly loves.

Fristorp says himself: "It's difficult to place my musical style as I am influenced by music of all descriptions."

Not surprising then that a man who performs many concerts in the churches of Scandinavia would release an album in 1989 of 10 religious songs and hymns.

His colour and varied career has seen him tour the churches, parks and concert halls of Sweden, Norway, Germany and even the Soviet Union which he toured with Sylvia Vrethammar. He released his first solo album "My Songs" in 1974 and went on tour opening for Dutch group Ekseption in 1974-75. Notably, his solo album featured a song "On the Way Home" which was subsequently borrowed and reworked by Burt Bacharach and lyricist Hal David for trumpeter Herb Alpert and recorded as "I Belong."

Throughout his career, Goran has worked with a number of gifted Swedish and Norwegian musicians and soloists including Arne Domnerus, Putte Wickman, Anna-Lotta Larsson, Jan Lundgren, Norwegian bassist Arild Andersen and Karoline Krüger to name but a few.

Recognized as a gifted and talented performer and songwriter, Fristorp has worked not only in his home country Sweden and in his 'second home' Norway. For several years, the Swedish Church Abroad (SKUT) and its Norwegian counterpart Norske Sjømannskirken, have hired Göran to play in concert across the globe - in Minneapolis-St Paul, New York, London, Nice, Bangkok, Singapore, Qatar, Abu Dhabi Dubai and Dubai. **(Dubai only once, right?)**

His special talent has taken him around the world many times and on his travels, he has won many new fans and friends whenever he plays in concert.

Göran has worked extensively with composer Leif Strand, and their classic 1975 collaboration, "Göran Fristorp Sings Nils Ferlin" featuring some great songs is a very famous album in Norway and beyond. Subsequent albums released by Goran over the years have always done exceptionally well among Norwegian fans - where he is much loved and where he has given extensive concert activities and regularly releases CDs.

His latest album "Min Lyckas Hus" was listed for three weeks on the Norway Top 40 where it peaked at number 24. The album, released in 2008, was mainly recorded in Norway, assisted by Per Lindvall on drums and percussion and Arild Andersen on contrabass. Andersen has worked on all of Fristorp's recordings since 1982, while Helge Lilletvedt has been an important musical partner providing beautiful string arrangements and fine piano playing.

Strings on the 2008 effort were by the Malmö Symphony Orchestra and woodwinds from the Swedish Radio Symfonikerna. **(Symphony Orchestra)**

All the songs are his and half of the lyrics too. Three of Scandinavia's finest voices accompany him including Helen Sjöholm, Marian Aas Hansen and Herborg Kråkevik.

A long collaboration with Anna-Lotta Larsson has been dramatically productive and in recent years they have sometimes been joined by up-and-coming pianist Andreas Landegren, the young composer/arranger providing the trio with a phenomenal musical presence.

The music of this Swedish folk legend immediately takes the listener away from the hustle and bustle of everyday life and to the perfect world his beautifully crafted music creates.

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The Performer

On [CD](#) or live on stage – solo or with other musicians – Goran Fristorp provides the crystal clear evidence that he is a craftsman.

He is a musician born in the folk tradition. He briefly embraced the tempting world of rock and roll as [fame](#) arrived, but today he is grounded in the classics and the wealth of wonderful music which he has tapped and learned from, to grow and mature as a writer and musician to the point that today he can present a music that is his very own.

And his beautiful music is handcrafted art which can only have real life when that music reaches the audience he seeks – music lovers in search of harmony, melody, fidelity and truth – all qualities his music delightfully embraces.

Although he began his career enamoured of the electric guitar, today he is one of the world's great acoustic performers and plays his songs alone or accompanied by a handful of musicians who work with him as he **plays** his wonderful trade on handcrafted instruments, delighting his audiences around the world with what are always on-on-one performances, no matter how many turn up to see him deliver his special gift as an acoustic balladeer.

Still very much a private man with an almost intellectual approach to his music and compositions, he is a perfectionist in everything he does. His performances are no exception.

Göran Fristorp sets a high standard; he is extremely self conscious about his ability and leaves no efforts behind when it comes to fine tuning his performances. Every single concert is approached in the same professional way.

"People in the audience who pay to come and listen to me deserve my full attention and commitment to deliver my music to the best of my ability," he says.

He was once so shy on stage at the outset of his career that he closed his eyes throughout every performance. Today, 1,000 performances and 21 records later, if he closes his eyes at all on stage it is simply because he is concentrating, endeavoring as he does to play faultless classical guitar accompaniment to the songs he sings, and during the original instrumental gems he performs.

His songs are mostly originals but his repertoire includes music from Swedish folk music legends as diverse as Evert Taube, Nils Ferlin, Carl Mikael Bellman, Gustaf Fröding and Beppe Wolgers.

Göran keeps the Swedish folk tradition alive still today and his rich, warm voice has gained depth over the years and he can still comfortably hit the high notes demanded of him in the Swedish folk music tradition. His duets with the likes of Helene Sjöholm and Anna-Lotta Larsson are classics of their kind, and few leave a Fristorp concert completely satisfied with the depth and range of the beautiful music he always delivers, solo or with other artistes.

Nowadays he has found a new audience for his finely honed talents and when not on tour around Sweden and Norway, he spends a growing part of his time now playing in Asia where he maintains a residence, in Thailand.

Alex Pithie, ACMEBROADCAST