

FINAL DRAFT (Nov. 3, 2018)

In 2014, two Americans fell in love with Broder Daniel and decided to make a documentary about the band and its legendary frontman, Henrik Berggren. They had no idea what they were getting into.

Five years ago, 27-year-old publicist Amelia Trask heard a song by the band Makthaverskan streaming from the speakers at a bar in Brooklyn. **She was so enamored** that she contacted the band's record label, Luxury, which was run by Gothenburger Rasmus Hansén. He informed her that Makthaverskan was about to be launched in the United States. Amelia offered to do press for the band.

When Makthaverskan appeared in New York a year later, Rasmus and a few colleagues ended up at Amelia's apartment, **where they drank beer and smoked cigarettes.**

"I was working on some press material for the band at the time," says Amelia. "But I had trouble with how to describe them. Were they post-punk? Power-pop? As we sat there, Rasmus mentioned their 'Broder Daniel influence.' 'Who are they?' I asked. Rasmus answered: **'Have you never heard of them? They are huge in Sweden!'**"

He clicked on a Youtube video of the defunct band. The clip showed hundreds of young fans weeping as frontman Henrik Berggren performed the ballad "No Time for Us."

"Amelia stood with a cig in one hand and a beer in the other," says Rasmus Hansén. "The beer remained untouched and the cigarette burned to ashes as she listened."

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Five years ago, 27-year-old publicist Amelia Trask heard a song by the band Makthaverskan streaming from the speakers at a bar in Brooklyn. **The American liked what she heard so much** that she contacted the band's record label Luxury, which was run by Gothenburger Rasmus Hansén. He informed her that Makthaverskan was about to be launched in the United States. Amelia offered to do press for the band.

When Makthaverskan appeared in New York a year later, Rasmus and a few colleagues ended up at Amelia's apartment, **where they partied.**

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All I could think was: “What the hell *is* this?”

“Then, we continued to other clips,” says Rasmus. “I remember that Amelia was a little angry about being forced to listen to Bright Eyes during her depressed teen years when she could have been listening to Broder Daniel. Why had they not broken through to the US?”

The gang continued on to a birthday party where they sat in the bedroom while Rasmus and his colleagues told Broder Daniel stories. Rasmus had previously had vague ideas about trying to launch the band abroad; now, he and Amelia discussed the possibility of doing it together.

“We had lots of ideas that just got dumber and dumber as the evening went on,” says Rasmus.

The next day, Amelia Trask went to her friend Sasha Hecht. They had met a year earlier at a concert and had been inseparable ever since. The friends had a lot in common: Amelia had studied at a boarding school in New Hampshire and planned to become a lawyer before she started writing for a festival newspaper and slipped into the music world; Sasha grew up in the “Gossip Girl environment” on Manhattan’s Upper East Side and was aiming for a career as a neurologist before she too was drawn to music. As a 19-year-old, she joined the media house VICE and started their music channel Noisy and remained there for three years. From there, she jumped around a variety of other media sites.

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“But when Amelia and I met, we agreed that the industry was changing,” she says. “In the beginning, we were a bunch of kids who loved music and wanted to devote our lives to it. But gradually, advertising took over more and more. Big companies interfered with and tried to dictate what the artists would talk about. They sucked the fun out of everything.”

The friends had been talking for some time about wanting to do something else, and now, Amelia recounted all the stories she had heard about Broder Daniel. When she showed the film clip, Sasha became as captivated as her, and soon, they were sitting and reading Swedish articles about the band with the help of Google’s translation feature.

“At first glance, everything was chaos,” said Amelia. “Members had come and gone, the band had split up, and Henrik Berggren seemed to have almost vanished.”

Sasha:

“On the one hand, we saw the amazing culture that existed around the band with their fans who call themselves ‘pandas.’ On the other hand, we didn’t understand what it was about this band that evoked such strong feelings. Even some real fans seemed unsure if Henrik was an idiot or a genius. Did he know what he was doing, or had it just been a fluke? We really wanted to understand: What is it about this thing that has caused so much chaos?”

The two friends used their contacts to get a meeting with the site Pitchfork, who, with some justification, calls itself “the most trusted voice in the music industry.”

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Amelia and Sasha suggested that they make a straight-forward band biography, and at home in Gothenburg, record label owner Rasmus Hansén created lists of people who could be interesting to interview.

“In the music world, there are some cities that have been more important than others,” says Rasmus. “Manchester, Liverpool, Seattle... But Gothenburg is one of the world’s best music cities ever—if not the best. Few outside of Sweden realize that, which I find very strange. And one of the most influential bands from here is Broder Daniel.”

For most Swedes, the history of the Gothenburg band is **more familiar**. Henrik Berggren—a 15-year-old wearing a slouch hat and makeup—formed the band in 1989 **when he was in eighth grade** at the private school Samskolan. Other members came and went: first fellow classmate Håkan Hellström, later guitarist Anders Göthberg and bassist Theodor Jensen.

Broder Daniel’s first two albums were released on the major label EMI and featured brash rock spiced with Berggren’s stark lyrics about anxiety, loneliness, and alienation. Berggren not only made his mark on the band expressively, **but was also the one that stood out aesthetically**. His **signature** was the glittering stars that he stuck to his cheeks.

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For many Swedes, however, the history of the Gothenburg band is **familiar**. Henrik Berggren—a 15-year-old wearing a slouch hat and makeup—formed the band in 1989 **while attending** the private school Samskolan. Other members came and went: first fellow classmate Håkan Hellström, later guitarist Anders Göthberg and bassist Theodor Jensen.

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Although the records sold poorly, the chaotic band quickly gained a devoted following. They cultivated the myth of themselves as hard-partying rascals with no regard for **either** order or business, and fell in the same financial trap as many other contemporary bands. Berggren later revealed that the contract with EMI gave the band six percent royalty **to be shared** among the five members.

In the late 1990s, two record label executives, Isse Samie and Klas Lunding, signed the band to Dolores Recordings under a contract that meant a slight improvement: 12 percent in royalties. They released the record *Broder Daniel Forever*, and when director Lukas Moodysson used the band's music in *Fucking Ämal* [Eng: *Show Me Love*], they finally got their **broad impact**. Broder Daniel was booked for bigger and bigger venues, but the intense touring—combined with an equally-intense drug habit—**soon took its toll on** Henrik Berggren. He fell ill with thyroid inflammation and the band took a two-year hiatus before returning with their perhaps best-known song: “Shoreline.”

When they released *Cruel Town* in 2003, Håkan Hellström had left the band and launched his own solo career. The album became the band's last work and they stopped touring in 2006. Two years later, guitarist Anders Göthberg took his life by jumping from Västerbron [West Bridge] in Stockholm, and Broder Daniel's final appearance was a tribute concert **in his honor** at Way Out West Festival. After that, Berggren disappeared from the music scene, while the other members went separate ways.

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“**But** Broder Daniel lived on anyway,” says Rasmus Hansén. “They have given birth to so many other things: Håkan, of course. And Theodor Jensen started The Plan, from which Peter, Björn and John developed. They were important to Bad Cash Quartet, which then became Hästpojken. The bands I release through my company—Makthaverskan, Westkust, Agent Blå—would not have existed without Broder Daniel. Many of them have even become successful abroad. But Broder Daniel never got that chance themselves.”

Six months after the trip to New York, Rasmus Hansén invited Henrik Berggren to dinner to introduce **the film project**. By that time, Henrik Berggren had taken over his parents’ townhouse in Västra Frölunda, where he lived rent-free. The residual money that occasionally rolled in was enough for food, but sometimes his father had to pay his cell phone bill. In addition, Berggren **had recently been diagnosed with** the disease ME/CFS – Chronic Fatigue Syndrome. He was depressed and too sick **to play concerts**. Ever since he **was little, Henrik had dreamed of some day playing in the United States.**

Now, Rasmus Hansén sat in front of Henrik and told him that he, Amelia, and Sasha wanted to introduce him and Broder Daniel to an American audience.

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CAPTION: According to Amelia (left) and Sasha (center), Henrik almost did not show up for their first interview because he was too nervous. Berggren remembers it differently: “It was so important that there was no reason to be afraid.”

Six months after the trip to New York, Rasmus Hansén invited Henrik Berggren to dinner to introduce **Sasha and Amelia’s idea of making a documentary about the band**. By that time, Henrik Berggren had taken over his parents’ townhouse in Västra Frölunda, where he lived rent-free. The residual money that occasionally rolled in was enough for food, but sometimes his dad had to pay his cell phone bill. In addition, Berggren **suffered from** the disease ME/CFS – Chronic Fatigue Syndrome. He was depressed and too sick **to do concerts.**

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“It was amazing to hear it—like a dream,” says Henrik Berggren. “I’ve always encountered that attitude that anything that comes from the United States or England is better. The music world is an idiotic thought hierarchy, and it was probably the worst when Broder Daniel started playing. I was always told that I could not do anything abroad because I was so bad in English. So they said about me. Although, I never thought so myself.”

He says that it is in line with how he feels about the Broder Daniel years afterwards.

“It was often a struggle to get across my will, and I felt incredibly stifled and always at war. Then I often thought: The United States may be my only salvation. But because everyone had the attitude they had, it never happened.”

Now, seemingly out of nowhere, appeared three people who seemed to take his dreams seriously and showed, as Berggren himself says, “that the truth was just the opposite.” Rasmus put Henrik in contact with Sasha and Amelia, and they held talks about the project over the phone.

“We tried to be very respectful,” says Sasha. “This was a person who had been alone for a long time, and had been mystified by the media—and we were outsiders. If you’re to open yourself up to an outsider, you don’t want to be misunderstood. But he replied immediately: ‘You don’t have to worry. I trust you because you found me.’”

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“What struck us immediately was that Henrik is extremely intelligent,” says Amelia. “He speaks five languages, and it turned out that he read philosophy in Ancient Greek and studied Shakespeare through a distance course at Harvard. The mix of indie pop soul and sophisticated intelligence made him incredibly fun to get to know and talk to.”

They talked for “hours” every weekend for several months **while the film project was in pre-production**. Henrik told them about the years with Broder Daniel and filled in the gaps about what has happened since the band’s breakup.

“When I talked to them, they immediately looked into my soul,” says Henrik Berggren. “Really weird. A mystical experience. Someone from the other side of the world has found you somehow—when you’re lying in your grave. That’s truly how I experienced it.”

The documentary project gave Henrik Berggren new energy and soon, he shared that he had plans to make a solo album. He started sending demos to the film trio as they were recorded.

“No one else was interested in what I was doing,” he says. “But they listened and gave me comments on the stuff I sent. Their enthusiasm did a lot for me. It helped me. I don’t know, but maybe I would not have even made the record if I had not come into contact with them.”

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One year after the birth of the documentary, Amelia and Sasha flew to Gothenburg to film a test interview with Henrik **to show to potential financiers**. Only when they came to Sweden did the Americans realize that Henrik Berggren was an “icon for so many.”

“We immediately saw how people completely shut down when he was around. At the end of the trip, we celebrated Rasmus’ 30th birthday on the outskirts of town. Henrik had not been to a party for a long time and wanted to tag along. When we showed up with Henrik, it felt like walking in with a lion on a leash. Everyone froze and kept their distance. Henrik just wanted to hang out, but it was so strange.”

Amelia Trask:

It took a while, but by the end of the night, Henrik was at the karaoke machine singing Broder Daniel songs with people from Makthaverskan. It was completely surreal.

When a record release began to feel more realistic, Henrik Berggren **decided to get a manager**. Berggren—who “prides himself on never reading any contracts”—**would allow someone else to be responsible for the jobs** he was too sick and uninterested in taking care of. **In the end, he asked PR woman Ebba Lindqvist. Later, the team was strengthened with two people from the music agency United Stage.**

“I knew Ebba since before,” says Henrik Berggren. “She had worked with Broder Daniel. When someone from the media rang, she was always their contact. It was an easy continuation of it.”

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In the US, Amelia and Sasha continued to search for partners for the film. Pitchfork had been acquired by the media giant Condé Nast, who put the site's documentary effort on ice, but the filmmakers were still in good spirits. They had good material to show to potential financiers and several other interviews in the works. Among the former Broder Daniel members, there was a prize game: Sweden's now-largest living pop star, Håkan Hellström.

He had just left the major label Universal for the new indie label Woah Dad! which was run by the same people who once had care of Broder Daniel—Isse Samie and Klas Lunding. The other two founders, Joel Borg and Niklas Lundell, came from the booking agency Luger and had previously participated in and organized the festival Way Out West.

So it was through Woah Dad! that the filmmakers were able to contact Håkan Hellström. Rasmus Hansén arranged a meeting with Joel Borg, and in early 2016, the filmmakers flew back to Sweden.

According to them, Borg was enthusiastic on behalf of the artist and assured that Telegram could be a good partner for the film.

“Joel was very helpful and told us that Håkan had an entire Broder Daniel archive that we could access,” says Sasha Hecht.

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During the visit to Sweden, they also had a meeting with Paul Blomgren DoVan, CEO of the production company Gothenburg Film Studios.

“We met some major players in Stockholm who were interested, but when we met Paul, we decided on Gothenburg Film Studios. We would be telling a story about Gothenburg and Paul was a Gothenburg guy. It seemed fair.”

“We have a development project where we support young filmmakers,” says Paul Blomgren DoVan. “These were two first-time filmmakers who came with great passion and a good idea. Initially, we supported them with free technology so that they could test movies. Then, they asked if we wanted to be more involved.” *[Removed because factually untrue]*

Paul, Amelia, and Sasha agreed that Paul would be the producer of the film. He also realized that it would be an asset for the film if Håkan Hellström was in it, and discussed the matter with Joel Borg. They concluded that Amelia, Sasha, and Paul could film Hellström when he played two shows in New York a few months later. Maybe they could even get the opportunity to film an interview with the star then.

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PULL QUOTE: “He’s negotiated the rights to several major films. Our lawyers are the shit!”

Amelia, Sasha, and Paul soon signed a so-called Letter of Intent—an agreement to establish a framework for their cooperation. They agreed that Amelia and Sasha owned the project and that Paul would be working as a producer responsible for, among other things, the financing and economics. At the same time, Blomgren DoVan suggested in an email an idea of how they could get Håkan Hellström in the movie: Joel Borg at Woah Dad! had been in favor of the trio filming Hellström when he played two shows in New York a few months later. Maybe they could even get the opportunity to film an interview with the star then.

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A month before the two shows, Hellström announced, without mentioning any specific reason, that he did not want the concerts or any interview to be recorded. A week later, he changed his mind again: the concert recording was given the green light, but no interview—there was no room for it. Both Joel Borg and Håkan Hellström were “enthusiastic about the movie” and wanted to arrange an interview opportunity in Sweden instead.

“Paul and several people said that we could showcase the concert material when we were looking for money—that Håkan’s involvement would give us the boost we needed to get money from the Swedish Film Institute. The whole reason we wanted to work with Paul was so that he would fundraise, so it was just: Go for it!”

Henrik Berggren had now come so far with his new record that he was ready to start negotiating with record companies. Since the album was written while the movie was starting to film, the idea was that they would be released at the same time, and that much of the new music would be heard in the film.

“Our goal was always to complete the film production before the record came out so that the film could provide context for the album,” said Amelia Trask. “We knew it was a very personal record, and we saw that together, they could be a beautiful package. That was the concept.”

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“We were told that Håkan’s participation would give us the boost we needed to get money from the Swedish Film Institute,” says Amelia. “We needed financing, so we just felt: ‘Go for it!’”

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For Henrik Berggren, it was obvious that the documentary filmmakers would have the rights to use his music without paying anything extra, but it was not just up to him. The upcoming record label also had to give its consent. Amelia and Sasha claim that they then contacted Berggren's management team and that they **consented** that the documentary's music rights would be negotiated into the next record contract.

"They said they would take care of it."

(Berggren's management **says** that no such promise was ever made.)

In mid-2016, the filmmakers heard that Woah Dad! was the label in question. They felt hesitant. Not only because the company consisted in part of the same people who once took care of Broder Daniel—during the summer, Swedish newspapers also wrote how the artist Alice B, who acted as a guest artist when Hellström played at Ullevi, was not paid for her involvement. In a statement, Woah Dad! wrote that the artist himself had not participated in the negotiations and was "disappointed with how it was handled." Alice B responded by publishing a private text that the artist allegedly had sent to her, stating that she was "looking for publicity" and should be "grateful." Sasha Hecht and Amelia Trask say they heard many more similar stories from people who worked with Woah Dad!. Most seriously, however, were several stories of abuse and rape allegedly carried out by a person with connections to the company.

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For Henrik Berggren, it was obvious that the documentary filmmakers would have the rights to use his music without paying anything extra, but it wasn't just up to him. The upcoming record label also had to give its consent. Amelia and Sasha claim that they then contacted Berggren's management team, **consisting of Ebba Lindqvist and Anders Larsson and Pontus Sillrén of United Stage**, and that they **promised** that the documentary's music rights would be negotiated into the next record contract.

"They said they would take care of it."

(Berggren's management **believes** that no such promise was ever made.)

FINAL DRAFT (Nov. 3, 2018)

They felt “ethically obligated” to forward this information to Henrik Berggren’s management before signing any contract. Amelia and Sasha met manager Anders Larsson, one of two in Berggren’s United Stage team, who calmed the duo’s fears.

In the end, Henrik Berggren signed to Woah Dad! at a price of one million kronor.

“I wanted to be indie with my new album,” he says. “But not so indie that it did not get out. And then there was nowhere else to go. Other interested customers could only put the money together for a one-time payment. But I did not look so carefully, I trust what people who are more familiar than I say in such situations.”

For Amelia and Sasha, the contract meant problems. There was no clause giving them the right to use Henrik Berggren’s new music. They also did not have the right to use Broder Daniel’s earlier songs—and a music documentary without music is quite pointless. Nor was there any money in the project. The Americans had resigned from their jobs to work full-time on the movie, but now it was getting tight. Paul had applied for money from the Swedish Film Institute, but had not heard anything from them. Sasha and Amelia were getting impatient and wanted to try to get financiers in the US themselves.

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While the record deal negotiations were in progress, things started to get tight for the Americans. They had resigned from their jobs to work full-time with the film, but there was still no money in the project. Paul Blomgren DoVan was working on an application to the Swedish Film Institute, but Sasha and Amelia were impatient and wanted to try to get financiers in the US themselves.

FINAL DRAFT (Nov. 3, 2018)

“All the material we filmed was with Paul in Gothenburg,” says Amelia Trask. “So we had a meeting where we said, ‘You’ve got nothing happening on the Swedish side. You have to send over some materials so that we can show some clips for US financiers.’ We made a long list of potential investors and had contact with CAA, one of the biggest management companies, to help us.”

Paul did not like the arrangement. According to their initial agreement, he would be the producer, and he had already accounted for the production costs of what was filmed in Sweden. That he would suddenly get a smaller role did not seem fair. In an email, he explained his attitude: the project was too weak for him to be sure to get back the money he had already invested. They had not secured the music rights, and he also thought that the action was too thin for the Swedish audience and for the prestigious film festivals the Americans were aiming for. Because they also lacked music rights, the project was too weak for him to be sure that he would get his money back.

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“All the material we filmed was with Paul in Gothenburg,” says Amelia Trask. “So we had a meeting where we said, ‘You’ve got nothing happening on the Swedish side.’ We made a long list of potential investors and had contact with CAA, one of the biggest management companies in the US, to help us.”

In November, eight months after the trio signed their first and only agreement, the Americans expressed that they wanted Paul to take on a smaller role in the project, where he would assist Amelia and Sasha in filming in Sweden rather than have any power over the film.

Paul was hesitant about the arrangement. After the American women presented their plan on how they themselves would manage the project and tell the story of Broder Daniel, Paul announced that he no longer wanted to invest in the film. In an email, he explained his attitude: the music rights were not yet secured and he also thought that the action was too thin for the Swedish audience and for the prestigious film festivals the Americans were aiming for. He had already been responsible for the majority of the production costs and felt that the project was too weak for him to be sure that he would get back the money he had invested.

FINAL DRAFT (Nov. 3, 2018)

As Paul Blomgren DoVan saw it, the case could be solved in two ways. Either Gothenburg Film Studios could take over as majority producer, which meant that the company would have the power to make economic and creative decisions about the film. Or Amelia and Sasha could pay for Paul to continue to assist them in their work—if they also paid back that money he already invested in the project. He estimated the total cost of the project at just over 800,000 SEK. [*~\$80,000 USD*]

Since Amelia and Sasha had staked everything on the documentary, they chose the option two. But they did not accept the sum Paul calculated. In the sum included namely the film's single biggest expenditure—the recording of Håkan Hellström's concert in New York, which came at a price of almost 300,000 SEK. [*~\$30,000 USD*] The recording had proved useless because Hellström, after several turns back and forth, declined participation in the film as he did not want to “take attention from Henrik.” Sasha Hecht and Amelia Trask thought Gothenburg Film Studios should be responsible for the cost, Paul Blomgren DoVan disagreed.

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Amelia and Sasha were upset. They sent a fire-and-brimstone email where they explained how dissatisfied they were with Paul's efforts. After a period of negotiations, Paul Blomgren DoVan presented two solutions on how the trio could move forward. Either Gothenburg Film Studios could take over as a majority producer, which meant that the company would have the power to make financial and creative decisions about the film. Or, Amelia and Sasha could pay back the money he had already invested in the project, and Paul would continue to assist them in their work for payment if they so desired. He estimated the total cost of the project at just over 800,000 SEK. [*~\$80,000 USD*]

Because the documentary was so important to Amelia and Sasha that they even quit their regular jobs, they chose option two.

FINAL DRAFT (Nov. 3, 2018)

“It was so stressful,” says Amelia. “We wanted to record several interviews that winter but had no money. At the same time, we couldn’t get new money from other financiers until we resolved the rights issues. On top of that, I always had a fear that Henrik would die. He had been a drug addict for 25 years, he was sick—I was afraid his heart would stop because of all the amphetamine he took. I thought ‘What if he dies and this movie never sees the light of day?’”

She continues:

“I felt responsible for everyone who told us things. We had captured Gothenburg in 2016, when Henrik Berggren was secretly recording new material. We had 20 hours of interviews where Henrik completely exposed himself. We had interviews with people who shared their innermost secrets with us. And you know how Swedes are: they never tell anything to anyone. I was so grateful to those who trusted me, and it felt like I would betray them.”

When the conflict with Gothenburg Film Studios escalated, Sasha and Amelia enlisted the help of “one of the best entertainment lawyers in the United States,” Simon Pulman.

“He negotiated the rights to *Searching for Sugar Man*, he negotiated *Hunger Games*,” [Changed after clarification] said Amelia. “Our lawyers are the shit!”

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“It was so stressful,” says Amelia. “We wanted to record several interviews that winter but had no money. At the same time, we couldn’t get other financiers until we resolved the matter with Paul. On top of that, I was always afraid that Henrik would die. He had been a drug addict for 25 years, he was sick—I was afraid his heart would stop because of all the amphetamine he took. I thought, ‘What if he dies and the movie never sees the light of day?’”

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FINAL DRAFT (Nov. 3, 2018)**PUBLISHED ARTICLE (Nov. 5, 2018)**

But the negotiations dragged on. The US attorney sent 12-page contracts to Gothenburg Film Studios, while Paul wanted to reach a simpler solution: Amelia and Sasha could get all the material after they paid for it.

Pulman obviously wanted his clients to pay as little as possible. The single biggest expense was the recording of Håkan Hellström's concerts in New York, around 300,000 SEK. [*~\$30,000 USD*] That had proved fairly useless because, after several turns back and forth, Hellström, through agents, declined his interview participation in the film as he did not want to "take any attention from Henrik." After pressure from Pulman, the concert costs finally landed at Gothenburg Film Studios, but the fact remained: the unemployed Americans had to scramble half a million SEK [*~\$50,000 USD*] to access the film material. Quickly.

CAPTION: The filmmakers recorded the final scenes of the documentary the night before Berggren's first single "To My Brother, Johnny" was released.

Two years had passed since Amelia Trask and Sasha Hecht first met Henrik Berggren and woke him from his hibernation. Berggren's return to the limelight seemed to be getting closer: he had signed a record deal for his solo album *Wolf's Heart* with indie label *Woah Dad!*.

FINAL DRAFT (Nov. 3, 2018)

It soon tuned out that they would benefit from them. The next conflict was about music rights. Since it was never written in the record contract that Sasha and Amelia would get the songs from *Wolf's Heart* for their documentary, they had to start negotiating with Woah Dad!. They maintained that they had been promised the music for free. Joel Borg wrote that they could get the rights if Woah Dad! received half of the revenue from the film.

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But for the American women, things were still sluggish. Berggren's record contract did not help: it did not contain any clause that gave them rights to use his new music. Nor did they have the rights to use Broder Daniel's previous songs—and a music documentary without music is pretty pointless. The filmmakers were worried about whether they could even complete the project.

"I felt responsible for everyone who told us things," says Amelia Trask. "We had captured Gothenburg in 2016, when Henrik Berggren was recording new material in secret. We had 20 hours of interviews where Henrik was completely exposed, we had interviews with people who shared their innermost secrets with us. And you know how Swedes are: they never tell anyone anything. I was so grateful to those who trusted me, and it felt like I was going to let them down."

To use music in a movie, two separate agreements are needed: one with the copyright holder and his representative, one with the record company that owns the recordings themselves.

When the filmmakers started to negotiate with Woah Dad!, they maintained that they were promised the music for free. Joel Borg said he had never heard of such an agreement and wrote that the company's lawyer had advised him not to give up the rights. He suggested another solution: they could get the rights if Woah Dad! received half of the revenue from the film.

FINAL DRAFT (Nov. 3, 2018)

“Actually, it was never about the rights being free,” says Amelia Trask. “But 50 percent of the profit is not a realistic bid! We would gladly have paid something for the rights, but at the time, things had been going on for so long that we were not prepared to give anyone a damn penny.”

The locked situation was made even more difficult by the fact that Woah Dad! was also in the process of purchasing the rights to Broder Daniel’s song catalog from former owners Warner. Henrik Berggren and four of the five other former band members had already signed and approved the sale. But when Berggren heard that Amelia and Sasha had been denied the rights to the music for free—as he had promised—he sent an email to his management and record label: “It pains me to see my dream project sink like the Titanic,” he wrote, explaining that if his record label prevented his solo music from being used in the documentary about him, he did not want to expose Broder Daniel’s catalog to the same risk.

Therefore, he had asked the last member to hold on his signature until the matter with the music rights was resolved.

Both the record company and the management team replied that none of them were looking to prevent the film. However, they wrote that they never promised that the rights would be free, and that they had never even heard that a film production would get free music rights.

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“Actually, it was never about the rights being free,” says Amelia Trask. “But 50 percent of the profit is not a realistic bid! We would gladly have paid something for the rights, but at that time, things had been going on for so long that we were not prepared to give anyone a damn penny.”

The situation was further complicated by the fact that Woah Dad! was buying out the rights to Broder Daniel’s song catalog. Henrik Berggren and four of the five other former band members had already signed and approved the sale. But when Berggren heard that Amelia and Sasha had been denied the rights to the music for free—as he had promised—he sent an email to his management and his record label: “It pains me to see my dream project sink like the Titanic,” he wrote, explaining that if his record label prevented his solo music from being used in the documentary about him, he did not want to expose Broder Daniel’s catalog to the same risk.

Therefore, he had asked the last member to hold on his signature until the matter with the music rights was resolved.

Both the record company and the management team replied Henrik that none of them were looking to prevent the film—on the contrary, they stated that they hoped it would be released. His management wrote that they never promised that the rights would be free, and that they had never even heard that a film production would get free music rights. In addition, they thought that the agreements Amelia and Sasha sent were too unspecific and risked giving them the rights to use the music anyway.

FINAL DRAFT (Nov. 3, 2018)

Henrik Berggren replied that he would be “ashamed to death” if he did not give “amerikatöserna” [*“the America gals”*], as he affectionately called them, at least the rights to *Wolf’s Heart* for free—“no matter how the practice has been since Lykurgos.”

Negotiations with Woah Dad! over the rights lasted for a month.

“Joel Borg tried to sneak wording in the agreement that it would only apply until the film got a distributor, and that we would then have to renegotiate,” says Sasha Hecht. “He also tried to add a clause that ‘neither party should act against each other,’ that we should not say anything negative about them. They are used to working with people who don’t have lawyers.”

Amelia Trask:

In the end, we had \$20,000 in legal fees. Going on and on discussing rights to music that might not even exist if it were not for our film, while the artist himself asked them to sign... We couldn’t believe our eyes.

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The impatient filmmakers soon turned up the tone and threatened to change the direction of the film: if they did not get the music rights for free, they would instead make a film about how “Henrik was abused by his own team.”

Berggren told his management that he would be “ashamed to death” if he did not give “amerikaflickorna” [*“the America girls”*], as he affectionately called them, at least the rights to *Wolf’s Heart* for free—“no matter how the practice has been since Lykurgos.” They told him that if his wish was to take nothing, they would follow it, and soon arranged the copyright agreement for *Wolf’s Heart*. Then only the recording rights remained. Woah Dad! lowered its offer to cover five percent of revenue, but the filmmakers stood by and re-engaged their lawyer.

“In the end, we had \$20,000 in attorney fees,” says Amelia Trask. “Going on and on discussing rights to music that might not even exist if it were not for our film, while the artist himself asked them to sign... We couldn’t believe our eyes.”

FINAL DRAFT (Nov. 3, 2018)

In the end, as Henrik Berggren wanted, “amerikatöserna” [“the America gals”] got to use *Wolf’s Heart* and Broder Daniel’s music for free. Then, the last band member signed the contract and the rights ended up with Woah Dad!.

However, the dispute with Gothenburg Film Studios continued. In the spring of 2017, the filmmakers began to suspect that Paul Blomgren DoVan in fact wanted to use their material to make his own movie.

When they looked closer at one of the agreements that Henrik Berggren would have signed to authorize his participation in the film, they found that it was written solely with Gothenburg Film Studios and had the preliminary title *Broder Daniel*. Their documentary was called *I’ll Be Gone*. Shortly thereafter, manager Ebba Lindqvist asked Henrik if he agreed to film his rehearsals and concerts for an upcoming project that he would have “full control over.” The idea for the film, Lindqvist communicated, came from Gothenburg Film Studios.

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In the end, it was what Henrik Berggren wanted: “amerikaflickorna” [“The America girls”] got to use *Wolf’s Heart* for free. Then, the last band member signed the agreement that allowed Broder Daniel’s song catalog to go to Woah Dad!.

Finally, Amelia Trask and Sasha Hecht had secured the music they felt was so important to their documentary. But they still had none of the film material in their possession—and had found no way to pay the roughly half a million [~\$50,000 USD] that was required. In the spring of 2017, the filmmakers had also begun to suspect that Paul Blomgren DoVan in fact wanted to use the recorded material for his own documentary.

Henrik had informed the Americans that his management had asked him if he agreed to film his rehearsals and concerts for an upcoming project that he would have “full control over.” The idea for the film, Berggren wrote, had apparently come from Gothenburg Film Studios.

FINAL DRAFT (Nov. 3, 2018)

“Our lawyer constantly advised us: ‘Be sure to secure the rights to Henrik’s life story!’” says Amelia. “And we had replied: ‘No, it’s cool, there won’t be any problems. No one else will do any other documentary.’ Then we saw it and thought: ‘Holy shit! They are actually going to make another documentary.’”

Paul Blomgren DoVan denies that he had any such plans.

“We went in with an honest intention to make a little documentary,” he says. “But that ambition could not be achieved. I have gathered both opinions and feelings about our collaboration, but I do not want to review it outward. I don’t think that’s cool. I would also commit breach of contract, and it would be sad to give their lawyer—who works on commission—a new way to squeeze us out of money.”

Amelia and Sasha became so worried that they followed their lawyer’s advice and asked Berggren to sign an agreement giving them the exclusive right to tell his life story. The artist accepted; he says he has sworn the filmmakers “eternal faithfulness.”

“The others flipped when they heard it,” says Amelia. “They got so fucking pissed. No one will want to work with Henrik in the future, they claimed, because nobody can do more than a five-minute film with him.”

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“Our lawyer constantly advised us: ‘Be sure to secure the rights to Henrik’s life story!’” says Amelia. “And we had replied: ‘No, it’s cool, there won’t be any problems. No one else is going to make a documentary.’ Then we saw it and thought, ‘Holy shit! They are actually going to make another documentary.’”

Berggren’s management team believes that this is a misunderstanding: the documentation of the tour was actually about audio and still images to create a photobook and a live album.

Paul Blomgren DoVan denies that he had any plans to make his own Broder Daniel movie.

“We went in with an honest intention to make a little documentary,” he says. “But that ambition could not be achieved. I have gathered both opinions and feelings about our collaboration, but I do not want to review it outward. I don’t think that is nice. We landed on an agreement that Sasha and Amelia would have full freedom to continue the project with Henrik. I have respected it and I wish them all the best.”

Amelia and Sasha were still so worried that they followed their lawyer’s advice and asked Berggren to sign an agreement that gave them the exclusive right to tell his life story. The artist accepted; he says he has sworn the filmmakers “eternal faithfulness.”

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FINAL DRAFT (Nov. 3, 2018)

Sasha Hecht:

They see Henrik as a commodity—not as a person. Something anyone can exchange and use, a person without their own choices or control over their legacy.

Shortly after the American women secured the rights to Henrik Berggren’s life story, they also negotiated for the recordings of Håkan Hellström’s concert in New York. Nevertheless, almost 600,000 SEK [*~\$60,000 USD*] remained to pay for the material still owned by Gothenburg Film Studios.

While the dispute was still ongoing, Henrik Berggren’s album, *Wolf’s Heart*, was released. The fans were hysterical about his return, Berggren’s glittery cheeks soon adorned every magazine cover in the country, and the critics wrote overwhelmingly positive reviews. 10 years after Henrik Berggren last stood on a stage, he again drew big crowds with his summer tour.

“It was so simple to me,” says Henrik Berggren. “I just happened to have received money from my tour and didn’t know what to do with it. And there they sat in the technical problem. It was quite obvious that I would pay.”

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While the filmmakers were looking for ways to pay Gothenburg Film Studios for their material, Henrik Berggren’s *Wolf’s Heart* album had been released. The fans were hysterical about his return, Berggren’s glittering cheeks soon adorned every other magazine cover in the country, and the critics wrote overwhelmingly positive reviews. 10 years after Henrik Berggren last stood on a stage, he again drew big crowds with his summer tour.

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FINAL DRAFT (Nov. 3, 2018)

Amelia and Sasha spent the following late summer in Amelia's apartment in Brooklyn. They had finally gotten all the material and all the agreements in place. Tobias Bauer, member of the band Agent Blå and producer of the film since Rasmus Hansén left the project, flew over from Sweden and helped the Americans to transcribe all the interviews and organize the extensive recorded material.

During a run, Amelia ran into a friend who had just gotten a job at the crowdfunding platform Kickstarter.

"Then, everything fell into place," says Sasha Hecht. "So we said 'Fuck it.' We don't need the establishment. We have the contacts, we have the movie. Let's just **do it** ourselves!"

Amelia Trask:
We had come all the way back to where we started.

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They continued to discuss how they would get the film financed—and if there was "something they learned from all this," Sasha says, it was to "work with people you trust." To speed up the process, they downloaded an editing program and studied instructional videos in order to start editing the movie themselves.

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"Then, everything fell into place," says Sasha Hecht. "So we said 'Fuck it.' We don't need the establishment. We have the contacts, we have the movie. Let's just **finish it** ourselves!"

Amelia Trask:
We had come all the way back to where we started.

FINAL DRAFT (Nov. 3, 2018)

They downloaded an editing program and studied instructional videos so that they could cut the film themselves. With the help of colleagues and friends, they completed the editing of the documentary in the summer of 2018, and in October, they launched a Kickstarter campaign to collect money for post-production. Soon, they posted a clip on Facebook where Amelia appealed to the outside world to donate money to the project. In the video, she looks into the camera saying: “Over the past four years, we have been attacked by people and organizations with much more money and much more power than us.”

The drawn-out conflicts seem to have made their mark. During the many hours I talk to Sasha Hecht and Amelia Trask, they often recount how many songs they believe that Håkan Hellström has plagiarized. They ask me to be vigilant because the influence of the companies involved is high in the top of society and tells other stories that are difficult or impossible to verify. Among other things, they say that during one of their stays in Gothenburg, they were followed and confronted by an unknown man whom they later saw in the company of one of the bigwigs of Woah Dad!.

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Using the services of colleagues and friends, they completed the editing of the documentary in the summer of 2018, and in October, they launched a campaign on Kickstarter to raise money for post-production. They posted a clip on Facebook where Amelia appealed to the outside world to donate money to the project. In the video, she looks into the camera and says: “For the past four years, we have been under attack from people and organizations with much more money and much more power than we do.”

FINAL DRAFT (Nov. 3, 2018)

Other things they have said have now been more justified. For example, during the #MeToo movement, several accusations of abuse and rape occurred against the man they heard rumors about. Three women described in Aftonbladet, among other things, the abuse they allegedly had suffered, and one woman also chose to report the man to the police for a number of rapes. However, since the statute of limitations period passed, no prosecution was ever aroused. Woah Dad! made a statement where they promised to “investigate” and “terminate the person or persons they are talking about.” Since then, the man has no official assignments within the group. On the other hand, he remains one of the major shareholders.

Sasha and Amelia are still convinced that they have been the victims of a conspiracy.

“As time went on, it became clear that everyone was talking to each other behind our backs and that they were trying to use us because we were the only ones who had access to Henrik,” says Sasha Hecht. “They wanted to use us to make a Swedish film.”

Tobias Bauer, band member of the Luxury band Agent Blå and producer of the film since Rasmus Hansén left, describes it differently:

“It felt like being iced out. I tried to contact some of the people involved, but it was like communicating with a wall. You could send an email, and it was not that the response would take a few days—it was that you received no reply at all.”

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FINAL DRAFT (Nov. 3, 2018)

He continues:

“I became interested in the film project because it felt like it could really be big. Amelia and Sasha have many contacts and there has sometimes been talk of major investors and distributors. But it feels like everyone forgot that they were dealing with two young first-time filmmakers.”

When I talk to Henrik Berggren over the phone—he prefers to do so because of his “illness, drugs and the like”—I tell him that I got stuck on a wording of his in one of the emails I’ve come across. That he “felt that people were trying to push him down and stand in the way” of him all his life.

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“I became interested in the film project because it felt like it could really be big. Amelia and Sasha have a lot of contacts and they have sometimes talked about big investors and distributors. But it feels like everyone forgot that they were dealing with two young first-time filmmakers.”

CAPTION: In 2017, Entourage star Adrian Grenier took a liking to the Berggren project and managed to gather several interested investors. When the deal did not go through, he went on to make a documentary about the world’s loneliest whale. Above, the film team: Tobias Bauer, producer, Amelia Trask, director and screenwriter, and Sasha Hecht, producer and screenwriter.

One thing Amelia Trask and Sasha Hecht did not lose during the entire project: their high-flying ambitions. They hope that I’ll Be Gone, as the movie is called, will premiere at one of America’s most prestigious festivals, such as Sundance or Tribeca. The film places a strong focus on the people who have been influenced by Broder Daniel over the years, such as the “pandas,” who still meet to listen and talk about the band’s music, as well as the musicians who have followed in the band’s footsteps. But in the center is Henrik Berggren, dressed in his characteristic cape and familiar hat, intimately talking about his life while splayed in a gigantic bed.

When I talk to Berggren over the phone—he prefers it to meeting because of his “illness, drugs, and the like”—I tell him that I got stuck on one of his wordings in an email. That he “felt that people were trying to push him down and stand in the way” of him all his life.

FINAL DRAFT (Nov. 3, 2018)

“I’ve always had that feeling, I think I felt it early in life. But especially with Broder Daniel. That you should be pushed down in some way. I don’t know, but some have been so incredibly provoked by me. For some unknown reason. I have said such extreme things about myself—that I’m the only one who speaks truth and so on—and it probably annoys people, I guess. Either you have to accept it, or you have to get angry.”

He continues:

“Very many people who said that they acted in my best interest have ultimately not believed in me. Not bothered and did not understand what they had to deal with.”

When I ask him if he can specify, Berggren replies:

“Above all, it is about doing nothing. Passivity. You do nothing if you do not care or do not believe in anything. **But also that you are not taken seriously.** Such an incredibly naïve idea of what is serious or not. A cowardly view, as well.”

Do you feel that the film project has been taken seriously?

I don’t understand how it happened, all that. Everybody says differently. But I feel good that it was not taken seriously anywhere. That you would rather follow routines. I can’t say anything for sure, but I recognize it as well.

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“Very many people who said that they acted in my best interest have ultimately not believed in me. Not bothered and did not understand what they had to deal with.”

When I ask him if he can specify, Berggren replies:

“Above all, it is about doing nothing. Passivity. You do nothing if you do not care or do not believe in anything. **But also that I am not taken seriously.** Such an incredibly naïve idea of what is serious or not. A cowardly view as well. **Over time, I have shown that I am worthy of being believed. But in order to work with me, it obviously requires that you do the exact opposite of what you usually do, because such strange things happen to me that never otherwise occur. So the more professional you are and accustomed to your job, the more trouble it will be for me.**”

Do you feel that the film project has been taken seriously?

I don’t understand how it happened, all that. Everybody says differently. But I feel good that it was not taken seriously anywhere. That you would rather follow routines. I can’t say anything for sure, but I recognize it so well.

FINAL DRAFT (Nov. 3, 2018)

The same thing is repeated all the time as well. And it is not malice that it is done by. But just bad imagination in some way. An inability to think boldly. It is also that their control is questioned. That they do not understand everything or have an eye on everything.

How involved were you in all the decisions around the film?

It was clear that it was Amelia and Sasha's movie, not mine. I've been totally okay with whatever they want to do. For the alternative is that I'm a busybody, and I think the result will be worse then. I always stick my nose in everything, even though I don't have all the control in the end. And it is mainly because nobody is driven enough and wants something. It stands and falls with me in the end. But with Sasha and Amelia, there was another will, besides mine, that was equally strong. I didn't have to go in there because they cared.

You still paid the full cost of the movie. It doesn't seem like money is so important to you?

I'm definitely not driven by money primarily, secondary, or tertiary. It will be very long down the list. I would like to have money, but I would not compromise on anything for it. I do not understand what the point of it is anyway: what do you do with it? It is unfortunate not to have any money at all, because then suddenly, there will be a huge problem. The smallest thing cannot be done.

PUBLISHED ARTICLE (Nov. 5, 2018)

The same thing is repeated all the time as well. And it is not malice that it is done by. But just bad imagination in some way. An inability to think boldly. It is also that their control is questioned. That they do not understand or have an eye on everything. The girls were in a bind about the rights. But I do not doubt for a second that management has had my best interests at all times and I have felt well taken care of by both them and the record company.

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You still paid half a million [~\$50,000 USD] to get them the rights to the film material. It doesn't seem like money is so important to you?

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FINAL DRAFT (Nov. 3, 2018)**After spending on the film—are you back at square one today?**

A little worse, actually. I'm completely broke. Surprisingly hard. I had forgotten how it was to have no money.

How do you look back on the film project? Was it worth it?

I call Amelia and Sasha my angels. I see them that way. To feel seen and understood—it's priceless.

To stand in your way or act against your interest—they have never been guilty of it?

No, they are always on my side. Whatever happens. It's something completely different.

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FOOTNOTE: Joel Borg and Henrik Berggren's management team have declined to participate in the article.