



A musical vagabond has landed

Byline: Sara Strömberg

He was recently on the American Top 200 chart at the same time as Zara Larsson. Bror Stefan Pettersson, or **Steve Future** as he is known on stage, wants to perform the world's longest harmonica solo at Hummelstugan and shake up the blues scene in Åre. But first he will perform at Jazzköket with his new record, "7 Cities," in his back pocket.

ÅRE

From his top-story window, Bror Stefan Pettersson has views of downtown Undersåker: Byvägen road, the Strandberg ICA grocery store, the hustle and bustle of the parking lot. But he also sees the expansive horizon, the forest, water and fields. It's precisely the mix he needs.

"This is where I prepare a lot of my song material and it's where I find a lot of my inspiration. I sit here and write at the kitchen table a lot."

He greets me barefoot, wearing a paisley-patterned shirt and jeans. He offers me black coffee and a little live music. While I was there, he managed to play guitar, harmonica, and to sing. It was only morning, but he had already taken a walk, rehearsed and worked out at the gym.

"I have to keep going," he says and admits that he hasn't eaten breakfast yet.

Bror Stefan Pettersson began his career as a teenager in Haninge and Nynäshamn, where he grew up. Since then, he has been part of several different constellations, including Stockhouse, Blueshunters, Ruset and the Jämtland-based Stulet Vatten. For many, many years, he was a fixture of the Stockholm jazz and blues scene and played with well-known names like Totta Näslund, Sven Zetterberg and Rolf Wikström.

"For example, I used to always have two regular performances every year at the venue Mosebacke in Stockholm, because the owner Bo Stenhammar, who was a co-founder of the Stockholm Jazz Festival with Git Magnusson, liked me. That gave me a boost and from there, from 1983 and on, I built up my tour schedule."

He now appears under his own name, **Steve Future**, and writes most of his material himself, though he also does some covers. His new record "7 Cities," his eighth in a row, was just released and is tinged with various influences including blues, country, reggae and psychedelic rock – if it must be categorized. In any case, the 18 tracks were recorded in Europe and North America. He has just come home from Nashville.

"I've been all over the world and recorded in several different studios. The song '**Brand New Day**' was recorded in New York, for example, with Bobby Rondinelli from Rainbow and Black Sabbath on drums. That song was on the American Top 200 chart and stayed there for seven weeks; I was actually there at the same time as Zara Larsson. There is also a video for the song on YouTube."

Another song is a collaboration with Joe Firstman from the Nashville-based Cordovas, who also played at Captain Cook in Östersund last year. Bror Stefan Pettersson has essentially been on tour for five years, but now Undersåker and the big yellow house, which once contained a Konsum grocery store, will be his permanent residence. Moving forward, his goal is to give the world's longest harmonica solo, preferably at Hummelstugan in Åre – and to bring life to the sleepy live scene in the municipality.

"There aren't even half as many live jobs as there were just ten years ago, which isn't very much fun. I've arranged a lot of things over the years; I started the Haninge Blues Association in 1986 and I have a lot of contacts. I just need to find an organizer who will dare to try something new," he says, and adds that he cares about old cultural buildings like Bygården in Undersåker. "I go crazy when they say they have plans to tear the building down in the future."

Talking with Bror Stefan Pettersson is like opening floodgates to lakes, drinking water, drainage, eutrophication and acidification. Not only does he have a background as a plumber; he is also highly engaged with environmental issues, with a focus on water. He has seen the first algal bloom and the effects of industrial trawling in the Baltic Sea, which still moves him deeply. Among other things, this has led to songs like the poem that has been set to music entitled "Glitter" and "Östersjöblues" ("Baltic Blues"), his radio show that combines blues with elements of water on Radio Haninge. Many of the songs on the new album are also about water, sometimes with a connection to different places, sometimes as a symbol of destruction, life or love. The audience will get to hear some of them at Jazzköket in Östersund on May 12.

"It'll be a blend, a sampling of all my albums and a few blues covers."

Indeed, Jämtland now serves as his fixed point of departure. However, his camper van is always ready for new adventures, whether on stage or out in nature. The ocean and windsurfing call to him in summer, the snow and skiing in winter. He began downhill skiing in Åre in the 1960s and loved it from the first moment. These days, cross-country skiing gives him the most energy. He glances out through the top-story window.

"It's going to clear up later. I'll probably take the camper van and ride for a while then, see if it's still possible to ski. Maybe I'll stay overnight," he says.

A musical vagabond carries on with his day.