

Narnia

BIOGRAPHY

The Lion roars again - The Narnia story so far... the first 20 years.

Vocalist **Christian Liljegren** and guitarist **CJ Grimmark** met for the first time in 1993, in Jönköping - a town in the south of Sweden. At this time Christian and his band **Modest Attraction** were just about to release their first album, *The Truth in Your Face*, and CJ was active as bandleader, vocalist & guitarist in a local band called **Sentinel**. They remained in steady contact during the years that followed.

In 1996 Modest Attraction released its second album *Divine Luxury*. At that time Liljegren phoned Grimmark and asked him whether he was interested in working together on a musical vision Liljegren had in mind. Since the late 80's Christian had had a huge passion for bombastic, melodic, neoclassical hard rock & heavy metal, which he was not able to explore in the band Modest Attraction. CJ was instantly interested. After having seen the animated movie about the *The Witch & The Lion*, Christian figured "**Narnia**" would be great name for the new band.

A few months later, as Modest Attraction guitarist **Stephan Mohlin** had to turn down a German tour for personal reasons, Christian phoned CJ and asked him to temporarily replace Stephan, which he did. Stephan soon left the band all together, and Grimmark was asked to become a full-time band member. Grimmark accepted.

During the time with Modest Attraction Liljegren and Grimmark kept working on their vision of the new band. They took a few old songs from **Borderline**, Modest Attraction & Sentinel, altered them to their own preferences, and added a couple of new songs. In September 1996 they settled in **Topz Recording Studio** to record their debut album.

The recording, the mix, and the mastering of the debut album *Awakening* was finished in the spring of -97.

Magnus Söderkvist, at that time at **MTM Music**, became Narnia's agent and presented their album to 10 different Japanese labels at the **MIDEM Festival** in France. No less than nine of these labels immediately wanted to sign Narnia. Narnia decided to team up with **Pony Canyon Inc.**, a solid label that worked with **Yngwie J. Malmsteen** and **Joe Lynn Turner** among others.

In May 1997 Liljegren and Grimmark headed on their final tour with Modest Attraction. In Germany they met **Matthias Mittelstädt** who, along with his brother **Rainer** and **Saviour Machine** frontman, **Eric Clayton**, was running a management company called **MCM Music**. MCM Music loved the album and took on the task of becoming Narnia's management.

The *Awakening* album was released on July 18, 1997, and several thousands of copies were sold on the day of the release. Media was impressed by the new Swedish guitar virtuoso CJ Grimmark and a special team from Japanese **Young Guitar Magazine** flew over to Sweden to make a special report about CJ Grimmark & Yngwie J Malmsteen. CJ and Yngwie met, and Yngwie commented on Narnia's early material, saying: "*That sounded quite a bit like me*".

The demand to see this new metal outfit increased, and Narnia started touring in Sweden in 1997.

Narnia line-up, 1997:

Christian Liljegren	Vocals
CJ Grimmark	Guitars
Andreas Johansson	Drums
Martin Härenstam	Keyboards
Jakob Persson	Bass



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MCM Music sealed a deal with German record company **Nuclear Blast** – one of the world’s biggest metal labels to this day - and the *Awakening* album was released in Europe, on CD and Vinyl LP, in February 1998. Nuclear Blast promoted Narnia as *The Melodic Metal Masters*, and along with **Hammerfall** and a few other acts, Narnia pioneered the new wave of melodic metal of the late 90’s.

In April 1998 Narnia went to Finland to guest a big TV show and to play shows together with **Stratovarius** and **Children of Bodom**. The band continued to play festivals in Europe during spring, and recordings for the 2nd album *Long Live The King* began during summer. The recording went on NON STOP, literally, for about 60 days and was finished on the very day before the next big event was about to take place:

In September they went back on the road again, this time to support legendary **Ronnie James Dio**. CJ & Christian then went to Japan to promote their 2nd album *Long Live The King*. The album was eventually released in Japan in December 18, 1998. Now the ball was rolling.

The next 10 years saw more albums, and live shows to follow them up:

Desert Land	(2001)
The Great Fall	(2003)
At Short Notice... Live In Germany (DVD)	(2004)
Enter The Gate	(2006)
Decade of Confession	(2007)

The Narnia fanbase is still growing and the albums have sold 6-digit numbers. Songs by Narnia have also appeared on hundreds of samplers and compilation albums together with high profile artists such as **Metallica**, **Korn**, **Red Hot Chilleppers**, **Scorpions**, **Europe**, and **Avantasia**, to name a few.

Some line-up changes has taken place over the years. Bass player **Jakob Persson** left the band in 2001, and was immediately replaced by **Andreas Passmark (Royal Hunt, Rob Rock)**. Keyboard player **Martin Härenstam** departed from Narnia in 2003. During the years 2003-2009 **Linus Kåse**, **Andreas Lindahl**, and **Anders Berlin** fulfilled the keyboard duties the road.

In 2008 vocalist Christian Liljegren left the band for personal reasons. Narnia then recruited singer **German Pasqual** to finish the album *Course of a Generation*, and the tour that followed. In the first days of 2010 Grimmark made the decision to put Narnia to rest.

The break lasted for four years. In late 2013 CJ Grimmark & Christian Liljegren started discussing a possible reunion and the idea of making the best and strongest Narnia album ever. On January 31, 2014, the band announced it’s return. Celebrating the 15th anniversary of the classic album *Long Live the King*, Narnia got back on the road for a few shows.

In March 2016, while the band worked hard on the new album, all previous albums were released for digital download and streaming, some of them for the very first time.

Reaching For The Top, the first single taken from the upcoming 7th studio album, will hit the market on June 7th - 2016, along with a promo video produced by **Mats Vassfjord (Grand Design & 220 Volt)**.

On the new self-titled 2016 album Narnia re-visits their melodic roots but with an updated sound, creating a perfect blend. A powerful production by CJ Grimmark, mixed and mastered by **Thomas “Plec” Johansson**.



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The line-up for Narnia 2016:

Christian Liljegren	Vocals
CJ Grimmark	Guitars, keyboards & backing vocals
Andreas "Habo" Johansson	Drums
Martin Härenstam	Keyboards
Andreas Passmark	Bass

The full length album will be released worldwide on CD, vinyl and on digital formats on September 16th, 2016. and the plan for Narnia is to reach as many countries as possible the next coming years.

The Lion roars again, See you on tour!

For more info about Narnia:



narniatheband.com



facebook.com/narniatheband



instagram.com/narniatheband



narnia.jonomedia.se

Discography:

Awakening	(1997)
Long Live The King	(1998)
Desert Land	(2001)
The Great Fall	(2003)
At Short Notice... Live In Germany (DVD)	(2004)
Enter The Gate	(2006)
Decade of Confession	(2007)
Narnia	(2016)

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