

Kalandra

The Other Side Release Tour 2027

The dream world has inspired many great works of art over the centuries. The phantasmagorical terrain inhabited by Lewis Carroll, Salvador Dali and David Lynch is where we now find Scandinavian alt-prog-folk artisans Kalandra, whose elegant blend of Nordic pop savvy and dark atmospheric rock has been a developing sensation for 15 years. Formed while the core members were studying at Paul McCartney's Liverpool Institute of Performing Arts, their remarkably assured 2020 debut album *The Line* - over 54 million streams and counting - was followed by 2022's immersive video game soundtrack *Kingdom Two Crowns: Norse Lands*. In 2024, their captivatingly majestic *A Frame Of Mind* album powerfully affirmed Kalandra's ascendancy - as did their sold-out headline show at Oslo's 1300-capacity Rockefeller venue earlier this year. Their proven genius for weaving ethereal melodies into raw and eerie musical landscapes makes them a perfect fit for a concept album about dreaming, as we are presented with on *The Other Side*.

Determining the theme before writing began, the band started 'dream journalling': jotting down their nocturnal visions and working them into songs. "It's been very helpful to write down my dreams," affirms singer Katrine. "It definitely affected how I wrote lyrics. I would love to do this again, have some sort of loose concept, it brings the record together."

"Knowing the theme was dreaming was helpful to me musically too," adds guitarist Florian. "We could have these dreamy effects in there. I feel most of the songs have nightmarish or dreamy parts, one way or another. There are still a lot of different themes here though, there's folklore, current events, introspective stuff, life and death... Everything can fit into dreams lyrically speaking, it's just life, it's all-encompassing."

There's a very dreamlike blend of languor and disturbance taking different shapes throughout the record. Faroese singer-songwriter Elinborg lends her imploring voice to the nervous percussive tension of the uncharacteristically brisk *Animal*: "Kalandra have long joked about our inability to write an upbeat song," says Katrine, "so at 136 BPM, this one finally proves that we're capable of it!".

Pensive ballad *A Ship Has Left The Shore* especially exemplifies the album's scrupulously uncluttered soundscape, focusing purely on the strength of its haunting vocal and piano melodies. "It's about losing someone dear to you," reveals Katrine. "There is a quietness to the way it carries its grief, leaving space for the emotions to reveal themselves rather than presenting everything at once. Before we sent that off to mixing we felt like there could have been so much more happening here; we sometimes have over 70 different tracks that need to be mixed. Then the mix came back and it was so

rich, because we gave our mixing engineer Tony more space to work. I was mind-blown."

Some of this purity of focus is a consequence of the album being written simultaneously while the band constructed their own new bespoke studio. With little time to record elaborate string sections or experiment with unorthodox instruments, as guitarist Jogeir attests, "It was very 'run and gun', not overthinking it on the technical side. A problem for our mixing engineers has been that there's too much stuff happening at the same time, so you can't really hear everything. We tend to put too much colour in. But sometimes you can get just as much energy from one big sound as you can from a hundred smaller sounds. For this album, we said, we're doing the 'less is more' thing."

Kalandra have long since settled into their own versatile musical identity, embracing effective contrasts between shimmering joy and aching melancholy, sounding atavistically ancient but stylishly contemporary, otherworldly but firmly rooted in woodland soil. Kalandra's open-minded, open-hearted signature sound may take in several reference points, but it remains impervious to easy categorisation. Freely cited inspirations on The Other Side's heavy guitar quotient include Alice In Chains and Bring Me The Horizon, while neoclassical legends Dead Can Dance, Norwegian electro-alt-rockers Pyke and Oslo 'doomgaze' unit Leonov also made their mark on Kalandra's creative psyche. Even so, this is a band that will always obey their own singular muse: "To me it's about trying to write something I haven't heard before," says Florian. "That's not to say it hasn't been done! But if I haven't heard it before, then it piques my interest."

He's not alone. Examine any comments section beneath any Kalandra song, review or social media post and you'll find an uncommonly passionate fanbase testifying to the unique healing power of their extraordinary music. For Katrine, who oversees the band's social media presence, this can be a double-edged sword. "Writing songs about mental health and introspection, while trying to fight in the attention economy, doesn't sit so well with me," she ponders. "You're supposed to share, but if a song is quite personal, how do I keep it where I'm not just exposing my vulnerabilities to the world? That's not very professional or healthy, but at the same time, maybe it's useful for someone. People demand that you put your entire self onto these platforms so they can connect with you. I'm still finding that balance, of what distance you need to keep, what to share and what not to share."

The band have no problem sharing their hopes and ambitions for the future, and it's much the same as any blossoming band in the prime of their lives with a beautifully wrought new album in the can: bigger tours, bigger crowds, bigger budgets, bigger stages - the bigger the better for Florian. "I'll only be happy once we've done a Rammstein-sized show," he grins, "with a nuclear power plant on wheels travelling beside the bus! That's peak ambition!"