

1. Can you tell us about the upcoming exhibition in Edinburgh? What techniques have you used on these works?

This exhibition features recent prints collected in a portfolio published by Paul Stolper Gallery in London, and related prints. They are all executed in a single colour - Payne's Gray.

2. Is there a common thread in your music and your art?

Increasingly so – some junctions exist between my work in both these fields that I would like to examine. For instance in the recent series of works, text elements make up these 'bridges' – the lyrics of songs can form points of departure visually, from which I can explore the possibilities in these lyrics in a different way: I somehow start to operate as my own commentary or censor, and so a different tone appears, a darker sense of humour becomes apparent, and the original lyrical content is sometimes exposed, even mocked for its non-ironic and sincere approach. Moreover, there is a similarity in method: with the artworks I try to censor myself as little as I can, and from this there is a new boldness in my approach to the music to leave the initial musical impulses intact, and not fall for the many possibilities of making them 'better' or perfected, but keep flaws and imperfections of first takes and happy accidents.

3. When did you get interested in art, and how did this develop into a livelihood?

I have always had a mixed feeling of irritation and curiosity about art. As a teenager I worked as assistant at a prestigious art center in Norway and came into contact with artists like Hockney, Christo, Yoko Ono, John Cage and a host of Norwegian artists - it was very inspirational and formative to see how they worked and thought about their work. However I only started to feel the need to exhibit in response to the overwhelming fame that washed over my life in the 80's.

4. You have a new solo-record out – how do you describe your music – and was this a solo-project all the way, or are there collaborators?

This is very much a solo-project, and I am very proud of it – more than anything I have ever done. I have put everything I have into all aspects of recording, production, artworks, video etc. because I decided there were no longer any logical boundaries between the music and my other artistic practices.

Of course, nothing happens in a vacuum, and I have had help from a lot of great people – Martin Terefe produced the record with me, and people like Guy Berryman (Scottish!) and Will Champion from Coldplay, Andy from Travis, and Ed Harcourt etc generously contributed to the recordings.

5. What is the difference between being in the media's spotlight with a-ha, and promoting yourself on your own?

As a member of a-ha, I was submitted to an enormous amount of attention directly on me as a person, something that can be quite taxing. Of course there are perks to selling 29 million albums and touring sell-out stadiums worldwide – I will not pretend I did not relish it at times - but gradually the feeling of chasing your own success

eroded my conviction in what I was doing. This eventually brought me back into the art-field, seeking a more dynamic arena for experimenting.

6. Are there great differences in the creative process as artist, in a group and as an individual musician?

There are similarities and differences. In both cases I try to find possibilities by self-imposing limitations and rules. In a group you obey certain rules of conduct, but you can also lean on your team-mates, whereas as an individual artist you are more free, but you must also assume all responsibility. I never really took accolades personally on stage with a-ha, but when you are out there alone, you steel yourself for both applause and ridicule. You give it all you've got, and so it is much more rewarding when people express their enthusiasm.

7. Will art and solo-records be your focus in the time ahead, or are there other plans?

I will continue in the same way, trying to find new ways to combine these elements.

8. You are currently planning an exhibition and concerts in Edinburgh – what are your expectations?

Edinburgh is a lovely city, and i very much look forward to both exhibiting at Edingburgh Printmakers and playing at the Venue, a place I have heard many good things about