



# THE ART OF KULT mini-interview

## Interviewee

Orvar Säfström  
from Fandrake

## What is this?

**THE ART OF KULT MINI-INTERVIEW**  
is the ninth monthly small release,  
fully dedicated to the mind behind the  
artbook that is being Kickstarted now.

[Click here to go to the Kickstarter page.](#)



Characters, locations and incidents are portrayed from the metaphorical  
viewpoint of the *KULT: Divinity Lost* setting.

**CABINET**

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Game system © 2021 Helmgast AB. *KULT: Divinity Lost* is developed and published by Helmgast AB.

# ÖRVAR SÄFSSTRÖM

I'm sort of a subculture celebrity in Sweden, for a lot of reasons. I was part of the first generation of Swedish death metal with my own band and as vocalist for Entombed. I was a film critic with my own television show for ten years, and put a special focus on horror. I was one of the first "respectable" culture journalists in Sweden to elevate computer/video games as an art form. I am the foremost producer of symphonic game and film music concerts in Scandinavia. And I'm without comparison the premier historian/archivist/writer/lecturer on the history of Swedish tabletop roleplaying together with my co-writer Jimmy Wilhelmsson. I'm the recipient of the Swedish film industry honorary award, the Swedish game society honorary award, as well as three "roleplaying themed book of the year" awards from the readers of Swedish game magazine Fenix. I really don't like to brag, but our books have definitely been an important factor in the resurgence of the Swedish roleplaying hobby/community/industry.

## *When did you first encounter KULT?*

I was just the perfect age for Äventyrsspel, the leading publishing house for roleplaying games in Sweden in the '80s and '90s. Born in 1974, I was ten years old when the second edition of Drakar och Demoner — now on Kickstarter as Dragonbane — was released. When you look at it now, you can see how their production line evolved with my generation. When I was 10, I got into the generic fantasy of Drakar och Demoner and the loveable post-apocalypse of Mutant. When I was 15, Mutant went suitably cool cyberpunk. And in 1991 when KULT hit the scene I was 17, touring with Entombed, had a 25 year old girlfriend on speed, and read Crowley and Barker. You couldn't invent a more perfect recipient of the original KULT, I think.

## *What is your relationship with KULT?*

I indulged in the world of KULT, wrote letters to the original creators, and even got a KULT tattoo in early 92. It was actually made by the original guitarist of At the Gates (a Gothenburg metal band), Alf Svensson. In his kitchen. With homemade tattoo equipment, no less. Along the road, I've become close friends with many of the key players from back in the day, including making an award winning art book with legendary Swedish illustrator Nils Gulliksson, who came up with the original concept for KULT before the writers were involved.

## The Project

**THE ART OF KULT** is a deep dive into everything from early productions sketches to the striking and evocative illustrations of the current, award winning, version: **KULT – DIVINITY LOST**.

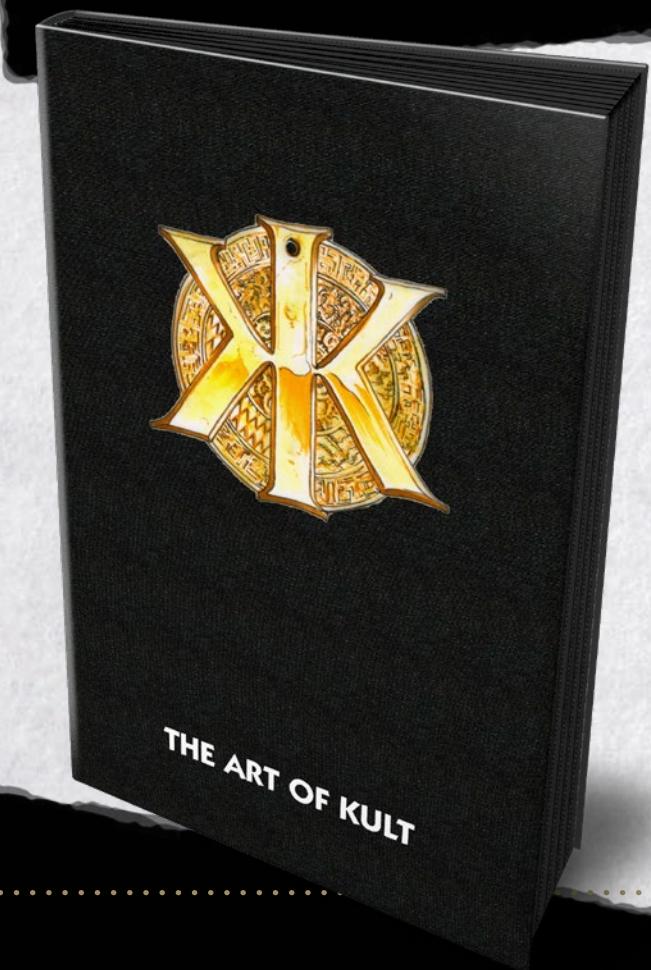
The book contains works by brilliant artists like Basien Lecouffe-Debarme, Paolo Parente, Peter Bergting, Nils Gulliksson, Peter Andrew Jones, Adrian Smith, Torbjörn Jörgensen and many more. Images have been scanned professionally in high resolution from the originals. Most of these artworks have never been presented in quality this high before.

The artbook is a lavish volume, approximately 300x240mm/12x11 inches, starting out at a massive 224 pages, with more added as stretch goals up to a full 320 pages.

**KULT - DEATH WAS ONLY THE BEGINNING** is a separate behind-the-scenes book. This is the detailed story behind one of the most unique and lauded role-playing games of all time. With in-depth interviews with creators, writers and artists over the years, it sheds light on the back story, the creative process and the evolving nature of the franchise, detailing the conceptualization and production of the original game and subsequent editions, the reception, public outrage and legacy of KULT.

## Back it on Kickstarter

[kickstarter.com/projects/fandrake/the-art-of-kult](https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/fandrake/the-art-of-kult)



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# KULT

## Döden är bara början

gade kroppar bärts ut i plastsäckar och försvisser för alltid. Men ingenting är vad det tycks vara. Våra sinnen uppfattar bara en bråkdel av verklighetens många facetter. Den värld vi ser runt oss är en illusion, en skuggbild skapad av tanken för att hålla vanskillet borta. Verklighetens gränser har förszagats. Allt fler bryter igenom vallarna och möter det kaos som finns på andra sidan.

KULT är rollspel i 90-talets storstadsvärld, där mänsklig ondska blandas med fasor från andra sidor av verkligheten. Känsliga människor krossas av stadens anonymitet och förvandlas till psykotiska monster. Driften som fortfarande fängslas av gångna tiders moral växer till sjukliga perversjoner under ytan och bryter fram när hämningarna släpper. Men mänskligt mörker är inte allt som hotar. Den mänskliga ondskan bryter ned verklighetens ramar och släpper in varelser från andra sidan. Våra drömmar tar fysisk form och jagar oss.

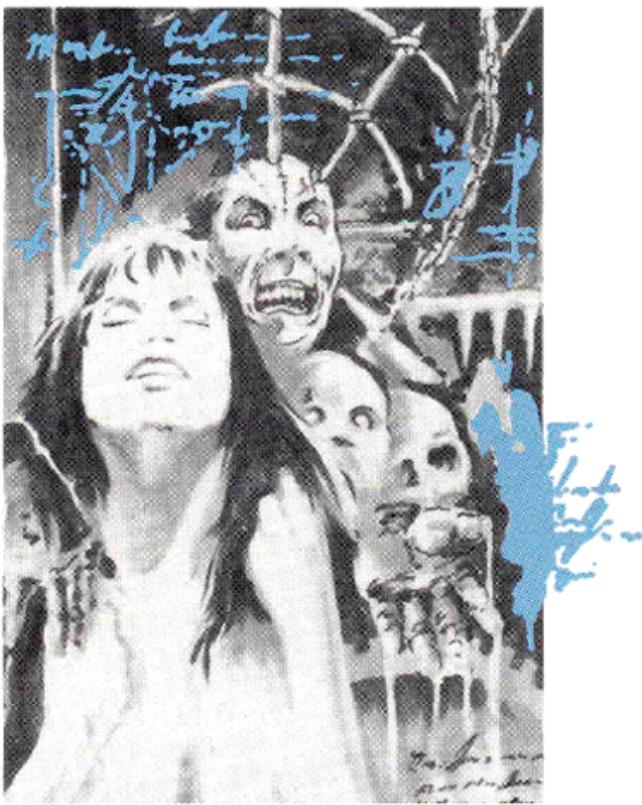
Varelser från det förflytta återföds i nät för att omdirigera våra liv. Vår skräck föder monster som hotar att sluka oss. Avvikare som inte tillåts i den rena, ordnade världen tar sin tillflykt till ödestäder, förlummade fabriksområden och rivningskåkar i innerstäderna.

Där förvandlas de till något som inte längre är helt mänskligt.

Rollpersonerna vävs in i berättelser knutna till deras eget förflyttna. Gamla brott hinner upp dem och kräver att sonnas. Fasor från barndomen kommer upp till ytan och tar fysisk form. Skräcken formas av vårt inre. Vad som än finns där ute kan vi inte se det utan att själva speglas i det. Varje människa har sina egna demoner, sin egen skärseld. I spelet tvingas rollpersonerna vandra in i mörkret, kanske över dödens trösklar. Bara för att upptäcka att där finns inget slut, att döden är bara början.

Det är en värld där solen har gått ned. Bakom skyskrapornas stålpersiener fjättrar män i mörka kostymer sina offer vid blanka obduktionsbord.

Mörka ritualer vävs av oferblod och skräck, innan sar-



## What is Fandrake?

Fandrake is an award winning Swedish publishing house owned by me and Jimmy Wilhelmsson. We specialize in large coffee table style books on subjects like tabletop roleplaying, board games, retro video games, comic books and more. We also publish boardgames. Our Kickstarter for the updated and expanded rerelease of the 1985 game Drakborgen (DungeonQuest) broke the record for most successful Swedish language Kickstarter campaign of all time. We have several projects running alongside **THE ART OF KULT**, including a massive book on the history of Drakar och Demoner (Dragonbane), a photo book on the early Swedish death metal scene, and two artist specific art books. Oh, and three more board games as well.

## Why are you making the artbook?

My Fandrake partner Jimmy Wilhelmsson and I began archiving original artworks and documents from Äventyrrspel in 2015 while working on our first book. Since then our collection has kept growing and today we have hundreds, if not thousands, of original KULT artworks scanned professionally in high resolution. We just haven't had a great opportunity to highlight these images in a proper context before. This is our genuine tribute to the impact of KULT.

## What can we expect from the Kickstarter

KULT is not for everyone. Let's just get that out of the way. KULT is everything your mom, dad and teachers warned you about. To look deep inside yourself, and see a darkness beyond the black. I have devoted the past seven years to the legacy of Äventyrrspel, and to me KULT is the most unique and important Swedish roleplaying game ever developed. The Kickstarter for **THE ART OF KULT** assumes there are others like me, people who regardless of age feel akin to the wonders and horrors of this world. KULT was, and is, a very visual game. With **THE ART OF KULT** I hope to present that visual impact in a very exclusive and curated way. Add to that some very special extras, including the behind-the-scenes book **DEATH WAS ONLY THE BEGINNING** on the detailed history of the entire KULT franchise — already included as an ebook but printed in hardcover and included with all physical reward levels as the 750 000 SEK goal.

I really don't expect a million people to back **THE ART OF KULT**. This is not Dungeons & Dragons. I just hope to reach those who have found something unique, horrifying and exhilarating in KULT, just like I did back in 1991.



