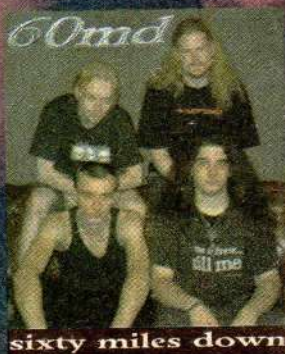


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The Mundane

Issue 16

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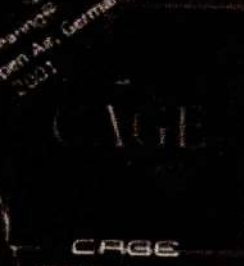
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Here is Issue #16... finally. As usual we have over one hundred pages of metal. I have been busy in recent weeks preparing upcoming issues. Among them are the Powermad 2001 program which will be out the week of August 15th, we will have a regular issue sometime the beginning of October, and the Prog Power U.S.A. 2001 program in November.

Thank you for all the people who continue to help me out, especially Brett Clarin and Samantha Mabli. I am currently anxiously awaiting the Powermad Festival and a trip to Florida with my sister to see my ailing mother. Hopefully this will not be the last trip to do so. My apologies to those who I have lost touch with. My busy schedule has unfortunately not allowed me to keep in contact with some people I really do care about. I haven't forgotten about you.

Thank you to all the people who advertise with Transcending the Mundane and help support it with your hard earned money. I will try to make your investment worth your time and money. Thank you to those who pay in a timely fashion and for those who ignore past debts- hey, what comes around goes around. Karma, baby.

As you can tell, once again we have covered everything from prog to black metal. There are no limitations to what we cover as long as it's heavy and emotional it will be in here. I accept all discs for review and everything that is sent will be covered. Get in touch if you are interested in putting a song on the c.d. compilation. This is the best way to get people out there to hear your music.

Once again, a special thank you to Divine Rapture's Metal Mike, who designed this cover. Drop him a line at Mike@divinerapture.net if you have interest in his exceptional graphic design work. Told him we sent you.

Support your underground distributors, record labels, stores, and magazines. Not only do they have some great, hard to find stuff, but they also offer them at the lowest prices by far.

A great vocalist by the name of Paul LaPlaca is currently seeking a band to join. He prefers an established act and he is willing to relocate and has a burning desire to tour. He used to sing in October Thorns and is currently releasing his solo album. He is one of the most talented vocalists in the States and has earned a reputation for being one of the hardest workers and his professional demeanor will be appreciated. See you next time.

---

# Abolisher

Interview with vocalist and guitarist Luis Rivera

**Abolisher** is a Chicago based heavy metal band who have just released their debut e.p. *Lament the Season*. The songs on this disc have traditional metal values but also add a unique sense of melody and a quirky style to the music. **Abolisher** balance the true metal with some surprises, thus they do not sound dated but they will not embarrass your typical **Iron Maiden** fan. Here is frontman Luis Rivera to talk about their debut offering and metal in general.

## How do you feel about the debut disc?

I'm very happy with the way it turned out. We recorded it at Quali Tone studios with Brian Griffin and everyone in the band is very pleased with the results as well. I know it's not perfect but I'm very proud of it and I'm anxious to see what the response to it is going to be.

## Give a little background on Abolisher.

**Abolisher** came together in the summer of 1994, we were all seventeen years old at the time. Three of us are left from that line up. Myself, Clint Davis, and Brayman Whitfield. We released two demos previous to this one. A two song cassette in early '95 and a four song cassette titled *The Unity of Opposites* in early '96. Both received favorable reviews but if you compare those to the recent recording there's a pretty dramatic improvement I think. David Hernandez joined the band two years ago and finally gave us the solid line up we were looking for. Now everyone in the band has their head on straight and is ready to do what it takes to get this band going.

## What do you want to achieve with this band?

I would love for **Abolisher** to go as far as possible. I would love to put out albums on a decent label and tour all over the world, but I would want for the band to be respected in the metal community for being a quality band first and foremost. That's a bigger priority than anything else really. It would be awesome to play the European festivals alongside some of my favorite bands and to be able to do this for a living. I'd like to think that's not totally out of the realm of possibility. I would also like to change people's ideas of what they think metal is and who it should be played by. We're four kids from the south side of Chicago that nobody would've ever guessed would be playing metal. Most people who grew up around here were listening to hip-hop. I'm not trying to dis hip-hop but for whatever reason it didn't appeal to us but metal struck a serious nerve within each one of us. Now we would like to make our contribution to its evolution and at the same time rip apart the idea most people have in their head of who plays and listens to metal.

## What makes Abolisher different than the other metal bands out there?

There are a lot of different talents within the band and we do draw on a wide range of influences. There are other bands who use some of the same elements but I don't think anybody else puts them together the way we do. We really will try just about anything if we think it fits the song and makes it better. But the thing that really sets us apart I think is our songwriting. We're very ambitious and want every song to be dynamic and very memorable. We want people to be able to bang their head or hum along. We also want you to walk away with our songs stuck in your head. I don't think any of our material could ever be seen as filler. I hope that doesn't come across as arrogant but it's the way I feel. Each one of us is way too picky. If there's a piece of music that doesn't excite us it's

not used.

**Do you think you have the chance to make an impact in America?** Call me crazy but yes I do. I think there's a lot of people in the U.S. who would be receptive to what we're doing. There's over 270 million people in this country and I do not believe that even half the people here like the crap that's being force fed to us. There's this idea that exists in the rest of the world that Americans are stupid mindless sheep. I think those people are seriously mistaken. I really believe Americans are getting fed up with the current trends and that there is a hunger for something different and thought provoking. A lot of people in the mainstream music industry think that Metal is the last place to look for something like that. They are dead wrong! Metal is probably the genre in music where bands are being the most experimental and creative. I believe that this is where a band as diverse as **Abolisher** can play a role. If a label were to take a chance on us and put us on a few decent tours in the U.S. I believe we would prove this to be correct.

## Why did you get involved with metal in the first place and how has it impacted your life?

I first got into metal when I was about twelve years old. Like I said before it struck a nerve in me and I was hooked. At the risk of sounding ridiculous I'd say that metal saved my life. When people have it hard they usually have something that helps them pull through. That's what metal did for me. The world could be crumbling around me and everything in my life could be shit but as long as I had some good tunes to listen to I could cope. That's why I joined up with these guys. A lot of the

people were we grew up fell victims to drugs and violence, but we were able to channel our feelings of rage and hopelessness into something dare I say positive.

## What bands do you have the ultimate respect for and why?

That's going to be tough as there are many, but I'll just name a few. There is **Metallica** definitely. I can't say I'm into what they're doing nowadays but no one can deny the important role they played in the evolution of metal. **Ronnie James Dio** for having the best voice in rock or metal period. **Morbid Angel**, oh yes **Morbid Angel** had a profound impact on me. They proved that you could be an extreme band and still write dynamic and memorable music.

**In Flames**, they are great songwriters and I think the best band in the whole melodic death genre. **Opeth**, awesome musicians. If **Opeth** wanted to they could forsake the death metal side of their music and gain a lot more mainstream attention, but they have their heads on straight and realize that it's part of their sound and it's the coming together of the two styles so competently that makes them unique and great.

## Any final comments?

We appreciate your willingness to help out unsigned bands like ourselves. To anyone reading this get in touch for a copy of our new e.p. All you have to do is cover the cost of postage and a padded envelope (2 dollars US and 4 internationally) and I'll send one right out to you. I think you might be pleasantly surprised.

## Discography:

2001... *Lament The Season*

## Current line-up:

Luis Rivera... vocals and guitars  
Clint Davis... guitars  
Brayman Whitfield... bass and keyboards  
David Hernandez... drums

## Website:

[www.listen.to/abolisher.com](http://www.listen.to/abolisher.com)



# AEON

Interview with vocalist Tommy Dahlstrom

Aeon is one of the few bands to knock me off my feet lately. Their debut e.p., *Dark Order*, is a brutal death metal album with some of the best musicianship you will ever hear. They have managed to develop their own sound and separate themselves from the other. Here is a brief interview, via e-mail of course, with vocalist Tommy Dahlstrom.

**What's your opinion of your new mini cd?**

It's one of the best death metal releases you can find nowadays.

**Where does your band fit in the world of extreme metal? How would you describe your sound?**

We fit at the top of the death metal scene. We will be the best death metal band that is. We have a raw, technical, fast, Christian killing sound.

**How did you manage to avoid sounding so much like all the other Swedish bands?**

I hate the Swedish death metal sound. I think that most bands in Sweden that say that they are playing brutal just sounds like crying babies. They should buy *Dark Order* so they can listen and learn.

**Do you think your technical ability will be overlooked?**

If a person that is not in to death metal listen to it, yes.

**When will you be recording your full length?**

We are creating music right now and I don't know when it will be done. I do know that it will be fast and brutal

**Why did you decide to form a band playing extreme metal?**  
We are extreme people and we like extreme music.

**What interests do you have outside of music?**

I personally smoke a joint and then I go outside and do some work on my 1971 Corvette.

**Do you work full time jobs?**

Yes we all have fulltime jobs and we hate it. We want to create music but our jobs are sometimes in the way. I mean who wants to create music when you are dead after a hard day at work.

**Do you think you would continue to try to break through or have you given a time limit to make Aeon break through the scene?**

No time limit. There is no questions about if we will make impact or not we will do it and our impact will hurt a lot of weak souls.

**How is Aeon different than other bands of your style?**

The other bands don't.

**Discography:**

2001... *Dark Order* (Necropolis)

**Current line-up:**

Tommy Dahlstrom... vocals

Zeb Nilsson... guitars

Johan Hjelm... bass

Arttu Malkki... drums

**Website:**

[www.necropolisrecords.com](http://www.necropolisrecords.com)

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ART, IMAGES & DESIGN by Scott Moshier ([www.theambientmind.com](http://www.theambientmind.com))

# ALL ELSE FAILED

Interview with guitarist Pat Shannon

**All Else Failed** is a Pennsylvania hardcore/ metal band that has just released its third album, *Archetype*. Their style of music is extreme, yet memorable- technical, yet accessible. This blend makes them perfect for fast rising label, Now Or Never Records, who just pushed **Diecast** into the spotlight. This interview is the perfect example of why I am wary of e-mail interviews. One sentence responses were basically eliminated as they showed how little substance this interview has.

**How do you feel about the new record?**

We're happy with it. No recording ever turns out exactly as you hear it in your head going in, so it's best not to listen to it until later on to see how you feel about it. I just recently started listening to it again and I'm really in to it, which is good.

**How do you feel about the line-up?**

Lineup wise we've changed quite a bit and what we are in to has changed quite a bit as well. We're basically a totally different band from when we started, but I think you can hear the progression through our recordings.

**What is your goal for your music?**

Our goal is to stay accessible and only do what is right for the song. Being "extreme"; will sound like shit if that's all you care about. Bands trying to be heavier than each other, more tech than each other or faster than each other get pretty boring. We all know who does it well and who comes off looking like they're trying too hard.

**Where do you think you fit in today's scene?**

I'm not really sure that we do. We played a show recently with **Most Precious Blood**, **Cannae**, **From Autumn to Ashes**, and **Nora** and that was the first time in a while that I felt that we really fit in with the show, so I guess with bands like that are where we fit.



**All Else Failed seems to be about pain and anguish, is this accurate?**

Absolutely. I think our problems have been a little overblown, and the bottom line is that when things are going well, there is nothing in the world more fun than being in a band. We have had problems and sometimes it gets draining, but I'm sure every band goes through that. It's all part of the deal.

**How have things changed now that you're on Now Or Never?**

Well, people interview us now, and Mat likes to buy us stuff.

**What would you tell someone who might be interested in buying your disc?**

I would just tell them that it's a record that we put all of our heart into and hopefully they will think it's worth the money. If not we'll end up in the used bin next to **Adam Ant**.

**Discography:**

2001... *Archetype* (Now Of Never)

2000... *In Times Of Desperation*

1998... *A Most Bitter Season*

**Current line-up:**

Luke Muir... vocals  
Pat Shannon... guitars  
Steve Weigand... bass  
Dave Klenk... drums

**Website:**

[www.noworneverrecords.com](http://www.noworneverrecords.com)

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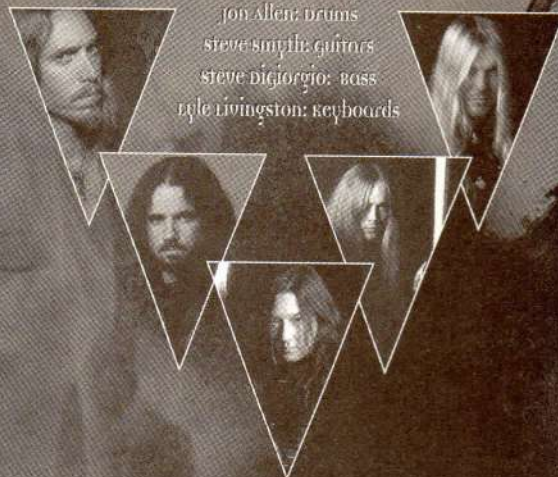
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# ANTI-PATHY

Interview with vocalist and bassist Samgar

**Antipathy** is a New York based death metal band, the likes of which haven't been heard in years. After witnessing a live show of their's at Castle Heights I was promptly blown away by the ferocity and technical ability. **Antipathy's** style of death metal is brutal but also technically proficient. There's nothing melodic, yet they are also very memorable. They have a new five song e.p. titled *Imminent Peril* available. Here is frontman Samgar to fill us in on **Antipathy**.

**How do you feel about your new disc?**

We're really happy with the way the recording came out, I think it's got the quality and strength to push us to the next level.

**Describe your sound and how you differ from other death metal bands?**

I don't consider us a "death metal" band, I think of us more like a "technical thrash" band with death type vocals. Being a strong thrash band is what helps us stand out from other bands.

**What do you hope to achieve with Antipathy?**

For right now we really want to get out on the road and spread our name and sound out there. Touring and promoting is what is mainly on our minds right now.



**What is your opinion of metal in the New York area?**

I'm still very new to the New York scene, but from seeing and befriending bands like **Head Trauma**, **Afflitus**, and **Carnage Krew** I've come to like the New York scene alot, it is a very supportive scene.

**What about your lyrical topics?**

Most everything on our new c.d., *Imminent Peril*, was written when we had a different singer and he happened to be a very depressed person, which came through in the songs "No Escape", "Bitter Alone", and "Someone Kill Me". The songs "Imminent Peril", "Cryptic Bounds",

and "Who I Am" were written by Dan, one of our guitarists, and they range from frustration with a siblings, attitude toward her children, being buried alive, and hostility toward his fathers own lack of caring.

**What got you interested in playing this type of music?**

I came into metal and thrash through classical music. With the complexity and the overall structure of these two types of music it only seemed proper to play this music. Also the true strength in the sound of good metal was something I couldn't resist.

**How have you matured as a vocalist and a bass player?**

As vocalist I'd say I'm still in my infancy. I sang in my last band but that only lasted a few months. As a bassist I'd say I've gotten a lot faster and far more accurate over the years.

**Your live show is phenomenal, what is your opinion of the typical Antipathy live show?**

Our shows tend to be pure in your face brutality and aggression. We try not to have too much down time between songs.

**What are your interests outside of music?**

I enjoy working in the theatre as a technician or hanging out at home with my four month old son.

**What are some advantages and disadvantages to living where we do for personally and for the band?**

It affords more accessibility to a major metropolitan area, which gives me more opportunity for work and infinite possibilities for the band to expand. The downside is that everything is so fucking expensive. It doesn't cost as much in Florida as it does here, just to get around.

**What do you think Antipathy has to offer to the metal scene?**

We're not your typical thrash or death band. We tend not to dwell on one or two pairs of riffs or progressions. It's just a steady stream of brutality.

**Do you think it is necessary for the band to sign to a label or do you think you can have success on your own?**

A label would be great to help get the name further and get us out on the road. Not to mention to help relieve some of the other stresses involved in promoting a band. Signing to a label would definitely be a good thing.

**Final comments?**

We have a new c.d., *Imminent Peril* which can be obtained from our website: [www.AntipathyNY.com](http://www.AntipathyNY.com). Booking and other contact can be made through the website or by e-mailing, [bobasam6@aol.com](mailto:bobasam6@aol.com).

**Discography:**

2001... *Imminent Peril*

**Current line-up:**

Samgar... vocals and bass

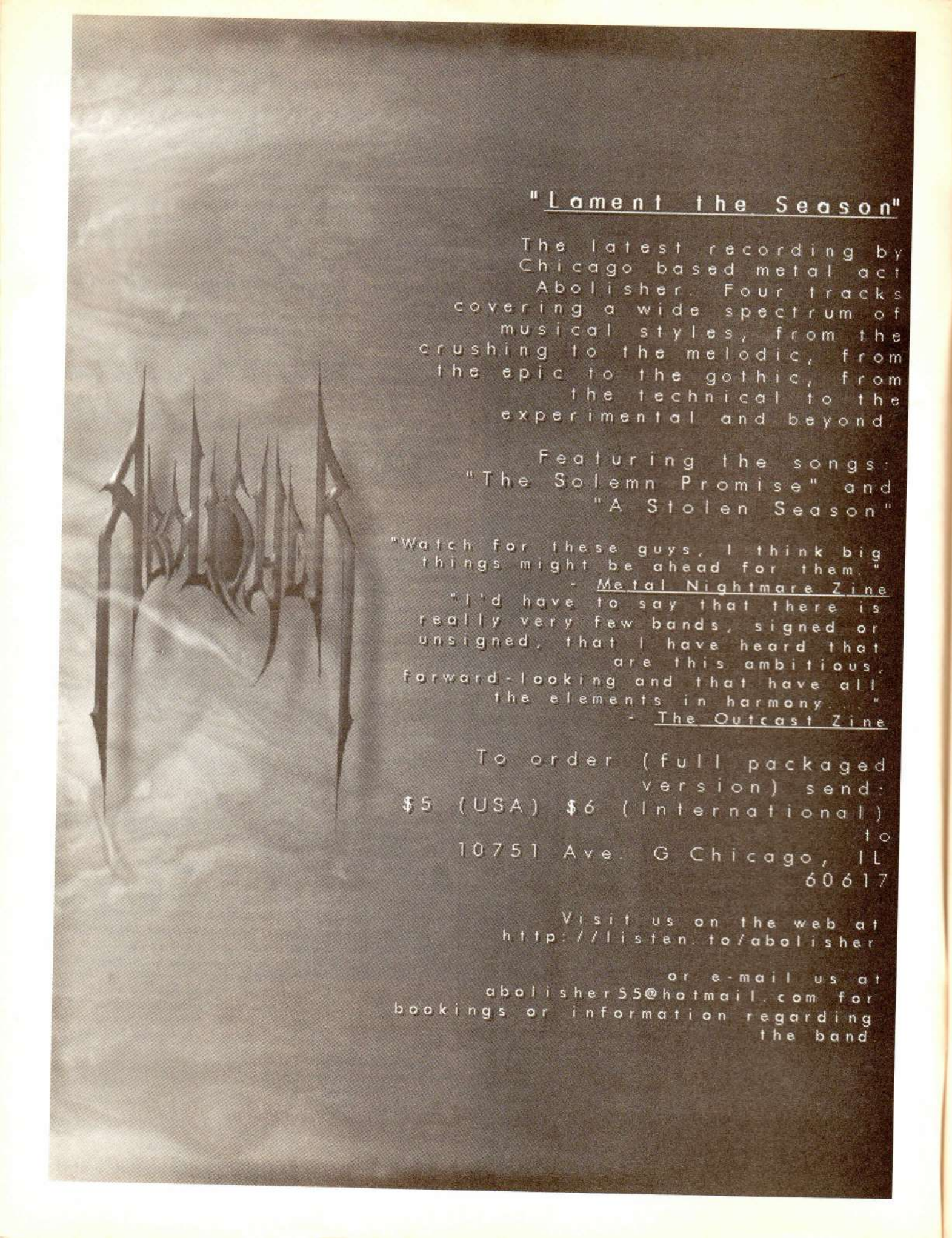
Dan Waldberg... guitars

Luke Celente... guitars

Alex Ghersini... drums

**Website:**

[www.antipathyny.com](http://www.antipathyny.com)



## "Lament the Season"

The latest recording by Chicago based metal act Abolisher. Four tracks covering a wide spectrum of musical styles, from the crushing to the melodic, from the epic to the gothic, from the technical to the experimental and beyond.

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# AVERSE SEFIRA

Interview with vocalist and guitarist Sanguine and bassist Wrath

In the American black metal scene, Texas' **Averse Sefira** are the leaders. Their independent debut, *Homecomings March*, established them as a band with the true aesthetics and sound of black metal taking it to new extremes and atmospheres. They signed with Lost Disciple Records and their eagerly awaited follow up, *Battles Clarion*, is more direct and aggressive. After several reschedulings on my part, we were able to talk with main men Sanguine and Wrath, two of the most intelligent and honest people in metal, about **Averse Sefira**.

Are you happy with the new record?

**Sanguine:** I hated it initially and a short period after but I walked away from it and came back to it and I like it now. We're getting a lot of unnerving praise for it. It's very lively and there's a lot of spirit to it.

**Wrath:** In the end it came together quickly. We were writing and writing and then it took less than a month we were recording it. I don't begrudge the way it ended up, it had a very urgent feeling. It's very frenetic and chaotic in the way it was written. It's the closest thing we've done to a live piece.

**Sanguine:** It's a mirror into where we were at when we were recording it.

**Wrath:** We can say the same about *Homecomings March*. That's why the new one's shorter.

How have you progressed since *Homecomings March*?

**Wrath:** We've tightened up our composition structure. We now have a drummer.

**Sanguine:** In some ways we're using more riffs, in some ways we're using less riffs. There's less repetition within the songs, the themes are more point to point. The lyrics are a continuation of everything we've done before. That's a facet of how we write. In retrospect, this album is a lot closer to the demo. The songs are similarly structured. It's a retrograde, but a definite improvement over what we were trying to do with the first album.

What are your plans for the summer?

**Wrath:** We're going to play the Milwaukee Metalfest and that's pretty much it.

**Sanguine:** There's a couple of shows we would've liked to have played, but the way tours are being packaged right now they're shedding out all the local openers.

How's the new drummer working out?

**Sanguine:** In a perfect world, in a perfect past, we would've been working with the Carcass from *Homecomings March*. He's the drummer we've always wanted to have but it didn't work out at the time.

**Wrath:** We invited him a couple of years before. He was busy with a job and in the band *Death Of Millions*. We were always interested but he politely declined. When we moved back to Texas from New York I saw him at a show and asked him if he would play with us now. It worked out.

**Sanguine:** The guitar parts are written first and then we sweat them out with the drum machine. We talk to the Carcass about it and things get reworked with the real drums. Initially, he didn't want a lot of input but towards the end of the writing process and definitely during the recording of the album he was spot on as far as helping us out. He felt more comfortable with it.

**Wrath:** I wrote all the drums for *Homecomings March* on the drum machine. I'm not a drummer, I know some theory, but I don't know how it should really be. Any good drummer innovates on the spot.

What are your thoughts on the American black metal scene?

**Wrath:** I think American black metal was being treated as the salvation

for the Norwegian sell out, in the last year or two. I'm gonna say this because I'm thinking of the trend that happened, they had their initial break out and got their first album out and finally Europeans were taking notice, then so few of them followed up on that. I think there was a lack of understanding that you have to create your own momentum. I don't know this for a fact, this is just the general perception that I have.

**Sanguine:** Any time we say something like this it gets turned around and people think we're fucking pricks. All this stems from the fact that Wrath and I saw this from an observation doing radio. We decided to pick and choose what we were presenting to the listeners. We have that take on what's quality and not quality. If you ask us about the scene or black metal you're getting our personal opinion.

**Wrath:** We can't represent **Averse Sefira** and talk about black metal.

**Sanguine:** If we're gonna talk about black metal outside of our band, we're just doing it as people. It's our opinion. The American scene seems to have stumbled. There's some strong showings, you've got bands like **Krieg**, **Judas Iscariot**, and **Demoney** is finally playing live. **Havohej** is making a comeback.

**Wrath:** I don't think it's as unified a movement as people thought it was going to be. I'm satisfied with that because we're not a homogenous culture like Norway. The reason that can work is because those guys stuck out like sore thumbs in their society. They could only relate to each other. Here there's all sorts of works of life and different ways of thinking and we don't have to relate to each other as much. It's good to have peers, feedback, and approval, and friendships. We have all those things. There's very stiff competition. Americans in general can't get away from that. When a sports team wins a championship, what do people do? They trash their city. Everyone wants to be the winner. The scene can't get away from trying to be the best. It's not about how fast a band can play, who is the most blasphemous—it's supposed to be art. You can't be honest with your opinions about bands.

How's everything with **Lost Disciple Records**?

**Wrath:** Real well. This album lives up to what Rich hoped it would do as far as response. It took us by surprise. Rich came through with a ten page booklet and he put together the elaborate designs we had for this album. He followed through on it for us. We're very appreciative of that. It turned out how we envisioned it.

**Sanguine:** There's a lot of positive things being said.

Do you feel your career is heading where you want it to?

**Wrath:** Within reason. We have a vague sketch of the next album. When we started working on *Homecomings March*, we decided to look forward to four albums. If we decide it's still vital we can go from there. If we get to album number four and call it quits then great. If we do the next album and decide it's crap then we'll quit there.

**Sanguine:** We're getting what we want out of this it will continue. As long as it's genuine and it's vital, we will continue. We're never going to try to make a living at this. We're free from that obligation which is very useful. We're never going to have to compromise. We're never going to have to be like **Deicide**. I feel very bad for them, it's almost like they're stuck in some Dante-esque punishment. It's like a shark, if you stop swimming you die.

**Discography:**

2001... *Battles Clarion* (Lost Disciple)

1999... *Homecomings March*

**Current line-up:**

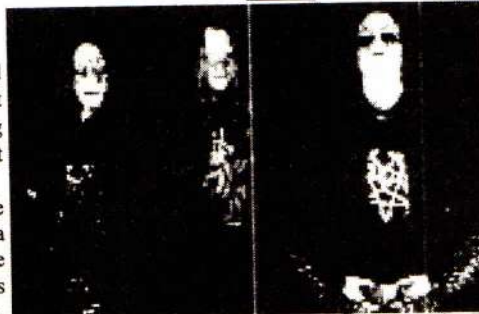
Sanguine... vocals and guitars

Wrath... bass

The Carcass... drums

**Website:**

[www.aversesefira.com](http://www.aversesefira.com)





### Interview with **Born**

**Born** is a New York based band that has been around since the early nineties and are one of the biggest supporters of the local hardcore scene. They have released their second disc, *The Aging Process*, a six song e.p. which showcases their diverse style and energetic attack. Unlike most hardcore bands, **Born** play music with an open mind and are not afraid to try different styles. I sent some questions which the band promptly answered. This is a band that deserves respect for their support.

#### How do you feel about the new album?

**Jay:** I am happy with it. I think it came out better than our first release, *Raging*, because it was recorded reel to reel. The first c.d. was recorded digitally and we were not as happy with the end product.

**Kevin:** I think it's a great album to put on when you are heading out only our skateboard or bike and just want to rip shit up. A.J. from *Leeway* produced it, I think he really worked some magic into our natural sound.

#### What do you want to achieve with this disc?

**Dave:** Yeah, it's an e.p. sampler that we made to show everyone **Born's** new style. It's been five years since the first album.

**Kevin:** Basically we are looking for a new label. We are using *The Aging Process* to shop around as well as give out at shows and get some airplay. Right now I think N.Y.U. (90.1 fm) and W.S.O.U. (89.5 fm) are playing it, so call up and request it.

#### Tell me about your origins.

**Dave:** Originally the band was called **The Mentally Numb** which started ten years ago. We were just a bunch of kids goofing around in the studio.

**Jay:** We changed the line-up and the name to **Born**. We added Simon on guitar, Mike on vocals, and Todd on drums. That line-up stayed the same with the exception of the drummer, which changed a lot.



#### What's your opinion of the East Coast scene?

**Kevin:** The East Coast style is very diverse and a person can get influenced by so many different styles just by going to a club by C.B.G.B.'s. One show can contain everything from punk and hardcore to ska, underground to mainstream, all for only ten dollars. Personally, I think East Coast hardcore bands have a sound all their own. West Coast bands seem to have more of a happy, upbeat sound, slower at times with a lot of E note crunching. I grew up in Brooklyn, New York where a lot of the big hardcore bands got their start. As a kid I was so inspired by the bands I saw at shows or in the studio rehearsing like **Type O Negative**, **Biohazard**, and **Life Of Agony**. They all used to practice in the same studio I did and when they were done we would hang out and talk to them. It created a great connection to the music I loved and I don't think I could've experienced that anywhere else.

#### Do you think **Born** is stuck in one particular scene?

**Dave:** I don't think that we are stuck in one scene. I mean **Born** has punk songs, metal songs, and even ballads.

**Jay:** I think we are hardcore in the sense of the word, but there is so much more to our style than that. Everybody in the band is into totally different types of music and we all bring something unique to the table when we write songs.

**Siz:** I just want to gamble like Kenny Rogers sang in that song.

#### How do you think this scene can be improved?

**Jay:** People need to come out to more shows and support the scene. The unity is not the same as it used to be.

**Kevin:** I hate when people come to shows to see their buddies play and then leave and don't bother giving other bands a listen. There is so much

great music out there to be heard. I remember as a kid going to Sunday matinee's and staying til like eight p.m. to see every band and hear what they had to offer. Now you go to a show and there is one hundred people for the first two bands and like six people for the last four bands. It's just not right, but what can you do?

#### Tell me about **New Found Hope**.

**Kevin:** Me and Dave run a D.I.Y. label called **New Found Hope**. Dave started it to give local bands a chance to be heard and to help them out with the cost to record and distro their stuff.

**Dave:** We have had a lot of great bands on **New Found Hope** like *Leeway*, *No Redeeming Social Value*, and *Southpaw* to name a few.

#### What made you want to get involved in music?

**Dave:** I didn't know how to break dance.

**Jay:** I saw **Iron Maiden Live After Death** and all I wanted to do was play on stage. Well **Sabbath** made me want to play music and **Maiden** made me want to be in a band. Over all it was the music my father listened to that influenced me the most.

**Kevin:** From the first time I heard "Black Magic" by **Slayer** I knew I wanted to be in a band. When I was fourteen a friend of mine had a Casio keyboard with a built in drum machine and I had a Sears guitar so we started a band. At one point Pat, the drummer from **Indecision**, was just learning to play drums so he replaced the drum machine and my first real band got started. I still have the videotapes of the old days- they are so funny to watch.

#### Tell me about lyrics.

**Kevin:** Dave and Mike write most of the lyrics. Their styles are like black and white. Dave writes mostly about unity in the scene, sort of old school and very punk. Mike writes more personal lyrics and growing up, friends, and hardships. We all put our two cents in when it comes time to put the finished touches on a song.

#### How do you feel about different music scenes crossing over?

**Kevin:** In a perfect world all the different styles could exist but nothing in life is perfect. For example, we played a show in New Jersey with a bunch of **Blink 182** wannabes. To make a long story short, there was a ton of friction from the moment we got off the bus. We had like fifty hardcore kids that came to see us and the local punk kids were not happy that the hardcore kids danced so rough. Words were exchanged and fists were soon flying. Even the club's bouncer got knocked the fuck out. As for death metal fans, we play with lots of metal bands and usually everyone gets along fine. It's just the kids into fucking M.T.V. punk that carry a big attitude and cause problems.

#### Any final comments?

**Kevin:** **Born's** a band that loves to play live anywhere, anytime. If you book shows and need a band to play give us a call. As we said before, we are still looking for a label to call home. We have tons of merchandise for sale and big summer tour plans so if you want to find out more about us join our e-mail list at [raging1973@aol.com](mailto:raging1973@aol.com). Remember, support the scene and keep it alive.

#### Discography:

2001... *The Aging Process* (**New Found Hope**)  
1996... *Raging* (**New Found Hope**)

#### Current line-up:

Mike Maden... vocals  
Jay Dip... guitars  
Siz... guitars  
Dave P... bass  
Kevin Kelly... drums

#### Website:

[www.anewfoundhope.com](http://www.anewfoundhope.com)

# CADAVER INC

Interview with guitarist Anders Odden

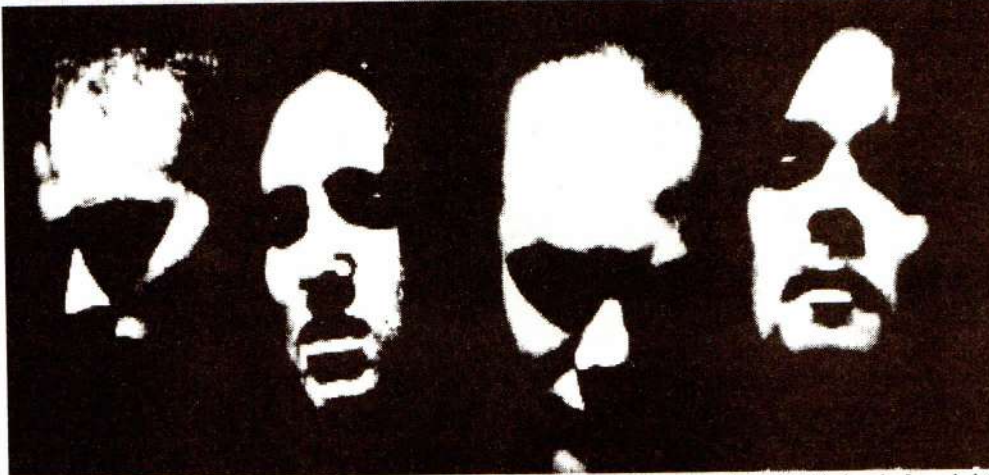
**Cadaver Inc.** is a band that may look forward to fans of the underground extreme metal scene from the late eighties, early nineties. Then known simply as **Cadaver**, the Norwegian band released two cult albums, *Hallucinating Anxiety* and *In Pains*, before breaking up. In 2000, guitarist Anders Odden reformed **Cadaver** with vocalist Apollyon (**Aura Noir**, **Dodheimsgard**), bassist L.J. Balvaz, and drummer Czral (ex-**Dimmu Borgir**). Their new album, *Discipline*, is an intense album that draws no limitations of death or black metal. Here is mainstay Anders to tell us what he's been up to over the years and the future of **Cadaver Inc.**

**How did your tour with Morbid Angel and Zyklon go?**

It went very well, we're very happy about it. Supporting **Morbid Angel** is one of the things that we've always wanted to do. The new singer sounds really great. He's going to do an excellent job for them when they go on tour with **Pantera** and **Slayer**.

**How has the response been for Cadaver Inc.?**

We've had a great response all over the place. It's amazing how well the album has been received by all the magazines. The album came out the first day we started the tour so most of the people at the gigs didn't know



the songs. We sold all the c.d.'s we had at the shows. Now we're ending the tour and we're at our greatest and we should continue on touring. We only had one day off out of twenty six gigs. We had a day off in Hamburg. We took **Morbid Angel** down to the famous area in Hamburg where it's insane with sex bars. They have twenty four hour bars, it's a great place. We took them all down there. We found this small pub next to the women in the windows. We went there and everyone from the crew, **Morbid Angel**, and **Zyklon** had this room in the back. When we all left there we were best of friends. We really connected. We went to this strip bar where the strippers strip to metal. One girl did a show with **Rammstein** and she sang all the lyrics. We needed a day off to recover from that party. They have huge competition. There's one hundred strip clubs and whore houses in one town. They are so competitive that they will do anything to get you to trust them.

**Tell me about your website.**

The Norwegian Parliament get involved to find out if we were really involved with terrorist activities. They took the bait with the website. The police checked out and wanted to shut it down. The Head of Security took it all seriously and he said we were doing illegal criminal activities. We were waiting to see if they would press charges. We will do anything to keep the site up because people love it. We will set it up somewhere else if we have to so we can keep it going. Most people just put up basic websites and they are boring. We like to have a good laugh.

**How is in Norway regarding censorship?**

It's not like in the States. Normally things are passed by. If you try to make money out of it, then the government will go after it. It's ridiculous in America they censor nipples even. You have an uptight government that doesn't allow people to see themselves. It's really strange for us, it has to be much more extreme to shock people. I didn't do this for shock value, I just did it to give the band a story. It connects well with the concept of death metal. Most band websites are fucking boring. We use this medium for so much more. It's easy and cheap to fuck around with. We have a video on there. It's getting out of hand. If you believe everything on our site is real, you have serious problems. It's a joke. It's very visual. We have made t-shirts now. It has the opening sequence on the back.

**People feel that when bands concentrate on the visuals they are covering inadequacies in the music.**

The website is not to cover up bad music. It's so people can discover that the band is fucking great. This kind of music should be aggressive, powerful, and fucking in your face; not controlled or over produced. I wanted this album to be as direct as possible and have good songs. I spent so much time figuring out how it was going to fit. Music is what's most important to me. Website hype is not something you can live on very long.

**How does Discipline compare to the music back then?**

I think we were ahead of our time back then too. We're not too far ahead of our time now, so people can actually get into this. The music is more mature now. We weren't able to do tours with the old **Cadaver**, this is something that I really wanted to do that we are now. We want to get into the clubs and play for people. Some of the music on the new album is older than the music on *In Pains*. Some of it is stuff that we didn't use in the old **Cadaver**. It's slightly rearranged but it makes us wonder why we didn't record it back then. The old drummer couldn't play as good as the drummer we have now, so that made a difference too.

**What made you decide to get involved with this style of music again?**

It was a matter of getting the right musicians for this band. I needed the right musicians for this and that's why it took so long. I did other music in the meantime. We wanted to bridge the old school and the new school scenes. It's a brutal sound, but modern and cold. We did it by just playing guitars, bass, and drums. We didn't use any electronics on this record. I wanted to prove that we can record an album with basic instruments and still have it sound modern and brutal.

**What are you planning for the rest of the year?**

We will probably do a U.K. tour in August. We only played London this time. There's talk of us doing something in November too. We just came off this tour and it was nice. It's hard to tell what's going to be next. We will play everywhere we can. There's been small talk about us coming to America. We'll see how the record does.

**Discography:**

2001... *Discipline* (Earache)

**Current line-up:**

Apollyon... vocals

Neddo... guitars

L.J. Balvaz... bass

Czral... drums

**Website:**

[www.cadaverinc.com](http://www.cadaverinc.com)

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**METALMIKE**  
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Interview with vocalist Joe Horvath

**Circle Of Dead Children** is one of the few extreme metal bands to make an impact on the American scene. What separates them from all the others is their open mindedness and willingness to make each song stand on its own and to throw some unusual curves without interfering with their brutal vision. The third release and debut for Necropolis, *The Genocide Machine*, is filled with creepy tunes and an extremeness that borders black, grind, and death metal. I was able to catch up with Joe about this Pennsylvania based band.

**Are you pleased with the new record?**

We're pleased, there's always things you wish you could've done a little bit different. It was rough. We only practiced once every four months. The entire c.d. was written and recorded in about three months. We didn't have time to fine tune anything. Six of the songs were done right there in the studio. With that type of setup you always wish you could've done things differently, but we're still pleased with it.

**Why don't you have the time to spend with the music?**

Our drummer lives five hours away from us. He comes back here once every three or four months. We write songs and practice for about two hours and then he'd have to take off again. The good thing is that he's here in the summer. That's when we do all the main songwriting.

**What are your plans for this summer?**

Right now we have about ten songs written. We're going to tour around in August, we'll try to get out as much as we can on weekends. We can't play out during the week because of my job, but we'll play out on weekends whenever we can.

**How would you describe your sound?**

It's death grind but everyone in the band has so many different influences and we bring them all into the songwriting. We're not worried about being the fastest or the most brutal. We'll use whatever people come up with as far as the parts, whether it's a crust, or death metal sounding, or hardcore, or grind, or thrash. We work with whatever we have. That way the songs sound fresh. When we started we knew we all had different backgrounds and we were very diverse. There's a million bands all doing the same thing so we tried a different route. We don't worry what fans of particular genres feel about the music.

**How has the band grown since your first two releases?**

Everyone's level of writing has improved a lot. We're a lot more focused now. We went through some line-up changes and I think we have a solid line-up now. Our relationship with one another has grown with the band. We know that with our limited time to write that when we do get together everyone is excited and there's no messing around. We really work our asses off to write the best songs that we can. We know what to expect from each other. People always think it's a terrible situation and it is, but

one really good, beneficial thing is it keeps you really excited about what you're doing. It doesn't get old. When you see each other once every three or four months you get really excited. Everyone is so ready to see each other and get together to play, it's a great time and everyone is hyped up to write new songs and play old songs. It's probably the only positive out of that, but it's very important. It's a strange way to do but it works.

**How do the new songs compare to those on *The Genocide Machine*?**

The newer ones are less death metal and a faster and rawer than the last one, but it's hard to say until the entire c.d. is done. The majority of them have old crusty grind. We're gonna tour in August and then when we get back we'll take a couple of days off and record.

**How do you feel about how everything is going with Necropolis Records?**

It's great so far. Everyone is working really well. They communicate really well and they let me know what's going on. The relationship that I've had with all of them has been really positive. I think they feel really good about us so far. We want to be one of the bands that helps that label, Deathvomit, become a well known album. I think it's up to us to be one of the bands that sets a standard for that label.

**What can you tell me about the visual representation of the band?**

Myself and the drummer, John, are very much into art. The way I see it, if you're going to do a website you might as well do it right. I've always been into art and I've got some crazy ideas. We were able to hook up with a web designer who was on the same level as I am. Any of my ideas he was able to work on them and make them better than I even envisioned it. The artwork on the c.d. was done by the Riddick brothers. They made it really dark and ambient, with cold waves. I always thought it would be great to have a different look and not your stereotypical artwork on the c.d. It helps the representation of the band when you have original artwork.

**Do you place any limitations on your music?**

We'll use whatever pops in our minds while we're writing the songs. On *The Genocide Machine* it's subtle, but we used some real fuzzy sounding keyboards. We did some different noises with the vocals, which we'll expand further. If we come up with some different ideas, they're gonna happen. The whole idea is to look back and not feel that you wanted to do something and feel guilty for not doing it. What we do is rewarding, not financially, but mentally rewarding.

**Final comments?**

Keep an eye out for our tour through the month of August and look for us at the Milwaukee Metalfest.

**Discography:**

2001... *The Genocide Machine* (Necropolis)

2000... *Exotic Sense Decay* (Willowtip)

1998... *Starving The Vultures* (Willowtip)

**Current line-up:**

J. Horvath... vocals

J. Andrews... guitars

A. Kooser... bass

J. Miciolek... drums

**Website:**

<http://members.tripod.com/~circlegrind/>



# DIABLERIE

Interview with keyboardist J. Suorsa

Avantgarde Music has always managed to find the most thought provoking and open minded metal bands in the world. Among the new bands they are introducing us to are Finland's Diablerie. This band is taking electronics to new uncharted heights within the realm of extreme metal. Their debut, *Seraphyde*, is a collage of intelligent, pulsating metal that have been drawing some comparisons to *Arcturus* and *Ulver* due to its quirkiness. Here is keyboardist J. Suorsa to answer some questions.



**How do you feel about your debut album?**

It's been a year since we recorded the album and even more since we composed the material on it. Naturally, we have evolved and progressed as individual musicians and a band. That inevitably shades our feelings about the album a bit. But leaving that alone, we are really satisfied with the outcome of our work.

**Tell me about the origins of your band.**

We found each other in the latter half of '97 and established Diablerie as a functional band immediately. The frames in which we would work were clear and well defined from the very beginning of our history; it has been a convenient template for progress and realization of our musical ideals.

**How would you describe your sound to someone unfamiliar with your band?**

The essentials are energy, atmosphere and thought. Those we bring forth by means of metal, electronics and dark thematic chaos.

**There are electronics with your extreme metal music- why do you feel you can successfully merge the two styles?**

Both styles can well serve as means to create dark energetic soundscapes. There is no reason to limit us to any particular genre.

**Do you think your band is an example of the future of this music?**

You mean whether metal will collectively turn into abusing electronics or what? I don't think that'll happen. Okay, it's increasing but still metal is metal for quite a lot of people.

**What are your tour plans?**

There are no plans regarding gigs or tours. Avantgarde hasn't said a word about this, so it seems they are not going to put us on tour any time soon. We would love to tour and do a lot of gigs however.

**What is the most difficult aspect of being a new band trying to breakthrough and gain some recognition?**

Of course the most demanding part is to come up with an album that indeed shows the band to be worth recognition. The rest is actually left for the record label to worry about. Well, establishing the band name firmly in publicity has proven out to be really difficult. Even though the album gets praised in various magazines and we are doing tons of interviews it still seems that none has a clue about us.

**What influences your sound and image?**

The most significant influence is a sort of innate passion for all dark and obscure stuff. I have to admit that a VCR serves as a good muse. There are many films that have had a direct effect on the whole concept of the band. In general it's the darker kind of stuff that's the most inspiring, but also intelligent dramas and love stories can give a spark to a birth of a song. Music is a soundtrack to one's innermost soul so it makes sense even superficially.

**What are your religious beliefs and do they play a role in your lyrics?**

Huh, getting rather personal! I'm a scientific mind, as we all I think. There are enough exotics in the universe even in the absence of god and mystic élan vitals. Religions are merely socio-cultural vehicles for controlling masses of idiots; it would be rather stupid to commit to any. It's inevitable that our worldviews contribute to the appearance of our lyrics, but I would say we have managed to maintain a certain distinct role in relative to the lyrics.

**What can we expect from Diablerie in the future?**

We only hope that the commercial side of the band is enough to keep the band alive and to provide us with decent conditions to perform and create this kind of music. Metal and electronics is a rather expensive hybrid you know.

**Discography:**

2001... *Seraphyde* (Avantgarde)

**Current line-up:**

H.J. Villberg... vocals  
E. Lunden... guitars  
K. Tukiainen... guitars  
A. Ahokas... bass  
A. Ruokola... drums  
J. Suorsa... keyboards

**Website:**

[www.diablerie.cjb.net](http://www.diablerie.cjb.net)

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# DIVINE:DECAY

Interview with vocalist and guitarist Alec

**Divine Decay** is a Finnish thrash band that you would swear came out in 1988 during the Bay Area thrash scene explosion. Their style will recall all the masters, from *Exodus* to *Testament* to *Forbidden*. They even perform a *Nuclear Assault* cover on their debut, *Songs of the Damned*. **Divine Decay** originally began as a fun project without the expectations of even getting a record contract, but here they are with a record deal and a critically acclaimed album. For those who long for the golden years of thrash metal, this is a band that has recorded an album that reminds us of the timeless and energetic quality this forgotten genre possessed. Here is frontman Alec with **Divine Decay's** first American interview.

**What's the scene like for thrash metal in Finland?**

We have only played about ten shows so far, but every show has been a big success. All the interviews and reviews have been good so far, no shit yet.

**When did you form the band?**

Two years ago. All of us play in other bands also; *Suburban Tribe*, *Hybrid Children*, and *Am I Blood*. Our drummer used to play in *H.I.M.*, which did okay here. He played on the first album but not anymore. We share the bass player with *Am I Blood*. We didn't decide to go this far, to make a record or anything. I listen to Bay Area thrash like *Testament's The New Order*, and nobody is doing that style of music in Europe anymore. I wondered if there could be volunteers for a band like this so I called a few of my friends. We didn't have any goals, we didn't plan to do a demo, play live shows, or a record. Things turned up so that now I am sitting in Paris and doing an interview. It's pretty odd stuff. I expected nothing. People ask me if this is the right time to do something like this- I don't know.

**Do you think your music has a place in today's scene?**

Yeah, sure. I think a lot of bands have been influenced by music of that time. A lot of Finnish metal bands say they listen to music from that area, I think we've managed to get that style down well even though we are thousands of miles away from San Francisco. We're playing from the fans point of view. We haven't lived this phase over there. I was afraid calling you because, how would you as a native, are you able to capture the same thing we are catching? We have the fans point of view. We didn't live that scene, we just heard it. There were some comments about our record company's selling points for this record by calling it *Kill em All*, the new era. I, myself hate comparing. You never want to put yourself on the same level as something that's a classic. People have high expectations when they hear that.

**How are things going with Osmose?**

We're doing okay with Osmose. The record was out for two days and we got contacted in Denmark, Brazil, Mexico, England- the promotion has done something that is relevant. They are going somewhere. The

Finnish bands that are now doing pretty good in Europe owe it to the record companies. In Europe the biggest exporting country is England, then it's Sweden, then it's Germany. They always trusted their own bands. They have had a lot of money to promote. Finland is now realizing that we have had good music for many years. We should show it to other people also. There are two countries- England and America, who have so many bands of their own. It's hard for us to come to their market. There's a lot of people buying records in Germany, but the way the label looks at it- they'll spend one thousand dollars on a country and see how that goes. People are now putting more money on videos. I think that has been the break through for Finnish music. I think the last *Testament* album, *The Gathering*, is one of the best albums of all time. That really captures what we would hope to do, although a Dave Lombardo is not found in Finland. For me, *Testament's New Order* was the record that got me seriously into music. The new album, I wouldn't even lie if I said I listened to it at least twice a day and it's been out for almost a year. There's not a bad song on that album. During the *Practice What You Preach* era the bass sound was really good, but now ten or fifteen years after it's like a tennis ball bouncing. It's horrible now, although at that time I thought it was cool. It will be interesting to hear how it will sound as they re-record their first album. I actually analyzed one day what I would change about that album. The snare is lost in time, it's a bit like rubber. I think it competes with *Queensryche* in those days. I think it's a good idea to do it again with today's sound. I saw *Testament* when they

were in Finland and they aren't as good as the record. No one can play like Lombardo.

**What are your plans for the future?**

I didn't expect to get this far, so we don't have any expectations. We'll see how people like this album. We made a two plus one deal with Osmose. We will do another album that hopefully sounds the same. We'll find out what this brings, you never know. Everything seemed to happen by accident, like how I became the vocalist. *Children Of Bodom* played in the next rehearsal studio to where we played. They asked us if we wanted to warm up. At that time we had the music but no vocalist. I only played guitar- I'm used to playing drums so it was enough for me to just play the guitar. Two weeks before the thing we had a fifth member, a vocalist, but he got a proper job. I promised that we would do this gig, but what could we do. I've done backing vocals before, so I decided I would sing. We played a couple of shows and went straight into making the record so it was quite new to me.

**Discography:**

2001... *Songs Of The Damned* (Osmose)

**Current line-up:**

Alec... vocals and guitars

Paul... guitars

Toni... bass

Patka... drums

**Website:**

[www.geocities.com/divinedecay/](http://www.geocities.com/divinedecay/)





# DOMAIN

Interview with drummer Greg

**Domain** is a Long Island based band who is combining metal and hardcore into a catchy but still extreme and very technical sound. They have released their debut e.p., *Far From Within*, and join the ranks of the rising bands with original ideas and an exciting sound. I sent some questions over to drummer Greg to find out more about this new band. Keep an eye out for some shows in the New York area this summer.

## How do you feel about your debut e.p.?

I'm pretty happy with what we came up with on the e.p. There's things on there that I'd changed but overall with the time period we had and where we were at, musically, at that time I'd say that I'm content with what we put on tape. I think our next record will blow this one away. On this record, I recorded my drum tracks before I knew Sadistic was gonna help us put the c.d. out. Had I'd known that I'd probably taken my time and did my tracks over. You can definitely hear us progress on this c.d. from the demo we had out. I wrote a majority of the music on the record which was cool. Jeremy's lyrics are really awesome on this record. I'm content with what we came up with but our next record will be way better. This was just a start of things. I'm more focused on where I want to take our musical direction so our next record will be insane.

## How would you describe your sound?

It's kind of hard to describe our sound to someone who's never heard us before. We're a hybrid of metal and hardcore with a strong melodic influence. All of our songs have structure too. There's all these new bands coming out with songs that have eighteen parts and the songs are all over the place. Every song has structure and at least one part you can sing along to. No one is really doing what we're doing. Lots of bands are concerned about being heavy or crazy or whatever, we're just concerned about writing good songs. We're more accessible than the average metal-core band.

## Give a little background on Domain.

**Domain**, or what I consider to be **Domain**, started in the spring of '99 with me on drums, Jeremy on vocals, Jeff on bass, Brian on guitar, and Ron Amar on guitar as well. There was a lineup before that when we were in high school but that's doesn't really count. We recorded a demo in Jan of '00. That line-up basically just played in a garage and learned how to write songs and develop our sound. We played shows all on L.I. In the summer of '00 the band and Ron parted ways. After that we basically wrote *Far From Within* with the exception of of two songs. Brian, our guitarist, just left to join another band **From Autumn To Ashes**, but we have a new guitar player, Mike Conlin. He kicks ass. What I hope to accomplish with **Domain**, besides becoming the biggest band in the world, is to write really good songs. I want to show people that we can play and write. I want to do something different. I want to set trends and be successful.

**What are some advantages and disadvantages to living on L.I.?**  
L.I. advantages are still disadvantages. L.I. is very clique-y at times. It's not what you know it's who you know. We've all learned that lesson from living here. You could be the next **Led Zeppelin** but if kids don't know who you are or you're not the "cool" kid in the scene or whatever you're gonna get ignored. That just makes you a stronger band putting up with all this "scene politics" bullshit. One advantage, though, is that they're are so many amazing bands that come here. You're surrounded by a lot of talent and lots of kids from, out of state, respect you just cause your from L.I. L.I. is also right next to the city, which is the entertainment mecca of the world. There's always a place to play here. It's not what it used to be back in like '95, when it was huge and there were tons of places to play, a lot less people go to shows nowadays, but it's still cool. It's a whole lot better than living in Montana or some shit.

## How do you feel about your music?

On our next record **Domain** will become even more technical. We've matured not only as writers, but as players and we will definitely be showcasing more of our ability as players on the next record. I don't know where we fit in regarding metal and hardcore. The lines have been completely blurred between what is hardcore and what is metal that I can't tell the difference between the two genres. We play mostly hardcore shows and are involved in that scene but I wouldn't say we're a hardcore band. We're the perfect balance between both genres. I've always felt that we're too hardcore for metal kids and too metal for hardcore kids. I don't care about labels and I don't care what kids label us, I just want us to be known as a good band. I just want people to enjoy and respect what we put out. That's my only concern, not what section our record is in at the record store.

## What influences you as a musician?

What influences me are bands that push the envelop. Bands that, may not be the biggest band in the world, but a band who influences other bands. Bands that set standards that others have to meet. Bands that pour all of their emotions and use music more as of a catharsis than a way to make money and act cool. That's what I'd like to become. Bands that influence me nowadays are bands like **Converge** and **Dillinger**, crazy shit like that. Bands who just go all out and pour themselves into their music and who are doing really crazy shit with music while setting a standard for other bands to follow.

## How do you feel Domain stands out from other bands?

We can stand out cause we do our own thing. We don't follow any trends.

We know what we want to accomplish as a band and we don't let anything deter us from it. We could've just jumped on the **Poison The Well** bandwagon or jump on the horrible rap core shit ass nu-metal wave that's going on but we didn't. That's what makes us stand out. We just stay on the path that we're on, remaining true to ourselves and to the music while maintaining our integrity. We've started to develop our own sound and we're gonna keep on developing it and trying new things.

## Why did you become a drummer?

I think I was like ten years old when I decided that I wanted to be a musician. Watching Tommy Lee in the "Without You" video from **Motley Crue**. Watching him in that video with the rest of them looking so cool made me want to be a musician really bad. My mom's a singer/actress and she wanted me to play music as well. I guess it all started from me watching way too many **Motley Crue** videos and me wanting to be in the **Crue**.

## Final comments?

I just to want reiterate we have a new guitar player in the band, Mike Conlin. He kicks ass. If you're in the LI area please come and check us out. We are currently shopping around our c.d. to labels so if any labels are reading this and are interested please e-mail me at [regtour@aol.com](mailto:regtour@aol.com). We are currently writing new material as we speak. Please help **Domain** fight the fight against nu-metal rap-core. Thanks and if anyone wants to order the c.d. online go to [www.revhq.com](http://www.revhq.com). Check out our website at [www.ctchardcore.com](http://www.ctchardcore.com) you can order c.d.'s from there as well.

## Discography:

2001... *Far From Within*

## Current line-up:

Jeremy... vocals  
Mike... guitars  
Jeff... bass  
Greg... drums

## Website:

[www.ctchardcore.com](http://www.ctchardcore.com)



# Dornenreich

Interview with vocalist, guitarist, and bassist Eviga

One of the most original and captivating bands I have heard in recent years comes in the form of Austria's Dornenreich. This band has just released its third album through the open minded Prophecy Productions and the music found within is shockingly good and experimental. Unafraid to go into harsher realms but still maintaining a sense of melody, Dornenreich remind me a little of Bethlehem, but really are indescribable. There is even communication between Dornenreich and American bands Agalloch and Lilitu which might lead to an appearance stateside. I had to track them down to find out more about this band. Here is the intelligent and intellectual frontman Eviga to fill us in.

## How do you feel about the new album?

I'm proud and that's pretty much of a wonder because I'm a person which is hardly ever contented, especially as for my own artistic work. With *Her Von Welken Nachten (From Faded Nights)* I've to say that it really keeps up with my strong visions I had in mind about what it should represent and actually my inner emotional requests became reality. *Her Von Welken Nachten* is a manifesto of what human passion is able to bring forth via its utter psychic and physical limits.

## What are characteristics of Dornenreich?

I consider the profound characteristics of Dornenreich to be passion, vocal intimacy, musical as well as emotional extremity, and intensity, surprise, suspense, variety, unusual instrumentation, creepy atmosphere, mystic moods, dynamics and aesthetics all together bursting with authentic individuality and archaic impact. Thus, hearing Dornenreich means to feel Dornenreich.

## What does Dornenreich mean?

Simply translated to English it means **Realm Of Thorns** or in the meaning of the German adjective "reich" it could mean something like "rich in thorns". In any case its an ambiguous term, a symbol, a metaphor and once that was the main reason for us to choose this term to be our band name, because it challenges our imagination and our creativity. Doubtlessly it does never limit our artistic identity for it reveals such a wide range of interpretations as our artistic horizon years for. It confirms us in our continuous development and that's great.

## How have your tours been?

The tours turned out to be great for us when it comes to the reactions in all details it's to say that we've played the Fear Of The Dark Festivals together with Graveworm and Vintersorg, and a European tour with **Marduk** and **Mystic Circle** during the last months. Primarily the audience in England, Scotland, Germany, France, Portugal, and Croatia seemed to be really fascinated with our intensive presence and dynamic appearance on stage, that is, numerous people talked to us after the concert and told us so. I have to add that visiting all these foreign countries enriched both my human and my artistic horizon. I'm far too introverted, nostalgic, and reflective to get involved with this omnismiling party attitude. It's just not my cup of tea, and therefore, the tours also revealed their drawbacks in my case. You just have to imagine the situation of hardly ever being on your own for a month. All in all, it pays to go on tour spiritually indeed.

## Discuss the vocal approach that occurs in Dornenreich.

With human beings it's a more than wide spread field of emotions, mood, and ambivalent feelings and as I've mentioned above one of our artistic cornerstones is to sound credibly, that is, to get across all those psychic

stades of feeling as a human being in an authentic way. We use this variety in vocal expression. We live and perceive the lyrics when recording them. Thus, when it comes to the vocal contrasts they are a natural consequence of the contradictions and the emotional raggedness a human being has to face within its nature. In our opinion the character that is, the charisma of an album relies on the vocal charm primarily and authentic variety does create an interested character indeed.

## How do you feel about your previous releases?

Our first full length album titled *Nicht Um Zu Sterben (Not In Order to Die)* was recorded in September '97 and today it seems to me as an extremely intense youthful scream bursting with vehement passion. Yet on this first release we focused on varied atmosphere by means of using keyboards, acoustic guitars, flutes, and contrasting voices. I've already dealt with the mentioned archaic contents, though, it all was done in a rather rude way due to the fact that we were very young back then. On our second album *Bitter Ist's Dem Tod Zu Dienen (Bitter It Is Serving Death)* the reflective aspect played a much more important role than it did on our debut. Our grade of awareness, our level of perception was a more detailed and simply a higher one at this time, but that's only natural for we have grown older. Our wider artistic horizon enabled us to express more inner depth as well as outer aesthetics. We had intensified and improved all our artistic abilities from instrumental skills, arrangement knowledge, and lyrical expression to the visual appearance of photography. Besides on this second Dornenreich album the single human being with all its inner worlds of emotions and thought got more important for us, therefore the cover of *Bitter Ist's* shows a lonesome human silhouette for the first time. However I think of our first three albums as a trilogy as for the pictoriality and for our general artistic individuality.

## What do you do in your spare time?

Gilvan is rather busy with his jobs, his studies, and his further musical projects. There's nearly no minute left for any other possible interests at the moment. Valnes and I deal a lot with art in general. It's all about reading romantic and expressionistic poetry (Novalis, Tieck, Hoffman, Trakl, Benn, etc.) and day dreaming within passionate syllables by J.R.R. Tolkien and Anne Rice, taking tons of photos, shooting our own no budget films and searching for adventures in the midst of the Austrian night forests.

## How did you become involved with music?

As far as I can think and feel back there has always been this enormous fascination with music and art. My father took me to the theatre when I was a little boy because he works as stage designer and painter. Therefore, the local theatre became my second home during my childhood. Apart from my father, my mother is into art too for she writes a lot and played the guitar some years ago. Even my girlfriend is an artistic being. She is very much into sculpture, painting, photography, and music itself. When it comes to inspiration I may name in the first place the unconditional cycles of nature, the atmosphere, and profound wisdom within ancient fairytales and legends and the passion of my unique individual perception.

## Discography:

2000... *Her Von Welken Nachten* (Prophecy)  
1999... *Bitter Ist's Dem Tod Zu Dienen* (C.C.P.)  
1997... *Nicht Um Zu Sterben* (C.C.P.)

## Current line-up:

Eviga... vocals, guitars and bass  
Valnes... vocals and keyboards  
Gilvan... drums

## Website:

[www.dornenreich.com](http://www.dornenreich.com)



# EARTHBOUND SMOKE GHOST

Interview with drummer Dalton, bassist Jeff, and guitarist Marcos

One of the most pleasant surprises came in the form of **Earthbound Smoke Ghost's** debut e.p., *Karma's Grave*. This five track disc is impossible to describe. The band takes elements of almost every form of interesting music (doom, groove, stoner, death, hardcore, etc.) and creates their own style of music that can draw no comparisons. Top it off with an original visual concept with Celtic images and you have **Earthbound Smoke Ghost**. Here is the band to discuss *Karma's Grave*.

## How would you describe your style?

**Dalton:** Each song has it's own vibe. One song could be considered doom-ish, while another could be interpreted as straight up riff rock. It's all about groove. Heavy fucking groove bleeding heavy fucking emotion. I can't really pinpoint a specific genre that we subscribe to because there isn't one. We draw on a variety of influences and styles, so to choose just one for the purpose of labeling ourselves would be unbecoming.

## Is the band stable and how do you feel the vocals fit with music?

**Marcos:** We all play a vital role in this band. And yes I would say that it is stable with a an occasional drum stick flying or a pedal or something but it's all good. It's like going out with three totally different babes except that they're all hairy and ugly! Pheroze does a great deal for us both vocally and musically, he's now doubling up with me on guitar and I'm totally excited about that. When I see him rock out next to me I get all pumped up. He has such a passion for music. He makes me look at my guitar differently now and I feel I owe it to him all of the other Ghosts to be the best I can be overall.

## Are you a Burroughs or Cronenberg fan?

**Dalton:** I'm a huge Burroughs fan, he's definitely one of the most original and intriguing writers in recent history. He had a unique vision that teetered on the darker side of things. I guess I am just drawn to surrealism, I can totally identify with altered states of reality.

## What other literature or film do you enjoy?

**Dalton:** I used to be really into reading, everything from Irish/ Celtic history to transcendental philosophy to real accounts of war. Fiction is something I haven't been into in a while except for Caleb Carr, *The Alienist* and *Angel Of Darkness*, I think it was called were amazing novels. As for film, I'm very critical because most films/ movies are fodder for the mindless, spineless fuckers who make up a great percentage of this country's population. I thought *Crouching Tiger* and *Shadow of the Vampire* were great, but I stick with the classic shit like *Reservoir Dogs*, *Mean Streets*, *River's Edge* and *Apocalypse Now* to name a few.

**Marcos:** I saw this foreign movie a few weeks ago *Amores Perros* (*Life's A Bitch*) and it rages man. I read books on serial killers mostly and I totally dig Stephen King.

## What are your plans for this summer?

**Dalton:** This summer is going to be all about shows and heavy drinking. We have a lot of shows being booked right now, starting with the Continental in NYC on July 11th and Castle Heights in Queens on July 21st. From there we'll be playing throughout the city and then heading down to Jersey and Pennsylvania, then up to New England. All shows will be posted on our website.

**Marcos:** We just scored a gig with the mighty Spirit Caravan which I'm totally stoked about. That's gonna take place in August and it's gonna be hella rad. I've been waiting for this for a long time folks.

**Jeff:** This summer is all about writing new songs and playing a bunch of fucking shows for some cool motherfuckers and of course as Dalton said, lots of drinking.

## Have you had label interest yet and do you think your style will limit the possibilities for label interest?

**Dalton:** No, because we haven't even solicited any labels yet what so ever. We will get around to that once we have more of a following, you know, to have a stronger leg to stand on. I don't think our style will limit us when it comes to label consideration. I think the music industry needs something unique, something you can't quite define, not more of the same run-of-the-mill bullshit that is constantly spewed forth by labels who are clueless to integrity and vision.

**Jeff:** I think we need a little more time before going down that road. I hope the music industry can tear itself away from the MTV bullshit and start to look for the bands who have something to say with their music. Not to say lets go back to the grunge era, but at least that shit was filled with emotion.

## Do you think E.S.G. have a particular vibe or sound that identifies with an era or style?

**Dalton:** Not exactly, but then again I really don't know. It's hard for me to really define. I guess we identify with a little piece of every era of heavy rock and metal in the past thirty years. We have a bit of doom, psychedelia, sludge, riff rock and some other shit all thrown together.

**Jeff:** You can sit and look at the bands who have been around for 10, 20 hell even 30 years and are still rocking. That's the kind of bands to follow. When all of the trend bullshit and labeling comes into play the integrity of the bands is compromised and some bands are ruined by being put into certain categories. I don't want people to be able to label us, I just want people to enjoy the songs for what they are, and what they are is a small part of a group coming together as an outlet of creativity and emotion.

**Marcos:** We're trying to capture all of feeling and emotions that drove us insane while listening to our favorite bands and tunes but keep it as original as possible.

## What is your inspiration for lyrics?

**Dalton:** I tend to dwell, mentally speaking, on darker things than I'd like to, but I am a product of my environment, you know? How I was raised, the shit I've gone through, and the shit I go through each and every day all effect my mental state and I guess that all comes across in the lyrics. All four of us in **E.S.G.** have had to deal with heavy amounts of loss and suffering. It's not that we try to be depressing or negative, we're just describing what we see and feel. I used to be really into both reading and writing poetry, not so much anymore. I think that poetry can be interpreted a million different ways, to fit in and be identified with however the reader sees fit. The same with our lyrics, make your own interpretation, make them yours.

## Final comments?

**Dalton:** I would just like to urge everyone to get off of their asses and support the music that is a part of their lives. You are never too fucking cool or too fucking important to see a band you really like, no matter who they are. We have to change this fucking slump that music is in and that's only going to start happening when people start giving a shit.

**Jeff:** Duck when you see a camel spit.

**Marcos:** Yes, come check us out live y'all will not be disappointed.

## Discography:

2001... *Karma's Grave*

## Current line-up:

Pheroze... vocals  
Marcos Orellana... guitars  
Jeff Scott... bass  
Dalton... drums

## Website:

[www.earthboundsmokeghost.com](http://www.earthboundsmokeghost.com)



# EERIE Ln.

Interview with vocalist Boo Gruesome

Eerie Ln. is a Texas based band with a penchant for incorporating horror into their metal punk act. They have recently released their second independent c.d., *Voodoo Music Box*, an album filled with short anthemic songs. This is a band that enjoys what they are doing and have original ideas. They do not care about trends, nor do they adhere to current scenes. Here is frontman Boo Gruesome:

## How do you feel about *Voodoo Music Box*?

I feel it's a bit stronger of a release for us then *tenthirtyone* but at the same time we still have several tricks up our sleeves we've yet to use. We are a do it yourself band and can't spend as much money as we'd like to on studio time and recording so I think our best disc is still in the making. But I stand behind *Voodoo Music Box* 100 percent.



## How would you describe your music to someone unaware?

For lack of a better description we call ourselves horrorcore or monster metal. A strange hybrid of a multitude of crazy influences.

## It is obvious visuals are important to Eerie Ln., explain what you are trying to accomplish with this band.

My favorite bands have always been dark. You can't play creepy music in my book and just look like some asshole who just stepped out of the local shopping mall. It's a complete package deal. The image and the music have to go hand in hand.

## What are your thoughts about bands like Rob Zombie, Misfits, Alice Cooper etc. and do they have any influence?

I don't listen to Alice Cooper, so I have no comment on him, but the Misfits, Samhain, Danzig, White Zombie, Cradle of Filth, and plenty of other horror bands are huge influences and inspirations for us. If it wasn't for them we wouldn't be doing this ourselves.

## Why do you play music? It seems like you have a lot of fun doing what you're doing.

It's the closest thing to spirituality I've ever felt. I love the connection with the other guys in the band when we're on stage. I like the bond with the kids in the crowd too. It's a magical bond unlike anything else I've ever felt. Like a soul connection. I feel good doing this. It's all I want

to do for the rest of my life.

## Do you have plans to make a career out of this, do you think it's even possible here in America?

I fully plan on it. Any way I can. I can't imagine my life at this point without Eerie Ln.

## Are films or books an influence on Eerie Ln and if so which ones?

Too many to mention. I read and watch alot of horror. A book by Clive Barker called *Cabal* is a huge influence on me personally. As well as the writings of H.P. Lovecraft.

## It seems as though a sense of humor is required with your band, do you think some people may take things too seriously?

We're all very sarcastic smart asses. We love horror but we're not glorifying evil or anything that we don't believe in ourselves as people. That would be fake and we hate it when people misunderstand us and think we're saling Satan. Too many bands do that already and most of them use it as a gimmick to sale their lame records. They're not creative enough to think of an image for themselves so they just hide behind pentagrams and 666. We like to joke and drink beers. Fuck trying to be the most serious evil band in the world. Be yourself and have fun. Look beyond what people try to sale you. Do you think all those bands are actually sacrificing children in the name of Lucifer when they're not on stage? Hell no. They're counting their money and laughing all the way to the banks.

## Is Halloween a big day for you?

The biggest, brother, the biggest.

## How do you think Eerie Ln can make an impact on the metal scene?

Well in my opinion we don't follow the current trends. We're following in the footsteps of bands that didn't follow the trends of their times. We are a lot more unique then just another bullshit rap rock band or cookie cutter punk band. We do what we want. We mean this. We're not in it for drugs and sluts. We do this for us and all those out there who want an alternative to the crap MTV and the studio executives want to shove down our collective throats and up our asses.

## What is it like in your area for the band and music in general?

It sucks for us in our area. We play out of town more than at home lately. We're from the same area as Pantera and you would not believe the amount of Pantera posers we've played with and Limp Bizkit clones.

## Final comments?

We have a huge website up at [www.eerieln.com](http://www.eerieln.com). We have an online Fang Club too. It's a Yahoo Club and can be found under Eerie Ln. or the Skull O' Maniacs. Thanx to all the kids who come to our shows and write. You guys make this all worthwhile. Feel free to write me at [gruesome13@lycos.com](mailto:gruesome13@lycos.com). Happy Hauntings!

## Discography:

2000... *Voodoo Music Box*  
1998... *Tenthirtyone*

## Current line-up:

Boo Gruesome... vocals  
Von Creepy... guitars  
Crypt Perish... bass  
Hell Hound... drums  
Evil Lind... samples

## Website:

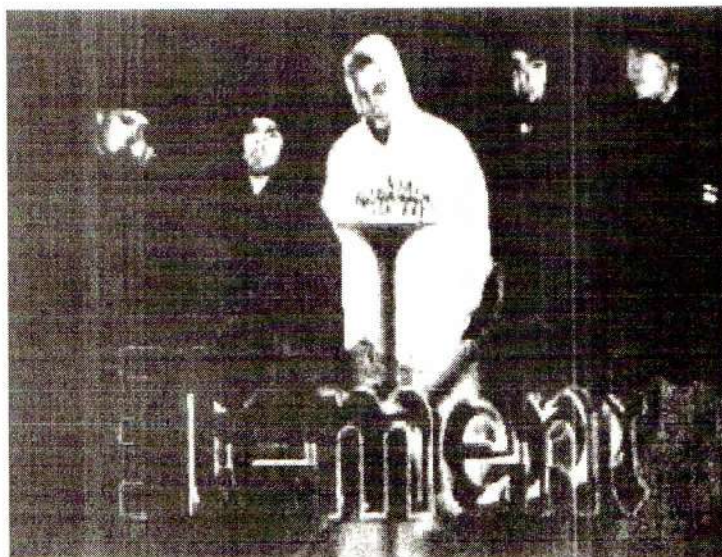
[www.eerieln.com](http://www.eerieln.com)

# ELEMENT

Interview with vocalist Bill Moros and bassist Joe Cincotta

Rarely have I ever seen a band improve as much as Long Island's Element have since last year's self titled debut full length. They quickly followed that up with the current five song e.p., *Explore Your Aggression*, which is aptly titled as Element have turned into a diverse band. The songs here are fast, heavier and also more melodic and catchy. Vocalist Bill Moros has really explored his vocal range, going from brutal screams to really catchy choruses. The band is pleased with this latest effort and labels have started to take notice. They are currently playing out as much as possible. Keep an eye out for their energetic and in your face live show. I met Bill and bassist Joe Cincotta at a diner one Sunday morning.

**What's your opinion of the new album?**



**Bill:** It's a much different direction that we're going in. We're more metal now, we've broken away from the solid, slamming hardcore, heavy vocals all the time. Now we got more musical.

**Joe:** The songs on the album have wider diversity. Everyone stepped up, including Bill with the vocals.

**Bill:** We recorded the album with Michael Barile at Purple Light Studios and he brought out more from us than we could ever hope for. He got us going in the right direction and now we're writing more towards that.

**Joe:** I get excited when I hear Slipknot and Disturbed- not that I really like the music, but it's nice to see them on the radio. Things are going in a heavier direction. We can now be heard on the radio.

**What are your intentions with this e.p.?**

**Bill:** We weren't happy with the first c.d. It was neither musically nor soundwise up to par. We recorded the c.d. and five days later we had eight new songs. As soon as we were done with the first c.d. we knew that it wasn't what we wanted to shop around. We needed something that could get us on a major label or a bigger independent label. We needed something that we could market. The first c.d. cost about six hundred bucks for ten songs, and this one was six grand for five songs. We recorded five songs in three days. If we were given a little more time in the studio it would've been tighter, but we're happy with it.

**Joe:** We are the band so we noticed things that could've come out cleaner. Everyone else may not notice but it bothers us when we listen to it. We're going to shop this around and if a label asks us to record two or more songs we have plenty available to follow it up with right away. We're doing pre production at my house and they are ready. We would be ready to record a whole album if necessary.

**You have a great live show.**

**Bill:** We've been friends for awhile. When we started playing as a band nobody had a job so we were jamming four or five times a week for like three hours a day. We didn't even have songs. We would get together and jam out any cover song just to play. It didn't matter what type of music it was, we just wanted to play. That's how we got tight as a band. That's how there's so many influences. Everyone likes metal but everyone in the band has different favorite bands.

**Joe:** We have an awesome crowd. I love our fans. They come to every show. We've played shows in Nassau county, Queens, and even Connecticut, we'll have fans follow us.

**Bill:** When you have fans that dedicated it makes you want to do it when they care about it that much.

**How long have you been together now?**

**Bill:** We've only been playing shows for about a year and a half now.

**Joe:** He just joined the band like three years ago. We started almost five years ago. There were three of us and then we changed drummers and luckily we found Bill and he dropped out of college and it worked out.

**Bill:** Sorry mom and dad, I want to be a rock star.

**They must've loved that.**

**Bill:** To tell you the truth, my parents have been unbelievably supportive. Everyone's parents are supportive. They believe in us because they see how hard we're working. It's not a joke for us. We believe we can do this and we have the material to back it up. We can't do it without people believing in us.

**Joe:** We practice at Ed, the guitar player's, house every Sunday. We're in his garage with all these amps and they must hear everything.

**That will be something to tell V.H.1's Behind the Music.**

**Bill:** We have a lot to tell them about.

**Joe:** We have a van that constant loses parts.

**Bill:** The last trip we lost the door handle and the side panel. We go on the L.I.E. and it's a road hazard.

**Joe:** It's a five hundred dollar van.

**Bill:** We aren't the richest band in the world.

**Are your lyrics from personal experiences?**

**Bill:** Some of it is stuff that I've gone through personally and some of it that some of the other guys went through that I put into words. Vocally, I like to take control of everything. I like to write the lyrics but I take from other places. They're using me as an active voice. We're five scumbags from Selden so there's a lot of bad shit going on.

**The titled was appropriate.**

**Bill:** It took us awhile to come up with it. We wanted to make sure everything was much better than the first one.

**Joe:** The first c.d. looked good, but then you listen to it and it's bad.

**Bill:** The guys at Aidemedia did a really good job. I came to them with a piece of notebook paper rolled up and Victor put it together and did an awesome job.

**Discography:**

2001... *Explore Your Aggression*

2000... *Element*

**Current line-up:**

Bill Moros... vocals

Ed Raccioppi... guitars

Desi Pena... guitars

Joe Cincotta... bass

Jason Rosado... drums

**Website:**

[www.elementmusic.addr.com](http://www.elementmusic.addr.com)



Interview with vocalist and guitarist Jason Smith

Tennessee's **Epoch Of Unlight** return with a new album, *Caught in the Unlight*, a new line-up and an improved sound. Upon release of their debut album, *What Will Be Has Been*, **Epoch Of Unlight** went out on a high profile tour with **Dimmu Borgir** among others. Only frontman Jason Smith remains from that line-up and the band recorded their new release with **Soilent Green's** Keith Falgout. The new sound is extreme but original in its delivery. I e-mailed Jason Smith some questions.

**How do you feel about the new album?**

I'm pretty happy with the new album. Not only does it mark our first recording ever with the new line up, but, in my opinion, it's got the best overall sound and production. I think we did pretty well with the limited time we had to record it.

**There seems to be a lot of growth in the band since the first album, what has happened to lead to this change?**

Well, the most profound change in the band was of course the line up. We lost our original guitarist and second vocalist, Randy Robertson, and our original bass player, Pierce Totty, left and was replaced by his brother, Joseph Totty. I think the fact that all the guitar work and vocals, with the exception of a cameo appearance by Ben of **Soilent Green** and **Goatwhore** on two songs, were done by me alone made the sound a lot tighter in general. Also, we've all just grown as musicians in the past couple of years since the first album.

**How did your national tour with Dimmu Borgir go?**

It went okay, although it definitely could have gone better. I would say most of all it was a learning experience. The crowd responses were pretty good usually, but since we were the openers on the bill a lot of times not many people would be there when we played. All in all though, I would say it was a good experience, especially getting to meet and hang out with the other bands on the tour.

**Any good tour stories?**

Here's one. A lot of times, especially during the first half of the tour before we got more used to it, we didn't get nearly enough sleep and all the towns seemed to kind of blur together at points. I got so bad at one point I started calling out the wrong city names at the shows. I remember at least one very clearly, since my band mates still tease me about it. We were in Salt Lake City, and at the end of the show I yelled out "Thank you St. Louis!" which was met with silence from the crowd, and since I didn't realize what I had done I was thinking that they didn't like us or something. As soon as I got off stage though, all the roadies and my bandmates were like "Jason, we're in Salt Lake City, not St. Louis". So for the rest of the tour I had every roadie and band member on the tour reminding me what city we were in before we played every night. It was kind of humiliating.

**Where do you think the new album fits in the realm of extreme metal?**

I think our new album is for the metal fan who's tired of straight grindcore/death that has little to no melody and basically no song structure beside the fact that there's 100+ riffs in the song but who doesn't really go for the complete melodicism that some of the more prominent Swedish bands or power metal bands offer. We're a nice middle ground combining speed, brutality, and melodicism all together.

**What are your thoughts on your career- has it progressed the way you expected?**

Well, I think that it's gone pretty well. It's nice being on a label and getting our music out there, especially since we pretty much started this as a hobby and have never labored under the impression that we'd "make it big" or anything. We've always had our feet firmly on the ground.

**What do you expect from your excursions in the music business in the near future?**

We're just happy to have the new album out, plus we're hoping to be able to get on a tour sometime this summer. Of course, we're also going to continue writing.

**What are some things that have happened in your life that affects your music?**

I think the biggest impact on our music is the fact that we're pretty much alone here in Memphis. The fact that we're still a three piece and I'm the only guitarist isn't really a choice we've made intentionally. Since we've started it's become clear to us that we're the only musicians in town who a) have the chops to pull this music off combined with the desire to actually play it and not waste time, and b) are reliable and take the responsibilities that come with being in a band that's more than just a casual pastime seriously.

**How do you feel about being on The End Records?**

I like it, The End may not be the biggest label, but it's very personal and gets our music out. We all know Andreas, who runs the label, personally and we never feel like we're dealing with faceless label executives or anything.

**Now that this new album is**

**out, what are your goals and what do you want to achieve with it? Is commercial success possible with a band like Epoch of Unlight?**

We just hope to please as many metal fans as possible out there with the new release. As far as commercial success goes, I don't really harbor any illusions about it. I know full well that extreme metal is in general a niche market and I don't see us watering down our sound enough to achieve success on the scale some commercial metal bands.

**Will Epoch of Unlight be a band that will continue to grow and evolve over the future years and if so, where do you want your band to head?**

Yes, we will continue to evolve, it's natural. I would like to see us better mixing the technical aspects of the music with some more melodicism in future releases.

**How is your music scene? Is E.O.U. accepted there?**

There isn't much of a metal scene here right now, and the last club that hosted music such as us recently closed its doors. As for being accepted, well, we know most of the people in the scene here, but even though we're friends with them and all, a show with only local bands usually sucks turnout wise. Even bigger shows flop here, **Morbid Angel** recently played here to barely one hundred people.

**Any final comments or anything we might have missed?**

Thanks for the interview, hopefully we'll get to see some of our fans on the road this summer.

**Discography:**

2001... *Caught In The Unlight* (The End)

1999... *What Will Be Has Been* (The End)

**Current line-up:**

Jason Smith... vocals and guitars

Joseph Totty... bass

Tino LoSicco... drums

**Website:**

[www.epoch-of-unlight.com](http://www.epoch-of-unlight.com)

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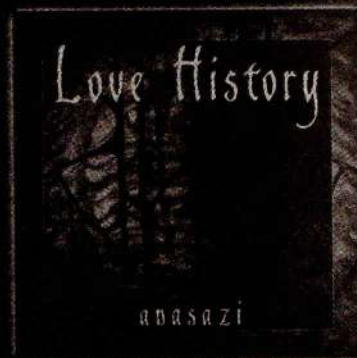
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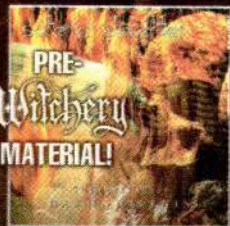
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# eve to adam.

Interview with vocalist Taki Sarris

When I first received a three song sampler from *Eve To Adam's* upcoming debut full length I was apprehensive. First of all, I hate samplers- just send the whole damn album, secondly, upon first listen the band didn't impress me. Shortly, I was able to listen again and I was soon hooked. The music and Taki Sarris' charismatic vocals avoid the cliches of modern metal and instead harken back to the roots of hard rock with a dark edge. This is a band that will be in our faces for many years to come while others from this era quickly disappear when the next trend comes along. I went to Sony's offices in Manhattan to sit down with Taki.

## How do you feel about the record?

I'm really proud of it. Ever since it got remixed I've taken a liking to it. I never felt the first mix had what we intended it to be. John Travis is a master of remastering and we love what he did. He's really coming into his own now. He just did the last *Buckcherry* record. It was a pleasure working with him. Before, the mix sounded very much like *Godsmack* or something like that and people were getting the wrong idea. There's metal there and we're influenced by that but there's a certain ambience there that should come out in our music. I'm really happy that we're getting to release this now. It is a good record. No one knows where it's going. A year from now it could be top two hundred, it may not. I think it should have a chance and people should have a choice to decide. It's an

of technology, a lot of people are deceived today. There's a sense of organicness to our band that hasn't been around in a long while. That's a breath of fresh air for some people. If you see us live, we're gonna give you what you heard on the c.d. We set out to be a real band. That's not easy to accomplish. You've got personalities involved and it becomes a family. That's the dynamics, they're pretty intense sometimes. I'm lucky I have these guys, we get along. They're my life. We spend a lot of time together and we enjoy each other. That's why we got into this. I love performing. There's no drug, shot of alcohol, anything that compares to getting up there. It's adrenaline. You crank up those amps and rip. That's what rock 'n roll is about. That's why it survived three generations. It may be on three legs right now, but it's still standing. It still has the ability to communicate. Life is hard, people need an escape and that's why we have music and film. Music is challenging and rewarding. Music breaks down barriers and that's why it's important to have respect for the craft. We're still a very young band but we've put a lot of time into our respective trades. To see our work encapsulated in this little package is amazing.

## What got you into music?

I always knew what I wanted to do. A lot of my friends that are my age have gone to college. I've always had this dream to be a musician. People thought I was crazy, but I never thought of that. I always saw it as steps to what I want to achieve. It's like a puzzle and some things are tougher than others. If it's really in your heart you can do it. It's one thing that a lot of people forget about. For me it was always music, it's in my blood. It's changed my life.

## What was your inspiration?

Inspiration for me was when *Guns 'n Roses* came out with *Appetite for Destruction*. I was watching the videos for "Sweet Child of Mine" and "Welcome to the Jungle", I was in sixth grade and air guitaring the solos. I was making a fool of myself but loving every moment of it. I want to travel the world, write some songs, and have an adventure. For all of us in the band; myself, my brother, Gaurav, and A.J., music was our central love. Without music I don't think I'd be alive. Quality of music is very important and that's why we need to respect the whole process. I've learned a lot about music. I've studied pieces that are four hundred years old. I've learned things about song form that you can correlate from, that are the same as a Neil Diamond tune or a Gershwin tune. I'm a guy in a rock 'n roll band but I never just listen to rock. Rock is an amazing dynamic and medium that communicates to the masses. If you only listen to rock it will hinder you. You don't want to get stale. As a musician the worst thing is to get locked into one thing and you can't grow.



album. There's a lot of band today that don't make albums. The bands we all love made great whole albums, whether it was *Led Zeppelin*, the *Doors*, *Alice In Chains*, *Pearl Jam*, or *Soundgarden*. I was talking to Anthony in the last interview about *Pearl Jam's Ten*. That's a great record. I wanted to get something close to the feel that record had. We tried to reach that height and I don't think a lot of people try to do that anymore. You have to shoot high. When I was fifteen, *Pearl Jam's Ten* had just come out. The kids today are stuck with *Limp Bizkit* and *Saliva*.

## How is Eve To Adam's music different than all the other bands out there now?

If you come see us live, some people say we're even better live than on record. We got into this to be a live band, not really a studio or radio band. We fell in love with the old legends of the seventies like *Zeppelin*, *Pink Floyd*, the *Who*- you were only as good as you were live. Because

## What are your tour plans?

We're playing some shows in the Northeast. We have a couple of shows coming up in July in the city.

## Discography:

2001... Auburn Slip (Mikendra)

## Current line-up:

Taki Sarris... vocals  
Gaurav Bali... guitars  
A.J. Pappas... bass  
Alex Sarris... drums

## Website:

[www.evetoadam.com](http://www.evetoadam.com)

# FALCONER

Interview with guitarist and bassist Stefan Weinerhall

Out of the ashes of Mithotyn rises Falconer. Ex-Mithotyn members Stefan Weinerhall (guitars, bass) and Karsten Larsson (drums), recruited clean vocalist Mathias Blad and started Falconer. Their self titled debut is more power metal due to the change in vocal style than the three albums released under the Mithotyn banner, although musically both bands are similar due to the songwriting of Weinerhall. While Falconer will remain a studio band and appear to have no desire to tour, they are causing some commotion on the power metal scene. Here is mainman Weinerhall to discuss his new band.

**How do you feel about the new record?**



I'm very satisfied. I just watched Sweden beat Russia in hockey. Now the interview is going very good.

**What was your vision for Falconer when it was formed?**

I wanted to satisfy myself from the beginning. I played in Mithotyn before and the vocals just messed everything up. Now I have a very good vocalist.

**How did Mithotyn dissolve?**

We left in good terms, it was a mutual agreement. All the inspiration was at the bottom. It was time to move on. We could've gone on with Mithotyn on Metal Blade if we wanted to but we felt it was best to leave it. We would've cheated ourselves just to push the band to a new deal. It was best to leave it with a good conscience. We ended up on Metal Blade anyway, but it worked out.

**Looking back at the Mithotyn records do you feel satisfied with the band?**

I would say so. The first album wasn't that good. The second one is very good, but on the third record I think you can hear that the inspiration is down and the vocals were very poor. I stand behind the records.

**What's the rest of the band up to now?**

Karsten plays with me. Rikard is just a father, family man. Karl is playing in a cover band. I think you can see that Falconer is an extension of Mithotyn since the music is the same. The main melodies is the same, although the vocalist changes it.

**How would you compare Mithotyn to Falconer?**

It's the same music but with very good vocals. It brings one more element to work with. It's what I needed musically. The vocals in

Mithotyn were very restrictive, especially on the third album. I felt like I was wasting my music. I'm very happy that I made the decision. I made four songs with a drum machine and made a demo. I recorded the vocal melodies on the guitar and then searched for the vocalist. I had to search outside the metal audience to find him. In my town we only have ten thousand inhabitants and I knew that no one could sing good enough.

**Do you feel that Falconer will draw a power metal audience?**

Yeah, I think even more people than that. It's not that aggressive. I think a regular rock 'n roll guy can enjoy Falconer. It's not as heavy metal or harsh. It's very melodic. That's always been my trademark.

**Why did you choose the name Falconer?**

I just wanted a name to reflect all the topics we sing about. We deal a lot with nature, kings, and queens. It's a short and easy name too. After awhile it grew on me. I thought having a falconer on a horse was the best cover possible.

**What about the lyrical content?**

The violence never meant anything to me, although I'm not a peace loving person- I don't know what it's like to live in a war. Now I can write whatever I wanted. I'm more of a Greenpeace, human lyricist. I'm very interested in history and nature comes along with history in some way. It's my kind of writing.

**Are you playing live?**

No, nothing and we have no plans either. My intentions is to have a band to record my songs and write new songs and keep recording. We'll see what happens in the future. I can't promise anything.

**What are some of your interests in your spare time?**

Watching t.v. I work during the summers at a park. I mow lawns. It's a very good job, it's very free- although it doesn't pay that much. It suits my personality. During the winter I just write music. I have a free life. I don't think I can do this forever. I won't be able to get anywhere in my life without money. We'll see what happens with music, maybe we will have to go on tour or maybe I have to get a full time job. Employment in Sweden is poor. If you're unemployed you get by pretty well. You get eighty percent of your salary. That's thanks to all the taxes that we have. That's why we can be unemployed and survive.

**What are your future plans for Falconer?**

I don't know. I've written four new songs and they are in the same vein. One song has a boogie woogie part. I don't want ten songs that sound the same. There will be a ballad, a poppy song, and some heavy metal songs. There will be no drastic changes yet. We have a five song record deal so we'll see where we are then. I think we'll be able to put out an album every year. I plan to enter the studio for the next record in October or November. I didn't imagine we would get such a good response from the c.d. The reviews and the interviews have been overwhelming. I am thankful. I think many Mithotyn fans will check out Falconer. It will be an improvement for all of them. I played with the same four guys for six years, now I can start over again. This line-up is steady, but maybe we will bring in a bass player. Then I don't think we can escape a tour.

**Discography:**

2001... Falconer (Metal Blade)

**Current line-up:**

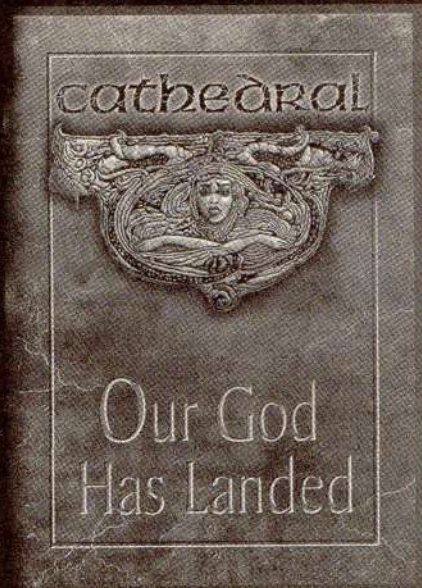
Mathias Blad... vocals  
Stefan Weinerhall... guitars and bass  
Karsten Larsson... drums

**Website:**

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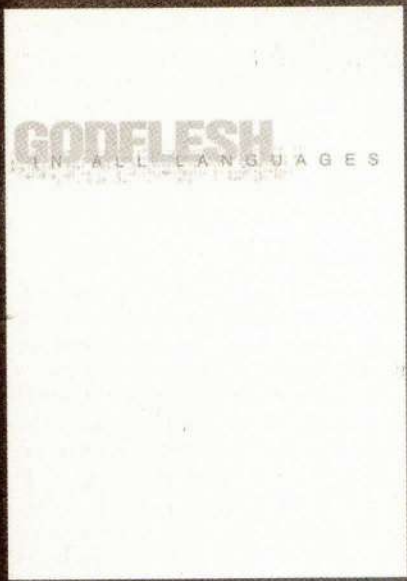
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# Fall Silent

Interview with vocalist Levi Watson

Fall Silent's new disc, *Six Years in the Desert*, is a compilation of songs from three previous releases which are all now out of print. Fall Silent is not your typical hardcore band as they play with an open mind and do not limit themselves to one particular style. Perhaps the most amazing thing about Fall Silent is that many of the ideas that they came up with on this disc were years ahead of their time. The music scene has finally caught up with them and Revelation Records has come in to save this Reno band from obscurity. Look for a new album later this year.

## Tell me about your band.

We've been a band since late '94. We're an active band in the punk scene. We've done three or four U.S. tours and we went to Japan and Europe last year. All the songs on this disc were seven inches and a full length that is out of print. We have another full length that is not on there. It's the only thing that isn't on there. We've been D.I.Y. since we started. We've never done advertising beyond reviews. That's probably why nobody knows about us.

## Is this a philosophy you will continue?

It can't be our philosophy anymore. I think it was more out of necessity than anything else. We couldn't afford putting out ads effectively. We concentrated on writing our songs and getting them recorded as good as we could. A lot of bands spend too much time trying to get big and trying to get signed and they don't spend enough time on their fucking songs. I'm glad it's taken us this long, because it's given us time to develop our own sound. We've never asked to get signed, we never sent out promos, we've just gone on. We like doing what we're doing. A lot of kids want everything handed to them, especially in hardcore bands. Going through what we have has made us who we are as a band. It's made the core members solid and we want to keep doing this.

## Did Revelation approach you about a deal?

The A&R guy who signed us at the time was doing our shows in L.A. and Anaheim for the last few years. He's into us and knows about our following. He got the job and got us signed, and then he quit. Revelation is doing so much for the album now.

## This album is ahead of its time.

Yeah, I can hear a lot of stuff that we have done in other bands. We did it six years ago. Right before Revelation signed us we were hearing all these bands getting really big and we were like, what the fuck is going on? By November of last year when they called us, we were down to two members in the band. We were ready to give up, but of course when something like that happens, everybody is ready to get back into the band again. We're all getting older so the struggles we had gone through were starting to lose their appeal. Revelation came along and pretty much saved the band. It was going to turn into a hooby band while we do other stuff. We have a strong line-up.

## Do you have new material written?

We're writing the new album now. It sounds more like the first three songs, which is the last stuff we put out just last year. It's faster, stripped down, more powerful, and more concise. It doesn't jump around from riff to riff as much as some of the older stuff does. Some of that stuff had ten riffs in it. It gets confusing at points. I remember playing an older

seven inch for people and they go- "how many songs is that"? It was only two. Now you can tell when a song starts and you can remember the first riff by the end of the song. That's how we've developed over the years. We've gotten consistent and we've pinned down a style that we're comfortable in. We write songs for the live setting. We've played a lot of shows and we see what works and what doesn't. We will record the new stuff in August. We only have a couple of songs to write. We have two full lengths coming up on Revelation.

## What's the scene like in Reno?

It's okay. We're pretty isolated up here in the mountains. There's not a lot of bands coming through. The gambling and tourists that come through this town isn't very friendly to kids. There's not a lot of crime here so the cops have time to go to the shows and break them up and fuck with us. We play three or four times a year here. You can't even advertise much because cops look for flyers so they can bust up the shows. We're close to California though. We're only four hours from San Francisco and Sacramento is very close too, so we can get out and play. We're used to driving long distances to get to shows. On the East Coast you can play ten shows two hours away from your house and not have the same kids at each show.

## How do you like living in Reno?

I love it. It's isolated enough so that we're not over run by people or crazy like California. We have all the things that you need for a city. It's really pretty out here. You've got the mountains, lakes. In the other direction we have a desert and all the cool things a desert involves. The geography of the place is awesome. I'm a marathon runner so I train up here and then run marathons in California. I

do really well because of the altitude. A lot of people train here because of the climate. There's less oxygen so when you go to a place with more oxygen you do better. I'm married now and I have a kid coming. The two new kids in the band are nineteen, so they just fuck around. They live at home. They can screw off and get high and do nothing, but the rest of us have to have a life. The other guys skate. We're busy, especially now with Revelation.

## Is December still kicking around?

Yeah, they're a Reno band. They're doing really well. They have a big record deal coming through in the next month or so. They're fucking amazing. They have new members. They're almost prog metal now. They have super long songs. The players in the band are some of the best I've ever seen. They're like **Dillinger Escape Plan**, but more metal like **Iron Maiden**. Traditional metal meets **Dillinger** metal. The drummer is the focal point of the band. What he does is amazing.

## Discography:

2001... *Six Years In The Desert* (Revelation)  
1997... *Nineteenhundredninetyseven* (Moo Cow)  
1996... *No Strength To Suffer* (Revolutionary Powertools)

## Current line-up:

Levi Watson... vocals  
Dan Galecki... guitars  
Jeff Dunn... guitars  
Brian Wohlgemuth... bass  
Damon Watson... drums

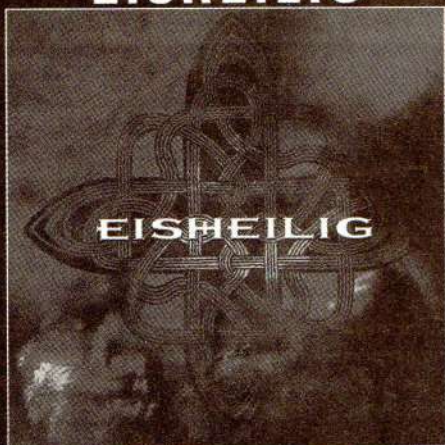
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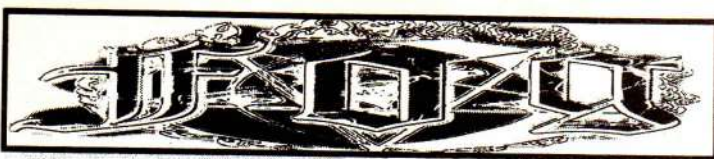
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Interview with vocalist and guitarist Lord Typhus

America's **Fog** have finally unleashed their debut of distinctive, raw, esoteric black metal titled *Through the Eyes of Night*. One of the leaders of the American scene, **Fog** is supportive of their peers and are currently playing out as much as possible. *Through the Eyes of Night* is atmospheric and dark, while **Fog** refuse to allow keyboards to take over their unique sound. I spoke to frontman Lord Typhus, who also operates the rising underground label Dark Horizon Records, about **Fog**.

**What are you up to?**

Next Saturday we're playing at a place called Connections in New Jersey. We'll be there with **Black Witchery**, **Profanatica**, **Perverseraph**, **Engorge**, **Abazagorath**, it's a big festival. It's the Return of Darkness and Evil Fest. We're also doing Milwaukee, The End of Days Festival in Indianapolis this September- the **Ravenous**, **Vital Remains**, **Internal Bleeding**, **Evil Incarnate**, **Demoney** are all playing that one. People are getting stuff on the move. It's good to see people supporting. We've been asked to do a lot of shows. We're ten songs deep into our new material. We're thinking about what we're going to do as far as recording. We're ahead of the game when it comes to that.



American black metal meets **Burzum** type. You can see some atmosphere in that direction. It's another raw American band. We'll put out a **Fog** *Through the Eyes of Night* vinyl version. We're still debating whether we'll do picture disc or l.p. I'm keen on the idea of picture l.p.'s but they're just so fucking expensive. We do it for the love of it.

**What makes Fog stand out in the black metal**

be impressed.

**How is everything going with Dark Horizon?**

It's gone beyond. I've now got part time help in here on a constant basis. It's going through the roof. We're trying to pick the right things to put out but we're trying to pick it from our heart first. I've been lucky that my personal choices have been pretty successful. I really like **Black Witchery** and that's been one of the best sellers that we've had. I love that band and I've supported them from the beginning. There's a good buzz out there. People trust us. Our mailorder has the reputation of being one of the quickest and easiest to work with. We're trying to step it up in the future where we can do at least a release a month or every two months. Right now it's whenever we can get the loot.

**Do you have any releases coming up?**

We have a **Revenge** mini c.d. which features J. Read the drummer from **Conqueror**. It's his continuation of **Conqueror** but he's taking it to the next level. It's insane. It will make people step back and scratch their head. Then we have **Harvist**, *A Gleam in the Night* c.d. It's

**How does the new stuff sound?**

It's definitely in the same vein but it's a lot more expanded sound. Our guitarist, Atziluth, has been in the band for two years now but he's finally getting his writing style blending with the band. It's broader sounding with more solos. There's more melody but as abrasive as ever. It's taking us to the next level.

**What are your thoughts on the record?**

We are totally pleased with the outcome of the album, but as with any recording, you always look back at something we wish we could've done at the time.

**How is the promotion with WW3 going?**

They're stepping up big time for us. Promotion is one hundred and fifty percent, we couldn't ask for more.

**Who from Fog is also in Morpheus Descends?**

I played bass on the last two **Morpheus** albums, *The Horror of the Truth* and *The Chronicles of the Shadowed Ones*. I will most likely be playing on the new one. If that ever happens, we'll wait and see. I'm busy with **Fog** and Rob is real busy playing bass with **Incantation**. We want to happen. We talk about it whenever we get a chance to speak on the phone.

**What's the response been from Europe?**

So far it's been very positive. Right now we're just biding our time and waiting for the right opportunity to get over there. We will probably go over and do a festival or two. I'm not keen on trying to do a tour right away because I want to build more on our name, but we do want people to see us. World War 3 has been very good with show offers and trying to get us on bills. We want to show people that we can do it live too. If you like the disc be prepared to witness it live. If you come to the show you will

**scene?**

In America we're one of the only bands that are doing this style of music that people thought Americans were not capable of. We're taking complexity to the next level. It's grim, it's heavy, it's fast, but it also has a melodic edge to it. We're not afraid to expand musically, we're all artists. We follow the path of the dark art. Put our disc in and put in anybody else's and see if you don't hear a difference. I have people think we have keyboard parts but it's the way we harmonize our guitars. We use keyboards like three times on the album and the rest is guitar melodies. We're not your average black metal band. We're trying to stand out. We support the American scene on hundred percent and I love a lot of the American bands, I like a lot of the raw stuff coming out- we're just trying to do our own thing and not let anyone's opinion get in our way. Another thing that holds back the American scene is their pea brained mentality. I take this serious and it's my fucking life. There's all these people who are supposedly so black and they don't take it as serious. It makes me wonder what their true objectives are. Our atmosphere is from our hearts. It's always going to be on our terms. Our label hasn't said anything about our imagery, our music, or anything. They let us do it on our terms and they have the balls to put it out there.

**Discography:**

2001... *Through The Eyes Of Night* (WW3)

**Current line-up:**

Lord Typhus... vocals and guitars

Atziluth... guitars

Luathca... bass

Tophetarath... drums

**Website:**

[www.geocities.com/darkhorizon666](http://www.geocities.com/darkhorizon666)

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# Hades

Interview with guitarist Dan Lorenzo and bassist Jimmy Schulman

Hades is back with their sixth full length studio album, *Damnation*, one which combines all elements spanning their fifteen plus year existence. Rarely has a band continued to grow and get better in the manner which Hades have. From the technical thrash of "Bioocaust" to pontificating "This I Know" and the grooving "Force Quit", Hades have unleashed their most diverse disc to date. The new rhythm section of returning bassist Jimmy Schulman and new drummer Ron Lipnicki add the backbone for Dan Lorenzo's riffs, Alan Tecchio's screams, and Ed Fuhman's leads. Here is Dan and Jimmy to tell us about their new disc.

**What are your thoughts on the record?**

**Jimmy:** It's a great album. I still listen to it regularly. It's good music, not just because I played on it. When I came back last year, I hadn't been playing fast in years. Your playing changes and grows through the years and I was a little apprehensive. Dan wrote some fast songs like the old songs and it was still fun to play them. It was a natural thing. The production and songwriting is much better now. We're still diverse. Dan is such a diverse writer.

**I'm still waiting for another Non-Fiction record.**

**Dan:** Yesterday I went to Mike Cristi's house and met Scott LePage at a diner. I have so many songs that aren't for Hades. The European fans especially, complain when too many songs in Hades sounded like *Non-Fiction*. All of us have songs that would sound great outside of Hades but nobody has enough time to do anything with it. Mike and I talk about jamming all the time but it never happens because we're all so busy. When we first got back together I thought about how cool it would be to do Hades for six months and *Non-Fiction* six months. Everybody wants what they can't have. We can't believe now that after we toured Europe with *Overkill* back in 1993, *Savatage* wanted to bring us out in America and Mike and I wanted to go home and sleep. Americans are a different breed of animal... we're all fat and lazy. We bought German cars in the eighties because we were putting out shit. We might have to work harder to get as many interviews, but it is possible.

**Have you received any negative feedback because of the album cover?**

**Dan:** We've been doing the European press and this is only about our fifth or sixth American interview, they all think we're going to get fire bombed. We got postcards made up of the album cover and while we were in Cleveland playing with *Antithesis*, Jimmy was saying "don't leave them anywhere". I think it's a pro American album cover, if you're not smart enough to look into it. I went to Europe during the O.J. Simpson trial and everybody was laughing at me, I went to Europe right after the Monica Lewinsky thing and everybody was laughing at me, and it's embarrassing. I love our country and I think we're capable of so much more. The cover represents that. When people say the whole country is going to hell, that's what this cover represents.

**How does this new Hades record fit in with the recent releases?**

**Dan:** Looking back, *Savior Self* was a rushed job. We went in the studio to record something as quick as possible. We did the whole record in ten days. We started recording *Savior Self* before we had a deal and we were lucky enough to get a deal. We had much more time in the studio for *The Downside* but the problem there was with Dave because he hit so soft, Timmy Gilles had to concentrate on fixing the drums as opposed to working with a great mix. With this album we didn't have that problem. Ron our new drummer hits real hard and Timmy gave us more time than

we had coming to us. Timmy also filled in on drums for us at Wacken and a couple other shows after Dave had quit, so Timmy's a friend, a fan, and a great producer. He gave us extra time for free.

**Jimmy:** I think this new album sounds a little like the old because this drummer plays more like Tommy. I also do what I used to do, that may be why it sounds a little older than the last two. I love *The Downside* and *Savior Self*, but I might've played differently than how the bass is played on those records.

**Dan:** Timmy spent so much time putting the bass drums through a computer on *The Downside* every time Dave would be off time or hit a little bit soft, he would compensate for it via a computer. Dave sounds like this ripping double bass drummer when it's actually computer candy. But Dave helped us out at a time when we needed it. Tommy Coombs wasn't interested in coming back. Dave was pleasant but the way it went out was really bad. He didn't want to do any more shows because he didn't want to lose his job and his job pays like a hundred dollars a day. He could make that if he worked overtime at McDonald's. He's a young guy in a metal band on a record label.

**I like the fact that once again "For the third time running, no lawyers, managers or cover songs were used in the making of this c.d."**

**Dan:** I've had three or four managers in my lifetime and it's incredible, they all were really nice people and their heart was in the right place, but at the end of the day they could do less in six months than I can do in a normal work week. It's frustrating when you have to give ten or fifteen percent of your gross when you're so poor. Every music lawyer I know is a bitter, failed ex-musician. They are so furious that they are old and ugly and you're young with a record deal and they're a better musician than you are- they pretend they are negotiating a deal while they're talking about their families and their boring lives. Lawyers will tell you not to sign a contract because they're playing it safe. New Jersey is the cover song capital of the world. I love playing covers but I can't imagine recording one when you're only allowed to put out ten or twelve songs a year and I've got Jimmy or Ed fighting to get one of their songs on the album. I can write thirty songs a year and I want to put at least ten of them on a record.

**Final comments?**

**Dan:** There's a European version, which is already sold out, but they attached the Hades home video to the first thirty thousand copies. You can get J. Bones home address on our website and that's where you can order the home video. Even if you're a mild Hades fan it's an amazing thing. There's video footage of us all the way back in the early and mid eighties. There's interview footage with us from two years ago. It's a really nice piece. It's on a level with V.H.1 Behind the Music.

**Discography:**

2001... *Damnation* (Metal Blade)  
1999... *The Downside* (Metal Blade)  
1998... *Savior Self* (Metal Blade)  
1995... *Exist To Resist*  
1988... *If At First You Don't Succeed*  
1986... *Resisting Success*

**Current line-up:**

Alan Tecchio... vocals  
Dan Lorenzo... guitars  
Ed Fuhman... guitars  
Jimmy Schulman... bass  
Ron Lipnicki... drums

**Website:**

[www.hadesusa.com](http://www.hadesusa.com)





# WARRIORS

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# INTEGRITY

Interview with vocalist Dwid and keyboardist Zunkley

**Integrity** has just unleashed its final album, *Closure*, which is an incredible disc of brutally heavy grooves and some odd surprises. While their constant **Slayer** comparisons are not as obvious on this sixth and final album, there is no denying the perfect combination of heaviness and experimentation. Current members of **Integrity**, including vocalist Dwid, will now be forming a new band called *Angela Delamorte*. One can expect even more of the gothic, industrial, and extreme styles that are found on *Closure* in their new incarnation. Here are Dwid and Zunkley to inform us about their future plans.

**How does *Closure* fit into Integrity's career?**

**Dwid:** We always try to make each record sound different than the one before it and I think we achieved that with this one. It was our most experimental album. We did a lot of unusual tricks as far as record is concerned. Our intention was to make something we never had before as well as something we'd like to listen to.

**Do you have any trepidation about recording an album that is so different from previous material?**

**Dwid:** No, that never comes into our minds. We recorded an additional six songs that year, but we didn't think they were good enough to be included. We picked the songs that we liked the best. We don't take into consideration what other people will think about us. Hearing positive feedback is great but ultimately we want to make records that we like. We have a very diverse background.

**What are you into?**

**Dwid:** A lot of different things. I like anything that's darker than the typical genre. I like scary country music, horror rock like **Samhain**, industrial music, and a lot of weird stuff.

**How do you feel about all the Slayer comparisons?**

**Dwid:** I think there's very little **Slayer** influence on this record. I am a big fan of **Slayer** and I think that they're a great band. I've always loved them. I thought they were always innovative. I think **Slayer** is the closest thing people can grasp when describing our music. For me it's a compliment.

**What are your plans now?**

**Dwid:** We're gonna do one last show this summer and this is the last record. We have a new band that we're doing called *Angela Delamorte*.

**Why are you ending Integrity?**

**Dwid:** Pretty much the fact that it's been thirteen years. We thought that was a lucky number to end on.

**What direction will the new band take you?**

**Dwid:** It's very similar to the current **Integrity** record. We're gonna be a little bit more experimental. We're doing an e.p. first. The singer from **In Cold Blood** has a new band called **Mushroomhead** and he has a record company as well so we're gonna record the e.p. for his record label. After that we'll probably do a full length for Victory. We have a new idea about how we want to record everything. On the last record we had the quieter songs separated from the louder songs. We're gonna try to give a breather for the listener this time. We've always been basically a studio band and we will continue to do it that way. It's better to be

creative in the studio than to try to regurgitate that live.

**What are some of your personal interests outside of music?**

**Dwid:** There's a lot of things. For example, last evening me and the guy who plays samples and keyboards in the band went out to a club and we picked up a homeless woman and drove her around and talked to her about religion. I liked that. I'm interested in people.

**What are your viewpoints on religion?**

**Dwid:** That would take a couple of extra tapes. That's a big thing for me, but I couldn't say it all right now.

**What are your thoughts on *Closure*?**

**Zunkley:** I'm very pleased with this one. I think it's something new for everybody involved. We all wanted a more electronic and dynamic record. There's more mellow songs and more singing.

**What are your thoughts about Integrity's evolution?**

**Zunkley:** I've been good friends with them for awhile and I helped engineer some of their albums, I think that by starting a new band it's going to be a clean slate. We'll have the same members as the last album. There's a lot of potential in this new band. **Integrity** was a great band but after thirteen years it's time for a new outlet.

**Do you know what direction you're heading or will it be very experimental?**

**Zunkley:** Everybody in this band has so many different roots. My influences are a lot different than Dwid's of other members of the band. It will be a hybrid of metal and electronics. There's no real plan but we have a basic idea of where we want it to go. We don't know what we're looking for but when we find it we'll know. The great thing about starting fresh is that there are no expectations. We can do whatever we want to do. We're all very open minded as to where we want to go. This new album will be attacking from several different angles, not just musically but also visually. It's not a concept album but it will have a feel to it that people be able to relate to. We all come from an artistic background. Visually it fits into a dark feeling. We want to push

the envelope when it comes to videos and the whole visual aspect. It will have a grainy film, almost rustic look. The imagery on the new **Integrity** has that feel. The sound will be more industrial and electronic. We're all excited again when it comes to music.

**Discography:**

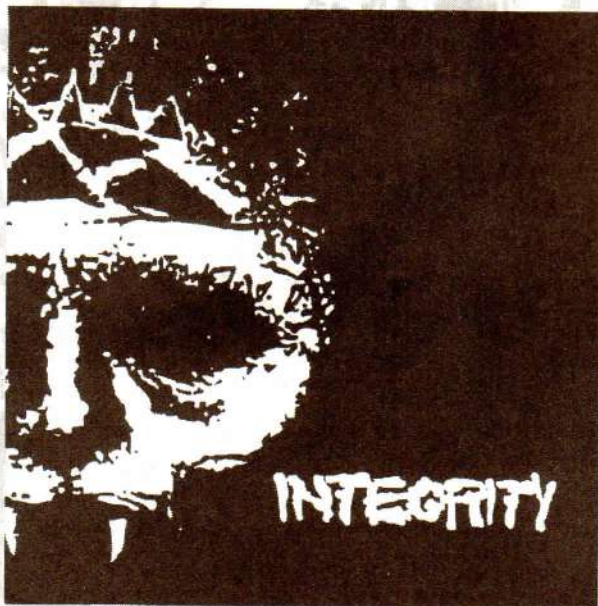
2001... *Closure* (Victory)  
1999... 2000 (Victory)  
1997... *Seasons In The Size Of Days* (Victory)  
1996... *Humanity In The Devil* (Victory)  
1995... *Systems Overload* (Victory)  
1993... *Taste Of Every Sin*

**Current line-up:**

Dwid... vocals  
Vee Price... guitars  
Brandon... bass  
Adam... drums  
Zunkley... keyboards

**Website:**

[www.victoryrecords.com](http://www.victoryrecords.com)



# Kitchen Knife Conspiracy

Interview with drummer Fred and vocalist John

One of the most underrated bands that I've come across in the last few years is Ohio's Kitchen Knife Conspiracy. They released their debut, *Sin Pathetic*, last year. Their brand of metal is a combination of death metal and groove. They have just recorded its follow up, *Handicapitated*, a more focused album but no less impressive. Kitchen Knife Conspiracy combine humor with seriousness, intelligence with silliness- these factors may make them difficult to understand but anyone looking for good, memorable, grooving death metal, this band is for you. Those familiar with Acid Bath will know where Kitchen Knife Conspiracy got their name from. Here is drummer Fred and vocalist John.

**What are your thoughts on the new disc?**

**Fred:** It sounds a little tighter. The drums are a lot fuller. The songs are a little more cohesive. We listen to the first disc and it's cool but there's three or four songs that we wish we hadn't done. The first one has some standout songs that the crowd gets into.

**John:** There were some fillers and we feel there are none on this next



album.

**Fred:** We're going to send it to Morrisound to have it mastered. We've heard a lot of good stuff from that studio.

**Do you travel a lot for shows?**

**Fred:** We've done a bit of travelling. We went to the Milwaukee Metalfest last year.

**John:** Buffalo, we've been all over Ohio. We've opened for some pretty big bands like Six Feet Under, Soilent Green, Agents Of Oblivion.

**Fred:** The problem is that we have to find the people who can market us. We work with Sinkclub but we need someone who can put in the marketing and especially the distribution. If we got distro we would all drop what we do and tour. I'm a high school English teacher, John makes windows, the bass player works at a steel mill, and the guitar player goes to school and works at the computer lab, but we'd drop it all in a second if we got distro and a label that would support a small tour. Even if we hooked up with a band like Six Feet Under. We would be able to build a response but we have to hook up with somebody. We want to tour. The only problem is if say we want play on the East Coast and there's no distro, no radio support, what are we gonna draw. It would be fun, but it's not worth it.

**John:** We've travelled four or five hours just to play for the other band. It was fun and they are cool to party with, but we want to build. The Milwaukee Metalfest was a great response for us even though we played

at three thirty on Friday afternoon.

**Give a background on Kitchen Knife Conspiracy.**

**Fred:** We got together in February of 1997. Me and the bass player have been playing together since 1991. We were looking for people to complete the line-up. We needed Jeremy to complete the formula.

**Where do you fit in musically and how would you like to be marketed?**

**John:** That's a good question and we're trying to figure it out.

**Fred:** We call ourselves stomp core. We say we're death metal but then people who are big time death metal fans disagree. We're too heavy for the people who like commercial metal. We fit in between the two. We have to find that crowd.

**John:** To death metal fans we sound like Korn, to Korn fans we sound like death metal. We're stuck in the middle.

**Fred:** We can either call ourselves stomp core or eighties metal geared towards gay men.

**John:** You could say heavy music with a cool groove.

**What are your plans for the rest of the year?**

**Fred:** We've got to push the website. If we can keep pushing that and we can find some label that's willing to take a chance. I'm going to wait until this new disc gets some attention and then try to push it more than last time. The album is going to be called *Handicapitated*. The cover is a handicapped parking sign, but we took the head off and put it by the wheel. It's a joke. The marketing for that will be cool. We're gonna do a lot more self promotion. Right before we came out with *Sin Pathetic* we sent it in to Sinkclub for a compilation. It was cool because they got us some shows out there, they got us professional photos, and helped us get the disc out, and they sent it to radio stations.

**John:** We're going to take two songs off our c.d. and put them on disc, print two thousand and pass them out to everybody.

**Fred:** We paid a thousand dollars to play the last Milwaukee Fest and it's for twenty five minutes.

**John:** We came back with stacks of free c.d.'s. We can really promote the band that way.

**It seems that a sense of humor plays a role in your band.**

**Fred:** People either want you to be a serious death metal band or they want you to be funny all the time. It would be nice to be able to do both.

**John:** We do both on the new album.

**Fred:** We sing about experiencing pain to going around and killing people's pets. It's tongue in cheek.

**John:** Girls, cars, porn, and video games.

**Fred:** We don't want handicapped people to be offended.

**John:** Then again we want to offend people.

**Fred:** We like to play on words and there's a sense of humor.

**How do people treat you as a teacher in a death metal band?**

**Fred:** My school is great. They support me one hundred percent. They put me on the front page of the paper out there.

**John:** A day before that I kicked Fred in the eye so he had a bloody eye.

**Fred:** I was bleeding all over my face profusely- that was fun.

**Discography:**

2001... *Handicapitated*

2000... *Sin Pathetic*

**Current line-up:**

John... vocals

Jeremy... guitars

Johnny... bass

Fred... drums

**Website:**

[www.kitchenknifeconspiracy.com](http://www.kitchenknifeconspiracy.com)

**REVIEWS: 90-100... essential for anyone's collection... 80-89... very good record, good representation of the band and the genre... 70-79... average, for fans of the genre only... 60-69... worse than embarrassing**

**ABHORRENCE... *Evoking The Abomination...* 80...** Brazil's **Abhorrence** first came to my attention via a 1999 e.p. on Wild Rags entitled *Ascension*. Now they unleash their debut full length, the eight song *Evoking the Abomination*. Like their countrymates **Krisiun** and **Opprobrium**, although not as accomplished, **Abhorrence** are all about punishing and brutal death metal. The songs are fast and furious with little melody. Perhaps most impressive is the intense drumming of Fernando Arroyo. There are no tricks or gimmicks to **Abhorrence** as they just want to pummel you head on into submission. A typically blasphemous and brilliant cover by Joe Petagno adorns their cover. **Abhorrence** is the type of band that brutal death metal fans will love but have little crossover appeal. They are very good at their craft but it remains to be seen if they have the ability or desire to add new twists. **EVIL VENGEANCE**.

**ABIGOR... *Satanized...* 82...** **Abigor's** tenth release features futuristic artwork, subtitled: *A Journey Through Cosmic Infinity*, and song titles like "Battlestar Abigor", "Nocturnal Stardust", and "Satan's Galaxy"- but don't fret, their style of raw, blasphemous black metal is still just that despite the outspace lyrical leanings. There is an occasional clean toned vocal embellishment but a sporadic surprise has always been in **Abigor's** repertoire. It has always surprised me how overlooked Austria's **Abigor** is. They have been playing impressive black metal for as long as **Marduk** and often better but they have remained underground. "Galaxies and Long Decline" is a highlight in **Abigor's** career. This is the type of track old **Mayhem** fans wish *The Grand Declaration of War* sounded like. Cold, melancholic- aggressive but with subtle melody- **Abigor** has recorded a quintessential track. Their previous full length, *Channeling the Quinessence of Satan*, was their most aggressive and raw release to date, *Satanized* takes that same spirit but with memorable songs and a bizarre twist. **NAPALM**.

**ABOLISHER... *Lament The Season...* 85...** This is a four track e.p. from Chicago's **Abolisher**. What is it with Illinois? **Spirit Web**, **Ion Vein**, **Winterkill**, **Twelfth Gate**, **Abolisher**, etc. The best new traditional power metal bands keep coming from this region. **Abolisher** is a very interesting band. They employ traditional elements to their brand of power metal but they also successfully incorporate keyboards and melodic touches within their lengthy compositions which gives "The Solemn Promise" a different quality. The guitar playing of Luis Rivera is raw and aggressive, but not really thrash- just heavy metal. He makes up for an average vocal talent with an intense emotion that works well with the straight ahead attack. "Standing in a Different Light" is a direct metal tune, while "The Solemn Promise" and "A Stolen Season" see the band exploring their sound more, while adding the occasional keyboard or piano for variation. Unlike the clean sounds too happy and perfect to be metal European scene, new American bands like **Zandelle**, **Desekrator**, and **Abolisher** are showing people what metal is really about. <http://listen.to/abolisher>.

**ABSU... *Tara...* 77...** **Absu's** fourth full length and first since 1997's *The Third Storm of Cythraul*, shows little growth in their black metal thrash attack. Even the high pitched metal scream that opens "A Shield With an Iron Face" can't save *Tara* from mediocrity. On a more positive note, Sir Proscriptor McGovern's war machine approach to his drumming is first class. Unfortunately, the music Shaftel and Equitant Ifermain lay on top is clustered and unfocused. Sure, their blackened thrash attack is better than the Swedish scene (**In Aeternum**, **Death Witch**, etc.), but a band this talented should be able to take their music further than this. On a positive side, once again **Absu** has created another mystical journey, this one in two "phases"- Ioldanach's *Pedagogy* and *The Cythraul Klan's* *Scrutiny*- perhaps there are people who will be interested in this. Kris Verwimp's stellar artwork is again on display, proving he is one of the best artists in metal.

**OSMOSE**.  
**ADAGIO... *Sanctus Ignis...* 89...** Behold what **Symphony X** hath wrought. **Adagio** is an international band featuring some of Europe's best talents. French guitarist extraordinaire Stephan Forte will be put into the same class as Yngwie Malmsteen and Michael Romeo if enough people hear this stunning debut. Not only does he shred with uncanny virtuosity but **Adagio's** songwriting is spectacular as well. Forte is joined by Swedish keyboardist Richard Andersson (**Majestic**), Dutch drummer Dirk Bruinenberg (**Elegy**), and British vocalist David Readman (**Pink Cream 69**). Fast rising producer Dennis Ward comes through with a career making production. Although the keyboard solos can be tiresome, Forte's flashy leads are exciting and there is an undeniable feeling of everything falling into place when listening to *Sanctus Ignis*. Very rarely does a band pulled together with musicians who are in successful full time bands outside *Adagio* so successful. Like the man he replaced (Andi Deris, now in **Helloween**) in **Pink Cream 69**, Readman makes a smooth transition to full on progressive power metal. Stephan Forte- remember that name. **LIMB**.

**ADEMA... *Adema...* 79...** This self titled debut from **Adema** is not a bad effort at all. Some songs work better than others ("Freaking Out") and **Adema** deserve credit for being one of the few bands on a major label to offer an album filled with diverse material. Among the problems are- a lack of identity and the songs fail to stand out as anything better than average. **Adema** signed to a major label despite never having played a live show. No doubt, the band's connection to **Korn** has helped them make it to this milestone without paying their dues. Vocalist Mark Chavez is **Korn** frontman Jonathan Davis' brother and drummer Kris Kohls was a member of **Videodrone**, a band which released an album on **Korn's** record label, which was produced by **Korn** bassist Fieldy and featured guest appearances by Davis and **Limp Bizkit's** Fred Durst. Despite the **Korn** connection, **Adema** do a good separating themselves musically. Personally, I find this a safe, by the numbers album. It's not bad at all, it just lacks substance and personality. **ARISTA**.

**AEON... *Dark Order...* 92...** *Dark Order* is a debut six song offering from Sweden's **Aeon**. Unlike their countrymen, **Aeon** stick to brutal death metal and do not follow the trends usually associated with Sweden. The playing is incredibly tight and crushing- definitely some of the best death metal you will hear. There is no finesse, even the blazing solos contribute to the ferocity. Most of *Dark Order* is fast paced. The rapid fire leads in between the riffs of "Eternal Hate" are awe inspiring. "The Awakening" proves **Aeon** can combine slow, crunchy stomps with blast beat outbursts. This is the type of song that would perk the ears of any **Morbid Angel** affectionado and guitarist Zeb Nilson could teach Trey Azagthoth a thing or two. **Aeon** do an excellent job combining high pitched, intense screams with powerful lows and even some Glen Benton/ *Legion* era of **Decide**, double tracked vocals. *Dark Order* is such a crushing and intricate release that it benefits from being a mini disc. Their debut full length should be out within a year. Like **Gory Blister's** *Art Bleeds*, **Aeon's** *Dark Order* is a landmark achievement in the world of death metal. **NECROPOLIS**.

**AKERCOCKE... *Goat Of Mendes...* 84...** **Akercocke's** debut, *Rape of the Bastard Nazarene*, was one of the most talked about extreme metal albums ever by their native British press. I never quite understood why there was so much hype. On their follow up, *Goat of Mendes*, **Akercocke** display one of the most diverse extreme discs unleashed yet. The band takes elements of grindcore, death metal, and black metal and effectively utilizes them for an original sound. Whether it's brutal lows or insane screams, **Akercocke** cover the gamut vocally. Musically, no band since **Impaled Nazarene** has the ability to play as fast as **Akercocke** and still be coherent. On *Goat of Mendes*, **Akercocke** are also exploring more than ever. The dissonant guitar sound and orgasmic moans highlight "Masks of God", "The Horns of Baphomet" has an atmospheric beginning and "He is Risen" is a harmonic laden thrasher. **Akercocke** have taken their sexual perversion and extreme innovation to new heights. *Goat of Mendes* is essential for anyone interested in extreme metal. **PEACEVILLE**.

**ALAS... *Absolute Purity...* 88...** I've been waiting for this disc ever since I heard an **Alas** track on an Alabaster Records compilation a few years ago. **Alas** features the talents of **Morbid Angel/ Hate Eternal** guitarist Erik Rutan and ex-Therion vocalist Martina Hornbacher Astner, drummer Howard Davis, and bassist Scott Hornick. The trend of having a female vocalist in a metal band is becoming overwhelming but **Alas** is better than your typical female fronted band. Martina sings in a near operatic style through out but the real gem may be in Rutan's playing. His guitar tone has bite but the music has nothing to do with death metal. His riffs meander and intertwine like a sojourn through unexplored territories. It's too heavy to be progressive. **Alas** is a band which is creating something new. It is artistic yet accessible. Hopefully, **Alas** will prove to be a real band and not a side project. Who knew that rising producer, multi-faceted musician Rutan had as much talent? **HAMMERHEART**.

**ALASTIS... *Unity...* 77...** Switzerland's **Alastis'** fifth album, *Unity*, is actually a step back from 1998's *Revenge*. They have frequently been viewed as a band following in the footsteps of **Samael** and when they recorded *Revenge* with **Samael's** Xy the comparison was never more apparent. On *Unity*, it appears they have returned with a more raw sound that was found on earlier albums like *The Other Side* or *The Just Law*. The clearer, more precise production that made *Revenge* so listenable is absent from *Unity*. There are more atmospheric parts and more sample usage despite the return to their roots and rougher sound. War D.'s vocals tend to remain in a gruff style, neither black nor death, but still heavy. Nothing really stands out here. Some of the later songs like "Ghastly Fancies"

and "Existence" are pretty good, but forgettable. "Existence" sounds like it could've come from *Ceremony of Opposites (Samael)*. I'm not sure if Century Media plans to release this domestically. **CENTURY MEDIA.**

**ALL ELSE FAILED... Archetype... 88...** Philadelphia's **All Else Failed** have created a harsh and thought provoking sophomore full length that should put them among the most talked about bands in the hardcore/ metal genre. *Archetype* is a disc you have to listen several times as there are nuances that can be overlooked due to the extremity of the music and the vocals. Vocalist Luke Muir tends to keep his aggressive borderline hardcore style, but will sometimes surprise with some clean tones. Musically, **All Else Failed** are very tight and precise. Their stops are so abrupt that you don't even notice them with the music so busy. Rarely will you hear an album this aggressive with such in depth playing. As the band name would suggest, as would the previous full length (*A Most Bitter Season*) and e.p. (*In Times of Desperation*); **All Else Failed** is about frustration and desperation... but look a little closer and you will find a band that is intelligent and complex. **NOW OR NEVER.**

**AMORPHIS... Am Universum... 79...** **Amorphis** continue their remarkable transformation from an atmospheric death metal band to a psychedelic rock group. *Am Universum* picks up where 1999's *Tuonela* left off and continues to develop their 70's progressive influences with some interesting saxophone playing. Only guitarists Esa Holopainen and Tomi Koivusaari remain from the early days and while their progression is similar to bands like **Anathema**, **Katatonia**, and **Opeth**- it is less spectacular. *Am Universum* kicks off in the right direction as "Alone", "Goddess", and "The Night is Over" combine energy with depth and passion. The guitar playing on "Goddess" is particularly impressive. Something is missing on the rest of the disc. Many people are complaining about the frequent use of saxophone but I don't think that is such a distraction. Pasi Koskinen continues his evolution as an impressive and distinctive vocalist. There isn't heavy like "Greed" from *Tuonela*, but **Amorphis** is at least willing to take chances. **RELAPSE.**

**ANCIENT RITES... Dim Carcosa... 86...** Despite their veteran status and critically acclaimed past, I am ashamed to admit that I know little about **Ancient Rites**. Their long awaited new release, *Dim Carcosa*, is my introduction to this great Belgium band and this is a killer disc. Music like **Primordial** and **Ancient Rites** traverse and integrate several genres into their extreme yet melodic sound. Hammerheart Records has put together a twenty page booklet with both lyrics and the actual story the *Dim Carcosa* concept follows. **Ancient Rites'** talent lies in their seamless transition from melodic, atmospheric passages to full on double bass barrage. Like the musicians behind him, bassist/ vocalist Gunther Theys uses a wide array of vocal styles to complement **Ancient Rites'** music. *Dim Carcosa* is an exceptional adventure, one that never gets boring as this is a band that know what it's doing and has the talent to accomplish it. I eagerly anticipate checking out their back catalogue. **HAMMERHEART.**

**ANDROMEDA... Extension Of The Wish... 79...** My wish is that this much hyped debut would've been a better album. **Andromeda** is a Swedish prog metal band centered around the exploits of guitarist Johan Reinholdz and the talented keyboardist. There is lots of flashy playing on *Extension of the Wish* but there is nothing that grabs you in the way of vocal hooks or melodies. The vocalist here is ex-**Darkane** screamer Lawrence Mackrory. For **Andromeda** he takes on a mellow, clean tone that is quite average. The only time Mackrory stands out is when he breaks out in an almost Marilyn Manson like tone on, coincidentally the album's highlight, "Star Shooter Supreme". Vocals are basically kept to a minimum to make room for the instrumental interplay that may touch upon **Rush** and **Dream Theater** ("Chameleon Carnival") at times. Some of the work on guitars and keyboards is fascinating, the musicians show pizzazz without becoming flamboyant. Producer Daniel Bergstrand (**Meshuggah**, **Stuck Mojo**) steps away from his trademark sharpness and allows **Andromeda** room to explore. This is a good first step, I do anticipate this band one to watch in the near future. **CENTURY MEDIA.**

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**ANGER OF THE LAMB... *Introvert*... 84...** I first heard about **Anger Of The Lamb** from Andy Hurr, guitarist of **Sixty Miles Down**. Andy and his bandmates are helping Brian James Snell take his solo project, **Anger Of The Lamb**, into a live setting. *Introvert* is Brian's debut release and it's not an easy disc to categorize. For the sake of simplicity one could say *Introvert* is rooted in the industrial scene. The music is not techno, nor is it aggressive- the pace is mid leve with some interesting electronic embellishments. Vocally, Brian sometimes uses effects, but he does an excellent job of varying delivery and often allows the music to be his main voice as atmospheres evolve from one track to the next. Fans of **Nine Inch Nails** songs like "Hurt" and "Something I Can Never Have" will find a connection to Brian's work here. Industrial music for thinking and feeling humans. I'm not sure what influence a real backing band will have on Brian's future work, but *Introvert* is the work of a talented, musically and lyrically, intelligent man. [www.angerofthelamb.com](http://www.angerofthelamb.com).

**ANTIPATHY... *Imminent Peril*... 88...** *Imminent Peril* is a five song debut e.p. from New York's **Antipathy**. **Antipathy** play old school death metal with some heavy thrash mixed in. Overall, it's a really brutal album with enough musicality to see these guys can play. Vocalist and bassist Samgar has a heavy vocal style that is actually very listenable and his playing is mixed well and technical, adding a new twist to the heavy music. For an independent recording *Imminent Peril* is really good. Unlike the **Suffocation** clones that have inhabited this area, **Antipathy** are bringing back the old school with a crushing sound few can duplicate. **Antipathy** join **Exuviate** as two upcoming New York bands who can have the same impact **Suffocation** and **Internal Bleeding** had nearly ten years ago. Excellent debut that deserves attention. [www.antipathyny.com](http://www.antipathyny.com).

**ARK... *Burn The Sun*... 90...** The supergroup **Ark** follow up their bizarre self titled debut with a kick ass disc. Featuring four former members of **Yngwie Malmsteen** (drummer John Macaluso, bassist Randy Coven, keyboardist Mats Olausson, and vocalist Jorn Lande), along with ex-**Conception** guitarist Tore Ostby, *Burn the Sun* is a stunning achievement. **Ark** had moments ("Where the Wind Blows") of brilliance, but it all comes together on *Burn the Sun*. Once again, Macaluso is a demon on the drums. **Ark** is a way for him to express his vast talents. His tribal work with Coven on "Torn" is unbelievable. Lande turns in his best performance as well. The Coverdale/Dio comparisons are less evident as he puts forth a performance that exploits his range, technical ability, and some intense hooks. He reaches deep on "Absolute Zero", and gives punch to opener "Heal the Waters". Ostby's playing is a lot less bizarre, but even when he goes there ("Just a Little") he complements Coven's work brilliantly. We also have some weird time signatures and precision riffing to make **Meshuggah** fans turn their head. A brilliant album made by brilliant musicians. **INSIDE OUT EUROPE**.

**ARKHON INFAUSTUS... *Hell Injection*... 79...** What happens when three individuals with names like D. Deviant (guitars, vocals), 666 Torturer (bass, vocals), and Hellblaster (drums) get together for some jamming? If you said hyperspeed chaotic grindcore, with sexual mutilation themes- you were correct. Songs like "Dead Cunt Maniac" prove **Arkhon Infaustus** can actually slow down if they wanted to but *Hell Injection* is too fast and chaotic for anything more than an occasional listen. With song titles like "Dead Cunt Maniac", "The Whorehouse Coven", "Domination Xstasy", and "The Black Succubus Whores" it is clear that **Arkhon Infaustus** are trying to shock people with their sexually perversion. Overall, *Hell Injection* is a decent album, one that fans of extreme music would enjoy, but it fails to push the envelop. It sounds as if their live show could rival the **Genitorturers**. **OSMOSE**.

**ARMORED SAINT... *Nod To The Old School*... 84...** *Nod to the Old School* is a collection of past and present **Armored Saint** songs spread out over two discs. Disc one kicks off with two very good and heavy new songs ("Real Swagger", "Unstable") and an updated version of their classic "March of the Saint" which is basically the same as the original. There's a Robin Trower cover ("Day of the Eagle") and a **Judas Priest** cover ("Never Satisfied"), and acoustic version of "Tainted Past", and live versions of "After Me the Flood", "Creepy Feelings". The last four songs are taken from their impressive 1983 demo ("Lesson Well Learned", "False Alarm", "On the Way", "Stricken By Fate"), of course all of which feature the late guitarist Dave Prichard. Disc two takes us back to 1989 for some unreleased material with Prichard as well and their "You Can Run But You Can't Hide" track from *The Decline of Western Civilization Part 2*. After Disc Two's seven tracks there are C.D.R.O.M. videos of "March of the Saint" and "Long Before I Die" which were recorded live. This is a very nice collection of tunes and obviously mandatory for fans of **Armored Saint**. Where did Joey Vera get that ridiculous haircut? **METAL BLADE**.

**ARSON... *Words Written In Blood/ Less Perfect Than Death*... 87...** New Jersey's **Arson** play a form of modern extreme metal that is an effective combination of America's noisecore (**God Forbid**, **Zao**) and Swedish technical death metal (**Arch Enemy**, **At The Gates**). *Words Written in Blood* is a five song debut e.p. that was originally released two years ago as a precursor for their current seven inch. Arthur's vocals have that typical screaming harshness but the music is playing by gifted musicians who know it is even more important to develop something memorable than go the crazy **Dillinger Escape Plan** route. Don't mistake me, you will find some impressive playing in **Arson**. Bassist Kyle really shows his chops on "Myth". "Severed" has the aforementioned Swedish sound, almost like a more extreme **Shadows Fall** but also incorporates mid paced grooves to break up the pace. "Avoid the Sun" is a short but memorable song with a groove few can tough. *Less Perfect Than Death* is New Jersey's **Arson**'s most recent seven inch put to disc. It features two tracks, "Less Perfect Than Death" and "Engraved". Both songs are a slight progression from those found on 1999's *Words Written in Blood*. Look for a new release later this year. **RESURRECTION A.D.**

**ASTROQUEEN... *Into Submission*... 78...** Sweden is becoming a hotbed for stoner rock, joining America and England as the frontrunners of the scene. The guitars are overly distorted and **Astroqueen** are more raw compared to their contemporaries. Perhaps this is a result of Andy LaRocque's production as he has become known for his work in the blackened thrash scene. There's nothing that really separates **Astroqueen** from all the bands inhabiting this over saturated scene. Like more bands of this genre, a musician doubles as vocalist, this time it's guitarist Daniel Anghede. The reason I bring this to light is that there is a shortage of really talented vocalists in this scene. Although Anghede's style is almost a cross between **Ozzy Osbourne** and **Chris Cornell**, there's nothing original here. The biography description perhaps describes them best- "heavy, fuzzy, downtuned, spaced out rock". Unfortunately, it's all quite average at best. **PAVEMENT**.

**ATROCITY... *Gemini*... 82...** If you can get over the fact that **Atrocity**'s latest, *Gemini*, sounds like a counterpart to **Rammstein**, you will find it's not a bad album. Americans will remember *Longing for Death* and *Hallucinations*, which featured some impressive technical death metal. Their last official U.S. release was the gothic tinged *B.L.U.T.* **Atrocity** continued with European releases like the folk/ female fronted *Calling the Rain*, the industrial **Das Ich** collaboration on *Die Lieb*, and their heavy 1997 release *Willenskraft*, which saw them update their sound by mixing **Pantera** heaviness and grooves with **Ministry** industrial to new innovative heights. Three years later we have *Gemini*. **Atrocity** take aspects from *Willenskraft* but tone them down and simplify them. *Gemini* is an interesting listen and I like it better than **Rammstein**'s *Mutter*, but the experimentation that has made everything they've recorded previously, at the very least, interesting, is gone as they have gone the safe route. Hey, they deserve the success. **UNIVERSAL**.

**ATTENTION DEFICIT... *The Idiot King*... 82...** I know my loyal readers are probably anticipating Alex Skolnick's participation in the re-recording of **Testament**'s debut, *The Legacy*, more than his second release with bassist Michael Manring and drummer Tim Alexander, but this has some impressive work. Despite a retarded album cover, *The Idiot King* is filled with eclectic, professional sounding instrumental experimentation. While coming from different backgrounds, especially Alexander (**Primus**) and Skolnick (**Testament**), this trio combines jazz, prog, and rock into expressive song oriented instrumentals. Personally, I love Manring's plating. It's powerful, heavy, and rhythmic and he particularly shines on "My Fellow Astronauts" and "Public Speaking is Easy". Alexander lays down a solid foundation while exploring different rhythms as well, "The Killers are to Blame" showcases his experimentation. Those familiar with Skolnick's work with **Testament** will find him restrained yet exploratory. Only on "Nightmare on 48th St." does he really shred. *The Idiot King* is a fine sophomore release from this talented trio. **MAGNA CARTA**.

**AURORA BOREALIS... *Northern Lights*... 79...** Maryland's **Aurora Borealis** is a band I've been waiting to hear some original material for a long time. Despite two full lengths and an e.p., I know them best from the various **Dwell** tributes they've participated in. Now that I hear their original material, I am disappointed. Drummer Derik Roddy (**Hate Eternal/ ex-Malevolent Creation**) is an amazing drummer and he is one of the few who could possibly have the stamina to keep up with Rob Vento's (guitars, bass, vocals) frenetic pace. *Northern Lights* was originally released domestically about a year ago, but **Die Hard**'s reissue includes five bonus tracks. Some songs are really good ("Enter the Halls", "Images in the Night sky"), especially because Vento adds some thrashing riffs to his raw and fast style of black metal. This is some blistering fast and punishing music but it fails to distinguish itself. Some cool looking fonts and logo designs

make for an interesting view. **DIE HARD.**

**AVANTASIA... *The Metal Opera...* 78...** One of the most talked about releases ever in the progressive/ power metal circuit comes from this all star project. There's no denying the caliber of talent. **Edguy** vocalist Tobias Sammet has assembled for his debut solo project, otherwise known as **Avantasia**. His musicians are **Gamma Ray** guitarist Henjo Richter, **Edguy** guitarist Jens Ludwig, **Helloween** bassist Markus Grosskopf, and **Rhapsody** drummer Alex Holzwarth. Even more impressive are the vocalists he's assembled- Kai Hanson (**Gamma Ray**), Timo Tolkki (**Stratovarius**), David Defeis (**Virgin Steele**), Andre Matos (**Shaman**), Rob Rock (**Warrior**), and Sharon Den Adel (**Within Temptation**). Of course, Sammet's vocals are in fine form. While all the guest vocalists give *The Metal Opera* some flavor, **Avantasia** basically sounds like **Edguy**- which is to say reminiscent of classic late eighties **Helloween**. With these famous and talented musicians at his disposal, it's surprising that *The Metal Opera* isn't a masterpiece. In comparison, Arjen Lucassen takes his superstar project **Ayreon** to far greater heights. Now that someone has created a project this grand in scope and talent, how can anyone top this? **CENTURY MEDIA.**

**AVULSED... *Stabwound Clarion...* 83...** Perhaps the most talked about and revered U.S. black metal band, **Averse Sefira** follow up their impressive independent debut, *Homecomings March*, with this intense disc known as *Battles Clarion*. A renowned live band, **Averse Sefira** have created a disc that is harsh and raw but somehow very listenable. They are one of these bands which produce an ominous atmosphere without the abundant use of keyboards. Firmly rooted in black metal, especially in the vocal department, the music is full sounding and heavy, a typical weakness for most U.S. black metal bands. Joining original members Wrath and Sanguine is new drummer Carcass. His powerful and fast drumming gives **Averse Sefira** a more punishing assault. Atmospheric interludes like "The Thousand Aeon Stare" break the intensity for brief periods but overall, *Battles Clarion* is a perfect purchase for those looking for something that rivals **Immortal's** *Battles in the North* or **Angel Corpse's** best. **LOST DISCIPLE.**

**AVULSED... *Stabwound Orgasm...* 85...** *Stabwound Orgasm* has been a cult hit amongst fans of gore/ grind for awhile now and it has finally been released here in America. This version features two bonus live tracks for "Sweet Lobotomy" and "Powered Flesh". Musically, **Avulsed** play brutal death metal, often with a heavy groove. Opening instrumental, "Amidst the Macabre" reveals the maturity of these talented musicians. When listening to **Avulsed**, it's hard to agree with the term grind being applied to their music as songs like "Blessed by Gore" and "Stabwound Orgasm" are mid paced with a punishing groove that would make fans of **Skinless** applaud. Some of the later tracks see **Avulsed** move at a quick pace but for the most part they stick to the groove formula. Many will no longer be able to ignore this Spanish band much longer. *Stabwound Orgasm* is a landmark death metal album- one that will further expand the boundaries of death metal. The only drawback is the limitations presented by the vocals. Sick cover artwork that will please fans of **Desecration's** *Gore and Perversion*. **WW3.**

**BADLANDS... *Badlands...* 90...** Here is a necessary reissue. One of the most overlooked bands and albums in hard rock history is **Badland's** self titled debut. In a move similar to that of another **Ozzy Osbourne** guitarist (Zakk Wylde) almost ten years later- Jake E. Lee left **Ozzy** and started a band with a Southern blues vibe and some ripping guitar playing. *Badlands* represents Jake's best guitar playing ever. From the infectious riff of "High Wire", to the delicate instrumental, "Jades Song", and the blues of "Rumbling Train"- Jake shreds with passion and furor. **Badlands** would never have their success without the talents of vocalist Ray Gillen (R.I.P.). His combination of passion and power elevates songs like "Winters Call" and "Devils Stomp" to songs that have rarely been matched by anyone. Gillen's vocals may have reminded some of Robert Plant, but he proved his range to be diverse and always talented with **Badlands**. This is a must have. **KOCH.**

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**BAL SAGOTH... *Atlantis Ascendant...* 83...** England's first class pompous black metallers are back with their fifth album of distinctive metal. The term black metal should be further explained as most of **Bal Sagoth's** music is synth dominated and Byron's vocals are spoken as much nowadays as they are screamed. "The Epsilon Exordium" is a lengthy synth driven build up and once the double bass thrashing title track kicks in, many people will be bored. Surprisingly, the frequent spoken narrative is a welcome contrast to the raspy screaming. The guitars have become more thrash oriented and the keyboards still run rampant. Songs like "Star Maps of the Ancient Cosmographers" prove **Bal Sagoth** have the ability to write melodic passages to bridge the mayhem. While **Marilyn Manson** and **Cradle Of Filth** get more recognition for their imagery, **Bal Sagoth** has the best album covers you will ever see and Byron has created a fantasy world worthy of Spielberg. Still, some may have a hard time deciphering where **Bal Sagoth** fits in the scheme of metal and others may find their epic proportions hard to swallow. **NUCLEAR BLAST.**

**BEHEMOTH... *Thelema.6...* 89...** I was surprised to see **Behemoth's** latest release, *Thelema.6*, once again issued in America. Apparently Dwell Records didn't come through fully on their license from Avantgarde, so this time Olympic is responsible for the reissue. I reviewed this before in a previous issue and feel this is the best record from an amazing band. Poland's **Behemoth** transcend traditional boundaries and with bands like **Zyklon** and **Myrkskog**, **Behemoth** represent the future and present of death metal. Olympic's reissue includes four bonus tracks, "Malice", "Sarcophago", "Hello Spaceboy", and "From the Pagan Vastlands". I don't understand why **Behemoth** are not huge. They've released several acclaimed albums with *Thelema.6* and *Satanica* being two of the best in the last decade. Hopefully, Olympic Recordings can give them their due in America and people will realize what they are missing. **OLYMPIC.**

**BEHIND THE SUN... *Targeting My Greatest Weakness...* 82...** *Targeting My Greatest Weakness* is New Jersey's **Behind The Sun's** debut e.p. Former members of **N.O.C.** and **Burnside** comprise this quartets line-up. Like many of today's hardcore/ metal crossover bands, **Behind The Sun** utilize a multi dimensional vocal attack. Alexis screams with anguish, growls, and even goes into some clean tones on the five tracks here. They aren't the most technical band in the world but **Behind The Sun** have the ability to speed things up or slow them down with groove. "Lying with Demons" is the strong track here. A slippery, eerie groove starts the song giving it an unusual flavor. It remains to be seen where these many upcoming bands (**Domain**, **Arsonist**, **Acetylene**, **Behind The Sun**, etc.) take this style of music. There is no limits to the potential these bands have. [www.behindthesun.org](http://www.behindthesun.org).

**BELFEGOR... *The Kingdom Of Glacial Palace...* 79...** Poland's **Belfegor** should not be confused with the other Belphegor, the band who released the excellent *Necrodaemon Terrorsathan* last year. *The Kingdom of Glacial Palace* is their debut and it features some of the most detailed and eye catching covers you will ever see. **Belfegor** is the type of aggressive black metal band with the fast paced heaviness that should please fans of **Immortal** and **Marduk** because of its brutality. The production is really good for this type of music and its heaviness allows for a death metal crossover. *The Kingdom of Glacial Palace* is an unrelenting disc. There is no breathing room for melody and there is no change of pace. **Belfegor** do a good job creating a chaotic atmosphere and keyboards are basically non existent. This is a forgettable album because there is no variety from start to finish. There is an audience who will enjoy this, especially those who worshipped **Panzer Division Marduk** and *Battles of the North*. **WW3.**

**BENT SIRKIS... *Impure...* 81...** This upstate New York band relishes their freakish visuals and sound. *Impure* is their debut six track e.p. While their image and make up is freakish not in a **Mushroomhead/Slipknot** way but more like a vampiric/ goth crossover with **Satyricon** and **King Diamond**. Musically, **Bent Sirkis** is a little more difficult to describe. They are heavy with vocals more on the gruff side; but not death metal. Perhaps they sound like a heavy metal version of the **Misfits**. It's dirty and sludgy, not crisp and clean. Even a stop and go stomper like "Impure" is not trendy. "Schematic" is rough and almost like early 90's **Sepultura**, but overall there are no easy comparisons for the music on *Impure*. "Sex Drive" has a style common to some of the popular heavy bands today but **Bent Sirkis** have created an album that may be too original for their target audience and too commercial for the underground. Regardless, they look pretty damn evil and twisted. [www.bentsirkis.com](http://www.bentsirkis.com).

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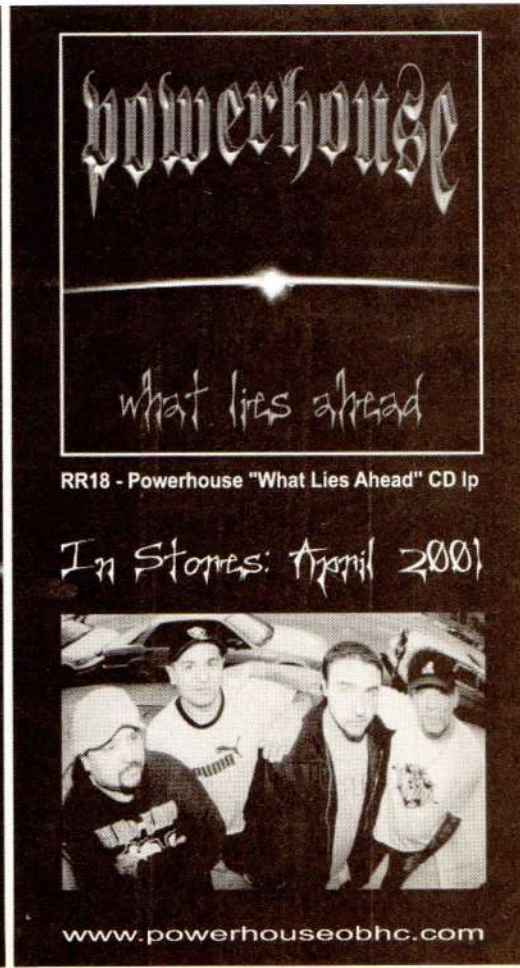
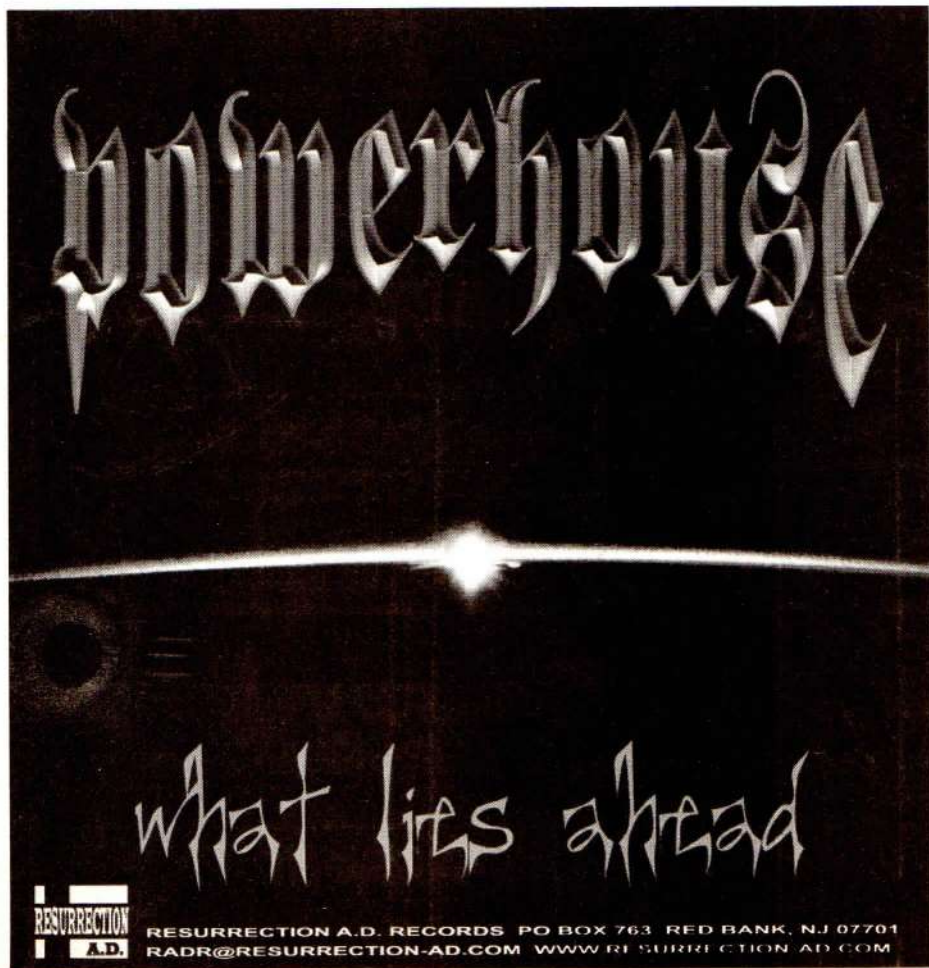
**BLACK DAWN... Absence Of Time... 84...** I'm not exactly sure what to make of New York's **Black Dawn**. I picked up this ten song promo disc at the New Jersey Metalfest, upon listening to them I realize that they aren't like the noisy, mostly death metal bands that proliferate the metal fests. **Black Dawn** have a straight ahead metal style with a timeless quality. Matt Kotten's vocals may have a tinge of old Hetfield to them, but he is otherwise incomparable as well. **Black Dawn** are not thrash, they are not death metal or power metal- just straight ahead aggression with groove, heaviness, and some rough melody. Even their imagery is not typical metal. Maybe a tinge of **Type O Negative**, but certainly more upbeat and less goth. "Room of White" may draw some Pete Steele/ **Type O Negative** comparisons, but as a whole they are unfair to the band. "When Am I" sees **Black Dawn** reaching into their emotional depths with some deep, dark vibes. This was originally released in 1999 and I hope they will create a new masterpiece soon. [www.blackdawn.net](http://www.blackdawn.net).

**BLACK LABEL SOCIETY... Alcohol Fueled Brewtality... 77...** There is no hiding Zakk Wylde's fondness for alcohol, live music, and dirty rock 'n roll. It's all here. *Alcohol Fueled Brewtality* features thirteen tracks from his two **Black Label Society** albums, *Sonic Brew* and *Stronger Than Death*, including "Bored to Tears", "13 Years of Grief", and "Superterrorizer". They also cover Ozzy Osbourne's most popular Zakk Wylde era hit, "No More Tears", albeit performed Zakk's way. The +5 part refers to the five songs that make up the second disc. These are more in line with his 1996 solo album, *Book of Shadows*. Studio recordings of "Snowblind", "Like a Bird", "Blood in the Wall", "The Beginning At Last", and a cover of Neil Young's classic "Heart of Gold" all appear on the second disc. Here is Zakk's explanation of *Alcohol Fueled Brewtality*: "If you want to hear a studio recording buy the studio album"- that's my suggestion. *Stronger Than Death* and *Sonic Brew* are two of the heaviest, dirtiest, most energetic records you will hear- hell they even sound live they're so raw. "There are no overdubs, no retouching, whatsoever. All the mistakes and bullshit are left in." For the Zakk Wylde completist only. Everyone should own *Sonic Brew* and *Stronger Than Death*. **SPITFIRE.**

**BLOOD FOR BLOOD... Wasted Youth Brew... 75...** *Wasted Youth Brew* is a twenty three track compilation of tracks that are rare or unreleased. **Blood For Blood** are a brutal hardcore/ metal band with lots of sing along, belligerent choruses. The first thirteen tracks are from seven inches and various artist compilations, including covers of **Slapshot** and the **Dead Boys**. The remaining ten songs were recorded live at the Middle East Club in Boston on January sixth, **Blood For Blood**'s first show after about a year of inactivity. While songs like "Chaos" and "The Strain" have a good balance of catchiness and brutality, with some strong sing alongs, most of *Wasted Youth Brew* is on the dull side. Fans of bands like **Agnostic Front** and **Pro-Pain** would be sure to enjoy **Blood For Blood**, but there needs to be more than this to captivate me. **VICTORY.**

**BLOODTHORN... Under The Reign Of Terror... 82...** After line-up problems and a label switch from Seasons Of Mist to Red Stream, **Bloodthorn** are back with their heaviest album yet. *Under the Reign of Terror* sounds like the type of war themed death metal album that would please fans of bands like **Bolt Thrower** or **Unleashed**. A powerful double bass sets the pace as **Bloodthorn**'s music comes across like warfare. Sometimes it's faster ("Demonblood"), sometimes slower ("Fields of Blood"), but *Under the Reign of Terror* is a death metal album old school fans can be proud of. At times, **Behemoth** can be cited as a comparison, but the channeled ferocity of **Bloodthorn** is focused and direct with no gimmicks or surprises. The eighth and final track is a cover of **Mayhem**'s classic "Deathcrush", an appropriate ending featuring guest and **Mayhem** member Necrobutcher. **RED STREAM.**

**BORN... The Aging Process... 84...** My initial reaction to **Born**'s e.p., *The Aging Process*, was one of apathy. However, upon a second listen I began to really enjoy the vocals and the attitude. **Born** originated in 1993 and despite a revolving seat behind the drum kit, they released their full length debut on their own label, New Found Hope in early 1999. *The Aging Process* is six song e.p. which **Born** are shopping to various labels for wider distribution. The vocals have a character similar but not exactly like **Suicidal Tendencies**' Mike Muir. Their distinctness adds something to the music which conjures memories of earlier New York City hardcore heroes like the **Cro-Mags**, **Leeway**, **H2O**, or even **Murphy's Law**. I must commend **Born** on their attitude of unity and positivity, especially in a scene lacking support. Again, I must stress, with a vocalist like this **Born** stand ahead of their peers and add character to a predictable scene. **NEW FOUND HOPE/** [www.anewfoundhope.com](http://www.anewfoundhope.com).



**BRAVE... *Waist Deep In Dark Waters...* 87...** Following two releases as **Arise From Thorns**, this Virginia band has changed its name to **Brave**. *Waist Deep In Dark Waters* is a four song e.p. that was recorded in hopes for a new record deal. This came from Dark Symphonies, the label which had successfully reissued **Arise From Thorns'** second disc, *Before an Audience of Stars*. **Brave's** sound is not entirely different than **Arise From Thorns** as it is basically the same lineup. The songs on *Waist Deep In Dark Waters* are passionate and meaningful. Michelle Loose's vocals are clear, powerful and expressive- and the same can be said of the music. The third track is perhaps the closest to progressive metal as **Brave** comes, as otherwise, their music is difficult to classify. There is the same darkness to **Brave** that permeates in bands like **Anathema** and **Katatonia**, but Michelle's vocals bring **Brave** into never before really explored regions. Unlike bands such as **Within Temptation**, **Brave** are not over reliant on the keyboards, as the guitar work as Michelle's brother, Scott, gives **Brave** the necessary musical complement to make the band so effective. **DARK SYMPHONIES**.

**BURIED ALIVE... *Last Rites...* 83...** **Buried Alive** follow up their successful 1999 debut, *The Death of Your Perfect World*. **Buried Alive** are a near perfect combination of hardcore and metal. Their lyrics and vocals are well within the parameters of hardcore but their music is skillfully played by musicians who would be bored by the limitations of the hardcore genre. "My Sacrifice" is a quintessential **Buried Alive** track as they create music that is heavy, creative, catchy, and uncategorizable. It is nice to see a band that will not fall into the typical **Agnostic Front/ Sick Of It All/ Madball** sound, yet not embarrass or agitate fans of the old school. We also get live versions of "Kill Their Past", "Engraved", "My Sacrifice", "Our Time is at Hand", and "Watching You Die". With *Last Rites*, **Buried Alive** prove they are the future leaders of East Coast hardcore. **VICTORY**.

**BURNING INSIDE... *The Eve Of The Entities...* 88...** I have been anxiously awaiting this full length debut for a long time. I initially heard this Florida based technical death metal act from a Full Moon Productions compilation. The reason why I love this band is the jaw dropping solos from Michael Estes (**Acheron**). His leads are flavorful, fast, and beautifully melodic. I would venture to say Estes is the best solo guitarist out there. *The Eve of the Entities* is not a guitar solo-fest, but there are enough tasty leads to keep fans appeased. The second aspect that makes **Burning Inside** special is the presence of **Death/ Iced Earth** drummer Richard Christy. He gets to show his chops with some technical intros and his superior drumming is all over the place. The rest of the music is basically average death metal but they do manage to be incomparable to the many bands of this style. Estes and Christy are two of the best performers in metal and the main reason why **Burning Inside** is so damn good. **PAVEMENT**.

**CADAVER INC... *Discipline...* 83...** **Cadaver Inc.** has all the necessary ingredients to make a huge statement in today's black metal scene. Like **Satyricon**, **Cadaver Inc.** bridge modern black metal with its early 90's Norwegian roots. Some may remember **Cadaver** from the early 90's as they released *Hallucinating Anxiety* and *In Pains*. Now guitarist Anders Odden (a.k.a. Neddo) has reformed **Cadaver** with ex-**Dimmu Borgir** drummer Czral, **D.H.G./ Aura Noir** vocalist Apollyon, and bassist L.J. Balvaz. *Discipline* is a fast, brutal, and sick debut. **Dark Throne's** Fenriz and ex-**Emperor** drummer Faust lend guest appearances and **Cadaver Inc.'s** recent problems with Norwegian government have given Earache a lot of publicity- so how is the music? It's quite good, not as good as the hype would suggest but **Cadaver Inc.** is a talented band playing fast paced black metal with great production values and a guitarist who can throw in some twisted riffs. Those looking for a modern album but don't need electronic/ gothic overtones, **Cadaver Inc.** is for you. **EARACHE**.

**CENTINEX... *Hellbrigade...* 79...** As they did with **Avulsed's** *Stabwound Orgasm*, **WW3** brings over **Centinex's** fifth album to the U.S. for a proper release. The Stateside version of *Hellbrigade* features three bonus tracks ("Apocalyptic Armageddon", "Seeds of Evil", and "Everlasting Bloodshed"). **Centinex** is a Swedish death metal band which has been around since the late eighties- even before **Entombed** and **Dismembered**. Somehow they have managed to elude similar success despite quality product. **Centinex** is one of the few old school death metal bands who have stayed in the same vein since the beginning. There are some Swedish trademarks here, especially with Peter Tagtgren's production and a subtle sense of melody in their attack, and **Centinex** straddle the line by not sounding dated but still maintaining classic elements. They have recently signed a new contract with another U.S. label so you can expect a new album by the end of the year. **WW3**.

**CEREMONIAL EMBRACE... *Oblivion...* 77...** Five short haired guys with no spikes or corpse paint would lead one to believe this Finnish band was anything but black metal. *Oblivion* is black metal, but **Ceremonial Embrace** play it with a sense of melody and dominating keyboard playing from Jari Maatta. They are one of those bands which often perplex me because the music is general melodic/ atmospheric metal but the vocals are of the black metal raspy variety. There are some moments where they will be all on the same page but the music which is often adventurous and the frequently used melodic keyboard flourishes clash with Jani Huotari's extreme vocals. **Ceremonial Embrace** was formed in 1998 and perhaps *Oblivion* is the result of too little time together, but it sounds as if **Ceremonial Embrace** will have to choose either a more melodic or a more harsh path and get everyone on the same page. **DISPLEASED**.

**DAVID T. CHASTAIN... *Rock Solid Guitar...* 78...** Underrated and versatile guitarist David T. Chastain (**Zanister**, **C.J.S.S.**, **Southern Gentlemen**, etc.) is back with another instrumental solo release. *Rock Solid Guitar* sees him joined by drummer Mike Haid (who also recorded with him on *Next Planet Please*), while Chastain apparently adds the bars. *Rock Solid Guitar* is eleven tracks and sees Chastain taking a more rock 'n roll oriented approach than the heavy metal of his previous work. The overall vibe is live sounding and laid back. Some highlights are the bouncy "Dancing with the Devil's Mistress", the sad yet shredding "In Memoriam", and the melodic soloing on "Keeper of Tomorrow". There's an **AC/DC** inspired "Hats Off to Angus and Malcom", which David compares to "Bad Boy Boogie". *Rock Solid Guitar* is mandatory for Chastain fans or anyone who enjoys instrumental rock with class and shredding, but metal fans will be disappointed. It still sounds like it was fun to record. **LEVIATHAN**.

**MIKE CHLASCIAK... *The Spilling...* 83...** "This album is rare vault type of release. It showcases some embellished, rare, or unreleased tracks and demo material. I felt that it was time to share this cool madness with you."- so says Metal Mike about his third solo release. **Halford's** axeman takes six tracks from his debut, *Grind Textural Abstractions*, and adds even more over the top shredding. Mike's solo material is heavy and complex, almost thrash like, with his maniacal solos. He also has some killer programming and samples to add some variety. The remaining five tracks are in the rare category. "Loose Cannon" is nothing but insane lead playing. "Final Death of Alexander IV" is over the top and brutally heavy, something fans of Toby Knapp's *Guitar Distortion* would love. There are two odd early ninties tracks; "Fast Fingers and Lots of Whammy Bar" and "Mariam's Fantasy", and another new solo titled "Can't Play 55". *The Spilling* is an interesting collection from this massively talented guitarist who is equally interested in great riffing as he is with shredding. Check out the awesome debut, *Grind Textural Abstractions* or *Territory Guitar Kill* as well. **BEYOND FLAT NINE/ www.planetshred.com**.

**CHRISTOPHER... *Wer Next Projekt...* 95...** From out of nowhere (actually, New Jersey) comes one of the most innovative and genius musicians ever heard. How can one describe what **Christopher** has created in one paragraph? The music ranges from delicate, simplistic **Pink Floyd** like introspection to bombastic, controlled mayhem. With nearly an hour and a half playing time, *Wer Next Projekt* is an intense and involving listen. It's not metal, nor industrial- this music does not fit into any categories. The main focal point is the trance inducing and powerful percussion. The seventeen minute opener "Nokturne" is one of the few compositions worthy to be called a masterpiece. The cacophony of the rhythmic percussion and hypnotic and heavy guitar riffs is one of the most impressive audio representations you will ever hear. Sometimes, *Wer Next Projekt* has a soundtrack feel. Vocals are kept to a minimum and are usually used more for atmospheric purposes than actual lyrics. The operatic vocals, the sheer length and build up of the compositions may be burdensome at times, but rarely has a listening experience been so rewarding. Unlimited potential, **Christopher** is not going to be living in obscurity much longer. [www.comecloser.com](http://www.comecloser.com).

**COMING CORRECT... *In Memory Of...* 85...** *In Memory Of* is a heavy, raw yet passionate hardcore album that, as Rick tells it, is recorded "In memory of the one I lost, in memory of innocence, in memory of times we shared, in memory forever in my heart." Despite its sentimental message, *In Memory Of* is all about aggression hardcore with lots of brutality. Rick Healey is a New York hardcore legend as frontman of **25 Ta Life**, and he puts in another first class performance with **Coming Correct**. Mark Palese's guitar playing is crushingly heavy and he adds a nice groove to the proceedings. This album was dedicated to Rick's father, Robert Healey Sr., and **Skarhead** vocalist Lord Eze's father; both of whom recently passed away. The album is a cathartic adventure and ultimately a positive and uplifting experience. What started out as a side project between **25 Ta Life** and **Krutch** has turned **Coming Correct** into one of the heaviest and most interesting hardcore bands on the East Coast. **TRIPLE CROWN**.

**CORONA BOREALIS... *Corona Borealis...* 72...** So... which is the best **Borealis** of this issue? My guess is **Aurora**. **Corona Borealis** has nothing to do

with metal. There is very little in the way of traditional instruments and the music has a new age vibe. **Corona Borealis** is more like a subtle Rajna. Among the instruments used by the duo of Kristian Nordeide and Ronny Hovland are bagpipes, flutes, harps, jew's harp, and a hurdy-gurdy (what the hell is that anyway?). Remi Andersen guests with wine glasses on closing track "Bjorgvindans". Where's spoonman when you need him? As you can tell this will not satisfy your metal needs. It's not even dark or melancholic, or any other emotion associated with metal- although the cover is very gloomy. Hammerheart has taken chances on obscure artists before with **Hagalaz Runedance** and **Avrigus** but both were successful because they put out good music with a connection to the feeling of metal music. **HAMMERHEART.**

**CRAWL 420... Killmercial... 80...** California's **Crawl 420** follow up their debut full length, *Severe*, with this new six song e.p. While there are familiar elements, from Dan Miller's rough hardcore vocal style to the straight ahead music, but it appears **Crawl 420** have become more metal. The sludgy elements of **Crowbar** and **Skinlab** creep into songs like "Greed" and "Lloss". Zach Vodola's guitar playing is top notch and **Crawl 420** provide a heavy groove. If you can picture old **Machine Head** becoming hardcore based and a bit heavier. While **Crawl 420** went for the throat on their first two releases, *Killmercial* sees them growing and maturing while adding the little nuances that separate average bands from very good ones. Songs like "Last Mistake" witness a tighter rhythm section (bassist Chris Dorame and drummer Jerid Pacheco). *Killmercial* sees **Crawl 420** stepping up to the plate and delivering the disc that should land them a nice deal. [www.crawl420.com](http://www.crawl420.com).

**DARKEST HOUR... So Sedated So Secure... 82...** Maryland's **Darkest Hour** will be hard to find this year. They certainly will not be at home as they plan to tour, tour, and tour some more. *So Sedated So Secure* is their third album and Victory Records debut. Their previous disc, *The Mark of Judas*, was M.I.A. Records final release before going out of business and it did not receive any push whatsoever. *So Sedated So Secure* picks up where that album left off as **Darkest Hour** continue to develop their Americanized Gothenburg sound. While the Swedish scene is continuing to evolve bands like **Darkest Hour**, **Deep**, and **Shadows Fall** are keeping **At The Gates** spirit alive Stateside. There isn't anything new here. John Henry delivers the same venomous spewed rasp throughout the nine tracks and musically, **Darkest Hour** rarely stray far from the Gothenburg sound. On a positive note, they play it all quite well. **VICTORY.**

**DAVE BROCKIE EXPERIENCE... Diarrhea Of A Madman... 70...** **D.B.X.** is a trio of musicians featuring vocalist/ bassist Dave Brockie, guitarist Mike Derks, and drummer Brad Roberts who are also known as Oderus Urungus, Balsac the Jaws of Death, and Jizmak Da Gusha from **Gwar**. In **D.B.X.** they do not wear their costumes, but they do retain their sense of humor. *Diarrhea of a Madman* features eighteen tracks, many stupid anthems like "You Want to Suck My Dick". The music is not metal but more like commercial pop/ punk with some bizarreness. At times you can tell **D.B.X.** is the work of **Gwar** members but they make **Gwar** sound like virtuosos. The lyrics are purposely juvenile and idiotic- unless you can find a deeper meaning to songs like "Masturbate", "Iranian Masturbator", and "Faggot on Fire". *Diarrhea of a Madman* isn't even listenable, it's just a novelty for **Gwar** fans who actually buy all their c.d.'s. **METAL BLADE.**

**DEFAULT... The Fallout... 78...** I've noticed that there are more and more bands coming out, most on major labels, which have an early nineties rock sound (think **Pearl Jam**, **Live**, **Stone Temple Pilots**, etc.). Some do it amazingly well (**Eve To Adam**) and others lack something special (**Default**). "Sick and Tired" kicks off *The Fallout* and sounds like an instant hit for these Canadians. What irks me the most though, and I know this is frivolous, but I can't stand hearing Dallas Smith take a deep breath before each part he sings with intensity. This isn't a bad album. **Default** like to rock and there is some emotion here along with a definite early **Pearl Jam** influence but ultimately **Default** are nothing more than a very good bar band. Then again, who knows? Songs like "Wasting My Time" are seeping in and contaminating my brain. I can't get it out of my head... that was probably their intentions. **T.V.T.**

T H E N E X T W A V E O F P R O G R E S S I V E

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**DERIDE... *Scars Of Time...* 83...** This release from the Music Cartel, a label that has become known for their doom metal and stoner rock bands have probably angered purists (if *Dreadnaught* did not already) because *Scars of Time* has more in common with the American scene that has spawned bands like *Nonpoint*, *Saliva*, and *Linkin Park*. *Deride* has a familiar sound but they play with some variety and have written an album's worth of memorable songs. *Deride* are seemingly the first band to come out of Norway with this style. Frediablo is a formidable frontman. He sings rough and clean with equal aplomb, and can scream with Phil Anselmo ferocity. A lot of *Scars of Time* has a rock 'n roll vibe. A song like "Cast from Thee" may have that one dimensional *Diesel Machine* vibe, but then you get the futuristic "Comaborn", or the industrial tinged "Another Day". The Music Cartel puts out some of the best stoner rock but with releases like *Dreadnaught* and *Deride* they have branched out hopefully they won't fail like *Stitch* and *40 Grit* did for Metal Blade. **MUSIC CARTEL.**

**DIABLERIE... *Serphyde...* 88...** *Diablerie's* debut combines "metal, electronics, the dark" into an unexpected and original album. Like most Finnish bands, *Diablerie* is creative and experimental but still metal. The overall sound is difficult to explain. They are as electronic as *Godkiller* but heavier. The vocals are not black metal, not quite death metal but brutal and raspy just the same. There is space and a sense of ambience in between the heavy and groove oriented guitar work. *Samael* is a close example to where *Diablerie* come from but they offer more clean tones as well. An upbeat almost techno "Nations Collide" fits well next to the sample ridden, laid back "Bitter Utopia". Then you have a song like "Until Death Do Us Apart" that approach goth territory. The heavy electronics on "Float" add a futuristic *And Oceans* like vibe. Throughout it all *Diablerie* are a heavy metal band. Even on their electronic excursions you still feel a sense of metal all over *Seraphyde*. Coinciding with the release of *Winds'* debut, *Diablerie* is taking the spirit of Avantgarde Music into the future. **AVANTGARDE.**

**DIVINE DECAY... *Songs Of The Damned...* 89...** Bay Area thrash- *Testament*, *Metallica*, *Death Angel*, *Exodus*, *Forbidden*- late 80's metal at its best. Leave it to Finland to bring the true spirit of thrash back. They even cover *Nuclear Assault's* "F#". While *Overkill* have been about the only band to keep 80's thrash alive, *Songs of the Damned* rekindles the spirit but doesn't sound dated. Vocalist Alec has a distinct style, like a cross between Chuck Billy (*Testament*) and John Connelly (*Nuclear Assault*) and despite his one dimensional style, he is a joy to listen to. Forget all those *Kreator* and *Sodom* rip offs, *Divine Decay* have brought back melodic thrash metal with enthusiasm. There's nothing super fast, rather *Divine Decay* stay mid tempo with memorable hooks amidst thrash riffs. Most songs have catchy sections in the middle of songs that change the pace and induces headbanging. Hopefully people won't overlook *Songs of the Damned*. People who loved *Forbidden*, *Sacred Reich*, and *Exodus* should seek *Divine Decay* at all costs. **OSMOSE.**

**DOG FASHION DISCO... *Anarchists Of Good Taste...* 78...** Don't worry, this has nothing to do with disco. *Dog Fashion Disco* list their influences as *System Of A Down*, *Mr. Bungle*, *Clutch*, and *Tool*- ultimately these four bands influence can be clearly heard on their debut, *Anarchists of Good Taste*. While they are not nearly as annoying or quirky as *Mr. Bungle* or *System Of A Down*, there is a slight carnivalesque sound to their music at times. The first two songs are the strongest, "Leper Friend" and "9 to 5 at the Morgue" have moments of brilliance, but their meandering ways prohibit listening enjoyment from start to finish. Take "Headless" for instance, Greg Combs has some original guitar work and John Ensinger is a talented enough drummer to connect the abrupt changes, but the lack of focus distracts from the energy. Todd Smith is one of those rare vocalists who get the most out of their talent and he never sounds out of place, no matter how bizarre the music gets. This is an album that should be lauded for its originality and how it challenges the listener, but it takes many listens before the music starts to seep through your conscious mind. **SPITFIRE.**



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**DOMAIN... *Far From Within... 87...*** The opening title track sounds like a cross between **Coalesce's** technical heaviness and hardcore sound and **Pantera's** brutality. What it lacks in originality, it more than makes up for in intensity. The remaining five songs on their six song debut sees **Domain**, like **From Autumn To Ashes**, a band to be reckoned with. "This Moment On" is brutal enough to please death metal fanatics and has some crushing break downs. "Reverse" has a unique sense of melody and vocalist Jeremy experiments with his voice for some interesting contrasts. "Mainline" has the intensity and insane quality that made **Neck** so cutting edge and drummer Greg proves to be on top of his game. "Conciousness Split" has Brian exploring textural dynamics to offset the heavy riffing and screaming. "Our Time is Now" is perhaps **Domain's** most catchy song, especially vocally, as there is a brutal heavy groove. *Far from Within* is an extreme record, but **Domain** has the poise to create memorable touches and the right amount of catchiness to make them very damn listenable. **SADISTIC/ regtour@aol.com.**

**DRY KILL LOGIC... *The Darker Side Of Nowhere... 78...*** The silly album cover makes you think these guys are trying to be freaks but there isn't much on their debut that would separate **Dry Kill Logic** from other bands out there. The band was known as **Hinge** but something happened which necessitated a name change before their debut could be released. "Nightmare" kicks things off and you would never be able to distinguish this song, as well as others, from several bands on their own roster. It's as if **Dry Kill Logic** took elements of **Sepultura**, **Machine Head**, **Soulfly**, and **Slipknot** and created this disc of predictable, trendy songs. *The Darker Side of Nowhere* would be amazing if it were released five years ago. This has been done too many times by now to leave any type of impact. Perhaps they will follow **Spineshank's** lead and turn it all around on their next disc. Is **Workhorse Movement** the only original band Roadrunner has released in the last year or so? **ROADRUNNER.**

**DYSRHYTHMIA... *No Interference... 90...*** **Dysrhythmia** is a Pennsylvania based instrumental trio and *No Interference* is one amazing instrumental record. On the heels of their debut, *Contradiction*, *No Interference* is the work of some incredibly talented musicians; guitarist Kevin Hufnagel, bassist Clayton Ingerson, and drummer Jeff Eber. *No Interference* is a well rounded disc. Songs range from two to fifteen minutes and **Dysrhythmia** manage to energize and amaze listeners with their virtuosity. This band is one of the easiest instrumental groups to listen to as they show their chops in song oriented structures. The sound is clean and the production is perfect for this music. It is easy to hear what each guy is doing on their respective instruments. I'm not exactly sure what style of music **Dysrhythmia** play, although fans from progressive to jazz to metal could probably enjoy this. This is a nice counterpart to Derek Sherinian's *Inertia*. **www.dysrhythmiaband.com.**

**EARTHBOUND SMOKE GHOST... *Karma's Grave... 88...*** Fans of William S. Burrough's *Naked Lunch* will recognize this New York City band's moniker. *Karma's Grave* is their debut five song e.p. showcasing some excellent heavy rock 'n roll. Groove, soul, and psychedelia are elements of **Earthbound Smoke Ghost**. They are heavy and retro in a **Spirit Caravan** way, but there are no obvious **Sabbath** influences. Scrape vocalist Pheroze provides perfect accompaniment to the heavy soul of **Earthbound Smoke Ghost**. "Buried" recalls **Corrosion Of Conformity's** awesome *Blind* album as Pheroze digs into the grooves with Karl Agell-like style. "Outer Self" is slow, sludgy and doomy before breaking out into seventies psychedelia. Bassist Jeff Scott provides the heavy bottom end and gives *Karma's Grave* its drive. Dalton (drums) breaks out on "Outer Self" recalling early seventies jams. "Until" sees **Earthbound Smoke Ghost** breakout with some surprisingly harsh screams. "Black Saturn" is a laid back ending to this awesome debut. *Karma's Grave* offers an excellent balance. **www.earthboundsmokeghost.com.**

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**EDENBRIDGE... *Sunrise In Eden... 78...*** Edenbridge's debut, *Sunrise in Eden*, was originally released last year on Massacre Records, but it now sees an American release via Sensory. Edenbridge is led by guitarist Lanvall, who had a band that released three symphonic rock albums under the same name. Now he has formed Edenbridge with vocalist Sabine Edelsbacher. His new band takes symphonic rock and merges it with atmospheric metal. *Sunrise in Eden* is a good album but it does not have the emotion necessary to leave an impact. Sabine's vocals are technically good but her style does not vary and it sounds too pretty. The clinical music backing her does not help much either. There are too many female vocalists with this style and unlike Brave's Michelle Loose, Sabine doesn't have the ability to leave the listeners feeling her emotions. *Sunrise in Eden* is too pretty for my tastes. One of the few Sensory releases that did not blow me away. Hey, nobody's perfect. **SENSORY.**

**EERIE LN... *Voodoo Music Box... 82...*** Eerie Ln. is a band that will appeal to fans of such bands as the Misfits and Samhain. Image is important to this Texas quintet, as they portray their cartoon horror but unlike many bands of this temperament, Eerie Ln.'s music is not bad at all. It is basically straight ahead punk metal but it is played with enthusiasm and the humor and the horror do not affect Eerie Ln. musically. *Voodoo Music Box* is the follow up to their debut, *Tenthirtyone*. Like other bands of this style, Eerie Ln. benefits from their live performance as visuals are very important, however, those who take a chance on this disc will not be disappointed. There is enough variety to break the monotony as some songs are almost thrashy, some are punkish and others just plain rock. They even cover "Great Balls of Fire". This band is fun. **MUTHA/ www.eerieln.com.**

**ELECTRANCE... *Disturbing The Universe... 88...*** This was a pleasant surprise. Electrance's five song debut e.p. is futuristic metal that is groundbreaking in its originality and execution. California's Electrance effectively balance the electronic mayhem of industrial metal into the future. From the energy of "Ethereality", to the stomp of "The Digital Vortex"; to the gothic overtones of "Machine Enhanced Sorcery" and "A Bizarre Alien Presence", and the early White Zombie groove of "The Holographic Universe" - *Disturbing the Universe* is a refreshingly heavy metal album that takes the genre into new, futuristic dimensions. Despite people anticipating a Fear Factory sound, Electrance defy any categorization as this trio, led by vocalist/ bassist/ programmer Mr. Sinister, have taken their music to a new level. Hopefully a label will take a chance and allow this band to keep experimenting because Electrance is one of the few bands with the potential to add something new to metal. **spacerage@hotmail.com.**

**ELEKTRIK MISTRESS... *Elektrik Mistress... 88...*** This album flat out rocks. Take the swagger of arena rock, add the groove and stoner vibes of Monster Magnet and a talent for writing catchy individual songs and you will come close to what Elektrik Mistress is all about. Opening track, "Rock Star", is an instant classic that embodies the aforementioned description. Kurt Kuthe (vocals, guitars) rips out some killer riffs on "Looking For". "Malana Dabba" has the spaced out psychedelia epitomized by early nineties Monster Magnet. The appeal in Elektrik Mistress is their energetic, live sound. This is a band having fun without doing so blatantly. Some tracks come across as being average ("Vertigo", "Deceit") but at least this band plays with heart. Surprisingly, Terry Brown (Rush, Tiles, Fates Warning) who is known for his crisp, clean productions, gives Elektrik Mistress a live sound. Kurt Kuthe is a talent in the making. He possesses the voice, the riffs, and the charisma to take this band to uncharted waters and perhaps become one of the precious few (Kyuss, Monster Magnet) to break through and have some commercial success. **www.elektrikmistress.00band.com.**

**ELEMENT... *Explore Your Aggression... 90...*** This is a five song e.p. which quickly proceeds Element's self titled debut full length and represents a massive growth for the band. It is no more apparent than in Bill Moros' vocals. While he does still have some Phil Anselmo intonations, he is taking his vocals in new directions. *Explore Your Aggression* is an apt titled as Bill goes from deep growling to instantly catchy clear tones that defy comparison. This contrast in style gives the music more dynamics. "Trust Again" is a perfectly rounded song. "Bleed Together" starts off melodic and atmospheric before building tension with some nice contrasts. "As I Am" is a superior track with expert instrumentation and a heavy groove. Guitarist Ed Raccioppi and Desi Pena provide some of their best work here. "Resurface" captures the energy and chaos of their live show. "Betterhalf" has a newer Crowbar eeriness and Bill uses his contrasting styles in an unpredictable manner. *Explore Your Aggression* should be the album to get these guys signed. They must be experienced live for maximum impact. **www.elementmusic.addr.com.**

**EMPATHY LOVES COMPANY... *Empathy Loves Company... 80...*** This is a three song demo from New York's Empathy Loves Company. The quartet seems to have everything together promotion wise. As for the music, on this demo it is not bad. "Clavin" is a short punk tune with hints of the Ramones. "Believe" is mellow and introspective with a heartfelt solo and a quiet pace. It is a dark and melancholy tune. "Don't You Know" is a haunting almost doomy number- again some cool guitar soloing gives Empathy Loves Company an emotional complexity. After a dull opener, the two remaining tracks are intriguing. It is a slow, plodding pace but enough emotional depth allows one to think Empathy Loves Company have the potential to do something really good. At least this is very original. **shadowcat1119@aol.com.**

**EM SINFONIA... *Intimate Portrait... 88...*** It's finally arrived. Em Sinfonia's full length debut and follow up to their promising e.p., *In Mournings Symphony*, is an excellent record. Most of the original band is gone but main songwriter Brian Griffin (Broken Hope) remains and he has crafted an album difficult to categorize. Joining him on vocals this time is Bunny. Her vocals dominate *Intimate Portrait* and offers a nice contrast to Griffin's deep gothic/ death tones. There are no direct comparisons to draw. Songs like "For Crimson Lust" have an old My Dying Bride guitar tone, some have progressive overtones ("Estranged") and others may be gothic, but doom is a prevalent sound on this album. Fans of early nineties My Dying Bride, Anathema, and Paradise Lost will find a band which takes some of their ideas, gives it an excellent production, and some dynamics. This is more than a side project and *Intimate Portrait* proves how serious these people are. **MARTYR.**

**EPOCH OF THE UNLIGHT... *Caught In The Unlight... 83...*** The End Records have developed a reputation for putting out the most original and sometimes avantgarde metal in the world (Scholomance, Sculptured, Nokturnal Mortum, Love History, etc.), and it is surprising that Epoch Of The Unlight fits on their diverse roster. This Louisiana band play death metal that is different than any of their American contemporaries but not as ground breaking an act as you would expect coming from The End Records. Jason Smith possesses a recognizable death/ black metal rasp and he sings with conviction. The music is heavy with some subtle melodies which will draw some comparisons to the Swedish scene. The band and Soilent Green's Keith Falgout did an excellent job considering this was recorded and mixed in less than a week. The guitars are sometimes quite thrashy and technical as the diverse "In the Absence of Light" proves. A good release that gets better with repeated listens. **THE END.**

**ESOTERIC... *Plagued By Visions... 74...*** *Plagued by Visions* is a seven song promotional disc for the Esoteric. There are three live songs and four demo tracks, all offer poor recording quality. It is difficult to categorize the Esoteric based on this recording as they sound rather generic. "Sparklerbomb" is straight ahead and heavy, but "Flight of the Botfly" actually has some quiet, melodic parts to break up the monotonous screaming. The demo tracks are chaotic and noisy, extremity appears to be a priority. They should have called this *Plagued by Poor Production*. There may be potential here, if you get through the sound quality. "Drawing to a Close" has a nice groove, "Disregard My Blank Stare" is heavy and quite original. It seems as though they rushed this, with a proper budget there is a lot of potential here. **ARM/ www.armrecords.com.**

**EXMORTEM... *Berzerker Legions... 75...*** This Danish band is all about brutal death metal. There is nothing different to distinguish any of the eleven tracks here. They go right for the jugular and never let up from their punishing assault. Exmortem have captured a killer sound and drummer Reno is incredibly gifted but there's no room to breathe. There are people who prefer their death metal this way and Exmortem will not disappoint them. If you want the best death metal in this style go to Poland (Vader, Lost Souls, Yattering, Hate) or Brazil (Abhorrence, Krisiun, Rebaellion). *Berzerker Legions* sounds good as Exmortem are assisted by Bo Lund and Konkhra/ Daemon frontman Anders Lundemark. With bands upping the ante and adding new twists to the genre, Exmortem sound behind the times. Then again, if it's brutal death metal you want you've come to the right place. **HAMMERHEART.**

**EYEHATEGOD... *10 Years Of Abuse... 70...*** and still broke. Since the compilation of rare tracks that made up *Southern Discomfort* and their fourth studio release, *Confederacy of Ruined Lives* were both released last year, it seems unnecessary that yet another compilation should be released. *10 Years of Abuse* features fifteen tracks among them are their four song 1990 demo, a live studio recording of four songs on K.X.L.U. in 1994, and seven live tracks from last year's European tour. The overall vibe of this raw and dirty recording is certainly relevant to EyeHateGod's sound but why must we be subjected to songs we've

already heard before. Three **EyeHateGod** releases in about one year's time is too much, especially when two are odds and ends. It is unlike Century Media to release albums like this and *10 Years of Abuse* is obviously for loyal fans only. On a positive note, the songs were chosen by the band themselves. **CENTURY MEDIA.**

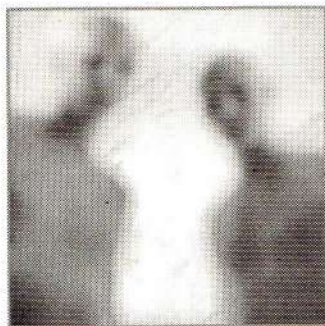
**FALL SILENT... *Six Years In The Desert...* 87...** This is an interesting band. They are rooted in hardcore but by no means do they allow themselves to be limited. *Six Years in the Desert* is a collection of remixed songs from two previous seven inches, an e.p., and their 1996 debut full length- *No Strength to Suffer*. There are seventeen tracks in all. Levi Watson's vocals are usually screamed harshly but he shows a dynamic range by experimenting with some clean tones. Musically, Nevada's **Fall Silent** run the gamut- from the **Slayer**-esque assault on "Hail of Bullets", to the hardcore groove on "The Rulers", to the doomy "Broke"- which sees Levi screaming with black metal ferocity. The occasional flaw ("Sunny Days", a *Sesame Street* cover) can be overlooked because the rest of *Six Years in the Desert* is so damn good. Like **December**, **Fall Silent** will probably fall through the cracks despite being able to draw such diverse audiences as hardcore, sludge, and even black metal. They play with no pretensions and willing to take chances. **REVELATION.**

**FIREBALL MINISTRY... *F.M.E.P...* 74...** Following their successful debut (*Ou Est La Rock*) with this e.p. of mostly covers is a questionable move. Why not write some more songs and record a proper full length? There is a retro, laid back rock vibe on new tracks "King" and "Choker"- both are well written and catchy. "Maidens of Venus" is dull. **Fireball Ministry** show their talent by capably covering everyone from **Alice Cooper** ("Muscle of Love"), **Judas Priest** ("Victim of Changes"), **Blue Cheer** ("Fortunes"), the **Misfits** ("Cough/ Cool"), and **Aerosmith** ("Moving Out"). Surprisingly, Reverend James A. Rota hits those Halford notes at the end of "Victim of Changes". I look forward to their next full length as this disc doesn't do much for me. **Fireball Ministry** is better known for having **L7** bassist Janis Tanaka in their line-up and guest musicians (ex-**Megadeth** drummer Nick Menza, **Fu Manchu**'s Brad Davis, and **Goatsnake**'s Guy Pinhas) than their music. Only a kick ass album will change that. **SMALL STONE.**

**FLOTSAM AND JETSAM... *My God...* 88...** The career of **Flotsam And Jetsam** was following an easily traced pattern. *Doomsday for the Deceiver* and *No Place for Disgrace* were classic thrash albums leading to a major label deal and the transitional *When the Storm Comes Down*. Cuatro led to the energetic and dynamic brilliance of *Drift* as they incorporated some progressive and funk influences. After being dropped and getting their recording budget slashed, *High and Unnatural Selection* followed along with massive disappointment. It appeared that the fire was gone. Only vocalist Eric A.K. and guitarist Ed Carlson remained from their classic line-up. Now we have *My God*, **Flotsam And Jetsam**'s best effort since *Drift* and an enthusiastic kick in the career. "Dig Me Up to Bury Me", "Keep Breathing", "Nothing to Say", and "Weather to Do" see the band finally utilizing their talents and Eric's vocals have new found life. "Camera Eye" sees him experimenting with distorted vocals over thrashing riffs. The closing instrumental, "I.A.M.H." is a refreshingly beautiful, somber instrumental. **METAL BLADE.**

**FALCONER... *Falconer...* 79...** This is the self titled debut which features ex-**Mithotyn** songwriter and guitarist/ bassist Stefan Weinerhall and ex-**Mithotyn** drummer Karsten Larsson. Based upon vocalist Mathias Blad's clear/ power metal style, it appears Weinerhall was bored with the vocals of his former band. I loved *Gathered Around the Oaken Table*, **Mithotyn**'s third and final album; and enjoyed the full choruses and even the rougher vocals. Blad sings in a clear, distinctive style but he lacks the passion conveyed by **Mithotyn**'s vocals and **Falconer** sounds remain in the same Nordic tradition and songs such as "A Quest for the Crown" have a folk sound to them. **Falconer**, like **Mithotyn**, have developed their own style- it just is deprived of the same passion that made *Gathered Around the Oaken Table* and *King of the Distant Forest* such good albums. Maybe **Falconer** will correct this with a little more time. **METAL BLADE.**

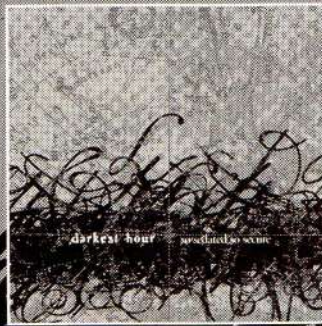
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**THUMB**  
"3"

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'They reflect all that is missing from the growing hip-hop/metal hybrid' - *Heckler*

IN STORES 07.10.01



**FOG... Through The Eyes Of Night... 80...** Fog is an American black metal band with some raw, aggressive, and dark sounds. Fans of **Morpheus Descends** will see some familiar faces in **Fog**. *Through the Eyes of Night* is their full length debut and features seven tracks of grim black metal. I find **Fog** to be more powerful than many of their American contemporaries (**Thornspawn**, etc.). The production is cold and harsh, but the music is not too chaotic as you can actually follow along to what the musicians are doing. Most of the songs are of epic length and tracks like "By This Axe We Rule" prove **Fog** is willing to change the pace and not just blast away. They are one of those rare bands with the ability to create an atmosphere without the use of keyboards, female vocals, violins, or even clean vocals. *Through the Eyes of Night* is an album that will restore faith in the scene of black metal purists but it is interesting enough for open minded fans to enjoy. **WW3**.

**G.B. ARTS... The Lake... 85...** This was a pleasant surprise. Pavement Music's first foray into the world of progressive metal has yielded an excellent discovery. Germany's **G.B. Arts** released two previous albums; 1994's *Vision of Water* and 1998's *Return to Forever*. *The Lake* sees **G.B. Arts** acquiring the services of new vocalist Markus Brand, whose clear, powerful, yet melodic approach should rank him amongst the best. Power metal fans will notice the three members of **Rage** make appearances. Peavy Wagner contributes vocals on "Shadows of Faces" and "The Darkness is Over", Victor Smolski plays guitar on four songs and produced *The Lake*, and drummer Mike Terrana provides ridiculous narration in between songs. **Angel Dust** vocalist sings on "Silver Rain". Despite all the guest appearances, *The Lake* is a cohesive and focused concept record. **G.B. Arts** vary the moods with ease from the mellow "My New World" to heavier prog metal like "Can't Remember". Hopefully **G.B. Arts** will find more unsuspecting fans with this American debut. **PAVEMENT**.

**GOD FORBID... Determination... 83...** New Jersey's **God Forbid** is a band many people in the Northeast have been raving about. I was introduced to them by Steve Joh via their impressive *Reject the Sickness* debut. They play a style of metal that can combine such diverse audiences as the **Dillinger Escape Plan**, **Megadeth**, and **Hatebreed**. *Determination* is heavy with a lot of new age thrash, and a healthy dose of technical proficiency. There's no doubt this band is immensely talented. They can create some real intensity without any "melodic" adjectives being thrown their way. The only weak link at the moment is Byron Davis' one dimensional screaming. It is the same fate that plagued Swedish bands like **At The Gates** and **Arch Enemy** until **Soilwork** and **Darkane** came along. Perhaps my earlier statement regarding melody inhibits Davis. *Determination* is an excellent record, but it doesn't have as much growth as I thought it would after listening to *Reject the Sickness*. I do have a feeling that they will one day, perhaps soon, release an album that will change the face of metal. **CENTURY MEDIA**.

**GROOVENICS... Groovenics... 79...** Spitfire Records has become known for their veteran roster, but with releases from new bands like **Dog Fashion Disco** and **Groovenics** they appear to be trying to catch a wave of popular bands, with these slightly original yet still trendy bands. I will give credit to this Florida band because they do show some variety on this second release. You've got modern hard rock ("Just Right"), retro funk ("She's a Freak"), gothic ("Spooky"), and slow groove ("Superstar"). "Just Right" has hit written all over it and "She's a Freak" sure is catchy but the rest of this disc is very inconsistent. With songs like the electronic and stupid "Booty Barn" and their cheesy cover of **Def Leppard's** "Pour Some Sugar on Me", it's hard to take the **Groovenics** seriously. Their quirkiness may draw some **Mr. Bungle** comparisons but there is little sincerity on this disc. **SPITFIRE**.

**GRUDGE... Forgiveness... 87...** Montana's new upstarts **Grudge** have released their debut on a major label and much to my delight, it's something different than your typical flavor of the month. There is nothing trendy about **Grudge**. The music is heavy musically while the vocals are melodic giving the band an interesting and rarely explored contrast. Songs like "Pissing Sick" are almost thrashy in sound. While **Grudge** is on a major label, *Forgiveness* was released with its independent recording budget, so it doesn't sound like a typical major label band. In some respects, both musically and in Gerrick Phillips vocals, I am reminded of **Corrosion Of Conformity's** *Blind*. It's definitely metal, metal without a particular era or tag to be placed upon it. I must emphasize the music is crushingly heavy, the vocals surprisingly melodic. **B.M.G.**

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Let's see Shadowdance on The Monumental Group's upcoming Tribute to Queensryche "Taking Hold Of The Flame" due end of Summer 2001.

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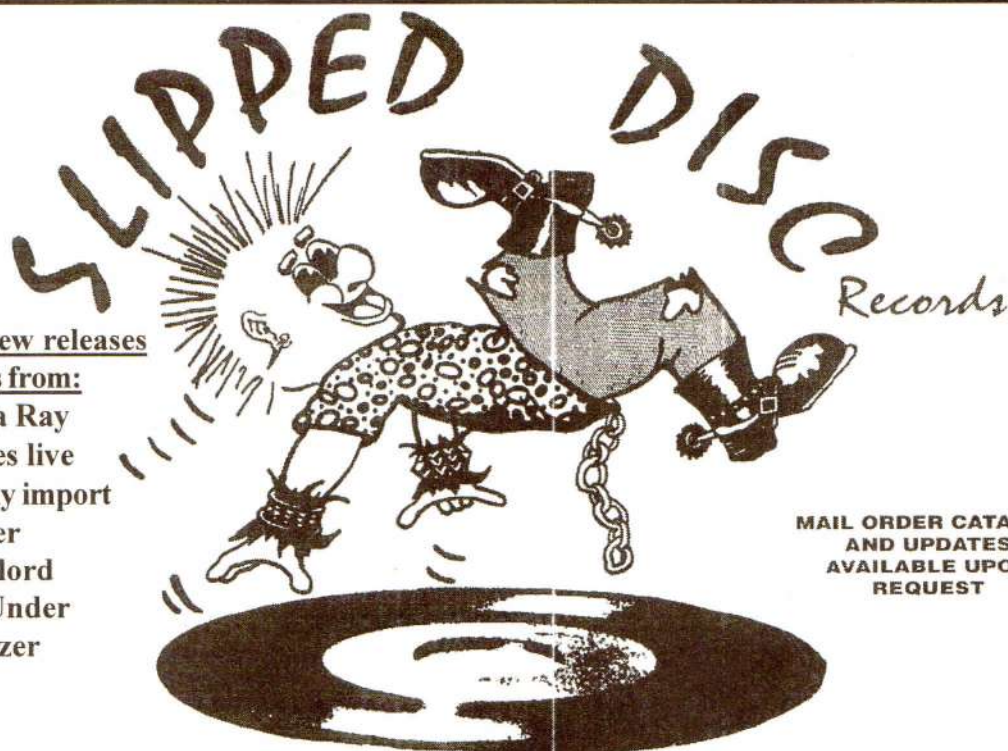


**GUN BARREL... Power Dive... 79...** Gun Barrel play straight ahead power metal that will draw fans of bands like **Raven**, **AC/DC**, or even **D.A.D.** *Power Dive* is an energetic rocking album with memorable, fist pumping choruses. There is an old school metal vibe with perhaps some N.W.O.B.H.M. kicked in as well. Songs like "Only a Passenger" and "Gate of God" leave the listener with sing a long choruses and rocking guitar. The vocals are fairly generic but effective. Upon initial listen I did not care for *Power Dive* but after a few spins **Gun Barrel** prove to be infectious. The guitar is bouncy and energetic (another **Raven** trademark) and **Gun Barrel** sounds at home in a dirty bar or a packed arena, thus you can count on success in the European market. Song titles like "Straight Down to Hell", "She's Coming Over Top", and "Take Me to the Highway" reflect the generic sound and ideas but **Gun Barrel** sound hungry. Extra points for enthusiasm, negative points for lack of originality. **LIMB.**

**HADES... Damnation... 90...** *Damnation* is **Hades** excellent follow up to last year's successful *The Downside* and their sixth release overall. Bassist Jimmy Schulman rejoins the band along with new drummer Ron Lipnicki. *Damnation* picks up where *The Downside* and *Savior Self* left off. Songs like "Bloat", "Biocaust", and "Damnation" are fast and heavy. "Absorbed" allows Schulman to show off his unique style and Alan Tecchio is on top of his game as usual. Songs like "Out the Window" and "Absorbed" allow him to use his massive range, from piercing screams to powerful lows. As Geoff Tate and Ray Alder have tamed, he is perhaps the only vocalist besides Rob Halford able to unleash high ranged styles while continuing to experiment in other registers. "Force Out" is a heavy stomper with a groove comparable to guitarist Dan Lorenzo's days with Tecchio in **Non Fiction**. Ed Fuhrman provides his usual array of impressive solos. As usual, Alan's lyrics are intelligent, political, and thought provoking. I feel the last few songs are average but **Hades** has managed to produce seven or eight tracks comparable to their previous best. **Hades** always manage to put out intelligent metal with wide variety, excellent riffs, and one of the most impressive vocalists ever. You can't argue with consistency. **METAL BLADE.**

**HANGNAIL... Clouds In The Head... 89...** For those of you who ponder **Soundgarden's** *Louder Than Love* or their break through, *Badmotorfinger*, and wish those days could happen again- I bring you England's **Hangnail** and their second full length, *Clouds in My Head*. The vocals are eerily reminiscent of classic Chris Cornell, while the riffs take on that raw **Sabbath** vibe that made songs like "Rusty Cage" so enjoyable. "Slowhead" and "Clouds in the Head" fall into the above category. Harry Armstrong's vocals are passionate and heartfelt. He gives **Hangnail** a soul that so many bands lack. On the mellow yet deep tracks; "Gone" and "The Watcher", Armstrong gives an intense and memorable performance that ranks among the most passionate you will ever hear. *Clouds in the Head* is an excellent follow up to their impressive debut, *Ten Days Before Summer*. **Hangnail** may fall into the stoner rock category, but precious few can claim to have a vocalist like Armstrong, who uses his talents to perfection without losing the essential rawness. **MUSIC CARTEL.**

**HATE... Holy Dead Trinity... 89...** How many excellent Polish death metal bands are there? **Vader**, **Devilyn**, **Lost Souls**, **Behemoth**, **Yattering**, **Hate**, etc. The Polish scene is becoming what Florida was in the early nineties. *Holy Dead Trinity* is **Hate's** fourth album to date and it is an accomplished affair. It features a compilation of previously released tracks to introduce **Hate** to the American market. The production is crushing yet clear, enabling the drums, bass, and guitars power and intricacies. The vocals have that deep, power of David Vincent and it works to perfection with the heaviness of the music. **Hate** prove that they can play blast beats without losing precision. The leads (especially on "God Overslept") are tasteful and original. All fourteen tracks have a heaviness and pace related to thrash metal, but the brutality of death metal. *Holy Dead Trinity* is more than just listenable as it is a landmark in death metal. **Decide** hasn't put out anything this good since *Legion* and fans of *Blessed are the Sick* will get into this as well. **WW3.**



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**HEMLOCK... *Lust For Fire*... 80...** Finally, after being recorded nearly two years ago, Hemlock's latest, *Lust for Fire*, is unleashed upon us. The listener is treated to nine tracks of insane, chaotic black metal with no keyboards, female vocalists, or melody for that matter. Sporting names like Balth, Desecrator, His Eminence The Wicked, and Azalin- Hemlock are esoteric and extreme. *Lust for Fire* has a poor production and is very noisy, but this is the vibe these New Yorkers are going for. The vocals are tortured and raw, no effects are used as one dimensional screaming is used. Hemlock go for a more emotional extreme. The songs are short and direct, most really fast, although they will slow to a mid pace sometimes. Don't look for any skillful playing or modern production values. Hemlock is pure cult. FULL MOON.

**HOODS... *Time The Destroyer*... 80...** One look and listen to California's Hoods and one can hear the Cro-Mags influence on their brand of aggressive hardcore/ metal crossover. The Hoods have achieved a lot in just a few short years. Four independent releases, countless tours in America, one in Europe, all while being one of the most significant contributors to the hardcore scene. With *Time the Destroyer*, the Hoods are ready to take the next step in their career, this being their first release on Victory Records. On the surface, the Hoods appear like your typical metal/ hardcore hybrid, but they show a flair for some hooks. "Another Lesson" has some massive grooves, "Life" opens with a keen sense of melody before some bruising riffs kick in, and "Your Turn/ Mass Control" does a good job of mixing brutality and groove. Bands like the Hoods are necessary to keep this scene alive, their attitude and sound are respectful and admirable. VICTORY.

**H2O... *Go*... 78...** H2O is a veteran pop punk hardcore band from New York City, who have three previous full lengths and *Go* is their major label debut. To their credit, H2O have stuck to their roots as *Go* is an energy filled live sounding disc filled with anthems. The twelve songs are short, punchy, and direct. Toby Morse sings in a typical pop punk style that is listener friendly. The music is spontaneous and live sounding, H2O even get pretty heavy on "Well Behaved". There isn't anything abrasive on *Go*, despite its raw and simplistic nature it is not a hardcore record. It is something people into bands like Pennywise and the Offspring could get into. Toby's vocals are commercial yet he manages to keep them edgy. H2O have not left their roots. MCA should be able to keep them where they belong- on the road. MCA.

**HURT... *Hurt*... 78...** This is a six song debut from Canada's extreme metallers Hurt. Their extreme death/ grind sounds like it would fit nicely on either Relapse or Necropolis' roster. "Deemon" is a straight blast, but "Onion" sees Hurt exploring their brutal aggression. The vocals range from abrasive screams to gurgling lows. Any grinding band needs a superior drummer and Matt Modder appears to have the talent to dictate the pace. The musical interlude in the middle of "Fuckfeast" would sound incredible with a proper production. This is the main flaw on Hurt. The band exhibits potential to be among the elite extreme metal bands but on this recording the production weakens the impact. "Eat the Worm" sees Hurt add some unique twists. If you're into grind this band is essential. The talent is there. If someone gets behind them they could join bands like Circle Of Dead Children, Upeaval, and Impaled as leaders of the new scene. www.hurting.org.

**ICED EARTH... *Horror Show*... 85...** When I asked Century Media employees about what Iced Earth's sixth studio full length would sound like, the typical response was- "it's Iced Earth". Upon listening to *Horror Show*, I couldn't agree more. Since the flamboyant Midnight-like vocals that plagued their self titled debut, the subsequent albums all subscribe to the same formula. Metallica meets Iron Maiden, with fantastic imagery and impassioned lyrical topics. On the surface *Horror Show* appears cheesy, especially with typical song titles like "Wolf", "Jack", "Dracula", "Frankenstein", etc. However, guitarist Jon Schaffer has assembled his best line-up to date. Returning are vocalist Matt Barlow and shredder Larry Tarnowski. The newcomers are bassist Steve DiGiorgio (Sadus, Death, Testament) and drummer Richard Christy (Death, Control Denied, Burning Inside). Christy's impact is felt on the rapid fire double bass of "Wolf", while DiGiorgio's fretless style shines on "Dracula". Schaffer's collaboration with Blind Guardian's Hansi Kursch with Demons And Wizards comes to fore on "Damien" with its full operatic choruses. Overall, fans of previous discs like *The Dark Saga* and *Something Wicked This Way Comes*, will enjoy *Horror Show* and the occasional surprise. CENTURY MEDIA.

**INSANIA... *Sunrise In Riverland*... 72...** These European power metal bands ripping off Helloween has got to stop. I'd rather listen to AC/DC because they represent more originality. At least Sweden's Insania provide a picturesque cover that ranks among the best ever. The two No Fashion power metal bands (Wolf, Insania) make me laugh because Wolf provides some of the best power metal with the most ridiculous cover ever, meanwhile, *Sunrise in Riverland* is the type of album a metal head would buy solely for the cover and the music is second rate, Helloween/ Rhapsody rip offs. At least there is talent in Insania (not to be confused with the Insania that existed about ten years ago), but it is not put to good use. I enjoyed their debut, *World of Ice*, more than this one. There's still hope, Iron Fire grew into a quality power metal act, so can Insania. NO FASHION.

**INTEGRITY... *Closure*... 89...** Integrity return for their final album and unleash their most impressive disc yet. *Closure* is a brutal album. Frontman Dwid again shows why many consider his vocals to be the most passionate as he screams with emphatic heaviness. "No Time for Sudden Glances" has a brutal groove, "Bloodlust" is Integrity at its best with Dwid's harsh, screaming but powerful vocals. "Angela Delamorte" (also the name of their new band) starts like a bastard child of Black Sabbath's "Children of the Grave" before its anthemic chorus. There aren't as many Slayer riffs as previous efforts and *Closure* is their most experimental and memorable disc to date. Check out "Mine" as it incorporates gothic with brutal hardcore and a catchy sing along chorus. It is a dark, brutal album but Integrity somehow makes it all catchy no matter how extreme they get. No one sings/ screams with more power and passion than Dwid. VICTORY.

**IRON FIRE... *On The Edge*... 83...** Iron Fire's debut, *Thunderstorm*, though played by talented musicians, represented everything that was wrong with European power metal. Too much Helloween, not enough originality. I was less than enthusiastic about *On the Edge*, the Danish quintet's follow up to their debut, but the new album is surprisingly good. Iron Fire have gotten away from the straight ahead speed metal and have gone for a heavier, dirty approach musically. Perhaps it is the addition of new members Morten Plenge (drums) and Martin Slott (guitars) or just a desire to stand apart from the crowd but *On the Edge* is a winner. The title track has a guitar sound similar to American power metal, "Wanted Man" has an AC/DC rock simplicity, "Lost 'n Alone" is a melodic ballad, only "Thunderspirit" has the typical sound of the debut. Vocalist Martin Steen comes across like a combination of Michael Kiske and Sebastian Bach, giving Iron Fire a chance to crossover and appeal to many audiences. NOISE.

**JANE DOE 69... *Solid*... 83...** *Solid* is Finland's Jane Doe 69's third self released e.p. and shows that the band is ready to make an impact. The three songs show a sense of maturity and growth since *Scars* and *Snakeskin*. Jane Doe 69's music is heavy and dissonant, modern sounding groove metal that sounds similar to earlier Grope and Lostsouls, but would appeal to fans of American bands like Machine Head and Pantera. "Detergent" is heavy on the groove and Mikko Paulin's vocals take on a Phil Anselmo tone at times. "Painting from the Nerve" reveals Jane Doe 69's sense of dynamics. This band is not as one dimensional as one would expect. There is some precision to the riffing and the vocals can be overwhelming at times (especially on "Dead Somebody Walks") but Meshuggah would be an inaccurate comparison. Jane Doe 69 doesn't sound like a foreign band and America would be a good target audience for them, although they may be too heavy for fans outside the Pantera crowd. www.janedoe69.cjb.net.

**JACOBS DREAM... *Theater Of War*... 79...** Jacobs Dream quickly follow up last year's self titled debut with *Theater of War*. Once again vocalist David Taylor delivers a performance that almost matches Geoff Tate's brilliance. Not much growth has occurred since we last saw Jacobs Dream, although they have severed ties with two guitarists and add Derek Eddleblute, thereby becoming a two guitar band again. Jacobs Dream play old school power metal and have no problems with what people feel is a lack of originality because that is what they enjoy. Songs like "Sanctuary" harken back to the days of Queensryche's *Rage for Order*. Jacobs Dream also re-recorded two more songs from their demo; "Wisdom" and the excellent power ballad "Sarah Williams". One can only admire a band doing what they love but at some point Jacobs Dream will have to separate themselves from the pack. METAL BLADE.

**J.J. PARADISE PLAYERS CLUB... *Wine Cooler Blowout*... 85...** Hot on the heels of their exceptional self titled debut e.p., *Wine Cooler Blowout* enforces J.J. Paradise Players Club's groove oriented brutal rock similar to Entombed's album prior to *Uprising*, *Wine Cooler Blowout* is a punishing record with almost a Southern rock vibe but also a harsh, in your face aggression. J.J. Paradise Players Club is all about slow and brutal riffs. There's nothing pretty and it's adrenaline filled despite the restraint applied to the riffs. Vocally, they follow the Southern rock with heaviness style that Zakk Wyldé has recently perfected. It all fits together perfectly. Featuring former members of Unsane, Kiss It Goodbye, Kill Van Kull, and Glazed Baby, the J.J. Paradise Players Club

is less intense than their previous bands and has a party attitude. While the lack of variety is exposed in the course of a full length, *Wine Cooler Blowout* is still an enjoyable record. **TEE PEE.**

**KAMELOT... Karma... 85...** Florida's **Kamelot** have risen through the progressive power metal ranks and are the epitome of class and professionalism, in sound and spirit. *Karma* is their fifth studio album and third with ex-**Conception** vocalist Roy Khan. His debut with the band, *Siege Perilous*, was rushed and largely disappointing, but last year's *The Fourth Legacy* and now *Karma*, see the band working to near perfection. **Kamelot** have created an identity with their medieval/ majestic lyrics, their first class musical creations, and their purple tinged and eye catching artwork. This has led **Kamelot** to be a predictable band, but also one which writes some of the most memorable songs the genre has known. "The Spell" has a flavor similar to **Conception's** brilliant final album, *Flow*. "Karma" is quintessential **Kamelot**- dramatic keyboards, vintage Tom Youngblood riffs, and a tight rhythm section (Glenn Barry, Casey Grillo). There are some average moments like the predictable "Wings of Despair" or the sappy ballad, "Don't You Cry", but *Karma* should allow **Kamelot** to take the next step. Maybe a U.S. tour is imminent? **NOISE.**

**KHOLD... Masterpiss Of Pain... 83...** Moonfog Productions is the type of label that only releases a handful of artists (**Satyricon**, **Dodheimsgard**, **Gehenna**, **Thorns**) and their main concern is quality. So when I read that their latest Norwegian signing, **Khold**, was a raw, early nineties style of black metal I was expecting something less than spectacular. While **Khold** does take a back to the roots approach, *Masterpiss of Pain* is a fine record. The ten songs are slow to mid paced with heavy bass and a creepy guitar sound that makes songs like "Svart Helligdom", and "Bortvandring" an eerie listen. The line-up features members of bands such as **Tulus** and **Old Mans Child**, sound wise they lean toward the former. **Old Bathory**, **Dark Throne**, etc. are obvious references, but somehow **Khold** makes their debut sound interesting and inspired- not outdated, like I expected it to be. **MOONFOG.**

**KITCHEN KNIFE CONSPIRACY... Sin Pathetic... 85...** *Sin Pathetic* has some poor, low budget artwork and the initial appearance made me apprehensive. I put the disc on and listened to opening track "Sin", a piano driven piece that is beautiful with a nice crescendo- that took me by surprise, as did the rest of the disc. **Kitchen Knife Conspiracy** have familiar ingredients in their sound (groove death metal, may be the best tag) but manage to sound unlike any other. No **Pantera** rip offs, no **Pro Pain**, no obvious death metal reference. Their music is mostly mid paced and played with confidence. The vocals are rough, generally in a death metal style- perhaps some **Six Feet Under** mixed in. For a band that is simplistic and straight forward, they add their own stamp and do not limit themselves. **Kitchen Knife Conspiracy** falls nearest in the death metal category but do not allow themselves to be trapped by the genre's limitations. A pleasant surprise. [www.kitchenknifeconspiracy.com](http://www.kitchenknifeconspiracy.com).

**NIKOLO KOTZEV... Nostradamus... 79...** European guitarist/ violinist Nikolo Kotzev (ex-**Baltimore**, **Brazen Abbot**) has assembled a diverse and talented group of musicians for this massive two disc rock opera. Helping Nikolo out are ex-**Europe** members (bassist John Leven, drummer Ian Haugland, and keyboardist Mic Michaeli). The vocalists include three ex-**Yngwie Malmsteen** members (Joe Lynn Turner, Goran Edman, and Jorn Lande), two ex-**Rainbow** members (Turner and Doogie White), Alannah Myles, Sass Jordan, and Glenn Hughes. Turner (**Nostradamus**) and Hughes (**King of France**) get most of the vocalizations. Overall, Nikolo Kotzev has created a classy piece of music that will go unappreciated. Hughes is as good as ever and Kotzev pays homage to one of the most controversial people in history. There is an awful lot to digest here and to call *Nostradamus* a detailed and ambitious effort would be an understatement. Perhaps fans of *Jesus Christ Superstar* will like this but it's very hard to get through. Call it classical rock, if you will. **S.P.V.**



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**KRYONIX... *Kryonix*... 83...** This is a five song e.p. from Long Island's **Kryonix**. This band has the potential to be picked up by a major. Even though they are heading in the direction of what is popular today, they do it quite well. "Triangle" has some **Limp Bizkit** like rap, "Mindless" has an unmistakable groove and some heaviness, "Flesh" is incredibly catchy and memorable. "Parasite" sees **Kryonix** return to their rap style with a little groove. The disc closes with perhaps the best track, "Pain", which actually reminds me of the ahead of their time **Electric Love Hogs**. The five songs are brief, with an overall running time of about fifteen minutes. There is not much in the way of originality but they do what they do very well. Vocalist Joe Wenger has a familiar style people can get into. With a little more seasoning, if the trend isn't too late- **Kryonix** could find themselves in a good position.

**KULT OV AZAZEL... *Triumph Of Fire*... 74...** Another raw, noisy, underproduced American black metal band. **Kult Ov Azazel** hail from Florida and are signed to **Malevolent Creation** guitarist Phil Fasciana's label, Arctic Music Group. All the cliches of black metal (early 90's Norwegian style) are present in **Kult Ov Azazel**. Most of the musicians in the band are from death metal backgrounds and it shows on *Triumph of Fire* as the music is heavier than most black metal bands. Xaphan, Vetis, and Xul adorn corpse paint and list band responsibilities as Wrath, Demonic screeches of pure unholiness, holocaustic black axe of Azazel/ Blasphemous shrill of hatred. I'm not sure if they are mocking black metal's absurdities or simply paying tribute to them. If you are into this style of black metal I'm sure **Kult Ov Azazel** is for you, just don't expect much in the way of originality. **PAVEMENT**.

**LACRIMAS PROFUNDERE... *Burning A Wish*... 84...** Like previous releases by the **Sins Of Thy Beloved** and **Tristania**, Napalm Records is pushing **Lacrimas Profundere** in a big way. There's no female vocals here but **Lacrimas Profundere** play doom influenced metal that will turn the heads of

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**Anathema** and **My Dying Bride** with its dreamy, melancholic style. *Burning A Wish* is this German sextet's fourth album and shows massive growth since last year's *Memorandum* disc. Christopher Schmid has forsaken his death metal style almost completely. He has a surrealistic style that meshes well with the subtle arrangements and deep emotional impact of the music. While I think they sound a little too close to **Anathema**, especially around *The Silent Enigma* era, no one can argue that this music is rich with dark melodies, and complex, emotional music. "A Summers End" exhibits a sense of desperation, "2 sec and a Tear" a sense of longing. *Burning A Wish* should elevate **Lacrimas Profundere** to a larger audience as fans of veterans like **Katatonia** and **My Dying Bride** should enjoy this. **NAPALM**.

**L.A. GUNS... *Man In The Moon*... 85...** *Man in the Moon* is **L.A. Guns**' seventh full length and the first to boast the return of vocalist Phil Lewis and rhythm guitarist Mick Cripps since 1994's *Vicious Circle*. **L.A. Guns** have been one of the most underrated bands of all time. While they fell into the late 80's glam scene, their music had more bite and unbridled energy than their hit "Ballad of Jayne" would indicate. *Man in the Moon* features ten solid rockers highlighted by Tracii Guns' exceptional fretwork and classic riffs, while Lewis gives them his talented vocals reminding one of his earlier peak performances on "Sex Action" and "Rip 'n Tear". "Man in the Moon" opens the album in fine fashion, while "Spiders Web" and "Hypnotized" have the catchiest and most energetic choruses yet. "Beautiful" is an alternative rocker with massive hit potential and "Out of Sight" and "Good Thing" sounds like a vintage Plant/ Page connection. *Man in the Moon* once again proves **L.A. Guns** are the best around for heavy and energetic rock. They have never disappointed, nor disappeared no matter how difficult it was for them. **SPITFIRE**.

**LEGION... *Conqueror*... 87...** **Legion** is an impressive Indiana based death metal band. The first six tracks on *Conqueror* were recorded in 1997, while "Infested Earth" is from a 1994 demo and "Curtians" from a 1992 demo. While **Dark Horizon Records** has become known for their primitive black metal releases, **Legion** is a refreshing listen with their straight ahead death metal sound. It may be a result of the production but some songs sound like they were recorded with drum machines. Like Kentucky's **Abominant**, **Legion** are a Mid West death metal band who have been toiling in the underground for almost a decade with only a cult following despite decent product. I'm not sure what **Legion**'s current status is but *Conqueror* is an exceptional death metal album, one that doesn't betray its mid nineties origins. **DARK HORIZON**.

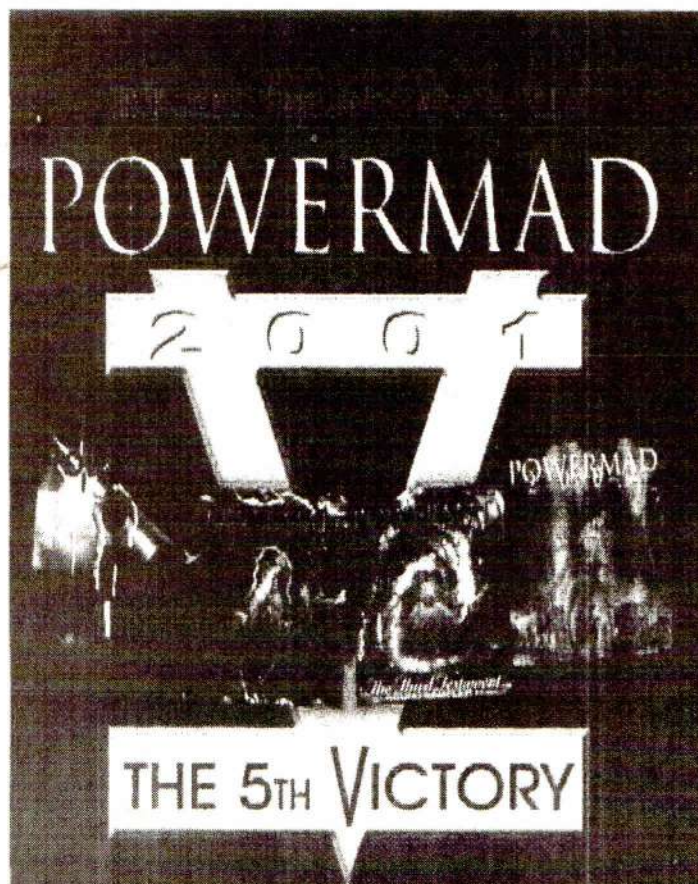
**LILITU... Memorial... 95...** One of my favorite U.S. underground bands is back with their second album, *Memorial*. Providing a killer follow up to *The Earth Gods* is not an easy task but somehow *Lilitu* have created a spectacular album. *Memorial* opens with "I Can Not Be Saved", with its dramatic music and somber vocals, then the aggressiveness kicks in. Within a minute or two *Lilitu* manages to show its diversity and eclectic styles which runs from melancholic atmospheres to abrasive black metal. The transitions between the two styles reveals a band deep in talent and maturity. Most of *Memorial's* tracks approach ten minutes in length but they are all enthralling journeys with depth and intensity. Imagine *Anathema* merging with intense black metal. *Lilitu* is a rare band which has the ability to create atmospheres without keyboards or female vocals dominating. Finally, a band with the talent and style to challenge *Opeth*. Vocally, *Lilitu* has mastered several styles to perfection. [www.lilitu.ejb.net](http://www.lilitu.ejb.net).

**LOST HORIZON... Awakening The World... 81...** The make up, the attire, the pompous names (Cosmic Antagonist, Preternatural Transmogrifier, etc.), and those metal screams reveal all the metal cliches and make Sweden's *Lost Horizon* difficult to digest. Sure, *Awakening the World* is not the most original power metal album in the world, and those galloping rhythms on songs like "Sworn in the Metal Wind" and "Denial of Fate" reek of *Iron Maiden* but they make their countrymates in *Hammerfall* sound like Britney Spears. Daniel Heiman, aka Etherial Mangnaminus is an excellent singer who can sing in an upper register, *Crimson Glory* style, or even go for a Eric Adams/ *Manowar* power. He has the ability to make average music sound exciting and even create some catchy choruses. *Awakening the World* has anthemic metal tunes galore, from "Perfect Warrior" to "The Kingdom of My Will", it all sounds meaningful. It remains to be seen if *Lost Horizon* will be one hit wonders like *Hammerfall* or if they will have the talent and perseverance of an *Iron Maiden* or a *Judas Priest*, but this is an impressive debut. **KOCH.**

**LOVE LIKE BLOOD... Chronology Of A Love Affair... 75...** Gothic rock veterans *Love Like Blood* release an album that chronicles the rise of goth in three separate, five year brackets. What they do is cover songs from an approximate time period of 1980-2000. The groundbreakers- *Joy Division*, *Bauhaus*, the *Cure*, the *Sisters Of Mercy*, *Christian Death*, and *Fields Of The Nephilim* are all paid homage via covers. Lesser known gothic bands the *Mission* and *Jesus And The Mary Chain* are also represented, along with the *Cult's* "Rain" to finish off the eighties. Other bands who are covered in *Love Like Blood* fashion are *Killing Joke*, *Paradise Lost*, *Lacrimosa*, *Type O Negative*, *Tiamat*, and *Marilyn Manson*. No one can dispute *Love Like Blood's* own inclusion of "Injustice". I give *Love Like Blood* credit for choosing some underrated, yet deserving bands and for also redoing these songs with their own style, but *Chronology of a Love Affair* is really just for those curious for a historical goth account. **HALL OF SERMON.**

**LUCIFUGUM... Instinct Prevalance... 81...** *Instinct Prevalance* is a ten track disc which features two early demos- *Path of Wolf and Fire of Hatred for Sky*. Leave it to the biography to summarize them: "the most primitive, ugly black metal from the Ukraine. No happy keyboards. Just very raw unholy black metal." Don't misinterpret, because *Lucifugum* does have a talent for diverse songwriting and they do use keyboards. *Nokturnal Mortum* fans will be interested to note that bassist Kniaz Vargoth and keyboardist Saturious were members of *Lucifugum* during these two blasphemous demos. The infamous and enigmatic Faunus is the vocalist on these two recordings. The raw, primal quality fits *Lucifugum's* style and *Instinct Prevalance* is an enjoyable listen despite its demo status. they have some cool wolf howls too. **DARK HORIZON.**

**LUCYFIRE... This Dollar Bill Saved My Life At Whitehorse... 72...** My recommendation is save your money for whitehorse because *Lucyfire* just isn't worth it. *Tiamat* frontman Johann Edlund has created a straight forward gothic tinged rock album that will put people to sleep. The brooding, melancholy vocals are trancelike but dull. He exhibits no emotion. Songs like "Baby Come On", "You Can Have All My Love Tonight", and "Mistress of the Night" reflect decadent party and sex attitude. To his credit, *Lucyfire* appears to be an outlet for Edlund to just rock out without having to put up with the demands of a new *Tiamat* record. *This Dollar Bill Saved My Life at Whitehorse* sounds robotic and synthetic, only the goth crowd could appreciate this. Surprisingly, *Lucyfire* perform an excellent cover of *Z.Z. Top's* "Sharp Dressed Man". *Tiamat* fans will find familiar elements but will be disappointed in the dull, lifeless music and the inane lyrics. **S.P.V.**



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**MAD CRUSADE... *Mad Crusade*... 86...** This is the self titled debut full length of Maryland's **Mad Crusade**. Having witnessed their excellent theatrical set at Powermad last year, I have anxiously awaited this release. *Mad Crusade* is basically four songs; the first three ("Second Earth", "Asylum", and "Veins of Ichor") hover around the nine minute mark, while "Phantasmagoria" is broken into eleven parts. The first three tracks reveal **Mad Crusade** to be an adventurous and original progressive rock band. The real gem is "Phantasmagoria". Reminding one in structure of the brilliant late 70's **Rush** albums, **Mad Crusade** create an epic masterpiece which sees them going from retro prog ("Inferno") to the more aggressive and bizarre ("The Witch"), then on to atmospheric moments, and contrasting explorative and up beat passages ("The Sleep of Reason"). For a debut effort, Sir Roland (guitars, keyboards, vocals), Gary Anson Leak (bass, keyboards, vocals), and Arnold Jerrell (drums, keyboards, vocals) have created a stunning piece of work. It is progressive in the truest sense of the term, yet never do they go overboard. [www.madcrusade.com](http://www.madcrusade.com).

**MAHARAHJ... *Repetition*... 87...** *Repetition* is Canada's **Maharahj**'s follow up to last year's full length debut, *Chapter One: The Decent*. *Repetition* is not an appropriate title because **Maharahj** offer a dynamic slab of aggressive metal with hardcore influences. As for technical ability, **Maharahj** rank among the best. They can go from calm and esoteric to in your face brutality with insane blast beats. *Repetition* is the next logical step in the band's evolution. Songs like "Cities and Script" have an added atmospheric element before some precision riffing and off beat drumming takes over. **Maharahj** teeter the edge of mayhem and control, thus making them a band which is unpredictable. It will be interesting to see what they're next move will be. There's a hysterical monologue at the end of the c.d. so don't turn it off too soon. **NOW OR NEVER**.

**MAMMOTH VOLUME... *A Single Book Of Songs*... 77...** With a name like **Mammoth Volume** you would expect something pretty heavy. Sweden's stoner rockers take the genre into a more experimental, retro, and even progressive direction. After a self titled debut and an impressive e.p., *Noara Dance, A Single Book of Songs* sees **Mammoth Volume** sounding more like a band from the early seventies than any of their peers. Occasionally the music gets heavy enough ("K") to inspire **Kyuss** comparisons, but for the most part the prog rock of "What Happened in Antioch" is more common ground. Guitarist/ keyboardist Daniel Gustafsson appears to be exploring his talents more than ever. Jorgen Andersson does not sound like a natural vocalist, but any limitations he uses to his advantage and adds a sense of rawness to the proceedings. *A Single Book of Songs* may be too adventurous for the audience most likely to pick this up. **MUSIC CARTEL**.

**MANGLED... *Most Painful Ways*... 82...** **Mangled** comes to me at the same time as **Exmortem** and some may not see the difference in the two death metal bands, but my preference is for **Mangled**. They have a small dose of that early nineties Stockholm sound (**Entombed**, **Dismember**) and they are the more listenable band. **Mangled** (did you expect something other than death metal?) hail from the brutal death metal European capital of the Netherlands (**Houwitser**, **Sinister**). *Most Painful Ways* lives up to those classic bands and add their own down tuned, yet unrelenting flavor. With all these rising death metal newcomers, Hammerheart Records just may become the new leaders of the scene. **Mangled**'s style is a little dirtier than most and it lends itself to their gore drenched image. A must for Dismember fans. **HAMMERHEART**.

**MARDUK... *La Grande Danse Macabre*... 83...** uh-oh. There's an **L.A. Guns** and a **Marduk** review in the same issue again... perhaps more hate mail from my Nazi loving friend in Westchester? We'll see. Sorry to disappoint you, but **Marduk**'s seventh release is perhaps their best yet. They've seemingly got over that phase during *Nightwing* and *Panzer Division* **Marduk** where they played as fast as they could and the one dimensional pace became burdensome. Don't fret too soon as songs like "Obedience Unto Death" and "Bonds of Unholy Matrimony" have the classic blasting through out and song titles like "Death Sex Ejaculation" and "Jesus Christ Sodomized" prove they haven't wimped out lyrically. *La Grande Danse Macabre* does an excellent job balancing the fast, blasting tracks with some slower, but still brutally heavy tracks. Fans of *Those of the Unlight* will be pleased to see they have returned to that style on several tracks. Legion still screams with unbridled fury and Fredrik Andersson again prove why he's one of the best drummers in extreme metal. **CENTURY MEDIA**.

**MASTERS OF REALITY... *Welcome To The Western Lodge*... 78...** Nine years since **Masters Of Reality** released their last studio record. Both their self titled debut and *Sunrise on the Sufferbus* were hailed as visionary rock albums. *Welcome to the Western Lodge* is once again the work of Chris Goss, musician turned producer extraordinaire. It is a trippy rock experience with an artsy air to it. "Moriah" has some bizarre playing and a blues vibe. Goss' trippy, dreamy vocal style gives **Masters Of Reality** its odd flair. The drums are the primary backbone as Goss' guitar playing provides a tapestry. "Why the Fly" has a retro/**Beatles** vibe that could've made it a huge hit if it were released thirty years ago. Goss is a talented man and necessary to keep rock 'n' roll from getting too stagnant, but *Welcome to the Western Lodge* is a disjointed listening experience. The lush yet raw soundscapes are interesting but provide little tension. With the exception of "Why the Fly", "It's Shit", and "The Great Spelunker" few songs have a lasting impact. **SPITFIRE**.

**MEGADETH... *The World Needs A Hero*... 82...** Sorry but what the world really needs is for **Megadeth** to leave behind the disappointing *Cryptic Writings* and *Risk* and release a killer record *The World Needs a Hero* is no *Rust in Peace* or *Countdown to Extinction* but it does have moments of brilliance. For every highlight there's an embarrassment. "Moto Psycho" and "1000 Times Goodbye" have the most inane lyrics of their career. Their revisit of "Hangar 18", here called "Return to Hangar" is pathetic. Fortunately, there are four or five songs that rank among their best yet. Returning to their early 90's sound, songs like "Burning Bridges", "Recipe for Hate/ Warhorse", and "Dread and the Fugitive Mind" recall the glory days of "This Was My Life", "Sweating Bullets", and even "Holy Wars/ The Punishment Due". "Recipe for Hate/ Warhorse" brings back the great riffs and adventurous song structures of the old days while "Dread and the Fugitive Mind" has a heavy, precision groove. New guitarist Al Pitrelli fits in nicely and Dave Mustaine's vocals are in fine form, especially on the subdued title track. Closing epic "When" has moments of brilliance as well. It's safe to say that **Megadeth** is back. **SANCTUARY**.

**MIMIC... *You First*... 83...** After a useless introduction, "Drown" kicks in with a nice heavy groove with clear but passionate vocals. **Mimic** are a band comprised of all females. They are as heavy musically as **Kittie** but much more listenable. Vocalist Tina E. Neal possesses a strong, powerful voice that goes from a Doro Pesch style to some more infrequent aggressive tones. *You First* consists of eight songs and is **Mimic**'s debut full length offering. The music is basically straight forward but not as trendy as you would expect. There is no false anger or aggression as everything flows nicely on *You First*. **Mimic** leans a little toward thrash metal and doesn't fall prey to the **Machine Head/ Sepultura/ Slipknot** rip offs that plague this scene. I was able to catch their energetic set at the New Jersey Metalfest, it won't take long before someone takes a chance on them. Wouldn't **Mimic** be a great name for a cover band? [www.mimic1.com](http://www.mimic1.com).

**MINUS... *Jesus Christ Bobby*... 90...** Now this album is incredible. **Minus** follow up their obscure debut with this diverse and unpredictable affair. The vocals range from clear, almost **Fear Factory** like monotonous tones to some of the most abrasive screaming you will ever hear. What really makes **Minus** special, besides the fact they are from Iceland, is the experimental edge to their music. Each song embodies twists and turns as you never know which direction this quintet is heading in. Sometimes it's furious anger, others they are surprisingly abstract and even melodic. If you thought bands like **Drowningman** and **Isis** were shocking wait until you hear **Minus**. This band can change gears in a blink of an eye. They even go into some cry baby funk guitar riffs without losing that unorthodox edge. The rhythm section is astoundingly tight and creative giving the band its backbone. Some people are calling *Jesus Christ Bobby* progressive hardcore- whatever it is, it's damn original and damn good. **VICTORY**.

**MONSTROSITY... *Enslaving The Masses*... 87...** One of the original bands to bring Florida death metal to the masses, **Monstrosity** has always been the most underrated band around. No one tours as much as they do and they have never released a disappointing album. *Enslaving the Masses* is a two disc set, one with remastered older material, the other a live disc. On disc one we are treated to five tracks recorded in 1991, four from 1990, and three from 1994, which were from their *Slaves and Masters* demo. Most are remastered versions of songs from their debut, *Imperial Doom*, and all feature the phenomenal vocals of former vocalist and current **Cannibal Corpse** frontman Corpsegrinder. The second disc features a dozen tracks recorded live with new vocalist Jason Avery and it includes their popular "Angel of Death" **Slayer** cover. In addition to the two discs you are also treated to excellent artwork and inner sleeve commentary. Only drummer Lee Harrison remains from the days of *Imperial Doom* but **Monstrosity** is stronger than ever and their mature, straight ahead death metal style will please all fans. **CONQUEST**.

**MORTICIAN... *Domain Of Death*... 80...** Will Rahmer (vocals/ bass) and Roger Beaujard (guitars, drum programming) return with another album of sample

laden, drum machine blasting guttural and unintelligible vocals and brutal death metal. While I preferred *Hacked Up for Barbecue* and *Zombie Apocalypse*, anyone who is into *Mortician* will not be disappointed in their sixth release. Expect your typical horror samples and lyrics like "hammer cracking open your skull" in twenty different variations. Yes indeed, *Mortician* can still lay claim to their self limiting most brutal band tag but isn't it becoming too predictable? Oddly enough, *Mortician* appears to be drawing new fans who are intrigued by their sound. *Domain of Death* managed to sound less industrial like when it comes to Roger's programming and Will still sounds inhuman. It's *Mortician*- what do you expect? **RELAPSE.**

**MURDER SQUAD... *Unsane Insane And Mentally Deranged... 82...*** Is this a new *Autopsy* record? What happens when you put two members each of the most popular early 90's Swedish death metal bands ever? *Unsane Insane and Mentally Deranged*. If you've been yearning for that old school *Left Hand Path* or *Like an Everflowing Stream* mixed with *Autopsy* sound, you've got it with *Murder Squad*. *Entombed* (guitarist Uffe Cederlund, drummer Peter Sjarvindh) and *Dismember* (vocalist Matti Karki, bassist Richard Cabeza) members combine for this twelve song old school Swedish death metal project. Most of the songs are short and it does appear to be a fun project. Also, several songs have a slow, dirty pace to them that almost comes across as doom, although *Unsane Insane and Mentally Deranged* is brutally heavy all the way through. *Murder Squad* have put out an album that's as good as anything *Dismember* has done. Song titles like "Bloodfreak", "Sent Home in a Box", and "Sacrificial Strangulation Beating and Rape" betray a horror cheesiness. **PAVEMENT.**

**MUSHROOMHEAD... *XX... 88...*** For years I heard about Cleveland's *Mushroomhead*. The rumors ranged from them being the most popular American extreme band to *Slipknot* ripping off their sound and stage apparel. While both are true to a certain extent, they forgot to mention that *Mushroomhead* are an amazing band. The eight musicians who comprise the band play a style of modern metal with the rhythmic sensibilities of *Slipknot* and the obvious influence of early nineties *Faith No More*. *Mushroomhead* has been around for years and have released three independent albums in the nineties, *Mushroomhead*, *Superbuick*, and *M3*. The thirteen songs from *XX* were compiled from their previous releases and makes this a killer record. The music is energetic and rhythmic, heavy with a groove and a wide array of vocal styles. This is a band that should be huge and this national debut should do it for them. It is amazing that a lot of these songs were written nearly ten years ago. *Mushroomhead* is still ahead of their time. **ECLIPSE.**

**MYOPIA... *Myopia... 82...*** With their self titled debut full length, *Myopia* prove there is more to Canadian brutal death metal than *Cryptopsy*. Joining bands like *Fleshgrind* and *Dying Fetus*, *Myopia* are full and powerful, with skilled musicians and a technical edge to their brutality. Dave The Butcher sings in a deep but comprehensible voice and adds a few sporadic screams for variety. I'd like to hear more of those high end screams like on "Onward to Extinction". All good brutal/ technical death metal bands (i.e. *Suffocation*) make good use of their bass players and *Myopia* are no exception. Dom Ierac locks down a groove despite the chaotic playing around him. *Myopia* go the straight ahead route when it comes to the lyrics. Songs like "Salvation in Death", "Concentration of Suffering", and "Scarred from the Inside" don't need dictionaries for translations. A humorous impalement and gore imagery in the artwork is not a representation of their lyrics. <http://listen.to/myopia>.

**MYRDDRAAL... *Blood On The Mountain... 80...*** The first release from Australia's Decius Productions is the debut full length of *Myrddraal*. This black metal band does an effective job of playing raw, old school black metal with some surprising twists along the way. As evidenced by "Daughter of Night" and "Blood on the Mountain", *Myrddraal* take their time developing their songs as both eclipse the ten minute mark. Their straight ahead, fast paced black metal aggression is typical, but their quiet, atmospheric moments make *Blood on the Mountain* a worthy listen- especially for old school, corpse painted black metal fans. The appropriately dark (full moon, mountains, forest at night time) cover sets the mood. Although I feel *Myrddraal*'s black metal style is quite average, there is a sincerity and passion to the proceedings- both from the band and the label. **DECIUS/ [www.deciousproductions.com](http://www.deciousproductions.com).**

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**MYRKSOG... *Death Machine*... 90...** Myrkskog's debut, *Death Machine*, was unveiled about a year ago but it never received a proper American release until now. *Death Machine* is a killer disc. The musicians create a modern sound thrash/death metal album with some unbelievable riffs. In addition to sharing guitarists (Destructhor), Zyklon and Myrkskog represent the future of death metal. Without resorting to gimmicks (the closing industrial remix of "Pilar Deconstruction" aside), Myrkskog use the guitars to create a whirlwind of riffs that is both brutal and beautiful. The drums create a war machine intensity, but the crushing, moving riffs take Myrkskog from *Blessed are the Sick* era of *Morbid Angel* and update the sound. Master V. sings in a rough, death metal voice but is not comparable to anyone out there. Be warned- the new *Emperor* had better be excellent because Myrkskog will be releasing the follow up to *Death Machine* later this year and they are the future of this style of metal. **CANDLELIGHT.**

**NEBRON... *The Message*... 80...** Nebron has one of the coolest, yet most primitive logos I've ever seen. *The Message* was originally a seven song demo recorded in 1997 and this new packaging includes four bonus songs recorded the following year, featuring a new rhythm section- bassist Csaba Sandor and drummer Tamas Sandor. This Hungarian black metal band play extreme and chaotic, with occasional melodic twists. Vocalist Balazs Levai sings in an underground, abrasive style and the newer tracks see guitarist Istvan Vass taking a more extreme and technical approach. This album shows Nebron has the potential to leave their mark in the storied black metal scene. Like some of those other non-Norwegian, non-Swedish black metal bands, there is something unique about them and they have developed a cult sound. Despite a primitive production, one can tell this band has something special to offer. **DARK HORIZON.**

**NIFELHEIM... *Servants Of Darkness*... 72...** Nifelheim's third blasphemous death/ thrash/ black metal extravaganza is their cult fans dream. It's raw, noisy, extreme and ugly and Sweden's Nifelheim will have it no other way. That is fine for their fans or people who worship bands like *Deathwitch*, *Cranium*, or *In Aeternum*; but for those who want a little substance or talent in their playing you must look elsewhere. No growth or change has occurred in Nifelheim. Hellbutcher, Tyrant, and Devastator are still spike and black leather bound and all the cliches of evil, blasphemous extreme metal are still present. In other words, *Servants of Darkness* is a chaotic mess. If *Motorhead* was a black metal band they would sound a little like this. Obviously, there is plenty of old *Bathory* and *Venom* influences. **BLACK SUN.**

**NO INNOCENT VICTIM... *Tipping The Scales*... 75...** California hardcore veterans *No Innocent Victim* unleash their fifth album of intense and brutal music. For fans of predictable old school hardcore, *Tipping the Scales* is the album for you. Each of the eleven tracks are straightforward and there is little to differentiate one track from the next, especially when it comes to the barking vocals. Their Christian influenced, positive lyrical approach is uplifting and songs like "Cast Down" have a groove to latch on to but *No Innocent Victim* is too predictable and add nothing new to the equation. Even bands like *Sick Of It All* have matured and experimented. A veteran band like *No Innocent Victim* should be able to come up with something better than this. Like their previous full length, *Flesh and Blood*, at least *Tipping the Scales* has some nice artwork. **VICTORY.**

**NOKTURNAL MORTUM... *Lunar Poetry*... 83...** *Lunar Poetry* is a reissue of *Nokturnal Mortum*'s debut from 1996. As they went on to release three more albums, including last year's universally hailed *Ne Christ*, many feel *Lunar Poetry* represents their best work. It has the cold grimness found in present day *Nokturnal Mortum* but is also more melodic and adventurous. An experimental *Celtic Frost* feel can be heard on a couple of tracks. Vocally *Lunar Poetry* is an expansive experience as tortured screams are offset by quiet, almost spoken passages. "Perun's Celestial Silver" and "Lunar Poetry" shows more melody and atmosphere than *Nokturnal Mortum* have shown on recent releases like *Ne Christ*. *Lunar Poetry* contains an impressive cover of *Celtic Frost*'s "Sorrows of the Moon". For those few who actually had *Lunar Poetry* (thank you Andreas for my copy years ago), there is an epic, ten minute plus bonus track called "Return of the Vampire Lord". **THE END.**

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**NOT SAVED... *Shit Sandwich*... 81...** *Shit Sandwich* is a six song e.p. from New York's **Not Saved**. Sporting some creepy image enhanced creatures, that gives no indication of the musical direction of **Not Saved** (although it does remind me of **Tad's *Infrared Riding Hood***). The music is hard to explain. It is raw, dirty and abrasive but certainly not unlistenable. **Kyuss'** debut, *Wretch*, could be used as a possible reference. Vocally, *Shit Sandwich* is harsh. "The Line No Man Wants to Cross" has a punk attitude, but "Crash and Burn" and "Excess" are more laid back and almost grooving in a stoner rock way. *Shit Sandwich* is the type of disc that captures the band in its true form. There's nothing pretty here. It's gritty and dirty, the charm lies in its spontaneous vibe. [www.notsaved.musicpage.com](http://www.notsaved.musicpage.com).

**NOVADRIVER... *Void*... 84...** From Detroit, Michigan comes another retro/ stoner rock band. Fortunately, **Novadriver** play this style better than most. Their debut, *Void*, sounds like the type of album that would have come out of the early seventies. There's a live, rocking vibe happening here. Fortunately, **Novadriver** take familiar elements of this style but they don't sound like anyone in particular- therefore, a rare, original band is in the making. They infiltrate a healthy dose of psychedelia in their energetic rock. Frontman Mark Miers has a penchant for rock 'n roll excitement and his enthusiasm makes up for his lacking distinguishable talent. There isn't much you would call metal on *Void*, even an old **Black Sabbath** influence isn't obvious and there aren't any cutting edge riffs but I'll be damned if **Novadriver** doesn't rock. Bands like this need to be heard before this style of music ceases to exist. **SMALL STONE**.

**OCANTHUS... *Ocanthus*... 79...** The impossibly gigantic breasted woman on the cover made me think Texas' **Ocanthus** were looking for Napalm Records to give them a deal. This self titled disc contains three songs of atmospheric metal. Led by the dual male/ female vocal approach of Danny Pitt and Michelle Cramer, *Ocanthus* has a dreamy feel while still rooted in cult doom/ gothic metal- even if it is buried in the songwriting. Unlike most bands who utilize dual vocals, the male vocals here are clean and surreal. The songs don't have any aggression but the structure allows the musicians to meander and express themselves through subtle arrangements (although "The Fall" has some heavy riffs). Closing track "Diana Rising" has almost a progressive feel and the guest keyboards of David Fialho sounds retro. There is room for growth but it is nice to be able to review an atmospheric metal band without resorting to your typical comparisons. [ocanthus02@aol.com](mailto:ocanthus02@aol.com).

**OHGR... *Welt*... 78...** Ohgr is the brainchild of none other than ex-Skinny Puppy frontman Ogre, with musical help from Mark Walk. *Welt* was originally supposed to be released on Rick Rubin's label in the mid 90's but due to legal hassles Ogre was forced to wait until now to re-record the eleven songs and release *Welt* through Spitfire Records. All the qualities that made his work with **Skinny Puppy**, **K.M.F.D.M.**, and **Pigface** as an industrial pioneer come together on this solo project. The result is varied and inconsistent. Some songs have the 80's **Skinny Puppy** vibe, while others see Ogre stepping away without relinquishing his industrial roots. "Pore" is undoubtedly the highlight here with Ogre's staccato vocalizations and upbeat techno speed. Roman Dirge creates the most unique pop up packaging ever put to digi pak. *Welt* has a varied feel but lacks a general direction. It maybe inconsistent but it is really nice to witness the return of Ogre's talents. **SPITFIRE**.

**ONTARIO BLUE... *Waiting For Rain*... 73...** **Ontario Blue**'s sophomore effort should be titled *Waiting for Something to Happen*. Don't, because it never does. Like most atmospheric dark wave acts, England's **Ontario Blue** are not the most enjoyable listen in the world. The somber, reflective atmospheres are better suited in an attentive setting. **Ontario Blue** is the solo work of **Endura's** Stephen Pennick. The opening titled track provides some eeriness via a spoken word from serial killer Dennis Nilsen's words. *Waiting for Rain* is difficult to digest. the prevailing theme seems to revolve around water, but not as a peaceful reference. There is some complex emotions to songs like "The Sins of Man" and "The Summoning". *Waiting for Rain* is something that is awesome to play before going to sleep... it will put you to sleep that is. **DISPLEASED**.

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**PAIN... *Rebirth...* 87...** Pain is the industrial metal solo project of **Hypocrisy's** Peter Tagtgren. He originally released **Pain's** self titled debut via Nuclear Blast back in 1996. *Rebirth* came out overseas in 1999 and I have only now been able to get my hands on it from the fine guys at Renegade records. *Rebirth* is a massive growth from Peter's work on his debut. The songs are deeper and have more feeling and emotion behind them. **Hypocrisy** fans will recognize Peter's vocals even though he isn't screaming as he does in **Hypocrisy**, his style is more subdued and complex on *Rebirth*. "Suicide Machine" is a multi dimensional excursion into electronic metal with lots of energy. Peter's vocal style has more range and variation while still in the electronic/ industrial metal realm. If **Pain** finds the right people to push them, they could be huge. Look for their third release later this year via Renegade. **STOCKHOLM.**

**PARAGON OF BEAUTY... *Comfort Me Infinity...* 88...** The simplistic art of this cover is a complete contrast to the range of emotions found on this open minded and dark disc. Germany's **Paragon Of Beauty** quickly follows up last fall's e.p., *Seraphine Far Gleam*, with this third release. The band is probably most closely associated with alternative rock, although Monesol's vocal range can go from subtle gothic means to some of the harshest screaming ever heard. This is no more apparent than on "One Step into Nothingness" which makes black metal vocalists sound like a joke when compared to the abrasiveness of Monesol's voice. The aggressive groove which precludes the screaming builds and relieves a tension few bands have ever duplicated. Songs like "Yonder thy Primrose Path, My Shuddered Face" and "A Drowning Day" integrate a melancholic depth and dangerous aggression. **Paragon Of Beauty** create lush atmospheres to help Monesol's expressive repertoire. He is the type of frontman that makes Maynard Keenan sound tame and this band is full of surprises. **PROPHECY.**

**PETE... *Pete...* 83...** This is the debut offering of New Jersey's **Pete**. It is an energetic disc which finds the band having contemporary sounds without following any major label trends. This is the type of album that translates well to disc. It's vivacious and live sounding. The band sounds dirty yet infectious. Like **Pearl Jam** ten years ago, Pete write dark, memorable songs but have no regards to studio polish. This disc is incredibly diverse. Opening with the ass kicking, almost like early **Aerosmith** "Sweet Daze", to the emphatic "Burn", to the mellow "Untied", and then the abrasive groove of "Cold Cocked"; **Pete** know how to shift gears and keep their listeners attention. As the disc wears on, songs like "Is She Coming Up" and "Bury Me" down have much impact but there's enough positive aspects to make these forgettable sometimes **Pete** sounds like **Alice In Chains** would if they had decided to rock out and pick up the pace. Bassist Lars Alverson is a star in the making as he comes up with some wickedly clever licks. **WARNER BROTHERS.**

**PLAYING ENEMY... *Cesarean...* 85...** Fans of **Kiss It Goodbye** will recognize some names in the Seattle based trio known as **Playing Enemy**. Their debut, *Cesarean*, is an intense, genre defying effort. The music and vocals are harsh and extreme but do not limit **Playing Enemy** to any preconceived boundaries. Like their label mates (**Isis**, **Burn It Down**), **Playing Enemy** utilize some odd time structures and have the ability to create some crazy musical patterns with discordant riffing. It's like **Neurosis** without any quiet moments. **Playing Enemy** do add some quirky, melodic playing with their chaotic songs, but they tend to keep the vocals harsh through out *Cesarean*. Demian Johnston's guitar playing is so busy you'd swear there were four guitarists on this disc. Like many bands of this style, **Playing Enemy** is not for easy listening. It demands that you lock in and hang on for a crazy ride. It's almost trance like despite the extremity. If you invest your time and attention in *Cesarean* you will be rewarded. **ESCAPE ARTIST.**

**POUNDHOUND... *Pineappleskunk...* 87...** **Kings X** frontman Doug Pinnick releases his second solo disc under the **Poundhound** banner. *Pineappleskunk* is a better record than his debut, *Massive Grooves*, and much better than **Kings X** latest disc, *Welcome Home Mr. Bulbous*, to be honest, it ranks among the best of any **Kings X** disc to date. Doug does it all on *Pineappleskunk* (except **Kings X** bandmates Jerry Gaskill who contributes the drums). The idiotic album cover must be ignored because you will be pleasantly surprised by the sixteen tracks you find inside. The grooves are everywhere. On "Jumping" there's some funk, "Mind" has some psychedelic, Hendrix like playing, "Atlanta" has that dark period vibe around **Kings X's** self titled album. Some songs are obviously reminiscent of **Kings X** but don't think they are subpar songs. Almost every track on *Pineappleskunk* is awesome. There is no filler, no indulgence, and Pinnick has written some of his most passionate and revealing lyrics ever. He should have titled it *Welcome Home Mr. Pinnick*. Let's hope **Kings X** can return with a killer record. **METAL BLADE.**

**POWERHOUSE... *What Lies Ahead...* 80...** **Powerhouse** is a California based hardcore band with a New York sound. They've been around since the early nineties and have played a role in bringing the traditional hardcore sound to the left coast. Fans of bands like **Madball**, **Agnostic Front**, and the **Cro-Mags** will find things to like in this album. Anthemic hardcore with some ballsy grooves and a tough attitude. Among the people in their line-up is ex-**Madball** drummer Walter Ryan. *What Lies Ahead* is a solid follow up to their *Pandemonium* seven inch and last year's debut full length, *No Regrets*. Songs like "Bullet Proof" have a confident attitude and some original ideas, while other tracks like "It's My Life" are old school, fast paced anthems. One positive aspect of **Powerhouse** is their willingness to change pace and write good, memorable songs. **RESURRECTION A.D.**

**POWER SYMPHONY... *Evillot...* 80...** If you are in possession of **Power Symphony's** excellent *Lightbringer* disc and have purchased *Evillot* wondering why it is more raw and less accomplished, it's because *Evillot* is a reissue of their debut. There are recognizable qualities to *Evillot* but many of the ideas are not as developed or refined as those on *Lightbringer*. Vocalist Michela D'Orlando is again in fine form and **Power Symphony**, like **Eldritch** and **White Skull** are one of the few Italian power metal bands to develop their own style. Most of the six tracks, especially "Inferno Suite", are of epic length and the double bass drums of original drummer Roberto Dussi gives added power. For those unfamiliar but curious, *Lightbringer* is a worthy purchase. If you enjoy that then seek out *Evillot*. There is little symphonic (except "Inferno Suite" at times) about **Power Symphony** but there is plenty of power. I eagerly await their next effort (not to mention some new photos of Michela- the best body in metal). **PAVEMENT.**

**PUYA... *Union...* 86...** **Puya's** third album is a winner. They may have many modern elements (**Sepultura/ Soulfly**) but they manage to add their own Latin influence and some incredibly catchy songs. Vocalist Sergio Curbelo has vastly improved since 1999's M.C.A. debut, *Fundamental*. He still rips out some aggressive verses but many of the choruses (especially "People" and "A Matter of Time") he sings with clarity and an infectious tone. **Puya** go from intensity to accessibility with remarkable ease. Unlike their peers, they know how to play their instruments and explore different textures. People like to hone in on their Latino influences, especially with their percussion but **Puya** is a lot more than a one trick pony. Speaking of those Latin elements, they work a lot better on *Union* and they sound more natural than they did on *Fundamental*. Step aside **Sepultura**, **Puya** has taken over your throne. **M.C.A.**

**QUIET RIOT... *Guilty Pleasures...* 72...** The classic (not original- that will only happen if someone finds a way to resurrect Randy Rhoads) line-up of Kevin DuBrow, Carlos Cavazo, Rudy Sarzo, and Frankie Banali reunited and had a semi-successful tour of the States. They have now recorded *Guilty Pleasures* and will have a high profile summer arena tour with **Poison**. Career wise, things haven't been this good since 1984, unfortunately, as far as the music goes, *Guilty Pleasures* is a low point. It sounds as if **Quiet Riot** is trying to rehash *Condition Critical* and *Metal Health* with second rate songs. You would expect more from these veterans. Following DuBrow's original departure in the mid eighties, **Quiet Riot** recorded a very good self titled album with **Rough Cutt** frontman Paul Shortino. DuBrow rejoined Cavazo for *Terrified* and *Down to the Bone*, two very hard to find albums that blow *Guilty Pleasures* away. They released a combination of new songs, cover songs, and live songs titled *Alive and Well* that wasn't bad in 1999. There will be people who like this, but it is predictable and lacks substance. **BODYGUARD.**

**REIGN OF TERROR... *Sacred Ground...* 83...** The **Reign Of Terror's** third release, *Sacred Ground*, is by far their best yet. Featuring the vocal talents of Mike Vescera (**Obsession**, ex-**Loudness**, ex-**Yngwie Malmsteen**, etc.) and the shredding of guitarist Joe Stump, the **Reign Of Terror** is sure to have a built in audience. The rhythm section has the diverse talents of **Event** members, Jay Rigney (bass) and Matt Scurfield (drums). Stump's Yngwie influence will surely remind listeners of *Alchemy* and *The Seventh Sign*, due to Vescera's identifiable vocals. While Stump gets to exhibit his vast skills on the instrumental "Paganini's Purgatory", his rapid fire approach usually doesn't take anything away from the songwriting on *Sacred Ground* but still leaves fans of his solo work happy. The classical influences and laid back heavy groove of "When Will We Know" gives a breather in between the relentless power metal of songs like "Save Me" and the **Deep Purple** influenced "Undercover". Mandatory for power metal fans. **LIMB.**

**REVEREND... *A Gathering Of Demons...* 85...** I was excited to see this in the mail. I heard David Wayne was reforming **Reverend** for a new e.p. but I didn't think I'd get a copy so quickly. Wayne formed **Reverend** in the late eighties after his departure from **Metal Church**, and they recorded a debut e.p. and two

full lengths (*Play God, World Won't Miss You*) before breaking up about ten years ago. I'm happy to report that *A Gathering of Demons* has that same old school thrash vibe (and even bass sound) as the old **Reverend**, despite another line-up overhaul. Of course, old school **Metal Church** fans will recognize and enjoy Wayne's "unimitatable style". The four songs here show a little growth but they will not disappoint fans of old **Reverend** or even **Metal Church**. The final track "Legion" will sound familiar as it is "Fake Healer" (*Blessing in Disguise*) with lyrics Wayne originally wrote for the **Metal Church** version of the song. While **Metal Church** hangs in limbo again, Wayne has not only reformed **Reverend**, but will also record a solo album under the name Wayne, which is said to sound like *The Dark* and it will be titled **Metal Church**. **NECK DAMAGE/ www.reverend.cx.**

**ROXX GANG... *Drinking T.N.T. And Smoking Dynamite... 79...*** With an album title like that you would expect dirty **AC/DC** inspired rock 'n roll. While **Roxx Gang** don't sound like **AC/DC** they do have that stripped down rock 'n roll vibe happening on this eight track disc. A cluttered production makes *Drinking T.N.T. and Smoking Dynamite* a burdensome listen at times, but it also helps support the blues flavoring of this disc. Fans of **Roxx Gang's** late eighties, early nineties albums will be happy to hear that this is more rocking than their previous effort, *Mojo Gurus*. There is more a 70's retro vibe as well and their cover of Bob Dylan's "Highway 61 Revisited" is appropriate. Some obvious references for **Roxx Gang** could be the **Hangmen**, **T-Rex**, or even **Hanoi Rocks** as they combine dirty blues with glam rock. Frontman Kevin Steele is a charismatic voice which helps recall this music's heyday about a decade ago. **PERRIS.**

**SACRED OATH... *A Crystal Vision... 85...*** **Sacred Oath** was originally formed by guitarist/ vocalist Rob Volpintesta and bassist Pete Altieri over fifteen years ago and *A Crystal Vision* is their lone contribution to metal so far. It was originally released back in 1988 and the band broke up before recording their second album. **Sacred Oath** is a must for fans of eighties metal, especially **Iron Maiden**, **Mercyful Fate**, and **Fates Warning**. The riffs are thrashy and powerful and Rob sings in the upper register, one of the few who could match King Diamond's falsetto. *A Crystal Vision* may sound a little dated today, but looking back it is amazing that this band did not become huge for that period. We also get four bonus tracks recorded in 1998, updated versions of "Two Powers", "Message to the Children", "The Invocation", and "The End". At the present time **Sacred Oath** is looking into playing at least one show on the East Coast in celebration of this reissue and there are whisperings of a new album possible. Sentinel Steel gives this album its proper due and many will be surprised when they hear what this band had to offer and what many have overlooked. **SENTINEL STEEL.**

**SAGA... *House Of Cards... 80...*** Canada's **Saga** is a band with a detailed and revered career that dates back to their self titled debut in 1978. Many may remember their early eighties hit "On the Loose" or their influence on such late eighties bands as New Jersey's **Prophet**. Amazingly, *House of Cards* (their thirteenth studio full length) still features its original line up. The recognizable and talented vocals of Michael Sadler, the powerful keyboards of Jim Gilmour, and Ian Crichton's fretwork have made **Saga** a band which has never compromised and continue to evolve without forsaking their seventies roots. Opening track "God Knows" is quintessential **Saga**. "Once in a Lifetime" is memorable and an emotional ballad. "That's How We Like It" has some cool guitar work and proves **Saga's** influence on such modern day progressive metal artists like **Dream Theater** and **Fates Warning**. Not even bands like **Yes** and **Kansas** can claim to have such a lengthy career without line-up changes or dissention. Nice cover. **S.P.V.**

**SEVENTH GATE... *Satan Rock... 76...*** With a title like *Satan Rock* one does not know exactly what to expect. Virginia's the **Seventh Gate** play heavy metal with heavy vocals and *Satan Rock* is what you get. Of course, the **Seventh Gate** are metal, not rock- but they don't fall into any genre specification. The recording on this four track disc is raw and underproduced. Maybe death metal is the closest to anything in particular on *Satan Rock*, especially "The Mary Shelley Song", on which vocalist Steven F. Kerchner II screams in a black metal style, although Nick Ellis apparently also adds some death grunts. I realize this is only a demo recording, but I don't see too many people interested in the **Seventh Gate**. It's very sloppy and has no direction. Let's see where they go from here. **lowendz@aol.com.**

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**SHADOWDANCE... Ageless... 85...** *Ageless* is the debut of Pennsylvania's progressive/ power metallers **Shadowdance**. The band was formed by guitarist Carlos Alvarez and drummer Jason Fraticelli, later joined by bassist Brad Stuart and vocalist Peter Donk (who isn't on this recording). The vocals were performed by Russ Friend and **Single Bullet Theory's** Mark Shveima Jr. helped out on "Gilded Cage", "Purge", and "Forever", as well as writing all the lyrics. "Gilded Cage" allowed Mark to explore some more melodic textures. *Ageless* is a lengthy disc (twelve songs, over seventy minutes) and each song is different than the next as **Shadowdance** explore different regions of metal. There are some heavy, complex and adventurous songs on here. Some songs are melodic with a progressive nature. **Shadowdance** may not have captured a definitive sound but *Ageless* shows a band growing into something special. Their open mindedness and incomparable songwriting should take them places in the future. It will be interesting to hear Donk's vocals and Travis Smith's artwork is again brilliant. **MONUMENTAL GROUP/ www.monumentalgroup.com.**

**SHADOW GALLERY... Legacy... 79...** **Shadow Gallery** is one of those bands that has a loyal following but little potential for bigger success. Since 1993 this Pennsylvania prog metal band has put out a new album every three years to critical acclaim. *Legacy*, like their previous release, *Tyranny*, is epic prog with some clever instrumentation and concepts. It starts off with "Cliffhanger 2", a thirteen minute excursion with some intense playing- it is the sequel to "Cliffhanger" from *Carved in Stone*. The four tracks that follow are in the five to seven minute range and have their movements, but there is something missing. *Legacy* lacks a sense of spontaity and there is little energy. The playing is top notch but doesn't have a sense of passion. Mike Baker is talented vocalist but doesn't provide much in the way of hooks. "First Light" closes *Legacy* as a nearly thirty five minute epic that doesn't go anywhere and is a burdensome listen. Fans of **Shadow Gallery** will probably not be disappointed, but *Legacy* is a demanding listen. **MAGNA CARTA.**

**SIGH... Imaginary Sonicscape... 92...** This band just gets better and better. Japan's **Sigh** have proven over the course of their previous four full lengths that they are a band open to experimentation and always offer something interesting. Vocalist/ bassist/ keyboardist Mirai Kawashima still keeps his vocals in a rough black/ death metal style but he never hinders the music. "Corspecky Angelfall" opens the album with a stoner rock vibe and once "Scarlet Dream" kicks in with its slow groove and subtly added electronics, it's clear that **Sigh** have taken things to the next level. Perhaps some **Samael** style has crept in? "Nietzschean Conspiracy" is a futuristic, totally original, and entralling listen. A song like this has never been recorded before. *Imaginary Sonicscape* isn't as abrasive or fast as this trio's previous work, but it is one of the most interesting and captivating albums you will ever hear. The mid pace works well for them to find a groove and veer off into other tangents. **CENTURY MEDIA.**

**SILENCER... Kozmos... 89...** "The cosmic power thrash has arrived- yes, indeed Keith, it has. Keith Spargo is the frontman for this modern thrash metal band and together with drummer Nick Seelinger, bassist Jeff Alexis, and guitarist Mat Botten, he has put together a very heavy, slightly technical album with some melodic hooks that is original and incomparable. Spargo is not the type of singer that would draw comparisons and he isn't head turning but he fits in perfectly with the heaviness of the music and gives **Silencer** a melodic edge. *Kozmos* features five songs of futuristic and powerful thrash. It has a great production and artwork that is better than what most labels put out. **Silencer** and **Malintent** are two bands that are essential to any metal fans collection. These bands are the future of metal. *Kozmos* is heavy but not too technical. "Industrial Command" and "Missing Hope" are well crafted, intense songs. **NIT/ www.silencer.cc.**

**SISTHEMA... The Fourth Discontinuity... 88...** **Sisthema's** self proclaimed "cyber thrash metal" is an energetic foray into the power metal style of **Meshuggah**. The guitars are fierce and precise, the drumming machine like, and unfortunately the vocals are also one dimensional. Massimo Pirazzoli's style of singing/ screaming is not as harsh of **Meshuggah's**, but it does get tiring over the course of a full length album. This music is so damn good that one can overlook this limiting aspect. Guitarist Lucio Minghetti explores some weird textures and some songs have a **Fear Factory** vibe ("Hydro"). Despite the aggression, **Sisthema** will probably also appeal to fans of bands like **Zero Hour** and **Darkane**. My only complaint is the repetitive nature. For a few songs, **Sisthema** is one of the best bands I've ever heard, but it can be too much of a good thing. Bands like **Sisthema** and **No Return** are bringing back thrash metal and taking it into the future. **NOISE.**

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**SKRAPE... *New Killer America... 88...*** What is it with Florida? Some of the best major label talent (**Crushdown**, **Super Transatlantic**, **Nonpoint**, etc.) is coming from there. A retarded album cover should not prevent people from buying this stunning debut. The music is heavy and groove oriented but unlike many of their contemporaries, **Skrape** have a soul and intense emotions emanating from *New Killer America*. The vocals are also a highlight. Some have compared them to Perry Farrell (**Janes Addiction**, **Porno For Pyros**), and though accurate, there's no denying this is metal. All twelve songs are strong, individual tracks. There is nothing weak on *New Killer America*. Some people are promoting **Skrape** as having ex-members of **Stuck Mojo** but to my knowledge one guy was in **Stuck Mojo** for a brief period of time before they broke up. Almost all these newer bands are good at what they do, none offer any real talent or originality. **Skrape** is a band that does both. Buy this. **R.C.A.**

**SKYFIRE... *Timeless Departure... 77...*** It is obvious where this young Swedish band gets their influences. Over the top **Children Of Bodom** keyboards and **In Flames** guitar melodies, with **At The Gates** rasp is the flavor of the day on *Timeless Departure*. The music by itself could easily pass for progressive power metal, but with Henrik Wenngren's rasp all over the place there is a distinct rift between the melodic music and the aggressive vocals. Like **Children Of Bodom**, the keyboards are almost the main focal point as guitarists Martin Hanner and Andreas Edlund performed them on disc. I'm sure there are people out there clamoring for more bands of this style, but there are many who wish the vocals were half as good and adventurous as the music. **HAMMERHEART.**

**SNAKE EYES... *The Journey Begins... 87...*** Here's a metal disc that will have fans of the N.W.O.B.H.M. clamoring for more. *The Journey Begins* is Canada's **Snake Eyes'** debut and already classic metal fans of bands from **Maiden** to **Saxon** are proclaiming them a favorite. Reminding me of another intelligent true metal upstart (**Graven Image**), **Snake Eyes** have a debut with plenty of diversity. In addition to the ten songs there are five bonus tracks. "King Guy" sounds like **Deep Purple** with Ted Nugent ripping on the guitar. "Sheet Metal" is a straight rocking metal tune. Even a ballad like "Dream Girl" sounds authentic and sincere. "Make My Day" would fit in perfectly in either the seventies or eighties and it plain rocks. Beautiful, mesmerizing artwork and a professional promotion makes this band sure to turn some heads. Hell, "19 B.C. Bylaw" recalls 70's era **Judas Priest**. True metal fans rejoice. There's finally a new band that you will love. [www.listen.to/snakeeyes](http://www.listen.to/snakeeyes).

**SOMBER... *Somber... 80...*** This self titled, eight song debut from Michigan's **Somber** was recorded live in the studio last December. While the result is raw and underproduced, a spontaneous and energetic vibe is captured. I'm not sure if **Somber** can be categorized. Their sound is certainly influenced by Swedish death metal (**At The Gates**, **In Flames**) but it is not as one dimensional as you would expect. Kerry Cripe can scream with a ferocious rasp but he will occasionally use some clean tones for variety, and even a black metal harshness. Musically, **Somber** is even harder to describe. Again, there is a Swedish influence, but also some thrash and some atmospheric moments too. This is a rough, live recording so it is not exactly clear how this would sound with a proper budget. Place **Somber** with bands like **Shadows Fall**, **Deep**, and **Darkest Hour** as American bands with a strong European influence. [www.somber.net](http://www.somber.net).

**SOULSCAR... *Abandoned... 82...*** Canada's **Soulscar** has been receiving some great responses from the press due to this debut recording. Their extreme thrash with a Swedish influence has had people declaring them a North American **Arch Enemy**. For now, **Soulscar** is the work of two musicians- Andrew Staehling (vocals, bass, guitars) and Chris Warunki (drums). While my version has some extra bonus tracks, the original c.d. contains six songs- two are instrumentals ("S.S.R.I." and "Ever Alone") and one cover (**Megadeth's** "This Was My Life"). **Soulscar** are still in their infant stages but one can hear unlimited potential. It will be interesting to see if Andrew and Chris branch out to find other musicians to help out or if they will continue as a solo project. "Your Absence My End" breaks the thrashing aggression with a cool mid tempo acoustic jam that shows **Soulscar** can explore their sound. [www.mp3.com/soulscar](http://www.mp3.com/soulscar).

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60md has nothing to do with trends or passing fads, but everything to do with a passion for music, whether it be experimental, brutal, vast or tight. **Sixty Miles Down** will follow wherever their heads, hearts and music take them.



**STABBING WESTWARD... *Stabbing Westward... 70...*** After separating from their major label following the excellent sounding but disappointing sales of *Darkest Days*, **Stabbing Westward** return with their fourth album. To most, they will forever be linked with the "Nine Inch Nails clones", **Filter** and **Gravity Kills**, but on **Stabbing Westward** they distance themselves from that trap with mixed results at best. Their self titled offering may be their most original release but it sounds lifeless and dull. The fast, energized industrial metal of *Wither Blister Burn and Peel*, *Ungod*, and *Darkest Days* is replaced with mellow, whiney songs and no direction. Only opening track, "So Far Away", and the haunting "Wasted" have any interesting parts. Songs like "Perfect" and "Happy" sound like mellow alternative rock. I loved some of their earlier work, like **Gravity Kills**, **Stabbing Westward** went unappreciated despite some kick ass songs. Let's hope this is simply a mid career crisis. **KOCH.**

**STEREOMUD... *Perfect Self... 87...*** New York's **Stereomud** has been making a name for themselves in this region and they have some familiar names in their line-up. Ex-**Life Of Agony** members, guitarist Joey Z. and drummer Dan Richardson, and ex-**Stuck Mojo** bassist Corey Lowery, along with guitarist John Fattoruso and vocalist Erik Rogers, constitute their line-up. Musically and visually, **Stereomud** have a typical modern sound (i.e. **Saliva**, **Linkin Park**, etc.) Rogers can go from more subtle tones ("Stepping Away") to aggressive mode ("Leave") with equal dexterity. Fans of **Life Of Agony** and **Stuck Mojo** will recognize Lowery's influence ("Don't Be Afraid", "Stepping Away") and a classic Joey Z. riff (circa *Ugly*) on "Old Man". Perhaps **Stereomud** is the result of veteran musicians taking the early to mid nineties roots into a modern arena, hopefully securing themselves the widespread popularity their previous bands deserved. By the way, there isn't a weak track on here. **LOUD.**

**STILLE VOLK... *Satyre Cornu... 75...*** *Satyre Cornu* is **Stille Volk's** third release of celtic/ medieval music that is an acquired taste. Holy Records is the home for **Stille Volk** and **Rajna**, both bands are on their third full length, and both play a distinctive brand of atmospheric music that has nothing to do with metal. Also, like **Rajna**, **Stille Volk** use bizarre and non traditional instruments and little to no vocals to translate their musical vision. Fans of their first two discs, *Hantaoma* and *Exuvies*, would be pleased to hear *Satyre Cornu* sounds similar yet expands the duos sound further. Somehow **Stille Volk** are able to sound relevant to the modern music scene without the cliches. There is a certain, intangible energy but ultimately, *Satyre Cornu* is a difficult listen and makes for decent background music. There's little to remember here and nothing that warrants repeated listens. **HOLY.**

**STRATOVARIUS... *Intermission... 78...*** *Intermission* represents a sabbatical for Finland's **Stratovarius** as they take a needed break after more than a decade together, eight studio full lengths, and constant touring. *Intermission* features fifteen songs of rare material. Unlike most compilations like this, *Intermission* is made up of almost all unavailable studio recordings. There are four new songs, mostly mellow and lacking passion. There are two **Rainbow** covers ("Kill the King" and "I Surrender") and a **Judas Priest** cover ("Bloodstone"), there is a live version of "Hunting High and Low", and seven songs which were previously available only in France and/or Japan. Of the new songs, "Will My Soul Ever Rest in Peace", "Falling into Fantasy", and "Requiem" are mellow and probably are too weak for a regular studio album. Only the pulse pumping "The Curtains are Falling" is worth the purchase, although this has another striking, colorful cover. What is it with those dolphins? See you in 2004. **NUCLEAR BLAST.**

**SUBTERFUGE... *Our Own Terms... 81...*** Is that a twisted variation of *South Park* on the cover? *Our Own Terms* is sixteen songs of aggressive Long Island hardcore/ punk. It's raw, nasty, and energetic. While **Subterfuge** are better suited for the *Under The Volcano* crowd there is a vitality and heaviness to this disc that can cross over to metal audiences. **Subterfuge** have done an awesome job of capturing the live sound to disc and they have the ability to make Long Island hardcore a strong scene again. It's nice to hear influences from the classic New York scene and no Swedish death metal and American modern/ technical hardcore. Songs like "Youth Prevail" and "Underhanded" have those catchy shout along choruses and often vocal lines are exchanged like old school **Biohazard**. **DIY/ www.subterfugekllhc.com.**

**SUNNY LEDFURD... *The White Disc... 79...*** After reading the bio and its rap rock cliches, I was expecting another **Limp Bizkit**. Meanwhile, the band talks about their love of Southern rock and how it influences their music and **Sunny Lefurd** have a home on the superior major label for heavy rock/ metal, M.C.A., so I had to give it a chance. There are heavy guitars and the aforementioned rock influence but the annoying rap/ rock hybrid spewed forth by Dugi is a tedious listen after awhile. Ironically, it's the heavy beats and no guitars of songs like "Pandemonium" that have more energy than the guitar driven numbers like "Nothings Enough". The inane lyrics of songs like "Pimping Ain't Easy", "Stoli's O", and "Weekend Shit Talkers" make them sound immature. Overall, this North Carolina quintet sounds like a band looking for a direction. **M.C.A.**

**TEMPEST... *Balance... 76...*** *Balance* is California's **Tempest's** third album of Celtic hard rock/ folk. They have been one of the few, if only, American bands to combine Ireland's traditional instruments with basic rock 'n roll. Frontman Lief Sorbye double with mandolin and Jim Hurley contribute fiddle and riq to **Tempest's** basic format. The bouncy folk vibe is an awkward experience. **Tempest** delves into some territorial traditional tunes- Scotland's "Captain Ward", Ireland's "Two Sisters", and Norway's "Villemann". *Balance* is the type of album that would be awesome in the many Irish pubs in the world, but as for easy listening it may be too loud. It isn't anything close to metal, so **Tempest** may not have a niche among listeners. In **Extremo** and **Skyclad** have a metal edge to them, **Tempest** fall into the trappings of basic folk. **MAGNA CARTA.**

**SVARTAHRID... *As The Sunrise Flickers... 77...*** **Svartahrid** follow up their acclaimed debut of Viking black metal, *Forthcoming Storm*, with *As The Sunrise Flickers*. It appears that **Svartahrid** is a side band for some members of **Mactatus** and they are not nearly as good. The songs are rooted in straight ahead black metal but the lyrics deal with typical ancient themes. The raspy, screaming vocals are up front in the mix- probably to cover the poor quality of the music. The pounding double bass barrage never ends and the guitars are too noisy for anything to stand out. *As the Sunrise Flickers* sounds like the type of album that would have come out about ten years ago. The nine tracks fail to distinguish themselves from one another and the pace is the repetitious for any memorable songs. There are many bands who do this much better. **NAPALM.**

**TIN MAN... *Dark Land... 84...*** *Dark Land* is a seven song offering from the East Coast alternative metal band **Tin Man**. I was able to witness their set at L'Amours opening up for the **Lynch Mob** and was quite impressed. They cross bands like **Alice In Chains** and **Pantera** into a musical groove and energy that should land them a record deal. *Dark Land* has some minor flaws but overall songs like "Indestructible" and the emotional complex and musically powerful. "Inside Yourself" more than make up for it. The repetitive and predictable "Common Ground" is the type of song that will turn people's heads. **Tin Man** have a more organic edge than bands like **Godsmack** and **Cold** and also offer enough variety and talent to please more demanding audiences. **Junoir's** vocals have an emotive edge that many modern bands lack. This is a band you will hear more about in the future. [www.tinmanband.com](http://www.tinmanband.com).

**TREE... *No Regrets No Remorse... 88...*** *Tree's* fifth release, *No Regrets No Remorse*, is easily their best yet. It's a heavy riff oriented, grooving disc highlighted by **River's** superior vocals and intelligent lyrics. **Tree** manages to sound relevant in today's metal scene, but still remain true to their roots. Unlike other bands of this punk/ hardcore/ metal scene, **Tree** will add some new twists and no two songs sound that same. Songs like "Redemption" have an old school vibe to them. There are some new versions of old songs like "A Lot to Fear" and "Live Life". For heavy groove rock, with contrasting clear and screamed vocals and a punk attitude- **Tree** is an essential band. *No Regrets No Remorse* exceeds all expectations and with songs like "Subdued" they've never sounded better. There's no reason why **Tree** can't be huge or radio darlings. They have managed to capture this sound without sacrificing their original ideals or vision. Don't miss them on their current tour with **Clutch**, **Murphy's Law**, and **V.O.D.** **WONDERDRUG.**

**TRICKY WOO... *Les Sables Magiques... 87...*** Canada's number one alternative export is back with their follow up to the massively successful *Sometimes I Cry*, *Les Sables Magiques*. **Tricky Woo** sound like a band coming from the seventies. Songs like "Lil-lay Bank Blues" and "Ring Sweet Mercy" sounds like they were recorded some thirty years ago, yet they have more energy and vivacity than almost anything out there today. Rare is the band to effectively bring back that sound and place it in the modern arena without sounding like something only your parents could like. Joining **Firebird** as two retro bands who are doing things right, **Tricky Woo** is a band that should not be ignored. They have the ability to change pace and throw in some unique surprises ("Beau Soleil"). **TEE PEE.**

**2 TON PREDATOR... *Boogie... 84...*** Death boogie that is. Sweden's **2 Ton Predator's** second album joins bands like **Lostsoulz**, **Jane Doe 69**, and **Grope** as the future breed of heavy groove metal. These bands have the modern groove but inject a dose of real heaviness that sometimes borders on **Pantera** like



**VISION OF DISORDER... From Bliss To Devastation... 88...** I can hear people complaining already. All those who followed the band through the nineties, including their two Roadrunner releases (*Vision of Disorder* and *Imprint*) will be shocked by their new sound. The same five members are still here, but in comes a new, updated and groove oriented sound. Just as **Earth Crisis** did with *Slither*, **Vision Of Disorder** are doing their own thing and relinquishing the stereotypes of what they should be. The guitars are heavier than most band you're heard. It's even a bit doomy. Think **Soundgarden** ("Rusty Cage"'s breakdown) on steroids. Vocalist Tim Williams gives one of the most diverse performances put to disc. From the catchiness of "Southbound" to the abrasive screaming on "From Bliss to Devastation", and all points in between (is that Phil Anselmo on "Downtime Misery"?). "Southbound" should be a massive hit. T.V.T. Records may be able to push **Vision Of Disorder** over the top like they did a few years ago with **Sevendust**. *From Bliss to Devastation* is a welcome change, it has plenty of surprises and they are still pretty damned heavy (maybe more so). Embrace the growth. T.V.T.

**WAR... We Are Total War... 72...** *We Are Total War* is a fourteen track compilation featuring almost all the songs from the black metal supergroup **War's** two releases. Aptly titled, *We Are Total War* takes seven tracks from each album, *We Are War* and *Total War*. Musically, **War** played a raw, aggressive style of black metal with old school flavor. The enigmatic team of All (vocals) and It (guitars), teamed up with guitarist Blackmoon and **Hypocrisy** (Mikael Hedlund, Lars Szoke, and Peter Tagtgren) for a band that should have been better than this. I'm not sure of the controversial record contract dispute between **War** and Necropolis Records but this compilation of out of print songs should appeal to some. Prevalent thought is that Necropolis Records had very right to do what they wanted with **War**. Oh well, buy **Aeon**- this mess is only for loyal underground black metallers anyway. Why can't we get some **Ophthalia** reissues?

**NECROPOLIS.**

**WARRIOR... The Code Of Life... 76...** California's **Warrior** has now officially release three albums, one for each of the last three decades; *Fighting for the Earth* (1985), *Ancient Future* (1998), and *The Code of Life* (2001). Fans of **Warrior's** classic debut will be disappointed knowing that vocalist Parrimore McCarty is now gone, although he is replaced by the talents of Rob Rock (ex-**Impelliteri**). *The Code of Life* is not a bad album overall. It fails to live up to the popular debut of its underrated follow up. Opening track "Day of Reckoning" is a metal classic in the making but it's average metal from there. Songs like "We Are One" and "Code of Life" have simplistic, redundant metal riffs and despite Rock's good performance, *The Code of Life* does not have any emotional impact. Guitarist Joe Floyd is the only mainstay and he's become better known for his engineering work with the legendary Rob Halford and Bruce Dickinson. Compared to that **Warrior** now seems like an after thought. **NUCLEAR BLAST.**

**WATERDOWN... Never Kill The Boy On The First Date... 85...** *Never Kill the Boy on the First Date* is the debut full length of Germany's **Waterdown**. Sporting a colorful, open minded cover, the music is a combination of melody and harshness. **Waterdown** fit nicely on a label with **Snapcase** and **Boy Sets Fire** in their ranks. The songs are quite catchy and listenable, even though Ingo can get quite harsh at times. He uses these direct contrasts, sometimes at the same time, giving *Never Kill the Boy on the First Date* an energetic and lively sound. The music has little to do with old school hardcore as **Waterdown** don't fall into any cliches. It can get quite heavy and groove oriented ("The One Thing"), but like their vocalists, they do not fall neatly into one pattern. **Waterdown** is a group of six veteran musicians putting their talents into a band that will soon be touring America and leaving a deep impact. **VICTORY.**

**WELLWATER CONSPIRACY... The Scroll And Its Combination... 75...** *The Scroll and its Combinations* is the third full length from Seattle's **Wellwater Conspiracy**. The band is led by **Pearl Jam/ ex-Soundgarden** drummer Matt Cameron and ex-**Monster Magnet** guitarist John McBain. Both musicians provide surrealistic vocals that work well with the psychedelic vibe of the music. *The Scroll and its Combination* is a disjointed effort as there is little flow or continuity to the music. Some may consider **Wellwater Conspiracy's** artwork flavors intriguing, but there is little here to grab the listener's attention and **Wellwater Conspiracy** rarely lose the alternative vibe. Ex-**Soundgarden** guitarist Kim Thayil helps out on "C Myself and Eye" and "The Scroll", while **Pearl Jam's** Eddie Vedder sings "Felicity's Surprise". While **Wellwater Conspiracy** will be of interest for fans of **Soundgarden**, **Pearl Jam**, and old **Monster Magnet** they may be disappointed. T.V.T.

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AVERSE SEFIRA



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**WINDS... *Of Entity And Mind*... 84...** Winds is a new Norwegian band with members from **Mayhem**, the **Kovenant**, and **Arcturus** but sound nothing like them. Their debut offering, the five song and twenty minute plus *Of Entity and Mind* is a trippy voyage more akin to prog metal. There is no aggression to **Winds** and this allows legendary drummer Hellhammer the chance to branch out. The vocals are clear and sometimes a little bizarre in that **Arcturus/ Ved Buens Ende** way. Lyrically, **Winds** take a new approach as the concept "is an assemblage of many different aspects of intellect and emotions, tied together by a philosophical feel placed in an almost fantasy like setting." Perhaps most impressive is the beautiful shredding of guitarist Carl August Tidemann and the keyboard flourishes of Andy Winter. *Of Entity and Mind* has a weird feeling, more progressive than anything. I'm curious to see what directions a full length will take them. **AVANTGARDE.**

**WITHERED EARTH... *Into The Deepest Wounds*... 88...** Upstate New York death metallers **Withered Earth** follow up their mediocre debut, *Forgotten Sunrise*, with this impressive disc. *Into the Deepest Wounds* opens with their most original and offbeat song, "Remnants of Unfruitful Existence". The rest of the album is not so typical either. **Withered Earth** take traditional elements of death metal and add their own twist to it. The pace is varied, but always vicious and the production has vastly improved. **Withered Earth** have the uncanny ability to allow space for their musicians to shine. Songs like "False Emotion Strain" slow to a slithering creepiness. "Into the Deepest Wounds" has some bizarre stop and go rhythms and overall there is a quirkiness to the music. Adam Bonacci tends to keep his vocals harsh and powerful, rarely straying from the death metal lows but also utilizing a raspy style. The music is top notch as **Withered Earth** prove to be the most interesting and unpredictable death metal bands to come around. **OLYMPIC.**

**WITHIN TEARS... *Moments Of Life*... 85...** Chapter one of Brooklyn's newest atmospheric doom sensations **Within Tears** has begun. New York has bred some of the best this genre has to offer (**Divine Silence**, **Grey Skies Fallen**, **Evoken**, etc.) and now we get **Within Tears**. Led by Anthony Lauer (vocals, guitars, bass, keyboards, programming) and vocalist Sal Sgroi, **Within Tears** play doom metal like old **My Dying Bride** and **Anathema**. The vocals are in the death metal vein and the pace is prodding in an **Evoken** manner but **Within Tears** are open minded enough to make each song stand out on its own. *Moments of Life* contains six songs. Four originals, in the seven minute range, an intro, and a cover of **Candlemass'** "Solitude". The vocals range from deep death tones to deep gothic ("Empty") and the atmosphere is always somber. Minimal use of female vocals and keyboards, and an emphasis on heavy guitars make this a metal album with ties to the early nineties. [www.withintears.virtualave.net](http://www.withintears.virtualave.net).

**WIZARD... *Head Of The Deceiver*... 82...** **Wizard** (not to be confused with Brazil's **Wizards** or Finland's **Wizzard**) return with their fourth album, *Head of the Deceiver*. Fans of **Manowar**, **Grave Digger**, and the like should take notice but **Wizard** is all about true power metal. With the exception of "True Metal" and "Defenders of Metal", *Head of the Deceiver* sees **Wizard** becoming less **Manowar** like (i.e. "Hammer Bow Axe and Sword" and "Spill the Blood of Our Enemies") from their previous releases, *Bound by Metal* and *Battle of Metal*. The vocals have less character and he unleashes less upper range screams compared to the early albums, but overall *Head of the Deceiver* is a true metallers dream. Fast paced, powerful sing along choruses, and old school themes will make **Hammerfall** fans blush with embarrassment. Overall, it's predictable and redundant but **Wizard** does a good job showing their sincerity and don't embarrass themselves. Many people may not realize this is their fourth disc and *Sons of Darkness* appeared back in 1995, thus making them veterans. **LIMB.**

**ZAO... *Zao*... 87...** This self titled effort is **Zao's** fourth release and their most well rounded yet. With drummer Jesse Smith the only remaining original member (he also contributes vocals, guitars, bass, keyboards, and programming). "5 Year Winter" kicks off in typical **Zao** fashion but the introspective instrumental which follows, "Alive is Dead", is a sign of experimental things to come. "Witchhunter" has acoustic guitar, programmed percussion, and dreamy vocals, while "A Tool to Scream" and "Trashcanhands" have a harshness normally associated with black metal or even grindcore. "The Dreams That Don't Come True" contrasts melodic moments with intense extremity, **Zao** proves they can actually intertwine the two into an unpredictable and explosive structure. Despite a revolving line-up, **Zao** continue to prove to be extreme music innovators and they've made contemporaries like **Cave In** sound pathetic. **SOLID STATE.**

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#### VARIOUS ARTISTS:

**A GUITAR ODYSSEY: Tribute To Yngwie Malmsteen... 83...** Finally, a tribute with worthy kick ass bands. the best Swedish progressive/ power metallers, including **Treasure Land, Stormwind, Pathos, Mayadome, Destiny, Narnia, and Evergrey** all are among thirteen artists to pay homage to Sweden's ultimate fretmaster, Yngwie Malmsteen. The songs on *A Guitar Odyssey* include three from *No Parole from Rock 'n Roll* when he was in **Alcatraz**, two from *Rising Force*, three from *Maching Out*, two from *Trilogy*, one from *Odyssey*, and one from *Eclipse*. Other artists who appear are Chris Amott, **Wicked Ways, Firewind, Daniel L. Dalley And Power, Mike Chlasciak, and Mattias Eklundh** who contribute an original tribute to Yngwie. *A Guitar Odyssey* proves that fret men like Chris Amott, Jonas Hornquist, Fredrik Kjorling, Mike Chlasciak, and Carljohan Grimmark have the chops to match the master. **DWELL.**

**BEAUTY IN DARKNESS... Volume 5... 83...** This version of *Beauty in Darkness* is perhaps the best yet. Several bands on here are even unknown to me. Among them are the **69 Eyes, L'ame Immortelle, Project Pitchfork, Silke Bischoff, Mandragora Scream, and Tapping The Vein.** Some of the best known bands on this eighteen song compilation include **Dimmu Borgir, Therion, Theatre Of Tragedy, Amorphis, Nevermore, Lacuna Coil, Crematory, Within Temptation, and Love Like Blood.** Newer bands like **Lucyfire, To/Die/For, and Entwine** have representation as well. *Volume 5* appears to highlight the gothic and industrial bands more than any other, even **Dimmu Borgir's** track has a gothic feel. **NUCLEAR BLAST.**

**I AM VENGEANCE... 82...** This is the soundtrack for the independent horror film debut of filmmaker Richard Anasky. Meteor City has compiled some of the best known (**Sheavy, Las Cruces, Count Raven**) and unknown (**Doomsday Gouvenment, the Awesome Machine, Blood Farmers**) doom and stoner rock bands as they offer some exclusive tracks intercut with some film dialogue. The overall vibe is consistent as fans of the genre will enjoy the sixteen tracks here and it is a good representation for people who may be unfamiliar with Meteor City's doom/ stoner rock speciality. With tracks like **Doomsday Gouvenment's** "I Am Vengeance", **Sheavy's** "Sea of Tomorrow", and **Count Raven's** "Scream", it sounds like **Ozzy Osbourne's** been resurrected in his prime. **Las Cruces'** "In My Sadness" is perhaps their doomiest track yet. If only all compilations were this inventive and also serve as an accurate representation of a label's ideals. **METEOR CITY.**

**LEONARDO... The Absolute Man... 81...** This is "an account of the life of Leonardo Da Vinci- written by the brilliant Trent Gardner (**Magellan**)." Another in a recent trend of massive operatic concept albums. Gardner uses arrangements that range from classical music to progressive metal. **Dream Theater's** James LaBrie plays Leonardo Da Vinci and gets the bulk of the singing. He is joined by renowned artists such as **Kansas' Steve Walsh, Ice Age's Josh Pincus, Shadow Gallery's Mike Baker, Mastermind's Lisa Bouchelle, and Under The Sun's Chris Shyack.** Trent's (keyboards) musicians include **Jeremy Colson, guitarist Patrick Reyes, and bassist Steve Reyes.** LaBrie puts forth a stellar performance and gives the needed theatrical edge to the proceedings. The classical interludes are a bit excessive, but the vocals contain some of the most fascinating melodies, harmonies, and duets ever put on disc. This is an album that takes time and concentration to digest but one must marvel at Trent Gardner's latest achievement. **MAGNA CARTA.**

**METAL DREAMS 3... 75...** Wasn't it just a few months ago that they released the second *Metal Dreams*? While 3 sports the same cover- this time it's in a yellow hue. This is an odd compilation because all seventeen bands are established and any real metal fan should either own or have heard almost all the songs here. I think every track has been previously released. Anyway, if you must know, here are the bands with songs on *Metal Dreams 3* (in track order): **Hammerfall, Amorphis, Helloween, Stratovarius, Anathema, Primal Fear, Crematory, Nightwish, Narnia, Orphanage, Iced Earth, Lacuna Coil, the Gathering, Paradise Lost, Nevermore, Opeth, and Orphaned Land.** The only reason I can see for promoting this compilation is as a recommendation for someone who knows little to nothing about metal but is curious. **NUCLEAR BLAST.**

**PROPHECY PRODUCTIONS... To Magic 2... 88...** Germany's Prophecy Productions is home to some of the most experimental, exhilarating, and unknown bands from Europe. Thus, a fifteen track compilation featuring bands from their diverse roster is an intelligent move. Some of the best metal around is found here (**Dornenreich, Paragon Of Beauty**). For those familiar with Prophecy's releases there are three new bands here- the gothic metal of the **Vision Bleak**, the mellow, atmospheric electronics of **S.O.T.S.**, and the highly anticipated **Of The Wand And The Moon.** Exciting and innovative acts like **Leakh, Empyrium, and Canaan** are here as is the aggressive **Blazing Eternity**, and better known veterans **Bethlehem** and **In The Woods.** To round things out are **Orplid, Naervaer, and Tenhi.** In a short period of time, Prophecy Productions has developed a dark, thought provoking, and unpredictable image. Some bands are certainly an acquired taste but no label has as many unpredictable and forward thinking artists as this one. **PROPHECY.**

**SEPULCHRAL FEAST... A Tribute To Sepultura... 78...** *Sepulchral Feast* was originally released by Black Sun Records but in 1998 but its reissue is the result of a new licensing deal arranged between the Swedish label and Century Media. Almost all the tracks are from the eighties version of *Sepultura*, and *Chaos A.D.* era. Among the bands featured are **Sacramentum, Deathwitch, Mystifier, Swordmaster, Dimension Zero, Lord Belial, Defleshed, Impious, Children Of Bodom, the Crown, Exhumation, Gooseflesh, Slavestate, Gardenian, and Denial.** The versions are raw, aggressive, and fast with a Swedish flavor. The packaging is nicely laid out with each band receiving a panel and a photo. I'm sick of tributes. **CENTURY MEDIA.**

**SHOW NO MERCY... Tribute To W.A.S.P... 70...** Another Dwell Tribute, another annoying **Aurora Borealis** track! Please, I just want to hear an original once. Some killer bands appear on *Show No Mercy*, it's a shame that people will not hear originals from bands like **Lilitu, Seven Witches, and Noctuary.** Underground bands, many of whom have previously showcased covers on Dwell tributes; **Black Earth, Soulless, Syn, Blasphemy Divine, Krueger, Venereal Disease, Mystifier, and Defekt** all appear, as do, California power metallers **Abattoir** and **New Eden.** **W.A.S.P.** has released so many live albums and best of compilations that a tribute like this is unnecessary. Some day we will see a label put together a tribute record to tribute records. Hell, **Aurora Borealis** could release at least one album with all covers they've done. **DWELL.**

**THE WHEEL OF TIME... 79...** This is a soundtrack for the *Wheel of Time*, with "music inspired by Robert Jordan's best selling series 'The Wheel of Time'". The cover art is medieval and exquisite. The *Wheel of Time* is the solo work of Robert Berry. It is an enchanting soundtrack that defies categorization. Berry gives the music an interesting vibe as songs are not overbearing nor subtle. **Tempest's** Lief Sorbye adds mandolin and Michael Mullen violin for some color. The only vocals appear on "The Aiel Approach" (Andy Frazier) and "Ladies of the Tower" (**Mastermind's** Lisa Bouchelle). The *Wheel of Time* is an interesting concept, but one must wonder what audience they will be able to grab. It's not even really progressive. There's no denying Berry's talent, but there's not much in the way of songs. **MAGNA CARTA.**

## 5 String Bassist (low B) and Female Screamer Needed

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## 5 String Bassist (low B) and Female Screamer Needed

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**Interview with American label boss Marco Barbieri****In your opinion, what does Century Media represent in the current state of metal?**

All that we're trying to accomplish with Century Media is establishing a kick-ass metal label. Century Media encompasses the entire extreme scene of metal highlighting some of the best acts from all over the world. We don't follow trends but instead try and start them by championing underground music that should be heard and appreciated by more people and giving bands a chance to be creative and get their art out there while making available quality heavy music to fans longing for it.

**How has Century Media grown since the beginning?**

It's been pretty monumental. Century Media was started in the late Eighties by Robert Kampf (then singer of the German thrash band **Despair**) as an outlet to release his band's music. In turn he began releasing records from his friends' bands and it just began to take flight. Robert enjoyed the business side so much that he eventually quit his band after their debut and concentrated solely on developing the careers of others. In 1991 they opened the US office and it started with quite a bang as volatile releases from death metal stalwarts like **Morgoth**, **Unleashed**, **Grave** and **Asphyx** were issued and did very well in the then burgeoning death metal scene. Regretfully, yet honestly, I feel Century Media lost their way around '93 not really capitalizing on some of these early successes and at the same time not establishing any new ones to take their place until a few years later. In mid- to late- '94 I think things began to shift and change with the licenses of key black metal originators like **Emperor** and **Mayhem** and the evolution/progression of **Tiamat** with their groundbreaking *Wildhoney* album. This European style of gothic/doom natured, atmospheric metal vibe swept throughout the ranks and soon Century Media was once again at the cutting edge with a stable of unique artists like **Samael**, **Moonspell**, the **Gathering** and **Sentenced** while developing new domestic talent like **Stuck Mojo**, **Iced Earth**, **Nevermore**, **Eyehategod** and **Strapping Young Lad**. In between these two things key additions to the staff in the shape of journalists Borivoj Krgin, Ula Gehret and yours truly was also key, in hindsight, to re-establishing Century Media and its roster. Since then, we've just tried to acquire the best bands and develop them through aggressive marketing and touring and in turn we've grown from a staff of six to one of thirty four employees in five years so the momentum is unbelievable but it's been a lot of hard work, energy, emotion and in turn a very rewarding and fun experience.

**Why has Century Media been so successful through the years while others have failed?**

I've sometimes wondered the same thing and always just attributed it to common sense but over the years I've not only found a lack of that but from all of our experiences we're able to see things coming and know how to best deal with the situations. I also feel that we have our priorities in the right place. We are all music fans first, and business people second. We have every best intention in every decision we make whether it's for the band or the fans and we've tried to learn from other people's and our own mistakes. Also, any profit generated by the company has always been reinvested back in the company via additions to the staff, better bands or greater marketing abilities.

**Explain your support for metal music in general, you cannot pick up anything to do with metal without seeing Century Media supporting it - you have been my biggest entry supporter from the start.**

You made your point exactly. We are a metal label and we support the metal scene. In order to accomplish our jobs we need to be everywhere - we should be everywhere. We try and be very aggressive in our genre-specific marketing and we have tight relationships and a great knowledge of this scene and subculture. Naturally we are always trying to unearth new opportunities to spread the word about us, and more importantly the bands, whether that's in the underground or in any mainstream outlet available to us. As far as our advertising support and commitment we release a lot of records and we need to let the scene know what's available. At the same time a lot of these outlets work on shoestring budgets and we want and need to do our part in supporting them via these ads to ensure they have the funds necessary to stay alive. It's amazing the number of labels out there who will neglect advertising and when they do many times they won't even pay - I just don't understand that line of thinking.

**What has been Century Media's biggest failures and accomplishments through the years?**

Our greatest accomplishment is continually fighting against adversity and the negative stigma given to heavy metal and independent labels by both the mainstream audience and the industry as a whole. Our story is one of success and all of the people who have and do work here and all of the bands who've issued their talents via the label have helped in defining the label and building upon each prior small success to create one huge triumph. We are proud to be celebrating our U.S. office's ten year anniversary and to reflect where we've come from and what goals we still have in our sites to accomplish. Generally our failures are few as in this scene you can't make too many mistakes and stay in business or remain credible. Naturally there were some rough spots in the earlier days and looking back I'm sure there are probably some questionable releases but thankfully no big mistakes spring to mind.

**Century Media has made huge strides in the past year - discuss your recent moves and what we can expect from C.M. in the near future?**

Probably the main thing was our union with Nuclear Blast Records who closed their office in Philadelphia at the end of 2000 and gave us the right to market and sell their bands/records. The initial integration was rough for a couple of months but since it's been very smooth and rewarding and we've had some great success with **Savatage**, **Dimmu Borgir**, **Primal Fear**, **Soilwork** and **Children Of Bodom**. We've been open to assisting other outside labels in the past few years whether it's a full integration like Nuclear Blast or Noise or just a manufacturing/distribution deal like we have with Inside Out Music America or Olympic Recordings. Regardless, there are all members of the Century Family and we enjoy utilizing the skills we've learned to assist other labels and bands in furthering themselves. I'm sure this is an area we will continue in, which is evident by recent deals with War Music, Black Sun and Spikefarm, but we need to be careful so we maintain the quality of releases and the level of promotion that people have come to expect from Century Media while not competing with ourselves in this same small marketplace. I still have tons of untapped ideas in store for Century Media but it is hard to implement them all with limited resources, the abundant amount of work everyday and a small staff but we do a couple new adventurous things every year.

**What is your role at Century Media? Discuss how your staff works behind the scenes.**

My title at Century Media is Vice-President/General Manager and it seems my job duties change a little bit every year as the company is always changing. Basically I'm the guy on top for the North American office and all decisions are run by me. I oversee everyone's work (both bands' and staff's) and orchestrate everything to make sure it all fits into the grand plan and it's being carried out to the fullest. When I started 6 years ago there were 6 people on staff so I handles a lot of the press, radio and advertising duties myself but now that the company has over 30 employees in the US I've been able to take a more administrative/managerial position. The staff works hard and everyone is specialized in their department and puts a lot of hard work, long hours, energy and emotion in promoting these bands and heavy metal in general. We have a real good working environment that is both relaxed and friendly yet responsible and productive.

Discography: (1991)... MORGOTH eternal fall... DEMOLITION HAMMER tortured existence... ICED EARTH iced earth... DESPAIR decay of humanity... ASPHYX the rack... VARIOUS ARTISTS in the eyes of death... MORGOTH cursed... POLTERGEIST behind my mask... UNLEASHED where no life dwells... RUMBLE MILITIA stop violence and madness... GRAVE into the grave... TIAMAT the astral sleep... HEXX morbid reality (1992)... DESPAIR beyond all reason... ASPHYX crush the cenotaph... DEMOLITION HAMMER epidemic of violence... ICED EARTH night of stormrider... CRO-MAGS alpha omega...

UNLEASHED shadows in the deep... MUCKY PUP act of faith... GRAVE you'll never see... INVINCIBLE SPIRIT can sex be sin... TIAMAT clouds... ASPHYX last one on earth... COMECON megatrends in brutality... SODOM tapping the vein... EYEHATEGOD in the name of suffering... SAMAEL blood ritual... SOLSTICE solstice... TRAGIC ROMANCE cancel the future... GOD IS LSD spirit of suicide... CHRISTIAN DEATH Jesus points the bone at you... LEMMING PROJECT hate and despair... ONLY LIVING WITNESS prone mortal form... STILLBORN state of disconnection... SENTENCED north from here... GRAVEYARD RODEO sowing in the discord of man... MORGOTH odium... EYEHATEGOD take as needed for pain... CRO-MAGS near death experience... UNLEASHED across the open sea... MERCYLESS coloured funeral... COMECON european conspiracies... STILLBORN permanent solution... VARIOUS ARTISTS intricate... (1994)... CHAOS U.K. 100% two fingers in the air... GRAVE and here i die satisfied... UNLEASHED live in vienna... SAMAEL ceremony of opposites... MUCKY PUP lemonade... ASPHYX asphyx... TIAMAT live in israel... ENCHANTMENT dance the marble naked... MAYHEM de mysteriis dom sathanas... PETER AND THE TEST TUBE BABIES pissed and proud... GRAVE soulless... EMPEROR/ ENSLAVED hordanes land... PUNCTURE puncture... GRAVEYARD RODEO on the verge... DEMOLITION HAMMER time bomb... PENANCE parallel corners... ACCUSER reflections... TOXIC REASONS independence... VARIOUS ARTISTS for a fistful of yens... THE BUSINESS keep the faith... ENGLISH DOGS bow to none... TIAMAT wildhoney... INSULT TO INJURY point of this... (1995)... SENTENCED amok... GRIEF welcome to grief... NEVERMORE nevermore... EMPEROR in the night side eclipse... STUCK MOJO snapping necks... UNLEASHED victory... STRAPPING YOUNG LAD heavy as a really heavy thing... ICED EARTH burnt offerings... RELEASE end of the light... SAMAEL rebellion... TOXIC REASONS no peace in our time... VERBAL ABUSE red white and violent... 454 BIG BLOCK your Jesus... MOONSPELL wolfheart... THE GATHERING mandylin... SENTENCED love and death... CHRISTIAN DEATH amen... HOSTILITY brick... MY OWN VICTIM burning inside... (1996) MERAUDER master killer... TROUBLE plastic green head... ONLY LIVING WITNESS innocents... EYEHATEGOD dopesick... CHUM dead to the world... VARIOUS ARTISTS Identity 2... GRAVE hating life... TURMOIL from bleeding hands... ASPHYX god cries... MADBALL ball of destruction... ICED EARTH the dark saga... NEVERMORE in memory... ROTTING CHRIST triarchy of the lost lovers... MOONSPELL irreligious... SAMAEL passage... STUCK MOJO pigwalk... MORGOTH feel sorry for the fanatic... NEVERMORE the politics of ecstasy... (1997)... ARCTURUS aspera hiems symphonia... VARIOUS ARTISTS identity 3... VARIOUS ARTISTS tribute to Judas priest... STRAPPING YOUNG LAD city... SENTENCED down... MY OWN VICTIM unjustified... PAINGOD paingod... OLD MANS CHILD born of the flickering... UNLEASHED eastern blood live... ALASTIS the other side... ULVER the madrigal of night... SATYRICON nemesis divina... SUNDOWN design 19... OPETH orchid... OPETH morningrise... SUBZERO happiness without peace... EMPEROR anthems to the welkin at dusk... EXODUS another lesson in violence... SKINLAB bound gagged and blindfolded... ICED EARTH days of purgatory... THE SPUDMONSTERS a moment of truth... VARIOUS ARTISTS out of the dark... THE GATHERING nighttime birds... TIAMAT a deeper kind of slumber... THEATRE OF TRAGEDY yelvet darkness they fear... SKYCLAD irrational anthems... SKYCLAD oui avant garde a chance... GRAVE extremely rotten live... TURMOIL anchor... UNLEASHED warrior... KATATONIA brave murder day + funerals to come... OPHTHALMIA via dorosa... MAYHEM live in leipzig... ROTTING CHRIST a dead poem... BORKNAGAR the olden domain... VARIOUS ARTISTS a declaration of independence video... JAG PANZER the fourth judgement... SACRAMENTUM the coming of chaos... (1998)... SENTENCED story: a recollection... ROTTING CHRIST thy mighty contract... VARIOUS ARTISTS firestarter... MOONSPELL sin/ pecado... STUCK MOJO rising... VARIOUS ARTISTS identity 4... LACUNA COIL lacuna coil... MY OWN VICTIM the weapon... NOCTURNAL RITES tales of mystery and imagination... ARCH ENEMY stigmata... KATATONIA discouraged ones... SAMAEL exodus... STRAPPING YOUNG LAD no sleep til bedtime... OLD MANS CHILD... ill natured spiritual invasion... EINHERJER odin owns ye

all... ICED EARTH something wicked this way comes... VEIL words vs. nothing... THEATRE OF TRAGEDY aegis... ALASTIS revenge... OPETH my arms your hearse... SENTENCED frozen... CRYPTOPSY whisper supremacy... JAG PANZER the age of mastery... RADAKKA requiem for the innocent... TWIN OBSCENITY for blood honor and soil... DAEMONARCH hermeticum... SKINLAB eyesore... THEATRE OF TRAGEDY theatre of tragedy... BORKNAGAR the archaic curse... (1999)... THE GATHERING how to measure a planet... NEVERMORE dreaming neon black... BLIND GUARDIAN nightfall in middle earth... GORGOROTH under the sign of hell... BORKNAGAR borknagar... SKINLAB disembody the new flesh... VARIOUS ARTISTS identity 5... ROTTING CHRIST sleep of the angels... EMPEROR wrath of the tyrants... TURMOIL the process of... SACRAMENTUM thy black destiny... GORGOROTH pentagram... GORGOROTH antichrist... EMPEROR ix equilibrium... ANGRA fireworks... NOCTURNAL RITES the sacred talisman... BLIND GUARDIAN tales from the twilight world... BLIND GUARDIAN imaginations from the other side... DODHEIMSGARD kronet til konge... DODHEIMSGARD monumental possession... HASTE pursuit in the face of consequence... LACUNA COIL in a reverie... ANGRA angels cry... ANGRA holy land... MERAUDER five deadly venoms... ARCH ENEMY burning bridges... RYKERS life's a gamble... KAMPFAR mellom skogkledde aaser... AURA NOIR black thrash attack... ICED EARTH alive in a them... DARK TRANQUILLITY projector... ANGRA freedom call... ANGRA holy live... VARIOUS ARTISTS never give in... SAMAEL eternal... STUCK MOJO hvy 1... TIAMAT skeleton skeletron... ANGEL DUST bleed... MOONSPELL the butterfly effect... (2000)... EYEHATEGOD southern discomfort... VARIOUS ARTISTS holy dio... THE GATHERING superheat... BLOODBATH breeding death... SOILWORK the chainheart machine... SENTENCED crimson... WINTERES BANE heart of a killer... KRISIUN conquerors of armageddon... OLD MANS CHILD revelation 666... SHADOWS FALL of one blood... MENTAL HOME upon the shores of inner seas... VARIOUS ARTISTS identity 6... JAG PANZER thane to the throne... BORKNAGAR quintessence... BLIND GUARDIAN somewhere far beyond... STUCK MOJO declaration of a headhunter... ANGEL DUST enlighten the darkness... THE GATHERING if then else... DARK TRANQUILLITY haven... NOCTURNAL RITES afterlife... ROTTING CHRIST khronos 666... VARIOUS ARTISTS Judas priest tribute... EYEHATEGOD confederacy of ruined lives... NEVERMORE dead heart in a dead world... CRYPTOPSY and then you'll beg... (2001)... THE FORSAKEN manifest of hate... ONWARD evermoving... TAD MOROSE undead... NIGHTWISH wishmaster... DARKANE insanity... NIGHTWISH angels fall first... NIGHTWISH oceanborn... HASTE when reason sleeps... LACUNA COIL unleashed memories... GOD FORBID determination... MARDUK la danse macabre... CANDIRIA 300 percent density... MARDUK obedience... MARDUK infernal eternal... EYEHATEGOD 10 years of abuse...

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# ROOT OF ALL EVIL



RECORDS

Interview with Earl Root

Minnesota's Root Of All Evil Records has been an underground force for several years now. Earl Root is one of the hardest working underground believers in metal and proves it by operating his records stores, his label, his radio show, his band, and his increasing work as a producer, as well as being a fixture at all the metal fests in America. The best known band on his label is **Impaler**, but his roster shows diversity and quality with new releases from **Aesma Daeva** (symphonic metal) and **Opaque** (groove, technical metal), resting alongside the symphonic black metal of **Theatre Of The Macabre**, the doom/ death of **Somnus**, and the technical thrash/ death metal of **Demonicon**. Here is Earl to tell us all about it.

### Do you play?

I used to play heavily but then I quit for about eight years. We had been offered a couple of record contracts about two weeks after we had broken up. I used to be in a band called **Disturbed** - not the buddy band that's jumping around these bands, the real metal band. We were on tour with a lot of bands from **Roadrunner**, **Malevolent Creation**, **Obituary**, **Carcass**. It was a lot of fun. We played the first six or seven **Metal**fests.

### What going on with the label?

We have the **Opaque** and **Aesma Daeva** coming out a month after that. In the studio right now is **Impaler** with a four song e.p. that will be out on l.p. on a Denmark label. We'll release it here in the States with four or five live tracks. **Somnus** is in the studio right now. **Walhalla** was gonna go in the studio, but with the financial restraints that we have they will wait- those guys are all in other bands and half of them are on tour. It's tough to get time to deal with recording. Their new record will be entitled **Hammerblast**. **Impaler's** release is titled **The Mutants Rise Again**, but we may go with a different name when it's released here. **Theatre Of The Macabre** are planning on going into the studio this fall also, their record is called **Manifesting the Sorcerer's Lore**. **Demonicon** was planning on recording soon. It costs a lot of money to do this. It's good to see someone giving us some interest. **Aesma Daeva** will also have a new one. He is self financing the recording himself so we'll be able to press it a lot sooner. He is done recording it and currently mixing it. It's more grand than the last one.

### Let's talk about your origins.

When I opened the store in 1993 soon I opened the metal side and I was approached by my good friend Bill Lindsey from **Impaler**. They were one of the first bar bands that I was very taken with. I've been a big fan and friends for a long time. They were going into the studio to do a new record and wanted to know if I'd be interested in putting it out. I was working with Brian from **Left Alone Creations** and he wanted to do it as a promotional idea to help the store and start the label and he would do the majority of the work. The very first **Roots** compilation we gave out at **Metal**fest three years ago and it was a promo only thing. It only cost us \$900 to put it together. That was the beginning of the actual label. As time progressed Brian and I had differences in opinion on how things should be run and it was me doing all this work. I decided to break it off completely. I don't have any bad feelings about it, I just wish it had gone through and we had at least broken even on that aspect of the business instead of it being such a huge loss.

### Have you been able to accomplish goals up to this point?

Yes and no. I had some goals to let people know that there is a good and thriving scene with very confident and talented musicians here in the Twin Cities and that's the basic idea of **Root Of All Evil Records**. There are good metal bands here. With my radio show and everything else I've had a great sense of humor because it's necessary in this scene. There are too many people too damn serious about their stupid metal. I'm sorry,

it's just music, it's not gonna change the world, solve peace problems, or feed the hungry. We're not gonna get legions of people to worship metal in the name of Satan. It's just music. It's designed to make people feel better. I get these true metal guys angry at me, but you know what? I'm as true metal as the next guy. I crank **Sodom**, **Kreator**, **Venom**, I've been doing my radio show for free for fifteen years, I play in the band, and I've lost tons of money on the premise of being a label. How can someone say I'm not true metal because I put something funny on a c.d. There's a lot of good aspects of this business too and that's the commraderie that I get from other people in the scene. Some of labels like **Pat at Red Stream**, all the gang at **Century Media**, everybody at **Relapse**, everybody at **Nuclear Blast**, **Maria at Hammerheart**. We're all in it together. I am privileged and honored to be working with a great and diverse unity of people.

### What do you look for in bands that you release on your label?

I've got to like it. If the person is playing with a certain amount of conviction and it comes from their soul that's what I want. They aren't writing music to be on the radio, or on a label, or to do anything other than playing for the enjoyment for themselves and for others. When I see that in a band and it really sparks me that's what I want. I've gone through thousands of demos and I know right away whether I'll like it or not. It would be nice to have a band on my label that was a touring band. That's one thing that's hurting my label. I can sell a few thousand copies through ads, trading, mail order, and word of mouth, especially if it's good but to sell any quantity over that you've got to be on the road.

### How many stores do you have?

We've got two stores in one building. Upstairs is the record store and downstairs is the **Root Cellar Dungeon**, the metal store. The vinyl does great. The majority of the stuff we sell online.

### Is production something you're looking to do as well?

I did produce the **Opaque** record, I also produced the **Theatre Of The Macabre** record, I co-produced the last **Impaler** record and the **Demonicon** also. It's something I've been learning and trying to do more of. It's something I've always wanted to do and I thought I have an ear for. The more you do something the better you get at it. I wish it was something I could do full time but there's not a lot of money in it. I was doing engineering so it was a natural progression to get into producing. I want to do more.

### What are your plans for the future of the label?

I'm going to concentrate on the bands who have stuck with me here. I'm not going to take on a lot of new acts, except for my own band. The band I'm in right now is called god-awful. If you took the guitar hero stuff like **Joe Satriani** and mixed it with **Napalm Death** or the **Haunted**. It's like Swedish death metal without the stupid vocals.

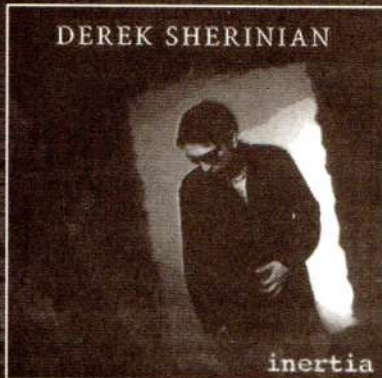
**Discography:** AESMA DAEVA here lies one whose name is written in water BRICK secured in darkness CARRIER FLUX introspective nightmare COLD COLOURS somnium xiii CROMLECH consciousness LE'RUE DELASHAY the court composer/ musick in theory and practice DEMONICON condemned creation DISTURBED a painful retrospect DOMINION a requiem DWOLE of euphoric nihilism GOTTERDAMMERUNG twilight of the gods IMPALER the gruesome years/ it won't die/ one nation under ground/ undead things/ wake up screaming LORDE OF ALL DESIRES scent of malevolence/ crowned in blasphemy NOTHING nondescript OPAQUE resolve PENTAGORIA the sky bled got PLAN E songs for a rainy day PORCELAIN GOD opinion REVEREND POKY BUNGE butt outta hell RIPSNOTER pulse SOMNUS awakening the crown TELLURIUM lv426 THEATRE OF THE MACABRE a paradise of flesh and blood THE UNHOLY as below so above/ ash wednesday WALHALLA fireich

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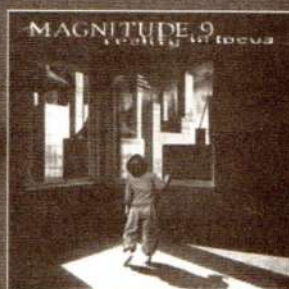
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# LACUNA COIL

Interview with vocalist Cristina Scabbia

Lacuna Coil vocalist Cristina Scabbia is a virtual unknown on these shores, but she has become perhaps the biggest sex symbol in metal history over in Europe. It doesn't hurt when the band she sings for plays emotional, borderline progressive and gothic metal that transcends boundaries and limitations. Together with male vocalist Andrea Ferro, her beautiful vocals give this Italian band a nice contrast. The band has now released their second full length and fourth overall, *Unleashed Memories*. Here is Cristina.

**Have you been touring?**

We finished three weeks ago. We did a festival tour with Dimmu Borgir, In Flames, Nevermore, and Susperia. Before that we did a tour with Theatre Of Tragedy, but right now we don't have any plans because we've got a lot of summer festivals.

**What have been your favorite festivals?**

Probably Wacken. I've never played any other festival before this year so I don't know what to expect. I'm excited to play any festival.

**Has there been any talk of coming to the States?**

We are discussing that. We had a lot of proposals, but the problem is that we have to arrange a lot of things. We are very busy because we have to write new material. To come over there is not that easy, not because of the distance from our country to yours, but the distance from venue to venue is very far. If we drive by ourselves it would be very tough. We can't wait to get there so I think we can arrange something. We will come over for sure, we just have to see when.

**How has the reaction been for Lacuna Coil in the States?**

It's very good. Just today I've had eight interviews. Everybody is saying we're brilliant. I don't know how much to trust because it's normal for someone to give you compliments. The reactions are very good. We get a lot of e-mails from fans out there.

**Your sound is not that easy to classify.**

We can do whatever we want. At the beginning it was normal to be compared to another band, they have to give the listeners and readers ideas about what you are playing. We have always been totally different. The only thing you could consider was my voice and Annecke's because we were two of the only female vocalists to use our voice in a different way- but there are so many differences between Lacuna Coil and the Gathering. After the first e.p. nobody compared us to the Gathering anymore.

**What about your lyrical content?**

I'm responsible for the vocal lines and the lyrics together with Andrea. On this album I wrote most of the lyrics. I prefer to write lyrics when I am alone with myself. I'm not sad, but reflective. I like to look inside myself and use simple words with a big meaning. I'm in love with simplicity. I don't search for something weird. This album is really melancholy. We talk about everything from death to love to passion, but always in a melancholic way even though we are very positive persons. We are not negative or sad at all. We like to laugh, we like to talk with people. It's easier to look inside yourself when you are sad. It comes

natural. I'm very transparent as a person. I'm an open book. Everybody can look at me and know exactly what I feel. I'd like to think that people can interpret our lyrics in another way though. It becomes something personal.

**Will you always use the male/ female vocal contrast?**

Of course, it's something special. In this way we can touch every note in the spectrum. We can do aggression, anything we want. You have more possibilities to work on more stuff.

**How do you like living in Italy?**

We have a lot of respect from the people. We became famous outside of Italy first, that's why we have a lot of respect in Italy. There's a lot of jealousy here. As soon as they meet us as people, they find we are very normal and we don't like to be poseurs or rock stars.

**Have you ever been to America?**

No. I can't wait. It will be great. We've been everywhere in Europe. We were in Mexico last December. Mexican audiences are totally crazy. They scare you sometimes because they want contact with you and they want to touch you. The day before Christmas we were in the water with a beer.

**How do you feel about being a sex symbol in the European press?**

I feel good, because I'm not doing it in a bad way. I'm not getting naked. It's not cheesy. It's normal that all the attention

is focused on me. I'm a female in a male world and I'm a singer. I like being a female and I like to show my femininity. I don't want you to refuse my femininity even though I play in a metal world. I don't want to be a man. It's a presentation of the band. It's normal. I prefer to imagine something. I prefer to be sexy with movement. To be naked is the easiest way to lose the sense of mystery.

**What are your plans for the rest of the year?**

We have festivals and we're writing new songs. We are also going around Italy and playing some gigs because we never did it before. I'm going to take a short vacation for this week and get ready to go. The problem in Italy is that there isn't a lot of support for metal. There is a lot of people who do listen to the music, there's a lot of people at the venues.

**Any final comments?**

If people want to contact us they and do so at [www.lacunacoil.it](http://www.lacunacoil.it). They can write us and we always answer every single e-mail. We like to be in touch with the fans.

**Discography:**

2001... *Unleashed Memories* (Century Media)  
2000... *Halflife* (Century Media)  
1999... *In A Reverie* (Century Media)  
1998... *Lacuna Coil* (Century Media)

**Current line-up:**

Cristina Scabbia... vocals  
Andrea Ferro... vocals  
Cristiano Migliore... guitars  
Marco Biuzzi... guitars  
Marco Coti Zelati... bass  
Cristiano Mozzati... drums

**Website:**

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# Lost Horizon

Interview with bassist Martin Furangen

Whether you think their image is pretentious or just good, quality entertainment, Sweden's **Lost Horizon** has released its debut, *Awakening the World*, upon the masses. **Lost Horizon** play a style of power metal that puts bands like **Hammerfall** to shame. They are aggressive and dynamic. Vocalist Daniel Heiman has the ability to sing in high pitched tones and a powerful middle range. It's all about the metal. Adorning make up and stage names like Transcendental Protagonist and Cosmic Antagonist, **Lost Horizon** will make some impact with their debut. Here is bassist Martin:

**What's your game plan now that the record is out?**

We're doing some festivals this summer. We're not doing any touring in the middle of the summer. We're doing Wacken in early August. We're doing some gigs in Northern France in late August. We are probably going out on a European tour for one month in September. It's too early to say if we will come to the States, because the album hasn't been released there yet. We're getting great reviews from the U.S., it's quite amazing.

**How do you feel about your band being promoted like Hammerfall?**

I understand it, but it's quite annoying.

**How long has Lost Horizon been together?**

In this formation we've been together since '98. The foundation to this band lays in **Highlander**. **Highlander** is a band that Vortex, the guitarist and I, started in 1990. At that time I was eighteen years old. We didn't have any goals of making an album. We did it because we loved playing that type of music. Joacim from **Hammerfall** used to sing for us and I guess that's also why there's the **Hammerfall** connection. We met our demise in 1996. Some people seem to think he left us to join **Hammerfall**, but that's not the case. When we ended **Highlander**, **Hammerfall** didn't exist. The roots to some of our material are very old. We spent about a year working with this music and rearranging it. When it comes to metal, we're into the classic, true heavy metal from the eighties. That's what we do, except with a modern approach.

**How was it working in Studio Fredman?**

We only recorded the drums in his studio. We went out and got our own recording system and studio equipment. We moved it around to several different studios. We recorded the drums at Studio Fredman on regular two inch tapes. We then bounced it down to hard disc. We recorded the rest directly on our Macintosh.

**Explain your image.**

When you look in the booklet there's a lot of pictures and we have our own personal touch. For us, music is very close to our hearts. It's a personal thing to like this music and play this music. It's natural for us to perform it and perform with our names and images. We have the bare chest and the ritual warrior painting. It's a way to enhance the performance. Of course, we do it all live.

**How is the live situation in Sweden?**

It's getting better. We've only had one serious gig. We've had a few warm ups in Sweden but they were so small. We played a big gig in Holland the end of March. It was a festival with six bands, including **Rhapsody**. It was an indoor festival in a venue that held about two thousand and it was completely filled. The response from the audience was amazing, especially considering our album had only been out for about four days. When we stepped on stage we had the audience on the first note to the last. We had an extensive signing session afterwards. In Southern Europe there's a different atmosphere than in Sweden. The winters here are majorly cold. People are not as open and passionate here as they are in Southern Europe. It gives you motivation to give something extra. I also lived in the U.S.A. for a year. I went to

school in California.

**How did you like living here?**

I lived in Los Angeles and I liked it. California is great, it's lovely. Generally Los Angeles is not a great place to be, but I went to a great school. It was the best year of my life. It's up to you when it comes to school. I put a lot into it and I got a lot in return. I experienced that same type of openness with American people. They are more open than Swedish people and other Northerners. Sweden is nice in many ways. Swedish summers can be fantastic, particularly here on the West Coast. Now it's twenty minutes past ten p.m. and it's still light. In another month it will be light until eleven thirty or something. I love that about Swedish summers. You have about three hours of darkness and the rest is light. But then again, in the winter you have eight hours of light and the rest is darkness.

**How do you feel about your career in metal?**

It looks really good now. There is a possibility that it will take off. People always want to hear good music. We've established a strong enough foundation now as a band. Look at the big metal bands who have been around since the early eighties, they're still around. Look at **Manowar**. You need to reach a certain level and to reach that level you need to be innovative enough for people to be enthusiastic. You need to find your own style and be yourself. The label has done good promotions and they have great distribution. We want to play live. That's what it's all about. The better it sells the quicker I can quit my day job.

**What are some of your interests outside of music?**

I'm a water person. I love the ocean. I do scuba diving and stuff like that. I'm also into training. I train karate and martial arts. I also mountain bike. That's an adrenaline kick. I keep myself too busy.

**Discography:**

2001... *Awakening The World* (Koch)

**Current line-up:**

Daniel Heiman... vocals  
Wojtek Liscski... guitars  
Martin Furangen... bass  
Christian Nyquist... drums

**Website:**

[www.oncelosthorizon.com](http://www.oncelosthorizon.com)



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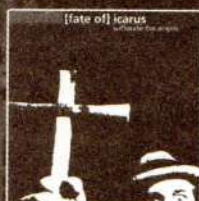
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# THE OWLS ARE NOT WHAT THEY SEEM



Interview with guitarist and vocalist Sir Roland

**Mad Crusade** is a Baltimore based progressive band that first came to my attention at last year's Powermad Festival. Their theatrical set was impressive and proved that **Mad Crusade** is a band with original ideas. They have now released their debut self titled album, which included the twenty five minute epic "Phantasmagoria", which is broken up into several parts. This disc shows their vast diversity and open minded songwriting. I spoke to guitarist and vocalist Sir Roland about the new album and **Mad Crusade's** future.

#### How's everything going for Mad Crusade?

We're trying to get some gigs right now. We've already got some press interest. We want to get some word of mouth going in Europe. We're slowly getting the word out. It took awhile to get these songs on disc but we made sure we did it right. We took extra care to make sure it didn't sound like something recorded in somebody's garage. We got some word of mouth going at last year's Powermad show.

#### Are you happy with how the disc came out?

Definitely. We're very proud of it. It's an eclectic collection. It came out really well. We've got a lot of positive feedback from it and it's quite a trip to have something of our own in our record collection. We didn't want things to be redundant, we wanted to have variety on there. All three of us have different influences. **Rush**, of course, figures in there. We don't want to go out of our way to mimic anyone. We've been compared to everybody but the **Carpenters** on this one. We've been compared **Jane's Addiction**, the **Beatles**, **Rush**, it's been interesting. It's a positive thing. We're happy that people take from it what they want. We're developing a sound like all young bands. We're planning our way to our own approach. It's going to be much more evident on the next album which we're already working on material for. We'll be performing some of it this year too. There's more instrumental stuff, more fusion, we leave ourselves open to any inspiration. We won't stick in one rut. During the proceedings Arnold upgraded his studio and that gave us more options. We had a lot more tracks at our disposal. It's taken a couple of years but we wanted to sound like a professional band, not a garage band struggling to get something recorded. "Phantasmagoria" is good for us, because you can take out shorter pieces and they stand out well on their own. Our strongest suit is that we have the courage to show off our sensitive side. Also, we don't want to do what is expected of us. I consider our disc a success if people can take something from it the second, third, and fourth time. Pop music is so surface. When you listen to the **Beatles**, you can always hear something new. If we accomplish that then we've done our job.

#### Where did you get the name Mad Crusade from?

We realized that's what we were doing. We were playing against type for a progressive metal band or a progressive metal band. We were not falling in with what's hip in the music scene. We're in good company. There's a lot of bands now that are getting away from that whole **Marillion** and **Dream Theater** influences. Bands are getting edgier. There's bands in

Baltimore that are doing that. We have an interesting scene developing here. Maybe some people who aren't familiar with this music will eventually embrace it. **Tool** is a good example of a band on a major label and they aren't playing by the rules. We'll continue to pave our own road. Both Gary and I do the lead vocals. Hopefully there's something for everybody. Gary has a passionate Geoff Tate style of approach, I have my maniac depressive Donny Osmond impression. Our goal is to establish a new approach. We're so aware of music and it's hard to find your own voice. That's why I derive my influences from some stuff outside of music, poetry, literature, classical music, jazz, and art. Hopefully it will filter through and create something different if not entirely new.

#### Are all three of you involved in the songwriting?

Yeah, and it's going to increase even more on the second album. On the first album I wrote "Asylum" and "Phantasmagoria" and Gary wrote "Second Earth" and "Veins of Ichor". Arnold was involved with the arrangement and the production. Helping put the songs into shape is his forte. He contributed a lot of strong melodic ideas to "Phantasmagoria". On the second album Arnold is going to have some of his own compositions on there. The second album is going to be even more eclectic. Arnold is a big **Al DiMeola** fan and a big fusion fan. We have some funky, uptempo stuff on the next album. It's nice because the first album is heavy. We're going to progress and move forward. We're all actively involved and it's a three man operation. It's such a tight unit that if we lost one of the members we wouldn't be able to continue. The band is the sum of its parts. Look at **Led Zeppelin**, when Bonham died they packed it in. I don't like how **Jane's Addiction** reunited without their original bass player, even though he wasn't a pivotal member of the band.

#### Is there a theatrical side to Mad Crusade?

The theatrical side comes out because we don't have a frontman. Perhaps I over compensate, but I try to develop my own stage persona which is the Sir Roland character. That's very evident in the lyrics. We're taking ourselves out of it and creating characters in the songs. We're creating dramatic elements in the music rather than being confessional, which is the easy route. By creating something dramatic in a universal way the audience can connect in an emotional way if they want to.

#### Do you like to read?

I was an English lit major. I've been thinking about going for teaching, but I don't really have any education credits. I work for an art gallery right now. "The Sleep of Reason" was inspired by a painting. It's very evocative.

#### What are your favorite pieces of literature?

Anything by Poe, Mary Shelley, there's a great novel that came out a couple of years ago by a Spanish writer called Resero that I would recommend. Lovecraft is very bizarre. He scares me more than any other writer. He's very good at creating a sense of dread just by using his language. Stephen King considers Lovecraft the greatest horror writer of all time. Anybody interested in the esoteric finds their way to Lovecraft.

#### Discography:

2001... Mad Crusade

#### Current line-up:

John Sullivan... vocals and bass  
Gary Anson Leak... bass, vocals, and keyboards  
Arnold Jerrell... drums

#### Website:

[www.madcrusade.com](http://www.madcrusade.com)



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# MAHARAHJ

Interview with guitarist Clayton

**Maharahj** is a Canadian metal band really coming into their own. While potential fans have an identity crisis on their hands because the band all sports short haircuts but **Maharahj** transcend the limitations of the genre and add their own special twists and turns. They have just released their second disc, *Repetition*, via fast rising New Jersey label, Now Or Never Records. Their record deal has expired and they will be looking for a new home in the coming year. Until then, let's just enjoy this killer record. Here's Clay.

**What are you doing?**

I'm just playing video games right now.

**Are you happy with the record?**

Yeah, I pretty happy. It was recorded almost a year ago. It was a good representation of what we were at the time. Now we play everything twice as fast and it's more thrashy and technical. We still like the songs and we're still playing them.

**When will you be recording again?**

It depends. We aren't on a label right now. The one that just came out was our last one on Now Or Never. Right now, we're free agents. We're just writing. We don't have a lot of new songs because we had a big break on our deal. Our drummer got hurt so we couldn't write a lot of songs.

**Do you play out much?**

We do now. We bought a mini school bus for the band. The engine blew up. For six months we didn't do anything. We played local shows because we could just load up our cars with the gear. Now that we have our vehicle back again, we're playing a lot more. We're going to tour. It's a lot more active now.

**Have you had any label interest yet?**

No, not really. This one just came out. I don't even know if people know that we're done with Now Or Never. I would expect that somebody would be interested in the next couple of months. Whatever we do next has to be best for the band. The next one is going to be the one that we want to be really powerful and impact. We'd like it to be this record. We're all about playing live. We leave in a week for a month in the States. We're doing ten shows or so with a band called **Curl Up And Die**. They're from Las Vegas and they just signed to Revelation Records. There's some shows at the end of the tour with this band called **Harikiri** from Indianapolis. They're a death metal band. We're playing in New York on July 12th in Manhattan with **Shai'hulud**. We're playing Long Island on the 10th at Ground Zero in Bellmore.

**Now Or Never Records paid to have a song from your disc on my c.d. compilation and I chose "Cities and Script".**

We get a lot of positive responses for that song. We call that the "we won the war riff" at the end. Everyone loves that riff. It's like us coming over the hill, it's a victory song. We changed the beginning. Now it just starts off with the blast beat. We modify things. If you know the song you'll appreciate what we do live. It's fun to play the songs off that c.d. live.

**How would you describe what separates Maharahj?**

What we're trying to do is not to sound like any one band. I can't pinpoint what we sound like. We're metal but we can't fit into many different categories of metal. What separates us is that you can sense the intensity of our music on the c.d. Some bands say they're a live band or a recording band. I think we're both. That's important to us.

**Are you presenting any type of image?**

I like the artwork on this one a lot better because my friend did this one. The last one was done by the guy who does Hellfest. We didn't have so much input on the last one. My friend designed what I wanted. I'm in control of the images. I do our website and I'm in control of the graphic designing. I didn't have time to do the c.d. I'll probably do the next one. I control how things should look like. I like the feel of the new one. It looks good. Not only should the music sound good, but the whole package should be a piece of art. The new one is vague, simple but intense with all the blues. It's a collage of simplicity, but also busy at the same time. I wasn't a big fan of the last one. You could say the music is more important.

**Is it a hassle crossing the border?**

Yeah, it can be. We've been lucky when we cross the New York State border, we do't have that much of a hard time. When we try to cross in Detroit, it's impossible. They don't like having our music there. We can play Windsor but not Detroit.

**How do you like living in Canada?**

It's fine. I'd rather live here than in the States anyway. The only difference is the currency. The culture is all the same. The States has a lot more racism, it seems more harsh in your face. In Canada it's a lot more relaxed. There's parts of states that are very nice and resemble Canada. Where we live in Ontario, it's built up. Once you cross the border for a couple of hours you have more cities. The further you go there are more mountains and it's more open. Where we live we have cities. There's a one forty thousand people here.



**Is there a music scene there at all?**

Yeah, where we live there's a lot of pop punk bands. There's a few other hardcore bands. The hardcore scene is good in general and it's diverse. We try not to play around here too much. We just had our c.d. release show a couple of weeks ago. We hadn't played here in about eight months and we had about two hundred kids at this show in our home city. Quebec is big for metal. We played on show around Easter and there were about three hundred kids and they had a beer bottle fight between the metal kids and the hardcore kids in the middle of our set.

**Do you consider yourselves hardcore or metal?**

I'd like to think that we're a metal band. When we started we had the idea of growing towards being a metal band. Most of the people in metal bands are older and they've been doing it for a long time. We're young still. The band is aged from twenty to twenty three. I'd like to think we're getting there, if we're not already. We're hardcore kids playing metal basically. A friend of mine made an interesting observation- if we all had long hair we'd be considered a metal band.

**Discography:**

2001... *Repetition* (Now Or Never)  
1999... *Chapter One: The Descent* (Now Or Never)

**Current line-up:**

C. Scott U... vocals  
C. Andrew R... guitars  
C. Glen K... guitars  
A. Benjamin B... bass  
D. William J... drums

**Website:**

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# maudlin of the well

Interview with drummer Sam

New England's Maudlin Of The Well have always been a band that does something different or even bizarre. They wrote enough material for two discs so instead of doing a double c.d., they went the *Use Your Illusions* or *Ayreon* route and released two albums simultaneously. The result is *Bath* and *Leaving Your Body Map*. Both albums are logical progressions from their excellent debut, *My Fruit Psychobells: A Seed Combustible*. Main songwriter and guitarist Tobias has crafted two albums that range from avantgarde and bizarre to death metal. There are plenty of surprises and some peculiar identifiable artwork. Here is their new drummer Sam to enlighten us.

## What are your thoughts on the new records?

Everything went pretty much as planned. Everything turned out as well as we could've hoped. We went with a great engineer by the name of Jim Fogerty. The label is very supportive. The material is very strong and we're really pleased with the production.

## Why did you release two discs?

There was a lot of material written. When it came time to do the new record we were talking to Ted from Dark Symphonies and there were



certain songs that he really wanted to hear re-recorded, then we had all this new material that we want to do. It got to the point where it wouldn't all fit on one disc. We thought about doing a double album and packaging it together as one set. For various reasons we decided to make it two separate releases. People have a choice of buying one of the other. It made it more interesting for us. You have two different discs to listen to and it's two different experiences.

## What are some differences between these two discs?

We tried to even it out. It's not like there's a heavy disc and a quiet disc. For people who are really interested, they'd want to hear both of them. There are some themes that get played out in both. There's some repeated things. For example, we have these instrumental interludes on there and there's two on each disc. In terms of them, you want to listen to *Bath* first and then move on to *Leaving Your Body Map*. They crescendo from the first disc to the second. You could really go with either disc. That's a hard question to answer. It's interesting to hear which one people like better. If anybody has the old demos they'd probably lean more towards *Leaving Your Body Map* because it has more of the older songs on it.

## What's the story with "The Ferry Man"?

That was the only song on the two records that was written by Toby. That was written by Karen our keyboard player. You can hear that it has a different influence on it. That has changed a lot since the demo days.

## Is there any common concepts or themes running through the two records?

Not so much lyrically as sonically. There's a certain chord played through out the discs. You hear it through out the interludes. In the artwork there's actually a diagram of that chord. Sonically, there's a lot of flow. There's a musically theme referenced in the intros to both albums and the intro to "Girl With the Watering Can".

## How will you promote the album?

We're looking at live shows. Since we've got the records recorded that's all we've been working on. We're getting our live act together. We have a couple of shows coming up but other than that we don't have a whole lot scheduled. We want to play out as much as possible. With our style of music it makes it difficult to find the right bands to play with, we can't just hop on a death metal tour. There are elements of it, but it's not really where we're at. Both fortunately and unfortunately, we don't fit into any category. It makes it more difficult but it's worth it. Who wants to do the same thing as a hundred other bands.

## Tell me about the artwork.

The artwork is going to be similar to the first one. The general cover layout is the same. It has a hand done painted feel like the first one. It still looks substantially different. Both covers on the new records have similar layouts. There are elements of the artwork that crossover. Some is easily identifiable, others won't. For example, the cover is repeated on the back cover of the other disc. For example, the cover of *Leaving Your Body Map* is the back cover of *Bath* and vice versa.

## How do you like the New England metalfest?

Worcester is really cool. It went great. That fest is very organized. The equipment that they rented for the bands to play on were fantastic. That fest was run very well. We went on early in the day and it's not a good indicator for later on. We had a good time in Milwaukee last year as well, so we're excited about going back.

## What are some personal interests outside of music?

I'm in computers at school. I have a strong interest in photography. In terms of other music, I also do some soundtrack composition. It's really interesting work. It's totally different from working in a band. Someone brings the visual to you and you have to make it complement without getting in the way. You're not the centerpiece. It's a lot of fun.

## Are you interested in films?

I don't go beyond the audio of it personally, but I am interested in movies. The directors that I know and like aren't anybody that other people would know.

## How do you explain to people what you sound like?

You reach the limits of what you can say. You have to put on the record. That's all you can do. There's so many different subgenres and it gets to the point where they're really meaningless. There's so many dynamics, so many changes so it's fun to play. You have to stretch a little. You aren't always playing blast beats.

## Discography:

2001... *Leaving Your Body Map* (Dark Symphonies)

2001... *Bath* (Dark Symphonies)

2000... *My Fruit Psychobells A Seed Combustible* (Dark Symphonies)

## Current line-up:

Jason Byron... vocals

Maria Stella Fountoulakis... vocals

Tobias... guitars

Nick... bass

Sam... drums

Jason Bitner... trumpet

## Website:

[www.maudlinofthewell.com](http://www.maudlinofthewell.com)





# Scott McGill/ Michael Manring/ Vic Stevens

Interview with guitarist Scott McGill

New Jersey instrumental guitarist extraordinaire Scott McGill has formed a new alliance with bassist Michael Manring and drummer Vic Stevens. The result is *Addition by Subtraction*, a fourteen song collaboration that sees these talented musicians putting out some impressive material. Scott previously released two solo albums, *Hand Farm* and *Ripe*, as he developed his style of instrumental guitar. These three musicians are currently playing several gigs on the East Coast so keep an eye out for them. Here is Scott, one of the nicest and most sincere and humble people you will ever meet.

**How do you feel about this new record?**

It's great. I normally don't like what I do, but this album I really like and I'm really pleased with the way it came out. I go back and listen to it, which is something I don't usually do. Michael and Vic played awesome on it. Neil and Jordan really kicked it out too.

**It is very diverse.**



That's the one thing with this record that's a little different. The first one that I did was one bag, the second one spread it out a little more but on this one we went for more variety. We keep a homogenous sound. The thing that plagues instrumental projects sometimes is that you either get all one tune the whole record or you get everything- country, metal, everything and it's not a band sound. I try to establish a homogenous sound. That comes first. It's a real trio effort. I wrote all the through composed stuff but the free tunes we just banged them out. Neil was in there and he'd tell us to do something. We'd have a basic parameter, maybe one would be slow, one would be frantic. A lot of the tunes on the record are free like "K.V.B. Liar", "Purging Mendel's Beasts". It has a form but it's also very spontaneous. There's some ambient things on the record, some heavier things. There's different guitar tones. A big part of that was Neil coming in and doing it. He's really good with guitar tones.

**How was it working with him?**

It was amazing. He knows what to do. The brilliance of him is that he gets out of the way if it's happening. He would let us go. He's an amazing producer and an amazing engineer. He knows how to get all the right sounds.

**Are you most satisfied with this album in comparison to your others?**

Absolutely. My playing is a lot better. I practice a lot. I want my playing and writing to get better. Vic's playing amazing, Michael is just killing. Out of all my recorded work, this is the one that I'm most satisfied with. It's great having Michael and Vic aboard.

**Are you playing any shows?**

Yeah, we played some shows in April. We did a short tour; we did Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore. It was McGill, Manring, Stevens, and Percy Jones from **Brand X** doing an opening set. It was just him on bass and he put a sequencer and played for forty minutes. It was incredible. Percy is a guy I've been listening to since I first started playing. It was awesome. I used to be a little dickhead listening to **Brand X** records and now I'm having breakfast with Percy Jones. This is great, pinch me. That short tour went really well. We were playing weeknights and we were bringing in decent crowds. We culminated it in Baltimore and had a really big crowd for that. Even though the record's only been out for a little bit, I'm getting e-mails from all over the place.

**It must be difficult trying to sell an instrumental record.**

Absolutely. The problem is that it gets stereotyped. Not to knock albums by certain people, they're fine records but the guitar takes the position of a voice. The scenario is usually the guitar player with a backing band. I love it when other people do it but it's not for me. I don't write that way. The nice thing about this is that I'm into metal and people who listen to that are buying the record, as are people into prog rock, even guys into jam band stuff. It's a bad thing and a good thing. Once people get it across that this isn't just another guitar guy record, it will help. It's the three of us. I'm not into the "I'm the guy" trip. There's parts to the live show when it's just Michael and Vic playing and I'm just happy sitting back and listening to them. I'm more into intense composition and technical, odd meter, polymetric. I'm more into making a really wicked tune. I'm lucky that I can do this with such great musicians and they put up with my mistakes. I'm really lucky.

**What are your dreams and goals?**

I just want to keep this happening. We're talking about doing another record and doing more live dates. I want to play and make albums with these guys. I want to play and become a better guitar player. When we play these gigs I feel great onstage. All the reviews from the disc can tell that we love playing with each other. You can hear it on the record. It's not tightly scripted and it's real heavy. There's real dialogue between the musicians.

**What happened with the possibility of you working with John Macaluso?**

We're still talking about it. We got sidetracked on it. John had to do **Ark** and I was doing this. He was playing with Yngwie on the road then too. John's a sweetheart and an incredible drummer. I would love to do something. We're threatening to. I have to go to Ireland in a few weeks for vacation and he's going to have some free time. I want to get together with him before the summer's end and start to do it. We've discussed what we should do on the phone. I'd really like to do something on the side with vocals and that would be it.

**What direction would it go?**

I don't know. I just want to get together and see. We have similar tastes in bands that we like. We dig each other's playing so we'll see how it works. My first priority is **McGill/ Manring/ Stevens** and his is **Ark**, but on the side I'd love to work with him. He's a beautiful guy and real talented.

**Discography:**

2001... *Addition By Subtraction* (Free Electric Sound)

**Current line-up:**

Scott McGill... guitars  
Michael Manring... bass  
Vic Stevens... drums

**Website:**

[www.scottmcgill.com](http://www.scottmcgill.com)

# MONSTROSITY

Interview with drummer Lee Harrison

**Monstrosity** is a death metal band that is all about perseverance. They were around in the early nineties when the death metal scene exploded in their native Florida. Their former lead singer (Corpsegrinder) went on to more fame with **Cannibal Corpse** and their debut, *Imperial Doom*, appeared all the way back in 1992. Now comes the double c.d., *Enslaving the Masses*. A fascinating c.d. that has some of the most impressive artwork you will ever see, disc one (*Crave the Blood*) features their 1991 demo of the same name, their 1990 *Horror Infinity* demo, and two songs from 1994. Disc two features twelve tracks of live material including their infamous cover of **Slayer's** "Angel of Death". I caught up with drummer and lone original member Lee Harrison to discuss his career.

**Enslaving the Masses** came out really nice.

We're really happy with it. It took a lot longer than we thought. I really like the artwork and the concept. The church is the same as the *In Dark Purity* scene. The same stained glass windows are in there. We've just finished forty dates and we've got forty to go. It's too bad about **Malevolent** having to cancel. They just recorded three songs and they're going to put them on their *Envenomed* disc as bonus tracks. We just played down there with **Morbid Angel**. It was our first reunion with George. Our singer couldn't make it. It was just a one off. We had a bind and George helped us out. It was amazing once the promoters found out about that it was all over the radio and on their answering machine. It happened the day before. We called George out of the blue. He sang some of the newer songs and he knew them.

**How is the new material coming along?**

We have a sixteen track studio in my garage and we've been recording everything that we play. We've got almost all the new record done. We've got a lot of work still but it's coming together. We have seven songs done now.

**Will it be released through Olympic or Conquest?**

It will be on Conquest. We have an exclusive with Big Daddy Distribution. We can control everything and we have full responsibility. We've always had our own merchandise and it's always paid off for us. There's some bigger bands who signed their life away back in the day and they're still paying for it.

**How did the New Jersey Metalfest go?**

It was cool. As usual there was no lights and no P.A. and it was daylight while we were playing. The crowd is always cool and playing in front of those people are worth it. We played a couple of nights later at the New England Metalfest with **Cannibal Corpse** and **Dimmu Borgir**.

**Are you pleased with how everything's progressed as a band?**

Yeah, with the first two albums there were production problems. On the new c.d. you can hear those guitar riffs finally. It was nice to have the demos on c.d. We got rid of a bunch of those *Horror Infinity* demos. We're still selling it. It's history. It's two discs for the price of one. It enhances the overall thing. You also get this killer artwork. Now we have to figure out something for the next one. We might make it intertwine.

**How do you feel about your current status?**

In the early days we were more popular in Europe and in America there

was nothing happening. We getting better in America. I'll go to 7-11 and some dude with a **Deicide** t-shirt will walk up to me and tell me he just bought our record.

**Do you feel you are underrated?**

It's fate to be that way. One of our favorite bands was **Dead Brain Cells**, they were an amazing band but they couldn't get out of the turnstile, for whatever reason, who knows? We covered their song "Deadlock" on our live disc. I hope that's not the case with us. I'll keep doing it.

**What's been the highlight of your career so far?**

There's been some good ones. We played in Germany at the Fuck The Commerce fest. The highlight was going down to Bogato, Columbia; Lima, Peru; and Mexico a couple of times. It's more adventurous. People are amazing down there. Just because you're an American they want your autograph. I'd like to go back, but it's so hard.

**You are proving that bands can succeed on their own if they work hard.**

I don't know who's left. There's **Cannibal Corpse**, **Deicide**, **Morbid Angel**, everybody else is broken up or they've gone on to different music. Look at Shaun Glass and the guys from **Oppressor**, their new band, **Soil**, is getting played on the radio now. That's a big question at times- is all this shit worth it?

**Is it worth it for you?**

Yeah, I can do other stuff and still do this.

**You're the only original member right?**

Yeah, but I'm the main songwriter. The style, like on *In Dark Purity*, is still there. You can still hear it's us. We've got Tony playing guitar for us now and he's killer. He contributes and writes stuff.

**When will the next record come out?**

In early 2002. That's the goal at this point. I hate to say a time because it never happens that way. We're doing these forty dates in the summer, then we go to Europe in the fall, so we'll be working it in between. It's hard to work on the road.

**How do you feel about being on**

**the road?**

I'm a road dog. I can go and do it forever. There is a suckage to it. The last tour I went five days without a shower. Being a drummer and under the lights every night, I sweat a lot. I have a routine. I wear the clothes that I'm wearing, I sweat in them and dry out in them- then I change them. Then my suitcase doesn't smell like hell. I've learned some tricks.

**Discography:**

2001... *Enslaving The Masses* (Conquest)  
1999... *In Dark Purity* (Olympic)  
1997... *Millennium* (Nuclear Blast)  
1992... *Imperial Doom* (Nuclear Blast)

**Current line-up:**

Jason Avery... vocals  
Tony Norman... guitars  
Patrick Hall... guitars  
Mike Poggione... bass  
Lee Harrison... drums

**Website:**

[www.conquestmusic.com](http://www.conquestmusic.com)



# Myrkskog

- Deathmachine -

Interview with vocalist and guitarist Destructhor

One of the most impressive death metal albums finally arrives in America. Norway's Myrkskog's debut album, *Death Machine* was released in Europe about a year ago to massive critical acclaim. After listening to this for the first time I could see why. The best elements of *Morbid Angel* is combined with the futuristic death metal of frontman Destructhor's other band, *Zyklon*. *Death Machine* is a punishing assault that is very catchy despite no obvious signs of melody. I spoke to Destructhor about their happenings.

**How has the response been from the States?**

We've haven't received any yet, it was just released. I hope it will sell good in the United States. People who like extreme metal will enjoy it.

**How would you describe your sound?**

We call it extreme metal. It's not death metal, it's not black metal- it's a hybrid thing. It's a mixture, so just call it extreme metal.

**What are you doing now?**

We are preparing a new album. We will record it around January or February of next year. We are working on the material now.

**How does it sound?**

It's the same as *Death Machine*, but more extreme and more aggressive and brutal. There's more hate and anger. There's a little more death metal. I love death metal, it's my favorite style.

**What are some of your favorite bands?**

*Hate Eternal* and *Immortal*. That's my favorites right now. I fucking love them.

**How is the scene in Norway for Myrkskog?**

We need something else rather than just black metal. We are something different than black metal. I'm not fond of black metal anymore. I like more brutal stuff. We have a very good response everywhere, including the fans. I hope we get the same in the U.S. also.

**What are your plans for the rest of the year?**

We will just prepare the new album. We have a lot to do there. I am also busy with *Zyklon* too. We will be rehearsing and enter the studio to record the new *Myrkskog*. We have to concentrate on doing the record now.

**Why did you have an industrial remix at the end of the record?**

That is a contract obligation that we have to have an album over forty minutes in length. Our album was a lot faster than we thought so the remix fills time. We will not do this industrial thing again, that's for sure. The next album will be pure metal.

**What's your opinion on Timothy McVeigh's execution?**

Yeah, I heard that one the news. He's the Oklahoma bomber right? I didn't follow the case and I don't know the story that good.

**Do you believe in the death penalty?**

I really don't care actually.

**How do you like living in Norway?**

It's great but it's expensive.

**Can you survive in Norway?**

Not just on the music, no. I have a day job, unfortunately. I will someday sell enough records that I can quit my day job.

**Explain your lyrical topics.**

The old vocalist wrote the lyrics. Him and Master V. are out of the band

now. The next lyrics will be written by me and we will get other people to contribute too. I will write about hate and misanthropy.

**Discography:**

2001... *Death Machine* (Candlelight)

**Current line-up:**

Destructhor  
Sescthdamon

**Website:**

[www.demon.com/myrkskog](http://www.demon.com/myrkskog)



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# NO RETURN

It appears that French metal is becoming more and more promising and No Return is a veteran band that has released their fifth album and best to date. *Self Mutilation* takes the basic elements of 80's thrash but updates them for the current scene. It is bands like No Return and Divine Decay, from France and Finland respectively, that are taking thrash metal into the future. I e-mailed some questions and singer Steeve Petit provided some answers:

## How do you feel about your new album?

Well, we feel quite proud, we did the production from A to Z ourselves. Meaning, we did the sound takes at a friend's home studio, then we mixed and mastered our own way. We're proud because it's our first production. The album is being well distributed, compared to the previous ones. Kodiak is doing the French distribution, as for Listenable Records, they're doing the rest of the planet.

## Why was there a long delay in between the third release and the new one?

We released a maxi album in 1997 called *Red Embers*, but it never received the promotion it should have had. The label, CNR Music didn't do their job. That sort of stopped us in our stride. Then our line-up suffered another change when our bass player, Janus, had to leave for family matters; then, the singer, Tanguy, from *Seasons of Soul* and *Red Embers* left us for a more hardcore style. Since then, we have had to find new musicians, so we took our time to choose the best for No Return, competent as well technically as on scene and with a lot of enthusiasm for our type of music.

## Are you touring for the new album?

Indeed, we just came back from a French tour with bands from Listenable Records label, *Crest Of Darkness* and *Symbyosis*. It all went fine, even though we dreaded Norwegian behavior, they turned out to be really cool guys. The people gave us a warm welcome all the way. It was a very positive experience.

## What has the response been thus far?

Extremely good, in fact. The album pleases our fans who show their enthusiasm when we play the new songs live, we've done some good shows lately. Our merchandise got completely cleaned out during that one tour. It's such a pleasure to come back to an energy bursting audience, it shows us how much our music pleases and how the fans are starting to trust the French metal scene again.

## How does *Self Mutilation* compare to your previous albums?

This album is more trenchant compared to the first ones, it's much more direct and blasting: carved for the scene. It's full of energy and rage like we used to do in the nineties. You could even say the samples represent a way to bring new breath to the No Return's thrash/ death metal style.

## Do you think thrash has a place in today's music scene?

Of course, or else bands such as *Slayer* or *Testament* would be on the street. I think that thrash has always had it's place, even if it was a bit out of breath at some point in time, at least in Europe it has. Thrash is the base of extreme metal, at least, that's how I see it, and there are many underground bands still playing this style. That's why I believe that there will always be bands such as *Slayer*, *Testament*, *Nevermore* or the *Haunted*, and No Return. Thrash will always be here, even if it's running second place.

## How did you make your sound appear to be modern, yet still having some classic thrash and metal influences?

Mainly because we have over twelve years of experience with our style, which helped us understand what we were seeking sound wise. The contri-

but ion of our new line-ups helped us reinforce the band, because we all have certain notions of sound, especially Malko who's from new wave and new age style. He brought the modern look to our sound and our music as we were mixing the album. We were four mixing the album; there was Malko (samples and keyboards), Didier (our drummer), Alain (guitar) and me, Steeve (singer). We wanted to keep the classic sound for the guitars and voice, that's the thrash style, and a more modern sound with the samples and drums as much as in the mix and mastering.

## What are some difficulties you overcome during your career?

For starters, we had problems with our label FNAC Music in 1994, they had decided to kick out every artist they had formally signed, giving the excuse of a financial crisis. Most of the bands tried suing them but didn't succeed. We were all ready to record another album but had to look for a new label instead. It was difficult for us, as we were just starting to get a name but not big enough to sign with an important label. We released another label in 1995 called *Seasons of Soul* and a maxi *Red Embers* in 1997, with a small label, CNR Music. Both were recorded at David Weber's Studio in Switzerland. But unfortunately, CNR didn't work on the promotion very much, so the albums never got very far.

## The French metal scene is probably the most underrated in the world, what bands do you like from your country and how is metal accepted there?

We have S.U.P., *Carnival In Coal*, *Scarve*, we like and even others more underground. This country's culture never has been very rock an even less metal. It's more or less Britney Spears and Barbie that make people dance here. We have a sweet tooth for imported crap. But it seems that we started to see a change these past two years, bands are forming associations and building there own structure. The nineties was a sort of black hole, every important French label was snubbing home metal, we went through a long dry period. Today, we are more and more independent.

## Did you accomplish the goals you set to achieve with this album?

Yes, at least in France we have. For the other countries, it's a bit early to tell, but we have been getting good reviews abroad and we hope that the public will react as well. I personally think that if a French band, like No Return, finally succeeds internationally, it would give a good push for our metal scene. The proof, when *Anthrax* took a song from *Trust*, it changed a lot of things for them.

## How do you see your sound evolving in the future?

Even bigger and more professional, our dream is to have Richardson's sound. But he's still a bit expensive for us right now. I think that we will work on our next one the same way we did for this one, that is, doing the sound takes in a studio and the mix and mastering ourselves. We are quite proud of our first home made album *Self Mutilation*.

## Discography:

- 2000... *Self Mutilation* (Listenable)
- 1997... *Red Embers* (C.N.R.)
- 1995... *Seasons Of Soul* (C.N.R.)
- 1992... *Contanimation Rises* (Semetary)
- 1990... *Psychological Torment* (Semetary)

## Current line-up:

- Steeve Petit... vocals
- Alain Clement... guitars
- Benoit Antonio... guitars
- Olivier Herol... bass
- Didier le Baron... drums
- Malko Pouchin... keyboards

## Website:

[www.noreturn-web.com](http://www.noreturn-web.com)



# NOVADRIVER

Interview with drummer Eric Miller

**Novadriver** is a Michigan based band who play heavy rock that harkens back to the glory days of the seventies. Taking influences from such bands as **Black Sabbath** and **Aerosmith**, **Novadriver** eschews classic metal with retro elements and science fiction themes. They have released their debut, *Void*, via Small Stone Records. I spoke to the pleasant drummer of the band, Eric Miller.

## How do you feel about the record?

We're extremely happy with it. It's one of those things where you don't know how people are going to react to it. We don't know how people are going to think about all this hard work and effort that we put into this album. It's getting a lot of great reviews, especially over in Europe. It's still in its infantile stage. I think some good things can really come from it. People are really getting the record and that's strange in a way because it's not complicated musically but I think people are picking up on the authenticity of it. This is seventies heavy rock with melody. I'm sure you can hear the influences in there. We're not going to deny that. We play what we love to play. We've got a science fiction theme. We all dig that kind of stuff. People are spending some time listening to it and really getting it. We're not trying to do anything totally original. I don't even know what that would be at this point in time. I like the fact that no matter where we go, they don't compare us to anybody consistently.

It has a retro vibe.



That's what we're going for. We understand that to get someone to spend their hard earned dollars on anything that you're selling, it should be good quality. It should look good and sound good. If you want repeat business, it has to be good. We spent a lot of time on this. We recorded the record later than we wanted to but we knew we had to do that to be smart about it. If we put this record out when we were originally going to try to, it would not be as good as it is. We've all been in other bands so that's one lesson that we've learned. You have to do it right, otherwise what's the point. One thing that I like about our band is that I see a lot of cross over ability. We get thrown in the stoner rock category which is totally cool, at the same time I see the early **Black Sabbath** where you have Ozzy singing these great songs that stick in your head. That's the kind of music that would be our first choice. It's heavy but it's got melody and it stays

in your head. You can sing along to it. We see that we're getting both of those type of people to pay attention.

It seems as though you are going back to your roots.

When I heard that **Oasis** and the **Black Crowes** were doing a tour together, I thought that was brilliant. That's something that I want to spend my money on. There's a band that is 1973 dead on, even though it's 2001. That shows where we're coming from.

Your album looks and sounds like something that should be on vinyl.

That's a great compliment. The guys in the band are fans of vinyl. It's important to attract your core audience. We sat down before the band started and looked at our previous mistakes. This band had to be well thought out and it has to be done correctly, otherwise it's a waste of time.

What bands did you like when you were growing up?

When I was growing up I was the oldest in the family. I got my musical influence from what my mom and dad were listening to. They always listened to top forty stuff. When I got older I heard heavy rock. There was something about it that really enticed me. It got me fired up. I liked the heaviness. It wasn't until later on when I met some guys who turned me on to **Led Zeppelin**, the **Doors**, **Hendrix**, **Cream**, the **Who**. I had the latest introduction to all those bands. Once I got a taste of that I was hooked. The other guys in the band are the opposite of me, they've always been into this stuff. The music I go for is **Black Sabbath**, the **Stooges**, **MC5**, another band that I think is doing good modern music is **Tool**. The old stuff is the best. One reason I think our record is doing well is because of the singing. The band before, that was a huge drawback. We

tried to cover it with music. This guy is the real deal. He's authentic. We're blue collar, hard working boys from Detroit. We have a great heritage here, musically. It ties in well with what we're trying to do.

What's Small Stone all about?

They have been in business for at least five years, probably more. Scott is a super hard worker and he takes good care of his bands. He does what he can. In the last couple of years he's gotten some big connections. In the last year or two he's got some excellent hotrods in his garage. He has super solid bands on his label. He's working hard so he's getting a

name for himself.

**Discography:**

2001... *Void* (Small Stone)

**Current line-up:**

Mark Miers... vocals  
Billy Reedy... guitars  
James B. Anders... bass  
Eric Miller... drums

**Website:**

[www.novadriver.com](http://www.novadriver.com)

# REDEMPTION

## Interview with Redemption

**Redemption** is a trio of talented musicians who play metal with Christian lyrics. Their self titled debut is one of the most impressive and innovative metal discs I've heard in a long time. I also thought it would be interesting to get a band very firm on their religious beliefs in this publication. I apologize to the band for errors I made in the last issue's review. This band is talented and should be heard.

### What are your thoughts on your debut disc?

**Chris:** It was definitely a learning experience. Since the band has been together for a while, the second c.d. should show more maturity, this was our first time dealing with a producer, which was a process to get used to. It was hard to go into the studio knowing what you wanted to do, then have to deal with the give and take and compromise of dealing with someone else. Production quality was good, but on the second c.d., we hope to remedy the things which were lacking.

### What does redemption mean to you and why is it significant?

**Donnie:** To me, the word redemption means salvation and being forgiven. No matter what I've done in the past—no matter how vile and disgusting it was—through Christ I am a new creation. I don't have to worry about that stuff, because I'm saved. As for the band **Redemption**, it gives me freedom in my music. I can do what I want to do.

**Chris:** The word redemption makes me think about the fact that I'm a worthless sinner and that there's nothing I can do on my own to get into heaven. Through the washing of the blood of Jesus Christ, and repentance of my sin, I have the key to walk into His kingdom. The band **Redemption** means a great deal to me. It's something I'm called to do, for however long the good Lord wants me to do it, and however far He wants me to go with it. This band has a profound message—not to sound cliché—but we have a lot to offer in a ministry sense and musically, because of what the members have gone through in their lives.

**Tony:** God had a vision for man. By becoming the ruthless sinner that I was, I failed in that vision. Redemption is the process of regaining or living up to that vision.

### How do you feel about metal and Christianity being combined?

**Tony:** For the longest time, people have thought metal is Satanic, so a lot of people, when they hear Christian metal, take a step back and say, that's odd. In fact, that was my first reaction when Donnie joined the band, about a year before I did. But metal is an accessible forum.

**Donnie:** Some people have the wrong opinion about Christian metal. There's no conflict where Christianity and metal meet, as long as it's done right. The musicianship, message and production quality should be able to compete with secular bands, or people won't take it seriously.

**Chris:** Metal in itself is a form of music no different than the blues, jazz or classical. I mean, Mozart shocked people with what he wrote. I don't feel that a particular style of music can be called evil. To be honest, the people who have the most problem with it are secular people, they feel this style is a form of rebellion. If you really look at it, following Christ is the most rebellious thing you could do in the world right now.

### Explain your experience as a bass player—your playing on this disc was some of the best I have ever heard, and also the most original. How do you approach your instrument?

**Chris:** I am very much into tone. I love the instrument I play, its a very strong and powerful sound. I jam for hours and work my chops out trying new things with scales or riffs. I've played with some good guitar players, but Donnie makes me work hard at being good. He comes from the Randy Rhoads and Steve Vai school, and the stuff he comes up with makes me work harder. I love him for that...he's one of the last of the Mohicans.

### Where is the music going on the material you are recording?

**Chris:** The music on the next c.d. will be heavier and darker. The style

of music and some of the topics we'll cover could anger some secular and Christian people because it will cut straight to the bone. The band is writing the material together, as opposed to just me like on the first one.

### What is your opinion of bands who trash Christianity?

**Tony:** I think its funny that they think they look cool in those clothes. They actually think it looks good to wear contacts that make one of your eyes a different color.

**Donnie:** In the end, they'll get it. It's not my job to condemn them—thats up to God.



### What are some Christian philosophies that you feel are most important in your life?

**Donnie:** You reap what you sow.

**Tony:** Isaiah 6:8 - Here I am Lord, send me. I will go.

**Chris:** Knowing that when my back is up against the wall, the Lord will see me through. What more of a philosophy do you need?

### How long has Redemption been together, and what made you choose to play metal?

**Chris:** The band has been together about three years, and Tony has been with us since last year. I chose metal because it was what I was raised on.

**Donnie:** I didn't choose to play metal, I play it

because its what I listen to.

**Tony:** Donnie played metal all the time while I was running around the house as a little kid, and his tastes influenced me.

### What are your feelings about marriage, and do you think that people take this institution too lightly in today's society?

**Tony:** I want to let everyone know I'm single and I would like to buy a woman a fish sandwich.

**Chris:** You have to keep marriage in accordance with God's law. You have to be equally yoked—which means that you need to have the same beliefs and faith in God.

**Donnie:** Marriage is forever—through rough times and good. As long as both people know its forever, it will work.

### What are your feelings about today's society in general—there is a lot of negativity and frustration—do you think religion can help you make the world a more positive place?

**Tony:** No, but faith can. Society is lost.

**Chris:** We're living in the end times. If you look at society, all you see is death, destruction, decay, seediness and a constant struggle to survive and obtain what the world offers, which amounts to nothing. Because of my faith, I know where I'm going and what I'm striving for—to be in the kingdom with the Father, to have eternal life, where I want for nothing.

### For someone who may be reading this and be skeptical about Jesus, how do you find the knowledge and dedication to believe and promote his message? Some people feel they cant believe in something they cannot see—how are you able to do it?

**Chris:** The Bible says that its a wicked generation that asks for signs and wonders. God shows Himself in bringing you through situations in life. God spoke the world into existence. Faith isn't something that can be approached intellectually.

**Tony:** Everyone believes in love, but theres no physical proof of it.

**Donnie:** I just know and I just do it. There's no formula to it, it just comes from the heart.

### Discography:

2000... Redemption

### Current line-up:

Chris Millaudon... vocals and bass

Donnie Lancaster... guitars

Tony Lancaster... drums

### Website:

[www.redemption-metal.com](http://www.redemption-metal.com)

# Garlic

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# RED HARVEST

Interview with keyboardist Ketil Eggum

One band who have managed to develop their own style and not allow themselves to be influenced by any current trends, yet still have a futuristic sound is Norway's **Red Harvest**. After releasing a quirky metal album in 1992 that drew several comparisons to **Voivod**, **Red Harvest** really started to develop their sound with two full lengths and two e.p.'s via **Voices Of Wonder**. Their most recent album, *Cold Dark Matter*, has been licensed to Relapse for their American debut. It is a stunningly original album that combines industrial/ electronic elements with heavy metal and a futuristic sound. Here is **Red Harvest's** Ketil Eggum to let America know about his band.

## What are you up to at the moment?

I was just watching a movie on T.V. called *Kalifornia*. Band wise, we're just relaxing. We got home from England two or three days ago. I think we're going start writing a new album this week. It's hard to play live and work in the studio at the same time. I don't think we're going to play live for at least four or five months. We're going to focus on the new album.

## How did you feel about the last album?

I think we can make a better record. We're very happy though. We don't know how it's doing in the States because it was released in January. The reviews have been very good in Europe. We're curious of what it's like in the States. It's hard for us to control what happens there because it's so far away. We didn't have any U.S. releases until Relapse licensed it from **Nocturnal Arts**.

## What are you going to do differently on the next album?

We are happy with *Cold Dark Matter* because we felt it was right for us to do an album like that at that time. We're happy with how things turned out and how we worked as a band, I think what we'll do is keep working that way. We want everybody more involved in the process of writing the songs. It's going to be a bit more heavy, with longer songs. I don't think we can top the sound of it. It's so grim and harsh. I don't know if we want to do that one more time. We have three songs and there are killer. We do things different, although I think we will stay harder. It's more fun playing live. We will mix electronics more, and work on riffs more. We will also bring a producer from the States this time.

## What are you influenced by?

**Voivod** is a great band and we've always loved them. It's hard for us to talk about influence, what makes **Red Harvest** is that we're five different persons listening to different kinds of music. I like black metal but I also like listening to P.J. Harvey. It's important to pick up other influences.

## How do Norwegians accept Red Harvest?

It's no problem. We have done eight releases and have been around for more than ten years. We started out at the same time as **Dark Throne** and **Mayhem**. We're the old guys. We've been friends the entire time. We are more alternative music than black metal to people in Norway. It's only been the last two or three years that metal kids have found us. We're a fucking institution. We've been together a long time and we'll never die. It's no problem being accepted. Some people think we suck,

but they are into melodic metal. It's no problem because we think they suck too.

## Do you feel like Red Harvest has yet to reach your peak?

There's no point in keeping doing this. As long as we are allowed to develop and have no limits, we can survive. We have a lot of ideas and we try to mix it all together. Some things may be trashed, but as long as it's **Red Harvest** music we use it.

## When did the deal come with Nocturnal Art?

We signed in 1999, in the autumn. We were sick and tired of **Voices Of Wonder**. Everything sucked there. We would play in Norway and there were people who couldn't get our records. We told them we wouldn't release a new album on their label even though we owed them one. We were searching for new labels and talking to people. We were one week away from signing with a Dutch label and I got an e-mail from **Samoth** from **Emperor**. I told him our situation and I wasn't aware that he had a label. He told us to hold off on our deal with the Netherlands and it pissed them off. We are so happy to be on **Nocturnal Art**.

## What's been the most difficult thing you've had to overcome?

Probably the label. We've had ups and downs with guys in the band. We all have big egos so sometimes it's a bit rough. We've grown older and we are able to separate things and we all know what to do. I don't think we've had the hardest struggles yet. We've never had it easy, but that only makes us stronger.



## Are you involved with any side projects?

Sometimes I am. The last year I've been busy with **Red Harvest** activities, I do all the work with the band so I try not to get involved with too much else. I'm going to do some guitar work with a band called **Demonic** on their demo in June. They are brutal punk black metal.

## Discography:

2000... *Cold Dark Matter* (Relapse)  
1998... *Hybreed* (Voices Of Wonder)  
1994... *There's Beauty In The Purity Of Sadness* (Voices Of Wonder)  
1992... *Nomindsland* (Black Mark)

## Current line-up:

Ofu Kahn... vocals, guitars, and keyboards  
Selveste Turbonatas... guitars  
Thomas B.... bass  
Lrz.... keyboards  
Erik.Wroldsen.com... drums

## Website:

[www.redharvest.com](http://www.redharvest.com)



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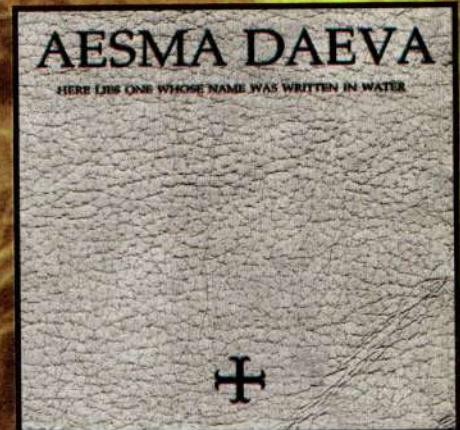
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# SEVERE TORTURE

Interview with drummer Seth

Severe Torture is a new extreme metal band combining the best aspects of death and black metal into a blasphemous and lethal mixture. With song titles like "Feces for Jesus", "Vomiting Christ", and "Baptized in Virginal Liquid" it is clear that Severe Torture is steeped deep in gore and perversion. They released their debut, *Feasting on Blood*, with its brutal and gory cover via Hammerheart America last winter. Here is drummer Seth to talk about it during a visit to America.

**So you're over for a visit?**

Yeah, we've got a holiday. We're here for ten days and we have three shows. We're hanging out and drinking beer all the time.

**Is this your first time in the U.S.?**

For me, it's the third time. I was here on a holiday nine years ago and two years ago I was over with another band of mine. I'm not with that band anymore but we were over for the Milwaukee Metalfest. The band was called Centurian. This is the first time with Severe Torture. The first show was last Saturday in Baltimore. The second show is tomorrow in Pittsburgh. The last show is Friday at the Ohio Deathfest. That's going to be the best time.

**How do you feel about your debut?**

I'm happy. We went to a different studio than where we recorded the demos and the first seven inch. It turned out really good. We had a sound in mind that we wanted to have and those guys did a really good job. Most of the songs are all the songs we ever wrote. It's three or four years of Severe Torture that you hear. It turned out pretty good.

**Did you do any touring over in Europe?**

Yeah, we did a tour in January for two and a half weeks with Macabre and Broken Hope. We were supposed to play the Dynamo Fest this year but it was cancelled because of foot and mouth disease. They are cancelling all the big events in Holland right now. It would've been really big promotion for us, there's usually about twenty five thousand at Dynamo. I try to drink away the frustration.

**Are you writing new songs yet?**

We are writing new songs. We want to record again at the end of the year so we could have the release in early of 2002, maybe February or March. We have three and a half songs. Right after we come back from the U.S. we start rehearsing again.

**When do you go back?**

It will be after the Ohio Deathfest. We fly out of New York. We head back on a Monday. First we have a flight from Pittsburgh to New York then from New York to Amsterdam. The only thing we'll see in New York is the airport. I'd love to play there, but shows get cancelled all the time.

**What's your opinion of America?**

I like it a lot. There's friendly people. It's different. The metal scene is different and it's a different culture. Everyone is nice and friendly and seems interested in Holland too. I want to come back when we have the chance to do more shows. It's a great opportunity for the band and to

promote the album.

**How is the music scene in Holland?**

It's really good in Holland. There's a lot of bands touring in Europe. They play in Holland most of the time because Holland is a small country with a big metal scene. For example when Morbid Angel plays they can get two thousand. For us it's really good, we can play a lot of shows and everybody has easy transportation. There's a lot of new bands in Holland. Not a lot of shows get cancelled.

**When were you in Centurian?**

I joined Centurian in June of '97. I recorded the mini album, *Of Purest Fire*. After that we went to the States for the Milwaukee Metalfest and recorded the full length after that. In a couple of months, me and Patrick- the bass player, left the band and formed Severe Torture. We didn't have the time anymore. They were rehearsing Saturday nights at a far distance. It was impossible to go to all the rehearsals. We were session musicians and they wanted to have four people who were dedicated to the band. We understood that. We have all the concentration now on Severe Torture. We're still real good friends. I've been in the band for three years and it's not something that you give up that easily. For both bands it's better. We have more time for Severe Torture, they have new members and they have a tight band right now.

**What do you want to accomplish with Severe Torture?**

The music has to be brutal. We want to write over the top brutal music but the kind you can memorize. We don't want to have big changes and we don't try to be original, we just try to be a good death metal band. We are what death metal should sound like. Every album we sell is a victory. If we sell a thousand records it's good, if we sell five thousand it's better, but it's got to grow. If people don't like your c.d. they're not going to buy them. We want to take it as far as we can. We try to promote as much as we can and pick the right tours.

**There's a lot of brutal death metal coming from Holland.**

We have some brutal bands but we also have some melodic bands, for example, Orphanage. Those bands are doing pretty good too. The bands that I listen to are brutal. When we think of the States we think of Hate Eternal, Disgorged, Lividity, Cannibal Corpse, Suffocation, Decide, Morbid Angel. It's a much bigger country.

**Have you recorded any videos?**

We have recorded a clip. They are editing it right now. It's for the song "Butchery of the Soul". I saw the first thirty seconds and it looks pretty funny. It's weird. There's a lot of hair. We rented a warehouse and we recorded stuff with a digital camera. We mixed it up with some live stuff that we recorded when we toured with Macabre. Check our website for more about it.

**Have you had any problems with the album cover?**

Yes, in Germany they didn't want to have it. We've got good responses too. We wanted a real brutal cover. We wanted a death metal cover and that's what it is. The next cover we want to have the same guy do it. We want to keep it in the same style.

**Discography:**

2000... *Feasting On Blood* (Hammerheart)

**Current line-up:**

Dennis... vocals  
Thijs... guitars  
Patrick... bass  
Seth... drums

**Website:**

[www.severetorture.com](http://www.severetorture.com)



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# SHADOWDANCE

Interview with guitarist Carlos Alvarez

One of the most exciting new bands I have come across is Pennsylvania's **Shadowdance**. Led by former **Cipher** guitarist Carlos Alvarez, **Shadowdance** have come out of nowhere and demand people's attention with their brand of power metal that knows no limitations. They were able to get the services of Travis Smith for superior packaging and this professional outfit have done a better job with their independent debut recording than most labels could ever do. Here is Carlos to tell us about his band. Check them out at [www.mp3.com/shadowdance](http://www.mp3.com/shadowdance).

## How do you feel about your debut?

Overall I would say we're pretty pleased with the way it turned out, especially considering it was our first in depth recording experience. As is usually the case there are always things that you hear after it's done that you wish you could change or would have liked to come out different but that's to be expected. I think every band goes through that. My biggest problem was learning to accept the fact that everything wasn't going to sound exactly the way I wanted when we got down to mixing. I am a bit of a perfectionist which can cause me to be very overbearing sometimes but it's always in the best interest of the recording of the band or whatever I've fixated on. I learned a lot from our engineer Greg Frey about knowing when to beat a part to death 'till it's right or when to let it go cause it's not as important as I may have built it up in my mind to be. The next one will be a lot better for sure but we're all still very proud of this one. The fact that it's a completely independent release makes us feel that even more.

## Where does Shadowdance fit in with the prog/ power metal scene?

The goal we're trying to achieve is to take the best elements of all the music we love and push it a little further. Sometimes we just want to hear some of these other power metal bands slam out something heavy as hell but they never really do, with some exceptions. I think we may be the first power metal band to throw a small blast beat into a tune. We just want to take the sound we love and expand on it in our own way. We draw influence from so many things that other power metal bands may not (or at least don't show) that we're bound to have a different approach to it. For instance Jason, Brad and myself have all been in death/thrash bands at one time or another. I'll personally go just as nuts over **Edge Of Sanity's** *The Spectral Sorrows* as I will over **Gamma Ray's** *Land Of The Free*. The prog end of things has been pretty subtle up until this point and although we will exploit it to a greater extent on future compositions, I don't think it'll ever be the most prominent aspect to our music. There's stuff that's a little unorthodox on the cd, mainly in the drum department but there are also hints of other styles within the context of the songs. Jason helped me write some of the bass parts and he has such a completely different approach to bass that it can be thrown over a standard riff and make it sound progressive without over complicating anything.

## How important is a visual representation for Shadowdance?

I would say it's very important. I hate it when you buy an awesome cd that has shitty packaging. The idea of the cd is that you're trying to capture something, a thought, a feeling, story, whatever. To not have the visual side up to par to help a person visualize what you were imagining just doesn't make sense to me. It helps to set the tone a little I think and maybe helps people to better understand where your head is at. I also thought it was very important to have all of the lyrics as it is a concept cd of sorts and therefore I felt it necessary to know what was being said. Of course I'm a huge fan of Travis Smith who can do no wrong as far as I'm concerned. He did the front cover, back cover and tray pieces. Ever since the first time I saw something he did I said to myself that I want him to do the art for our cd. I hope to get him for the next one as well. The only other thing to be said about the visual aspect of things is taking it to the idea of a live presentation. It is our goal to have some type of theatrical element to our live show; you probably won't see us just walk-

ing up on stage in some cut off shorts and a Marlboro shirt. I'm not talking about extravagant costumes or anything but some lights, smoke, a pair of chaps. I'm joking of course.

## How will the new singer fit into the band, what does he bring in?

Pete is great. He takes his voice very seriously as well as the manner in which he uses it. This is cool cause we don't, as a band, get to rehearse a lot due to conflicting schedules and so therefore we have to make the best use of our time. He's already shown that he is a reliable person just from the obvious work he put into learning the songs in a short amount of time. That's what we need, someone who functions well under a tight schedule and gets the job done right. As far as his actual tone, I think it's fantastic. He has great control so it's very smooth when he does difficult vocal moves within the songs. On top of that he has a massive amount of enthusiasm and belief about this band so just having him come down the first time went a long way in boosting our morale. It's been discouraging at times, not being able to find the right people. All we want is a full band. We know we're gonna have a bitch of a time finding a keyboardist.

## How was it working with Mark and Russ both doing the vocals on this album?

Great! I have to give massive thanks to Russ who was under the gun to learn a bunch of stuff and came through for us. He had never met us and actually the day we met we went into the studio to start his parts an hour later. He had never done an original band before and was looking for someone to give him a chance. The guy we were supposed to work with bailed on us a month or so before we were supposed to go into the studio and through a friend we got in contact with Russ. It took some time getting on the same page and unfortunately that was also while he was recording his final tracks but by the end of it he was sounding a lot more confident. The Mark end of things is a whole involved thing. First of all, Mark wrote about 90% of the lyrics for the cd and came up with the main basis for most of the vocal melodies. I had song titles and what they were supposed to be about, I knew where the verses, choruses, etc were supposed to be and just fine-tuned some of his ideas. Mark is an incredible talent. He came up with all of this stuff in about a week's time. When he did his tracks for "Gilded Cage", which by the way is one of the only tunes he didn't come up with the vocals for, he had one night to learn it and record it. It came out awesome. We can never thank him enough for the work he put into this. He took it as seriously as if it was his own band, which a lot of people can't do. Mark is one of the few people in this world that I completely trust to work solo on something I'm creating. As for his performance, I asked Mark to do some vocal spots to add contrast to Russ vocals which tend to be more operatic. Mark is extremely emotional and convincing as a performer and we needed that sound to help convey parts of the storyline.

## What are your goals for the band?

I believe all of us share a common goal of getting our music heard by as many people as possible. We want our band to succeed just as any other artist wants to succeed. We want playing and recording to be our job. Just see the world and make as much music as we can, meet as many new people as we can. At the moment I'd like to be able to get a licensing deal for *Ageless* and then some type of label backing for the recording of the next. *Ageless* was entirely self financed and we spent as much money on it as most independent labels would have given us so the sound is really good on it but it would be very hard for us to come up with that kind of money to do another.

## Discography:

2001... *Ageless* (Monumental Group)

## Current line-up:

Peter Donk... vocals  
Carlos Alvarez... guitars  
Brad Stuart... bass  
Jason Fraticelli... drums

## Website:

[www.monumentalgroup.com](http://www.monumentalgroup.com)

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# DEREK SHERINIAN

Interview with keyboardist Derek Sherinian

Keyboardist Derek Sherinian is making quite a name for himself lately. The former **Dream Theater** and **Alice Cooper** keyboardist branched out on his own in the talented trio known as **Planet X**. They released two critically acclaimed albums and Sherinian quickly put together this solo effort titled *Inertia*. He was able to get some impressive musicians together for this eclectic instrumental album. Joining him are guitarists Zakk Wylde and Steve Lukather, bassists Tom Kennedy, Jimmy Johnson, and Tony Franklin, drummer Simon Phillips, and electric violinist Jerry Goodman. Here is the modest and pleasant Derek to tell us about his solo ventures.

## How do you feel about *Inertia*?

I think it's great. We're all very happy with it. This record has the best representation of all my influences on one disc. It has my dream list of players on it. It looks like we'll be able to do some live shows. Both Steve and Simon are very happy with it and they want to play this stuff live. We're talking to promoters and we'll try to do something this fall. Both of those guys have been musical heroes since I was young. It worked out really good.

## What's going on with **Planet X**?

We're half way through our next record. It will be released at the end of the year. We're going on an East Coast tour and we're playing in Australia as well. We're staying busy.

## How do you feel about how your career has progressed since leaving **Dream Theater**?

I would've never thought in a million years it would be like this. When **Dream Theater** let me go I was disappointed but looking back on it now they did me the biggest favor in the world. As a kid I always dreamed of playing with these guys and never would I think that they would be playing on my record and in my band. I hope it gets to the point where we can play live because it will be explosive.

## How would you describe the sound on *Inertia*?

It's a wide range of styles. It's played with great musicians. If you're going to listen to one instrumental record listen to mine. I've been doing press for *Inertia* the last four weeks all over the world, no matter who I talk to- everybody has the exact same response. They usually don't listen to instrumental records, it's a great record, it's not a wank fest. I never expected it to turn out this good. I can't take all the credit because I'm surrounded by such great people and had such great collaborators on the writing.

## How did you get these people together?

I did my first solo record on Magna Carta and then I was free to find a new record deal. Instead of waiting and shopping through that long process I began my new record. I financed it with my own money. I always wanted to work with Simon. I sent him an e-mail asking him if he wanted to jam and he said yes. There was good writing chemistry. He got Steve Lukather involved and I made Simon co-producer. Simon engineered it and put a lot into it. He ended up co-writing half the record. It was a great partnership between me and Simon. I feel honored to be in the same room as him.

## How was the songwriting different for *Inertia* compared to **Planet X**?

In **Planet X**, Virgil started going on fire as far as his writing since Universe. Tony and I just put our hands back and let Virgil go for it. On the new **Planet X** it looks like it's going to be in the same vein. Virgil is exploding. We're letting him lead the way and we follow him. In my solo career, I'm much more involved in the writing and I have total control

over the shape of the album. That's something I don't have in **Planet X**. **Planet X** is a democracy between Tony, Virgil, and I. I have such great respect for Virgil and his talent, and his such a great songwriter- he has to take advantage of that. He and Tony are two spectacular players. Most of my girlfriends and my mother don't dig **Planet X**. They can listen to *Inertia* and there are songs that they really like. That's a cool thing about *Inertia*- I think it's going to reach a lot more people than hardcore musos.

## How can you reach a larger audience as an instrumental artist?

It's pretty much impossible. There might be one person who hears it and is passionate about it- you never know. I have realistic goals. I want to release a couple of great records a year and gain more and more fans on each release. It's a slow and steady burn. Over time I'll be able to do tours in the U.S. and draw a couple thousand people like the **Dixie Dregs**. I want to be able to make money in the United States touring. Not many instrumental bands can do that. That's a dream of mine. It helps that Simon and Steve are so established.

## Do you plan to remain this prolific?

I'm staying busy. I just bought a nine foot Yamaha concert grand piano. I spent all my money on it. I'm going to be a keyboard player for awhile so I plan to get some great recording.

## Has anyone asked you to play on their albums recently?

Everyone's leaving me alone. I think they know I'm in my own world up here in the Leopard Room pumping out my solo stuff or **Planet X**. It takes a lot of my energy to keep up with Tony and Virgil. It's technically demanding. I have to train to keep up with them. I'm trying to put my deal together with Simon and Luke for the touring. It takes a lot of time but it's worth it. It's nice to be in control of my career for once.

## It's got to be difficult getting your name out there as a keyboardist.

Yeah it is when you think about it. Gene Simmons said to me on the **Kiss** tour- "there's two things the kids hate, sidemen and keyboard players". I'm doubly fucked. I get fan mail from kids all over the world telling me they've been inspired. It's so cool that people are listening and you're helping shape how the younger generation of players play. That's all I wanted to do. I looked up to guys like Steve Morse, Jan Hammer, Jeff Beck, Simon, and Lukather- all the heroes. It's nice to know that I will have the same impact with the younger cats.

## What made you want to play the keyboards?

There was a piano in the house and I gravitated to it. I started studying and taking lessons at a young age. I started playing in some bands. At sixteen I took my G.E.D. and got a scholarship to the Berklee College of Music. I went there for two years where I met my friend Al Pitrelli. We remained friends. Five years later he got hired for the **Alice Cooper** band and recommended that they hire me. I played with **Alice Cooper** for a couple of years, then did the **Kiss** tour, and then got the **Dream Theater** tour a couple of years after that. That was my introduction to progressive rock. I never played any progressive music before then.

## Discography:

2001... *Inertia* (Inside Out)

## Current line-up:

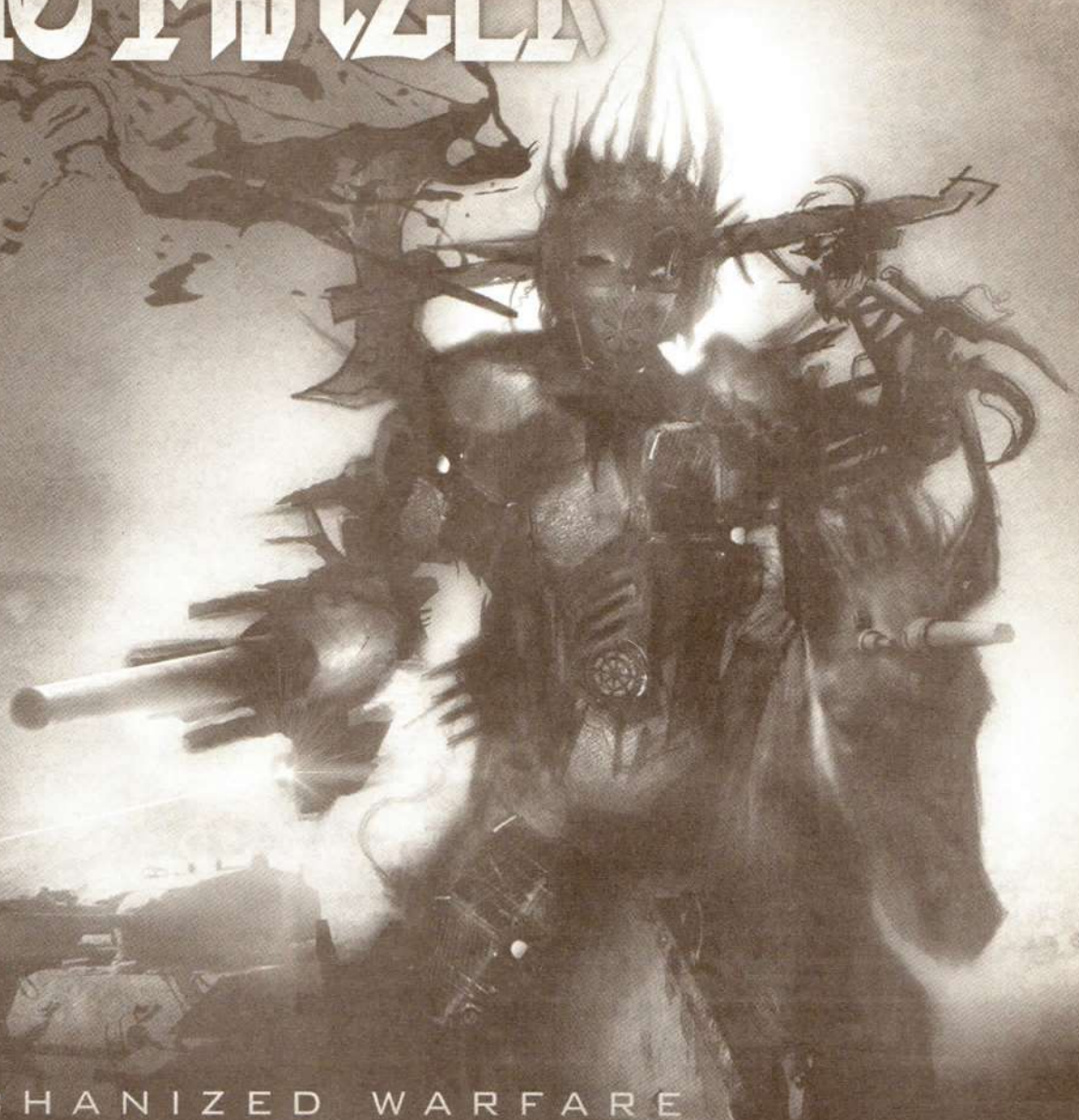
Derek Sherinian... keyboards  
Zakk Wylde... guitars  
Steve Lukather... guitars  
Tony Franklin... bass  
Simon Phillips... drums

## Website:

[www.dereksherinian.com](http://www.dereksherinian.com)



# JAG PANZER



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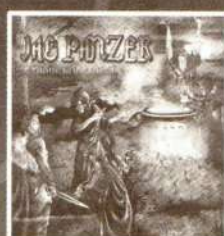
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**Interview with vocalist and guitarist Keith Spargo**

Colorado's **Silencer** is a metal band that you can not avoid. They are everywhere, one listen to their debut e.p., *Kozmos*, will tell you why. They play a futuristic style of thrash/ power metal that upholds the values of traditional metal but updates it for the future. While the band is currently looking for a label to expand their fanbase, they are currently playing as many shows as possible, including Milwaukee's Metalfest and Ultrasound. Check out their website for an upcoming limited edition release. Here's frontman Keith Spargo.

**How do you feel about your debut recording?**

We feel *Kozmos* is a good start. We are pretty happy with the production and realize it was a lot of work for a demo, but it has payed off considerably so far. In fact we had reviews written about it in which the reviewers thought it was on a label due to the production and professional looking presentation. It was meant to wake people up, and show that with work an unsigned band can make a very professional debut. We wouldn't release anything half-assed, there's just too much riding on our name where we're still out trying to prove ourselves.

**How would you describe your sound?**

I hate classifying, but it is inevitable, especially when you're trying to convince someone to check your band out. We have elements of a few styles of metal in our playing, namely thrash and classic or power. I would say melodic thrash, or power thrash. We are heavy fucking metal, and that should be enough. Now you will see the adjective "cosmic" referred to in some of our ads and press releases. That is where we think we can really add to heavy metal music. With *Kozmos*, the cosmic angle comes across more in subject matter at first. We are planning on writing and releasing subsequently more material that sounds more spacey, more grand. We'd like to build up to it. Too much too soon might lose a few people, and we feel it is important to establish that pure metal base, a good solid foundation to build upon. We will always have heavy, thrashing, pounding rhythms. We will always have strong vocal and guitar melodies with good structure.

**You are obviously doing a tremendous job of self promotion- what are some secrets to your success?**

You are an unsigned band, and no one knows you. You have no distribution yet. What we basically began doing upon the release of the e.p. was research all the names of as many magazines, fanzines, and webzines as possible that would review the music. Then it's just the old fashioned mailing parties. Myself and our drummer Nick primarily do this. We sit down, map out which ones we think get the most bang for the buck, and send off promos. Then we work our way down to even the smallest zines. It is so important. Before you know it, friends are telling friends and your network has begun. People read your reviews, order your CD. The web helps tremendously too. We have a large e-mail mailing list that we send our news snippets to. We are so lucky to have that network, yet few rarely use it. In our travels there are only a few bands that I regularly see in the majority of these zines. If you do this right, the underground learns who you are. If you're lucky, a buzz builds and people start talking about you. That's our goal, for a label rep to look at any single zine and see **Silencer** in there. For them to think, "Man. I see these guys everywhere."



**How important is it for you to sign with a record label- do you think the band can survive without one in the future?**

I guess that depends on the definition. If we were just content self-releasing c.d.'s for an indefinite amount of time, and still touring out of our own pocket regionally then we could definitely survive. I know that it's pretty obvious that I couldn't keep the guys I'm with if that was the case. We are all extremely hungry. This ain't no hobby. We feel we have music, both released and unreleased, that many thousands upon thousands of people need to hear. That's why I believe that it is crucial to sign to a label that promotes us strongly, has extensive distribution and is willing to put us on the road on good tours for several months a year. We have

so many ideas and are so confident on our spin on heavy metal that we need a label to help us get it out to the world. Although with some effort we can tour the U.S. to a degree independently, there's no way in hell we can get our show to Japan, Europe and South America.

**Silencer has a futuristic/ present sound, yet you still retain many traditional values regarding metal.**

Although it would be fun playing a certain older style of metal for a some amount of time, I am too creative personality wise to sit back and rest on others laurels. I have always been fascinated by space, the planet we're on, all that sort of stuff. There have definitely been very good efforts to describe some of it. **Rush's 2112** is a good example. I'll always love true heavy metal. It's always been and always will be my favorite. I also have enjoyed thrash wholeheartedly, and even much of the heavier sounds that come out nowadays. You are shaped somewhat, not completely, but somewhat by your roots and surroundings. The futuristic sound you mention, that's us in **Silencer**.

**I have read where you were considering looking for a full time singer so you can concentrate on playing guitar.**

In an old lineup of this band a couple years back most of the music was written with myself singing in mind. I was a lot newer to guitar, so it was very difficult singing and playing at the same time. Not only that, it tied me down, and still does, to the microphone live. I absolutely love to sing, but I would rather be a guitar player at this point. When the lineup formed that recorded and is playing *Kozmos* stuff we had in mind that we would get a singer or else, so I wrote more difficult material, stuff that is difficult to play and sing at the same time, thinking we'd have a vocalist. When we went through the auditions and could find no one, I became very frustrated. I think I have an above average voice, but nothing extremely signature. I can do about 80% of what I'd like to be able to do. Studio is one thing, live is another. I ended up back on vocals. I talk to people occasionally but it's so hard finding the right mix. Vocally, he'd have to have very powerful clean vocals, but be able to put a hearty edge on his voice without dipping into death style. We love searing, powerful cleans and will always keep it that way.

**How do you maintain your confidence and focus?**

I do get frustrated, things aren't moving fast enough. You can only work so fast, but you always feel like you could be doing more. I always question what I write. I can say that I haven't thought of giving up and I know we have an excellent chance at getting this band properly heard. To keep focused and confident, I try and relate to my heroes when they were starting out. Metal has never been in vogue, and they all went through similar trials. Low turnouts at gigs in the early days, it's just paying dues. At one point every metal musician who is big-time now was once a kid thinking "Wouldn't it be cool if someday I could be like"...you know, insert musical hero. What separated them besides the basic necessary musical talent? They fucking made up their mind and just did the business. I made that decision four or five years ago in the earliest incarnation of this band and haven't relented.

**With so many independent bands out there, what would you say to someone to try to convince them to buy your c.d.?**

If you like true, heavy, punishing, structured, intelligent, pounding metal music, buy our c.d.. If you like high concept songs executed with ferocity buy our c.d.. When our c.d. arrives, realize that the is just the beginning.

**Discography:**  
2000... *Kozmos*

**Current line-up:**  
Keith Spargo... vocals and guitars  
Mat Bolten... guitars  
Jeff Alexis... bass  
Nick Seelinger... drums

**Website:**  
[www.silencer.cc](http://www.silencer.cc)



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# SISTHEMA

Interview with vocalist Massimo Pirazzoli

One of the more promising bands I have come across this year is Italy's **Sisthema**. They combine the precision and talent of **Meshuggah** with power metal to form a new hybrid of exciting music. They may not find their niche because the vocals are too harsh for power metal fans and



the music is too melodic for extreme fans but this is a band with talent and a vision. They released an independent disc in 1998 titled *Bioelectric Violent Sisthema*, which hinted at the machine like beast they would become on their Noise debut, *The Fourth Discontinuity*. Their label describes them as cyber thrash metal. I spoke to the friendly vocalist Massimo Pirazzoli about **Sisthema**.

**Are you happy with how the new album came out?**

Yes, we are very, very happy. I'm happy that you like the album.

**Do you have tour plans?**

Our plans are to do new songs for a new record. We have some new stuff, it's aggressive and more catchy. For the tour, we'd like to but it's not the time. We have to wait some months for the album to be out to see the market. The main thing is that the album is out, especially in the U.S. This makes me very proud.

**Tell me about your first album.**

We have an album that's three years old. It is out on an independent Italian label called Dawn Of Sadness. It was in **Pantera** and **Machine Head** style mainly. We didn't go as far as this one. In the last three years we have grown and we have reached our personal sound. It's more aggressive but more catchy than before.

**What are your plans for this album?**

First of all, I hope that people will listen to the album and think that it's cool. I hope to bring my music to all parts of the world. I'm very proud that guys on the other side of the world can listen to it. I do not write the lyrics in an objective way. It gives something to think about. It would be great if everyone has their own emotions listening to my songs.

**How are fans in Italy responding?**

From the media the album is cool for almost all the magazines. I've done all the interviews with the guys in Italy, everyone told me it was great. People ask why we are on Noise Records. It's strange but it's really cool. In Italy there is a lot of bands that play power metal or heavy metal but they don't have the fortune to ink a deal with a good label. It's sad. It's the same in the U.S. for many bands as well.

**Have you played many shows in Italy?**

Right now we are waiting to do something in Italy. Now I think the album is not out for much time. In the summer in Italy there are only a few festivals to play. Maybe in September we will be out on the stage for

some support on the album. It's quite difficult because it's all festivals or nothing. I hope next year we'll be able to tour with the second album out.

**When will you record the new album?**

Next year. I don't know when. Now this album is out. No matter what we'll have the new one out next year. We want to give fans new music every year.

**How are the new songs sounding compared to the new record?**

Aggressive and more catchy. We are heavier than most bands. **Meshuggah** and **Strapping Young Lad** have been two of our favorite bands. Maybe you can hear that in our sound. I adore Jens, but it's impossible for me to listen to his vocals all the time. I adore Max Cavalera from **Soulfly**. How he uses his voice is fantastic. I like to be aggressive but make my voice more listenable.

**Discography:**

2001... *The Fourth Discontinuity* (Noise)

1998... *Bioelectric Violent Sisthema* (Dawn Of Sadness)

**Current line-up:**

Massimo Pirazzoli... vocals

Lucio Minghetti... guitars

Davide Solano... bass

Filippo Goni... drums

**Website:**

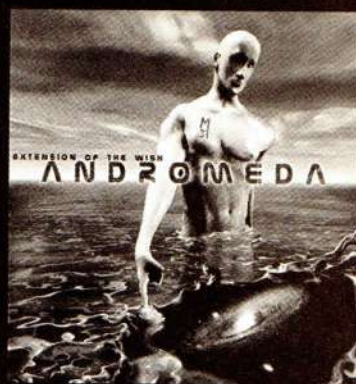
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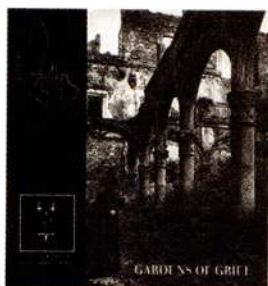


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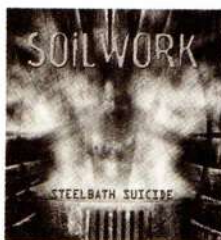


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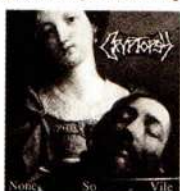
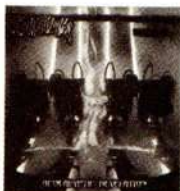


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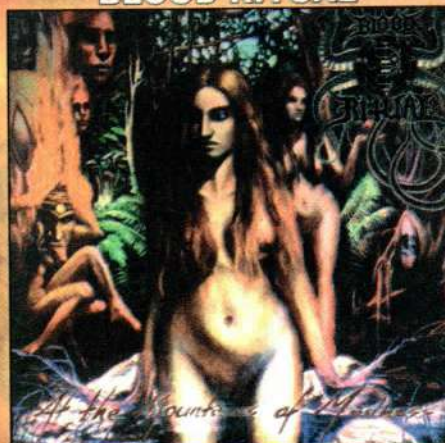


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# 60md

Sixty Miles Down

Interview with guitarist Andy Hurtt

New Jersey's **Sixty Miles Down** (a.k.a. **60md**) is one of the best and most promising new bands I've heard in some time. They have released a four song debut e.p. to introduce themselves to the masses. The music is very dark, the melodies haunting, and they possess some of the most depressing lyrics you will ever hear. Out of all the independent bands I have heard in recent years, **60md** (along with Florida's **Scars Of Life**) have the most potential to break through and be huge. Their style of music is different than what is currently popular, but the band has that same eeriness that allowed **Alice In Chains** to become one of the most revered bands just a decade ago. Now it is time for guitarist Andy Hurtt and **60md** to rise above.

### What are you up to at the moment?

Writing a lot. We're still looking for a new drummer. It's going slow. We've had a few cool guys try out but not the right guy yet. Our singer is also a really good drummer so we aren't stuck writing. We have a guy filling in so we can play shows. Ed from **Etheria** is helping us out live so we can still play. In the past month we've got eight good songs. We're looking to record again soon and do a full length. We're doing the four song officially pressed and hand it out to whoever we can. We'll get some presskits together and shop it around. We're looking for artist development more than we're looking for a deal. It's the next logical step. We want to hook up with a booking agent. A major label deal wouldn't be in our best interests now. We aren't stupid and we wouldn't turn it down. We'll record a full length starting the end of the month. Our singer has a studio set up so we can take our time. We're not locked down for hours or money. We're playing and writing like crazy. We're looking to record a full length.

### How has your sound evolved?

It's growing a lot. It's getting a lot more dynamic. We're not leaning toward progressive but it's opening up a lot more. The four song is really good, but we were still young as a band. That was when I hooked up with them. "Darkness Falls" is the good mix of heavy and melodic. We're doing a lot more of that. We're getting even more emotional. Everything's opening up a lot more, but we're still staying heavy. It's commercial but not overly so. I like good heavy music, but with someone singing. You can put a lot more behind it.

### How has the response been so far?

We've been sticking to Jersey now but we're looking to hit New York. The response has been good wherever we play. The other bands seem to like us which is cool and the club owners seems to like us which is even better. It's been slow because of the drummer situation but we are building a following. We haven't heard too much negativity. People seem to be really into it. We're just happy to play but it's even better that people are liking it.

### What are you looking for in a drummer?

We're looking for someone who can hit hard, but we we're getting picky with feel. It's hard to find a drummer who has a lot of power and a lot of feel behind him without being too technical. We don't know how to describe what we're looking for but we'll know when we hear it. John's a

drummer and we're looking for somebody who can work with him. He was a drummer before he was a singer. We have two guitarists and it's cool that me and Pete can bounce ideas off each other and the bassist. We're creative with it but without a drummer we can't have an outlet like that. We do have an advantage with John knowing the drums. We're located in northern New Jersey so we're only ten minutes from the city.

### What are some of your influences?

There's definitely a big hint of **Alice In Chains'** influence. We all grew up listening to them. That had a heavy impact with us. We get compared to them a lot. I think when people hear the two vocals and the harmonies it's automatic. There's worse bands to be compared to. Our guitarist was heavily influenced by **U2** when he was growing up. He does a lot of cool progressions and a lot of that he picked up from odd **U2** progressions. I listen to everything and all styles of music and try to absorb. I don't know if it seeps into our music but one of my all time favorite bands is **Clutch**. Our singer likes the older **Staind** stuff. If you want to draw one obvious comparison it's **Alice In Chains**. Nobody does that style anymore. It's good hard rock 'n roll with good hooks. A newer band that really stuck out for me is **Sevendust**. I like the sound of their guitars. It's really thick without being muddy. We like to have a heavy edge but with lots of emotion behind it. We have to pay our dues and play the smaller clubs with very little draw.

### How are you approaching this band for the long term?

We've all been around. I've been involved with bands with some potential. We look at it as if this band is our legitimate shot to make it musically. We're looking to make it but if we could make this our job we'd be happy. Who doesn't want fame and fortune, but we'd be happy if this was our day job. I've had friends who had strong things going and then out of nowhere it's gone. The music business is really fickle. We've witnessed what it can do and we know we're getting involved in a risky business. We're not getting any younger and we like it. Hopefully we can make it a career and if not it's fun. We've got to keep working and spread the name anyway we can. One luxury we have is having a place to record without having to spend the bucks. We recorded the four song at John's and then I took it to a buddy of mine who has a studio and we mixed it there. We put ourselves under our own deadline. Now we can take our time. We will record later in the month

and we look to be done recording the end of August. Then we'll take our time mixing. We'll probably have it out in early winter. We're even starting to experiment with some sampling and electronics. Our guitarist is messing around with it. We're not sure if we're going to take it live but we will add some stuff in our recording. My singer has a friend who has a band called **Anger Of The Lamb** and we're going to be helping him take that project out in the live setting. It's almost all in the industrial, electronic vein so it won't completely translate live but it's really interesting.

### Discography:

2001... **Sixty Miles Down**

### Current line-up:

John Mosco... vocals  
Andy Hurtt... guitars  
Pete Dobrzanski... guitars  
Goober... bass

### Website:

[www.60md.com](http://www.60md.com)





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# STRETCHER

Interview with vocalist Mario Israel

**Stretcher** released their second album, *Anno Mundi*, this past year perhaps one of the most intense and professionally sounding independent recordings ever. **Pissing Razors'** Eddie Garcia gives **Stretcher** a sharp production and the band delivers some aggressive in your face metal. **Stretcher** are also masters of self promotion as frontman Mario Israel promotes the band to the masses full time and you can always pick up a magazine and see something about the band. Here is Mario to tell us about the new album.

## What are you up to?

We're trying to get as many out of town gigs as we can.

## How is the scene for you in San Diego?

It's good for what it is. The only thing that sucks about San Diego is they don't have the mix of all ages and twenty one and up. You can have either one or the other. In Anaheim and Hollywood they have the intermix and it's so much more beneficial for the scene. We don't play too many all ages shows down here, but we do good for what it is.

## How have things progressed for Stretcher since your debut?

We've had some labels interested in us, Roadrunner, Century Media, and T.V.T.; but no one's jumped the gun with us. We've had some indie label interest and Pavement's the only label that's come to the table with a contract. The money they wanted to give us was really low and we didn't want to give up our options. We know we've got a good thing. We rehearse about four or five times a week still. We're concentrating on writing new material. Our songwriting has progressed even more with time and we're better as a unit. We spent some money and got one of those Roland digital recorders. We've got that in our rehearsal room now. We've got six or seven new songs and it's the first time we're producing our own music. We're able to arrange the songs and listen back so we can make the polishing touches that make it stand out.

## How does the new material compare to the last disc?

I'd say it's been on the same tip as the *Anno Mundi* album, but it's better arranged. We needed to improve the arrangement of our songs on the *Anno Mundi* album. We weren't able to listen back to them like we are on the new material now. I can name a few songs like "Self Doubt" that we played certain parts too many times or we should have cut to the chase right off the bat. We're catching the little things now. It's still heavy and fast as ever, but more complete songs. We're looking to record a three song sampler of our new material in August. We'll press that and shop it around. I'm looking to license the *Anno Mundi* album. Anyone who was interested in that wanted two to four options right away, the figures that they throw out weren't even half of what it cost to make that album. I manage and promote the band and book all the shows because everyone else in the band works. I survive off the money that we make off the local shows. I'm into making this band go further and further. It's not a matter of if we're going to make this band, it's just a matter of time. I like the fact that it's on our terms now. This next album will probably be licensed to someone and we'll probably have to give up an option but I love the fact that we have so many friends

who are in the music industry that have bands and work for labels so we're very fortunate. I can't wait until we're touring around the world with the third album that we give up and we make twelve percent on, so we get \$1.20 for each \$10 c.d., but we'll have two c.d.'s that we own right next to that we can make one hundred percent on. The long term goal is going to be beneficial to us. Some of the guys in the band are frustrated because they're sick of working their day jobs. We have to hold off and wait for the right thing. We're building more and more leverage.

## What are your live shows like?

Our focal point is our live shows, especially in our local area. We have so many sponsors that believe in us. We give away bongos, pipes, and shirts at all our shows. I've got a clothing line that I started with another partner called Wool Rider. We get into all other bands like **Sprung Monkey**, **Cottonmouth Kings**. They wear our clothes too. I have to give a lot of credit to Eddie, the drummer from **Pissing Razors**, he helped us out a lot through the years. He came in to produce this record with the know how. He wanted to give a listen to the material for a couple weeks and give his input, but we didn't have the set up we do now. We flew him into San Diego. We were well rehearsed so we went in there and blew this thing out. We recorded it in four days and mixed it in three days. Everything has been a great learning experience. Our buddy, Herp, has a recording studio in New York. Tom, Joe, and myself, and him sat there on the graveyard shift and mixed this album from late at night until early in the morning.

## How did the *Anno Mundi* album do?

We're down to our last hundred c.d.'s so we're gonna repress that. We've had nothing but positive responses from the majority of the people that we've talked to; from underground zines to fans. It's paying your dues. You have to pay your dues to labels, to fans, to everyone. It's all about earning respect. Labels are going to make sure you are going to stay around and there are no drug addicts. We understand that. We're doing as much as we can. We're doing as much as an indie label can for us anyway. I wouldn't want to get shelved up on a major either. I'm looking at it as a fine line and do as much as I can.

## Would you ever compromise your sound if the right deal came your way?

I don't know. One thing that we're doing with our new songwriting is we have our regular speedy tunes but we're dropping down to a low C now and doing heavy groove, **Skinlab** stuff- but we still go off in our little tangents. We can groove along and everyone knows what we're doing but then we'll throw in a hyper fast blast beat that throws everyone off. We try to bring in everything. We can do anything we want.

## Discography:

2000... *Anno Mundi*  
1998... *Everyone Loves A Tragedy*

## Current line-up:

Mario Israel... vocals  
Ed Mayhen... guitars  
Tony Ratz... guitars  
Joe McGowan... bass  
Tom Stuart... drums

## Website:

[www.stretcher.net](http://www.stretcher.net)





# SUPERKOLLIDER

## Interview with Superkollider

Remember the early nineties when Clutch and Helmet made heavy rock exciting again with their heavy, groove oriented music? New England's Superkollider's self titled debut takes that same simplistic yet effective approach and offer an energetic and memorable debut. The band is all about precision, yet they still manage to keep an organic feel through out the disc. I e-mailed some questions to the band and here are the results:

### How would you describe your sound?

**Erik:** We have a heavy sound. What we play isn't very complex actually. The songs are usually simple in structure and very guitar riff based. There's a certain purity in simplicity. A song like "Mean" for instance, which is based on only two notes, has a kind of immediacy to it because of that. I feel that really elevates the importance of that song's lyrics. My musical influences are the usual Sabbath, Maiden, Priest, but I also like a lot of other early eighties metal like Scorpions, Accept, Ratt, and Dokken. The Scorpions are masters of the guitar riff. The riffs on *Blackout* and *Love at First Sting* are insanely good.

**Terry:** We are like a massive drill grinding through the Earth's crust.

**Mike:** I would say our sound is in a hardcore/ metal vein with lots of pauses and emphasis on negative space. Most of the music is fairly simple but the reason it works is because it's so tight. As far as my influences, I grew up listening to everything. My favorite stuff has generally been punk bands like the Damned and Husker Du. These days the music scene looks pretty bleak, although there are still a few bands out there kicking ass.

**Kevin:** I would describe our sound as aggressive and heavy. No nonsense.

### What elements are necessary for your guitar playing?

**Erik:** Probably the most important part of how I play is my mindset. It's real easy to play in this band because we all have a similar mindset about our music. When we play we try to really connect with each other so that we become a single unit that expresses the song, not just four individuals. At that point what I'm playing on the guitar is a direct reflection of what we are trying to say in the song. What I play just falls into line after that, whether it's heavy or groove or whatever.

### How do you feel about the comparisons to Helmet and Stompbox?

**Erik:** Both are good bands and valid comparisons. I think we are going for something a little different than those bands though. At least we are not being lumped into the Korn/ Limp Bizkit pile. Not that there's anything wrong with those bands, but it's easy for people to pigeonhole a new band into whatever sound is popular at the time. It's unfortunate that the music industry in general behaves that way. I remember in the early nineties when just about every band that came out got compared to Pearl Jam. A lot of good bands simply got ignored because of that.

**Terry:** I take the comparison of us to Helmet as a definite compliment. I am not too familiar with Stompbox.

**Mike:** To be compared to a band like Helmet is a huge compliment I do see the similarities between what they were doing and what we are trying to do. As for Stompbox, I must confess I've never heard them. I've heard of them and people say that we do sound like them.

**Kevin:** I don't mind the comparison. New bands are usually compared to someone, and there's no shame in being compared to the good ones.

### How is the New England scene?

**Erik:** The fans in this area are great. We are starting to see some diehard regulars at our shows now. Also the bands in this area seem to get along pretty well and help each other out with getting shows and stuff. We play

live as much as we can. On average we've been playing shows about once a week for like the last six months. Summer has slowed down which has given us a chance to work on new music.

**Terry:** The New England scene kicks ass. We are lucky to be out of Boston right now. We'll always be proud of this city.

**Mike:** Overall, I would say the Boston scene is pretty cool. We have some bands that we're pretty tight with and we play with them quite a bit. One thing lacking are venues for all ages shows.

**Kevin:** I like the local scene. There are some cool clubs and we get to hang out with some good bands. There are plenty of hardcore fans around here too. We do get to play live a lot. We've actually turned some shows down because we don't want to play the same area too much.

### How was it working with Ken Cmar in the studio?

**Erik:** Ken has a good ear for sound and he has the experience to back it up. Sometimes the studio was hard though because we would want to spend more time on parts and we couldn't because of time. I don't know if any band ever makes the kind of album they truly want. Everyone seems to be pretty happy though.

### What are some interests outside of music?

**Erik:** I'm all over anything Star Wars. Action figures, toys, the card game, posters, t-shirts, you name it. I also play a lot of video games. I have ten systems at home plus my P.C. Online deathmatch is the best. Serious Sam anyone? How about Quake III?

**Terry:** Some interest of mine are skateboarding, swimming, exercising, frisbee, spending time with my girlfriend, and relaxing with my friends.

**Mike:** I studied archaeology at Umass Boston and received my B.A. in Anthropology. I might go back for my Master's degree sometime. Right

now I work for a landscaping company building Zen and Japanese gardens and waterfalls. It's hard work but I enjoy it.

**Kevin:** I like to do carpentry and make furniture. I also love to play golf. It's just too bad I suck at it.

### How do you get your guitar sound?

**Erik:** I play a Kramer Baretta through an ADA MP-1 preamp. I use a Carvin 900 for power amp and a Marshall 4 x 12 cabinet. I also use a Rocktron HUSH pedal to gate out noise. That's what makes the stops sound tight. I have a footswitch for the MP-1 but I only have

two sounds, on and off. I also have an E.S.P. MH-100 guitar but I use the Kramer more. They are both set up for drop C tuning.

### What elements can we always expect in a Superkollider song?

**Erik:** You're never gonna hear an acoustic guitar or a love ballad that's for sure. Superkollider has always been about electricity and volume. That's what we like.

**Terry:** What you will always get from us are more and more raw, powerful tunes.

**Mike:** I would say every Superkollider songs would have a one word title.

**Kevin:** I'm sure the songs will always be heavy. As for anything else it's hard to say. I don't like to plan that far ahead. I just like to let it happen.

### Discography:

2001... Superkollider (Wonderdrug)

### Current line-up:

Terry Boisclair... vocals  
Erik Markarian... guitars  
Mike Allen... bass  
Kevin Torstensen... drums

### Website:

www.superkollider.com

www.wonderdrugrecords.com



# THURSDAY

Interview with vocalist Geoff Rickly

**Thursday** is a band that has been making quite an impact in America with the release of their second record, *Full Collapse*. This is a band that is all about the cathartic release of intense emotions. Driven by intelligence and complex feelings, **Thursday** play a style of music that borders on hardcore and rock. There is a contrast of harshness and melancholy and vocalist Geoff Rickly is the perfect vehicle for these ideas. I spoke to Geoff about their rapid ascension and their impressive new album, *Full Collapse*.

**What was your mindframe going in to record this album?**

We were really lucky to have the luxury of doing whatever we wanted. We were really happy with the songs that we were writing and we wanted to do something that we would be proud of. We're really happy with it.

**How have you grown and changed since the debut?**

When we started the band we were pretty much straight into a hardcore direction. We were all a little scared about going into the studio on the first album. This time we were more comfortable and confident. We decided it was time to be who we were and write songs about our lives. If people love us or hate us for it, we don't really need to worry.

**How has the response been so far?**

It's been really overwhelming. We meet people in every city who know the lyrics to every song. There are people who already have **Thursday** tattoos- it's crazy. We've had some people tell us our record has changed their life. Yesterday we were home for a little while from our tour and I ran into my dad and he said that he went for his first career for fifteen years and we've already affected more people than he ever did in his first career. You never know if people are going to support you or not, so on that end it's been overwhelming and wonderful. My family is great.

**What are you up to?**

We have a tour with **Sky Came Falling** and **Fairweather** from June 1st until June 22nd. Then we have a week off and one of our guitarists does independent movies and he's going to work on a film. Our other guitarist, Tom, is getting some needed time off to spend with his girlfriend. Then we're going out on tour with **Waterdown** and **Drowningman**. We're looking for one more tour so we can get out to California. When this fall comes around we're going to try to head to Europe. We're trying to go out there and play for and meet as many people as we can.

**What's your opinion of the live setting?**

In my opinion, that's the way you should experience music. For me, it's all about communication. I can communicate with people and not have things in the way like packaging. It's straight face to face, person to person. We encourage people to participate whether it's to sing along, to shout, or to react to it in any way. We don't want it to be a one sided experience. That was what the recording of this record was all about. We would hang out in the live room so we could all play together. It wasn't like most studios where you have to record individually. We recorded it like we were doing a show. We had a lot of friends come in and scream

along and do back ups to get that feeling. We wanted the record to be like a live show. I used to work at the studio we recorded at and I have a really good relationship with the people there. We had this plan of what we wanted to do. They kept it in the punk spirit and made the recording very spontaneous.

**What are you writing about lyrically?**

It's a lot of life experiences. A lot of my friends and especially my friends in the band. They think I'm crazy. My girlfriend and I broke up right before our tour and I moved all my stuff out of her apartment. It was tough and they were worried but I was okay. They ask me if I want to get it off my chest but there's not really much there. They think it comes out in my music and I guess it does to some extent. Even if the song is about something negative seeing that people know what I'm talking about makes me smile. It's amazing to see people know exactly what I'm feeling. I hope that other people aren't also experiencing some of the same themes. I'm not always direct in my writing. There's something for everybody to relate to I guess.

**What are you looking forward to in the next few years?**

For the band, I want to get to the point where we can bring our friends' bands out and tour with us. We want to get younger kids involved in the music scene. That's the whole reason why you would want to go to a label like Victory. The first punk record that I bought was a **Bad Brains** record and I bought it at Sam Goody. As cynical as I am about stores like Sam Goody and mainstream rock culture, at some level that's got to be your introduction to it. If we could be anybody's door in that would be something special. I've got one more year left of school and I will be a high school English teacher.

**What's in your future plans with the band?**

We definitely want to go to Europe. We want to see if people in different cultures feel the same things. In

America if you are spreading a message you feel like you're doing it to people who are on the same page as you. Maybe we'll get different viewpoints from other cultures. We try to figure out other way to reach out to people, not just through music. Our other guitarist is a filmmaker. He worked on a band called *George Washington*. We're going to do a movie for one of our songs, "Understanding in a Car Crash". We're trying to play around with different ways for the listener/ c.d. experience. There's been a lot of experimentation already so it's hard to find something new.

**Discography:**

2001... *Full Collapse* (Victory)  
1999... *Waiting* (Eyeball)

**Current line-up:**

Geoff Rickly... vocals  
Tom Keeley... guitars  
Steve Pedulla... guitars  
Tim Payne... bass  
Tucker Rule... drums

**Website:**

[www.victoryrecords.com](http://www.victoryrecords.com)



# WATERDOWN

Interview with bassist Christian

**Waterdown's** new album, *Never Kill the Boy on the First Date*, is a peculiar disc. The album's artwork and the title reveal nothing about what type of music **Waterdown** play. One listen to this German band and you realize they are a remarkable band with an open mind. They employ two vocalists, Marcel who sings and Ingo who screams, to get their message across. They are currently getting ready to tour America with **Drowningman** and **Thursday**. I spoke to bassist Christian about **Waterdown**.

**Are you happy with everything on the new record?**

I'm very, very happy. The reaction has been great and we're very proud of the disc.

**What are your tour plans?**

We are about to do a full two month U.S. tour, from the middle of July to the middle of September. We're going to support **Drowningman** and **Thursday** for the first part of the tour on the East Coast, then we'll go to the West Coast. It's the biggest thing we've done so far. I love those bands, but I have no idea how many people will show up at the shows.

**Have you been to America before?**

I've been there a two times, two days each. I'm doing interviews for a German magazine. The rest of the band has never been there.

**What was your impression of America?**

It was nice, especially the weather. Here in Germany it sucks because it's always raining. In the middle of April it was still snowing. I want to go to the sun.

**What's the reception for Waterdown in Germany?**

We're a new band. We've only been around for one and a half years so there's a lot of work to do. So far, everything is going well. We did a tour with **Grade** that was super fantastic. We had a great response at all these shows and we've sold a lot of records.

**Did you have one release before this?**

We had an e.p. of four songs that we released in August of last year, right before our tour with **Grade**.

**How would you explain what you're doing with Waterdown?**

We rock. If you want to know more, I just say hardcore. People call bands with melodic singing emo and I don't like that word. Nearly all music is emotional, so that doesn't make sense. Hardcore should be emotional anyway no matter how much guitars are played. We are a lot more heavier than what people consider emo.

**What are the ideas behind the album title and the artwork?**

Many of the lyrics on this album deal with getting stabbed in the back by people that you love. The album title is not to be taken too seriously. The lyrics are both personal and political. We don't want to separate the two because we think that everything we do or don't do in life is political. The lyrics are about things that happen in our life so they are personal.

**How long have you been playing the bass?**

I've played bass for thirteen years now. **Waterdown** is my fifth band. We've all been in bands before. I've been playing in bands for twelve years.

**What's your perspective on the music business?**

Trust no one. Make up your own mind and try to get better and better. Rehearse as much as you can. Find some good friends that you want to

spend a lot of time with. You need to find people who you are willing to spend time with so you can tour for a long time. It would be impossible for us if we weren't all friends. Surround yourself with people that you trust and people that you like and try to get better.

**What is the biggest obstacle for you to overcome?**

Money. The problem that you have to work with is that you need a lot of time in the band. It means that members in **Waterdown** have to quit their jobs. That's what we want to do. Everyone in the band hasn't questioned quitting their jobs. It's a high risk. We're only young once. This is the most exciting time of our lives, so who cares about money.

**What are your career goals?**

The point where we are now is way more than we ever expected. I'm sitting here at home and everything is exploding before my eyes. It's sounds like a cliché but it's really a dream coming true for us. Victory is doing three records with us and that's awesome. They are one of the best labels that we know. Just the fact that they asked us to join their roster is awesome. We're the first German band that they've ever signed. They are setting up tours for us all around the world and I can't wait to go. I just want to make good records, get good shows and be true to myself. If I



can't look into the mirror and feel proud, it's not worth it.

**Final comments?**

I'm really looking forward to touring the U.S. If anyone wants to talk to us, come on up and say hi to us. We enjoy talking to people who like what we're doing.

**Discography:**

2001... *Never Kill The Boy On The First Date* (Victory)  
2000... *Drawasmilingface*

**Current line-up:**

Marcel... vocals  
Ingo... vocals  
Holger... guitars  
Claus... guitars  
Christian... bass  
Jorg... drums

**Website:**

[www.victoryrecords.com](http://www.victoryrecords.com)

# Within Tears

Interview with vocalist Sal Sgroi and vocalist, guitarist, bassist, keyboardist Anthony Lauer

I noticed **Within Tears** debut release at Slipped Disc and couldn't help but to pick it up. I was not sure what to expect, but was pleasantly surprised to hear heavy doom metal that has more in common with the early nineties scene than the modern styles of the genre. The band is currently looking to get a full line-up so they can play some live shows. Taking influences from such bands as **My Dying Bride**, **Pink Floyd**, **Anathema**, and **Novembers Doom**; **Within Tears** is the work of two musicians (Sal Sgroi and Anthony Lauer), with whom I e-mailed the following questions to:

## What are your goals and intentions with this first recording?

**Sal:** Our goal is to pull the listener in so they can feel and relate to the artistic story that is presented.

**Anthony:** Obviously, to get our music heard by others around the world. This cd is our business card to the world. It's our introduction to the masses. To get something out there to create record label interest. We're hoping to get a record deal so we can get in a studio and work with an engineer and mixer who can help us achieve the sound we're looking for.

## I noticed you shun female vocals and keyboards for the most part, what are your thoughts on their use in this style of music?

**Anthony:** We don't shun them at all. Every one of our songs uses keyboards and three out of the five songs on the c.d. use female vocals, to some extent. I use keyboards since I don't have an orchestra at my disposal. As far as keyboards and female vocals in "this style of music" goes, I think you should use whatever you can to properly convey the feeling of the song. Don't use something if it doesn't fit with the mood of the song. When we write, we sit down and figure out exactly what the feeling of the song is and what should go with it. We don't just slap a growl or a female vocal in because it "sounds cool". It has to add to the song. It has to convey the feeling of what's going on with the lyrics.

## Why did you choose to cover Candlemass' "Solitude"?

**Anthony:** It was my idea to do the **Candlemass** cover. Sal didn't even hear about it until I did all the music. I wanted to do it for a couple of reasons. One, it's a great song. It's actually one of the first doom metal songs I ever heard. Secondly, I felt that we could make it even more powerful and depressing, which I feel we did. I also wanted to try and introduce **Candlemass** to some of the people who may never have heard of them before. Everyone should own a copy of *Epicus Doomicus Metallicus*.

## What made you fan of this depressing/ doom style?

**Sal:** This music has a definite strong feeling of emotions that hits us right in the heart. Of course we're big fans of this genre but there's all kinds of other styles we love also.

**Anthony:** I would guess life in general. I walk around all day getting disgusted by what I see. The stupidity of people and the shit that they get away with. I see all this and there isn't a thing I could do about it, legally. I've become very reclusive because of this fact. At night I think of all the things I'd like to do, all the things I'd like to become and then reality hits... I do not fit into this world. Depressing and dark music speaks about a lot of the same things I go through.

## How do you feel about bands like Paradise Lost, Anathema, Katatonia etc. growing and changing as the years move on?

**Anthony:** I think the last two **Anathema** albums were incredible. *Judgement* is more depressing than their first albums. Read the lyrics. They're all about real life shit. Something that everyone can and will feel

at some point. I never really liked **Katatonia's** old stuff. *Tonight's Decision* was a good album but their last one was kind of boring. As far as heavier bands becoming techno groups (**Paradise Lost**, **Theatre Of Tragedy**, etc.), I think it's shit. I see nothing wrong with bands progressing but once you change your style totally you should also change the name of the group. Don't taint the memory of what the band used to be.

**Sal:** Change is fine of course, but I believe there's a limit. Going from doom to a techno type sound is too drastic. **Anathema**, now, are definitely one of the top five bands in the world. They have changed for the better. **Katatonia's** great too but they sound like they are going more commercial than before.

## Do you see Within Tears developing in a similar fashion?

**Sal:** No, but like I said before, whatever feels right at that moment is what will come out.

**Anthony:** I don't foresee us becoming a dance group. If I ever did anything in a totally different style, I'd use a different band name. Besides, could you imagine some kid with big parachute pants dancing at a rave to a group called **Within Tears**? I don't think so.

## Do you feel you are a depressed person or is this music a form of catharsis to get you through the difficult times?

**Sal:** I think both are accurate. We are depressed because things bother us maybe a little bit more than the average person. But there is also a sense of creative art coming though as fiction from real life problems.

**Anthony:** A little bit of both I guess. Unfortunately, I'm a manic-depressive, or so my old psychiatrist and psychologist used to tell me. So I go from extreme anger to depression to happiness in an instant. That's why our songs have sudden changes in them. I create music based upon what I'm feeling emotionally at the time. When I listen to our music I mentally relive everything that inspired the creation of the songs. It's like ripping open a scab.



Sal



Anthony

## How do you like living in Brooklyn and how does this hurt or help Within Tears?

**Anthony:** I don't really like Brooklyn too much. I don't like any big cities. I'd like to live in upstate New York. Some place where my next door neighbor is a mile away. People annoy me. In some ways living in Brooklyn helps because some people like to hear what's coming out of New York in general. At the same time, New York doesn't really have a thriving metal scene so that doesn't help, but with the internet it doesn't even matter anymore. I've found more great bands from other states and countries because of the net than I have by going to shows. Music is now more boundary less than ever before.

**Sal:** It helps and in a way it doesn't. Where we live no one listens to or understands this music because no likes to try something different. That in turn helps our hatred and sorrow while it also limits us. Again, so it helps in one way and it doesn't in another.

## Is there any final comments?

**Anthony:** Go to our website at <http://withintears.virtualave.net> or [mp3.com](http://mp3.com) and listen to our songs. If you like them than get in touch with us at [withintears@hotmail.com](mailto:withintears@hotmail.com). Usually the cd is \$7.50 but if you mention that you read about us in this magazine, we'll sell you the cd for \$3.00. This will cover the shipping charges for anywhere in the world.

**Sal:** All your sorrow, all your fears, all your hate, all your love are held **Within Tears**.

## Discography:

2001... Moments Of Life: Chapter One

## Current line-up:

Anthony Lauer... vocals, guitars, bass, keyboards  
Sal Sgroi... vocals

## Website:

[www.withintears.virtualave.net](http://www.withintears.virtualave.net)

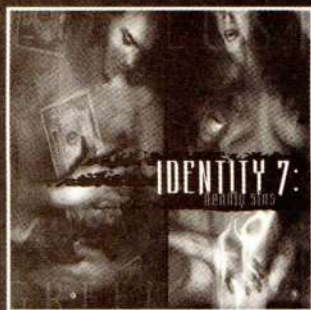


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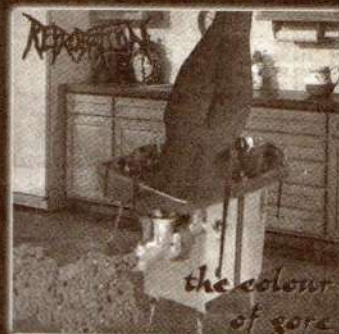
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Darkromantic poetry and rich, neoclassical soundscapes painted with ethereal, heavenly voices in a lush digipak with new artwork and layout. Remastered with bonus track. Also available: "Reprise MCMXCVIII" CD, and "Absolution" MCD.

# ARISE FROM THORNS

"Before an Audience of Stars"



Brilliant, progressive metal fronted by heavenly, powerful female vocals. Influences range from Claire Obscure to October Project and The Gathering. Remastered with 3 bonus tracks. Layout by Michael Riddick.



maudlin of the WELL  
"My Fruit Psychobells..."

Diverse and progressive,  
Astral Metal



RAIN fell WITHIN  
"Believe"

Atmospheric metal with  
heavenly female vocals



CORVUS CORAX  
"The Atavistic Triad"

The Ultimate Pagan  
WAR MACHINE!



AUTUMN TEARS  
"WINTER & the BROKEN ANGEL"

Orchestral, neoclassical  
music with heavenly vocals



LONG WINTER'S STARE  
"The Tears of Odin's Fallen"

Symphonic dark metal with  
male tenor and contrabass



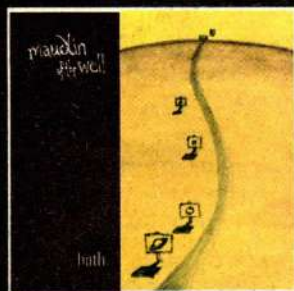
NOVEMBERS DOOM  
"The Knowing"

Dark, conceptual and  
diverse doom death metal

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