

COMPLETE COVERAGE OF THE MARCH METAL MELTDOWN II

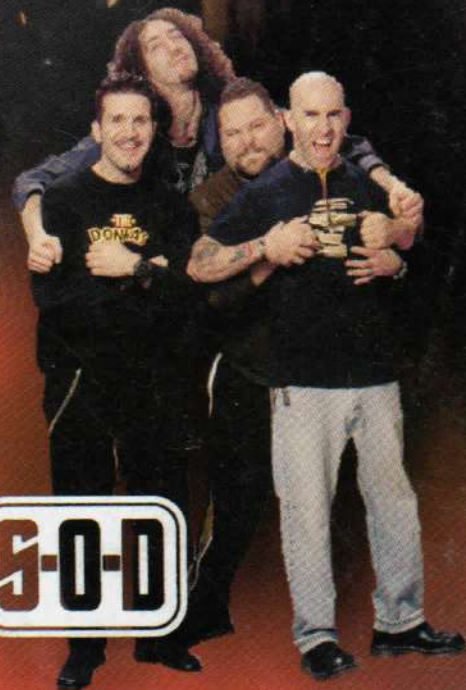
# Prometheus Crusade

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## SENTENCED

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# 5 to 6 Inches

Being a devotee to Metal is hard, for Metal is a genre that is spread by word-of-mouth; there is no commercial outlet for our music (in the States). When one gives serious thought to it, Metal is a society of elite members who believe enough in a form of music that is uncompromising, unyielding, and, dare I say rebellious. (I apologize to all you Rap, Alternative, and MTV fans; you're no longer a factor of rebellion, but rather a commonplace article that is no longer a serious art form. You're more or less seen as a joke in our eyes. We are serious about our music; it feels to be raped by the multi-million dollar corporation known as MTV) It's a form of art that is safely cathartic and speaks volumes on the present state of humans and the reality of their surroundings, yet it will probably never be recognized as such in our popular culture, and why not? Because the droll sheep surrounding us cannot even get past a simple manner of appearance-- an outwardly sign that binds many of us together, yet is shunned by their close-minded and dogmatic worldviews: long hair! I mention this because, as a fan and contributor of Metal music, I wear my hair long. "Hippie!" you scream. "Long Hair!" you'll bark out at me when I'm crossing the street. I've seen so many dagger-like glances that I have lost all count, but why? Why am I subjected to these obviously discriminatory comments? I work, pay my taxes, love my country, and love my girlfriend! It just so happens that I play guitar in a Metal band, write for a Metal magazine, and have (God forbid!) long hair. I'm not a "Satan worshiper" (and by the way, I thought we had religious freedom in this country, so it shouldn't matter what my or ANYONE'S religious beliefs are!), I have never killed anything, nor have I eaten anything that wasn't butchered prior to my purchasing it at the local shopping center (which is more than can be said for the "hunters" that surround me). My hair is long; that's the only outward sign that separates me from anything or anyone else in our popular culture.

"Big deal," you say. "Why am I reading this gibberish? He's a long-haired hippie-freak with no point, complaining that people scream at him when he passes by!" Well, hear me out and you'll see why what I'm saying is so important. I was recently the head of security at a geriatric hospital, and upon not being paid in a timely fashion, I decided to take my services elsewhere (a reasonable reason to move on). I applied at several different establishments and received the "would you consider cutting your hair" option (longhairs, I'm sure this sounds familiar to you); again and again I was offered positions that had these stringent conditions. Unfazed, I set my sights a little lower and headed for my local mall. Thinking that I am well-versed in music (I hate to pat myself on the back, but I believe I am a gifted writer and well schooled in the ART OF METAL!) and that I can work well with people, my quest led me to a well-known record chain that I'll not mention here. (It's NOT Sam Goody! I promised a friend I'd make that clear.) Impressed by my security background, I was "granted" an interview with this unnamed record chain. While being interviewed, I was asked the usual questions that are asked of any applicant: "What would you offer?" "What do you think are the responsibilities of an employee here?" and so on and so forth. Being a good conversationalist and having a way with words, I had it in the bag... or so I thought. Then came a question I thought I'd never hear from a record store: "Would you consider 'trimming' 5 to 6 inches off your hair?" Needless to say, I was shocked! My first reaction was to say, "Fuck you and fuck your store," but I held back and said, "Not for less than \$7.00 an hour," in a joking manner; I don't think I would have taken any job at this point, regardless of the pay. The interview ended without incident, yet for some reason, I can't help but think I'll not receive a phone call from the establishment.

Now I'm going to pose the question that every one that has ever experienced this would love to ask, and that is, if there's a girl working at the counter, in the stock room, or at the reception desk that has hair down to her ass, then why can't a man have the same (dare I say) "rights" as a female? Why is this important? Because, quite simply, it's discrimination. Laugh at me now, my friend, but if it's that easy to discriminate against me because of a simple thing like long hair, then how long will it be before it's something about you that someone doesn't like. Are you Black? Jewish? Are you an American Indian? How about gay? Hell, sometimes all you have to be is the wrong gender! Therefore, someone may not hire you because of some of these reasons. Don't get me wrong; there have been laws passed here in the US and job discrimination might not be as bad as it used to be, but it's far from where it should be. I need a job like anyone else; just because you're reading my commentary in this publication does not mean that I'm making any money from it, nor are the editors, nor are any of the other writers. This is, for now, and forever will always be, a representation and the illustrated symbol of the devotion that we collectively feel for our beloved METAL! We are all working for... well... for you-- the person who has this issue in his hands. You're the person that has made Metal her life, just as we have.

If my passion for Metal wasn't so overwhelming and pure, perhaps I would have folded and conformed to the demands of society, but then again, if I were willing to conform and cut my hair, why then would I not follow all of the trends and fashions for every current time period (like MTV)? I'll tell you why, because METAL is NOT a trend or a fad-- it's a way of life, and if I do cut my hair it will be because I wanted to, not because I was forced to by society, trend, or fashion.

~Keith W. Sullivan



VOLUME 3

NUMBER 1

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# SENTENCED

## A Crimson Stream Of Thoughts

By Keith Sullivan

*Having bathed in the beauty and melancholy of Sentenced's latest offering, Crimson, for close to 48 hours straight, I found myself pondering the many lost loves of my life: the reasons we are cursed to this spinning orb, why I must poison this earth with my every breath, and my very existence itself!!!! Each rotation of the disc brought me closer and closer to the brink of... my interview with Guitarist/main Lyricist Sami Lopakka. I'm extending an invitation to you, dear reader, to share in my discussion with this delightful and accommodating man. So pull up a seat and make yourself miserable, my friend. Now, without further ado, I bring you Mr. Lopakka.*

**Promethean Crusade:** I really want to thank you for putting the chorus of "Fragile" in my head for the last 3 days.

**Sentenced:** That's the point we're aiming at.

**PC:** So do you write the choruses first?

**S:** Uh, yeah, basically yes. We start from the choruses and then when that works in a way that is satisfactory for everyone, then we start to build the other parts around it, but usually it starts from the chorus. Like, you can perhaps hear on *Crimson* we always want to make the choruses kind of, uh...

**PC:** A definite hook?

**S:** Yeah, and stronger than the other parts also. Like, production-wise, so it comes a bit louder and catchier than the A parts and B parts and so on.

**PC:** Ever since *Down* your choruses have been so strong; they're so much more powerful than the choruses on the previous albums.

**S:** Yeah, we've been working on that and really giving that a lot of thought.

**PC:** Are you doing that differently, recording wise?

**S:** Yes, you could say that. We add instruments there and we even have changed the sound for the choruses so there is a big contrast between the chorus and the rest of the song. The chorus is like the spine of the whole song; you have to concentrate on something to create a song that is not, like, feeling the same from the beginning to the end.

**PC:** Has Sentenced been growing in popularity in the U.S. since *Down*?

**S:** Yeah, I think so, and as far as I know, every album that we have released over there has always sold more than the previous ones.

**PC:** You guys have a really nice web site. How important is the Internet to Sentenced?

**S:** It's more and more important. A couple of years ago we didn't really understand a lot

about computers and so on, but then we kind of grew into it; it almost became an addiction for us. I think having a home page on the Internet and having an e-mail address so people can contact you is a fast way to communicate with your fans, so it's really important for us. We have been putting more and more effort to make the home page work and really serve the needs of the fans.

**PC:** You have a deal on there where you actually answer the fans? They propose questions, and it says the members of Sentenced actually reply.

**S:** Yeah, it's true. We are really answering. A lot of people don't believe that we are doing this ourselves. Some bands say that they will answer it, but then some of their friends or whatever do it. But we are taking care of it ourselves, and I must say it takes a lot of time. Sometimes it might take a few weeks or even a couple of months before we have the time to answer the questions, but we answer them all sooner or later.

**PC:** The Internet is increasingly becoming more and more a part of the Metal fan.

**S:** Yeah. Why not?

**PC:** It should be, although a lot of Metal fans just don't have computers.

**S:** Yeah. They only have long hair and mustaches.

**PC:** Yeah and black t-shirts.

**S:** Yeah.

**PC:** Are you aware that ever since *Down*, you've been compared to METALLICA's black album?

**S:** Yeah, we have heard comments like that. It seems that people always need to have something to compare it to. We have been compared to bands that we haven't even heard, ever. And it's just weird, but I don't know, maybe there's some little things that would remind you of METALLICA, but I don't think it's the main thing. And we don't have the cheesy songs that were on the black METALLICA album. So I would rather hear comments or comparisons with *...And Justice For All* or *Master of Puppets*.

**PC:** Ville's really singing well. He's singing a lot more on *Crimson* than he has on anything... really singing. Is he in any kind of voice training?

**S:** He took lessons between *Down* and *Frozen*, but since that we have been improving the vocals and he has been rehearsing a lot. Now he's got the right technique to breathe when he sings from the lessons he took. He has been really improving a lot and now he knows how to do it and he can concentrate on the singing itself and forget about breathing. I would like as well to forget about breathing but uh...

**PC:** Yeah, it takes up so much of your time.

**S:** Yeah, why bother? But I agree that it's...

**PC:** Constantly improving?

**S:** Yeah, and becoming more like really singing, not only shouting. It always gives us more possibilities to build up something that we have not yet done and ever since he joined the band we have had a lot more possibilities to make progression with the music.

**PC:** How does it feel to be #1?

**S:** It doesn't really feel like anything great. Of course it's a very positive thing for us and we were satisfied as hell and

**PC:** Is it like a vindication?

**S:** Yeah, and a good excuse to drink like hell!

**PC:** Yeah, there you go, I'll drink to that.

**S:** It has been growing over the years, especially here in Finland. It has been growing pretty fast and very strongly and now we are at the point of being #1 in the national charts. It's really rewarding and gives us hope for the future as well.

**PC:** I hope someday soon it can happen here.

**S:** Yeah, there's so much more stuff that you guys have over there than having a Metal band. Even any Metal band, to be #1 would be...

**PC:** A miracle? But I guess you have to be rapping to be #1 here.

**S:** Yeah, and do it with that PUFF DADDY freak.

**PC:** Are you able to live off of the music or do you have to maintain a day job?

**S:** We are living on it now and it has been this way for a little while. Like, uh, the money flow before was going away from us. Now it is towards us again. So, we can live on it and we wouldn't have to have anything else to put bread on the table. But we all have, however, separate lives from the band and it's healthy mentally for each member to have something else in life than only this band. I, for example, I'm studying and the drummer is studying as well and so is the bass player. Uh, Ville and Miika are not doing much.

**PC:** It's so rare that a Metal band can actually make a living being a Metal band.

**S:** Yeah, it really took a long time before we got to this point, but we're here and I hope it all lasts a while.

**PC:** I'm glad you'll be touring here. You guys need all the publicity you can get especially here.

*Continued on next page*



Continued from previous page

S: Yeah, from what I have heard the situation over there kind of sucks.

PC: It's been improving.

S: It is?

PC: It's been improving, but not to the point that we're getting Metal acts in the top ten, besides METALLICA. And now...

S: Yeah and they're a Country act anyway! PC: Where do all these suicidal lyrics come from?

S: Um, I just listen to what comes from inside and for some reason always these negative feelings and negative thoughts are the first ones to come out and it's just so natural for us to write these very melancholy songs and really depressing lyrics. I don't know if the location of the band has something to do with it, as we live here almost at the Arctic Circle in Finland and the weather conditions are pretty extreme. I would say it already runs in our blood, and in the blood of Finnish people to have this basic melancholy view and it shows in everything we ever do: in the music, in the lyrics, and in life in general.

PC: And that's why most bands from Finland are the way you are.

S: Yes, and when it's this dark and this cold you can basically do three different things. One is, uh, to kill yourself, one is to become a drunk, and the third one is to become a musician.

PC: A mortician? [Laughs]

S: [laughs graciously] Yeah, and we chose to form a band and sing about suicide and get drunk as well from time to time.

PC: Is it hard to find girls with all the suicidal lyrics? Because I noticed on some of the songs you actually graduated from killing yourself to killing someone else.

S: No, it's not hard and actually we all have girlfriends. I'm even married now.

PC: Oh, you're married? Congratulations.

S: It's fascinating to women, go to a bar and yell out, "I'm going to kill myself!" Then you will have company. But I wouldn't say that, we're only, like, singing of suicide. There are some romantic elements included as well and a variety of different feelings and thoughts.

PC: Yeah, the lyrics definitely have a romantic type of feel to them, even though they all end in death.

S: Yeah, what is more romantic than that?

PC: Absolutely.

S: There's some weird beauty in destruction.

PC: And you capture it very well; your lyrics are some of the best... very poetic.

S: Yeah, it's nice to hear you feel that way.

PC: Has the name Sentenced taken on a new meaning to you in that when you were playing Death Metal was it like, Sentenced to death, but now it's more like Sentenced to contemplate a life of living in misery?

S: Yeah, I'd say that when we started it was like Sentenced in an almost like doomed...

PC: To death?

S: Yeah, and now it's like we like to think that we are Sentenced to live this miserable life on this big death row that is called Earth, and when we die we are free from the sentence. So, it has changed over the years. We are really happy that we originally didn't pick a name like Rotting Balls of Jesus or something.

PC: Is there anything that you would like to say to the American fans?

S: Yeah, I'm very much hoping that we'll see at least some of them when we arrive, that is if such people exist, but during the year we will check it out quite a bit. Hope to see you then. Just stay depressed until we arrive.

## no rest for the dead the end of space



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To All the Metal Freaks at Promethean Crusade,

I just got your mag (Vol.2 #2) with a recent order from RELAPSE, and I had to write. This is not so much as to praise you for Promethean Crusade (Which I could do, and deservedly so), but to sing the praises of the Metal underground. The underground has saved me, so to speak, and I'd like to tell you why.

First of all, I am a 37 year old Metalhead who grew up listening to the likes of ZEPPELIN, SABBATH, AC/DC, RUSH, etc. Then came the 80's, and when those bands either split up or drifted into musical styles I no longer cared for, a whole new bunch of groups, like METALLICA, MEGADETH, OVERKILL, and ANTHRAX came along to replace them. Everything was just fine and dandy as far as my listening pleasure was concerned.

Then came the 90's, and everything started going to hell. METALLICA and MEGADETH got infected with Rock-star-it is and were content with releasing radio-friendly fluff. ANTHRAX kind of self-destructed, and OVERKILL seemed to be heading for oblivion before they came roaring back with their last few releases. Still, there were other bands that caught my ear, like CROWBAR, TROUBLE, PRONG, MANOWAR, and PANTERA, but with the exception of MANOWAR, those others weren't quite up to par with the greatness of what I had heard during the 80's. In retrospect, my biggest mistake was to ignore the underground (of which I was vaguely aware, but I dismissed it as nothing more than a bunch of screamers and burpers), but I'm getting ahead of myself.

Along came Christmas 1998, and someone gave me a copy of METALLICA's *Garage Inc.* First, let me say that disc two was, for the most part, was good. It was nice to finally have the old covers on CD. But as for disc one, it sucked, and I mean royally! I couldn't bear to listen to the entire thing, and to this day that shocks me, for I never dreamed that I would use the words "METALLICA" and "sucks" in the same sentence but there I was. And it pissed me off that a band I once loved would sink to that level. At that moment, I knew the betrayal of their old fans was complete.

Add to that insult the sudden rise of some absolutely horrible piles-of-shit-so-called "Metal" (forgive me for even using that term) with bands like KORN, LIMP (dick) BIZKIT, KID R (sorry, I can't go on; I'm getting ill), and you can probably understand my despondency at that time. I was actually beginning to think that Metal was dead, and I'd be forever forced to console myself with the Metal of the past.

Fast-forward to March, 1999. I was in a CD store flipping through the racks, when I came upon a disc called *Tuonela* from a band called AMORPHIS. At the time I thought I had heard of them, but I couldn't recall ever hearing them. There was a little sticker on the shrink-wrap describing *Tuonela* as a "progressive metal masterpiece, blah blah blah," and it was on sale to boot, so I figured, "What the

hell..." As it turned out, that was probably the best twelve bucks I ever spent, not so much for the CD itself (loved it), but for where it led me. There was a little card within the CD package offering AMORPHIS' previous releases for sale. So, after about a month of listening to *Tuonela* exclusively, I called the RELAPSE hotline and ordered a few of AMORPHIS' older CDs.

About a week later, those CDs arrived along with a HUGE catalogue of underground Metal and a couple of 'zines. I just about shit my pants. I had no idea how vast and varied the underground was, and I was about to find out how richly creative and talented it was as well. So, using the reviews in the 'zines and the catalogue descriptions as a guide, I set out on a journey of discovery. And what a rewarding journey that was (and still is, and forever will be). Now I have a whole new bunch of musical "friends" like BORKNAGAR, AGALLOCH, BLIND GUARDIAN, THYRFING, MADDER MORTEM, THERION, NIGHTWISH, ASHES YOU LEAVE, MORGION, EVOKEN, SEA OF TRANQUILITY, and so many more. And much of what they are doing far exceeds in quality anything METALLICA and co. ever did. So now I actually look forward to powering up the old CD changer once again. Now I am complete. That's why I say the underground has saved me. Music speaks to the soul, and my Metal soul has been recast in the underground's forge. All hail the underground!

As for Promethean Crusade, enclosed please find a check for \$10 to cover the cost of sending me issues #5-#9. The fact that I am willing to part with my hard-earned bucks for your fine publication should be praise aplenty.

Thanx.  
Phil Van Dyk  
Denville, NJ

P.S. Oh, I do have one tiny complaint. I wish you would arrange your reviews in alphabetical order. It would make things so much easier when I use them as a reference on CD shopping trips. Thanx again.

Hail Tom, Mark, and Co.!

For some odd reason, I only write PC after I've had a couple of sniffers half-full of appreciable brandy. Here I go... A word of advice: get rid of the female or give her a vocabulary lesson (SEVERAL vocabulary lessons), and force her to take a beginner's class on good taste [Let's see... good taste. Could you define that for me? I mean, it's such a grey area in aesthetics and philosophers have been arguing about its nature for centuries. If you're holding a class on it, I'd be sure to pencil it in right after your vocabulary lesson, because if Princess Die is going back to school, then I, as editor, feel I should learn a thing or two about the English language as well. ~Tom]. The reviews on pages 43 and 44 of Vol. 2, No. 3 read like 'Gangsta' Rap lyrics and were completely uninformative [If you think that's how Gangsta Rap reads, then you're not listening to the same Rap I am, and yes, the reviews are informative; everything in PC is informative on one level or another. ~Tom]. That type of garbage shows no degree of professionalism (that's why I love your reviews) [One man's garbage is another man's art. Have you not studied some of our most recent visual artists and their "trashy" art? I would imagine you'd just as soon censor them, too. To the well-informed and educated, art comes in many shapes, sizes, and colors. Princess Die's art lies in her genius

use of modern colloquialisms. She also happens to be pretty damn funny! Her sense of humor may not be to your liking, but you have the right to turn the page. And if we don't give you that right, then we're not giving you, nor anyone else, the freedom to choose (without the freedom of choice, there is only slavery to the given ideologies at hand, and we wouldn't want to make you a slave to only one given idea or thought, which is why we present so many for you to choose from) and conversely, we'd be taking away Die's right to her freedom of expression within these pages. So censoring Die would be going against the grain of the first amendment and would be unconstitutional. Get it?]. How do you think that reflects on your integrity [To base one's integrity on two pages of an 80-page publication is pretty narrow grounds for judgement, would you not say? If you look at some recent Supreme Court cases, our wise justices have ruled that one cannot pass judgement on a work of art based on its individual components, rather, a work should be judged as a whole-- how the ENTIRE work impresses itself upon the soul, not just one or two of its individual parts.].? Don't you want people to take PC seriously [I know for a fact that people do take this magazine seriously. It's the serious nature of our publication we are trying to somewhat counterbalance with this section. Our pages are so laden with high-quality, serious inquiries into the art of Metal that we feel our readers should sit down and take a breather or two with some light-hearted reviews. We want people to laugh a little, too, know what I mean? All work and no play makes for a pretty uninteresting existence.].? Fortunately, I know better, and have enclosed a cheque for Vol. 2, No. 4 [Correction: Vol. 3, No. 1. 2000 is a brand new year, thus a brand new volume], which I'm looking forward to [You know better, and so do the rest of our readers. We'd like to think that our readers aren't stupid, thus we will keep this section as long as Die is up to the challenge of providing our readers with some of the funniest shit in the 'zine.].

So I'm a generation Xer who still loves Metal--new and old. It really sucks being a Metal junkie in the professional world where conservatism is still the rule. OK, so I still have a little testosterone in my system-- at least it is refined! My impulses are satiated with METAL! The only Metal I can't stand is the type that propagates senseless violence (that is why I dislike Rap/Metal bands like ICP in particular... Metal my ass!). I was real thin when I was younger, and I am still pretty thin for my height now [Join the club! ~Tom]. I used to get picked on in high school AND my first two years of college. Metal gave me my release. Metal says, "It's OK, you're not the only person in the world who's pissed off! Listen to what I have to say and learn to be comfortable with your hostility." My liberal attitude is still considered unorthodox in the professional world, but as you get older, you get wiser and you learn when to keep your mouth shut.

I haven't read many fanzines, but I'm addicted to PC. Every single CD I have purchased on your recommendation has been EXCELLENT. My wife purchased a copy of TESTAMENT's *The Gathering* yesterday at the PX. It was on a discount table, selling for \$1.00 because the packaging was slightly damaged! The funny thing was that my wife purchased the CD because it looked like something I would like. She had no idea that I put it on my #1 list after reading the reviews in PC Vol. 2, No. 2. Coincidence? PC's reviews on the CD were just as kick-ass as the CD itself... excellent Metal journalism! Thanks! I actually feel friendship! I wouldn't write you otherwise. I am glad that I can write you. It makes me feel good to know I'm not an isolated speck on the event horizon.

Jeff Puckett  
Ft. Riley, KS



Hail Tom and Mark!

Thanks again for your mag. The #5 was excellent (Even if I'm not a "true" Metalhead and don't like MANOWAR. Gasp! It's not that I'm knocking them; I just like other bands. It's sort of like my choice of rocky road ice cream over black cherry; both are good, but if I can, I'd eat rocky road.) I thought I'd give you the top ten good and bad reasons of what I like/dislike about your mag.

Like:

- 10) Layout is superb!
  - 9) Plugs for BEOWOLF, METALCORE, and a select few.
  - 8) You don't use gay every 3<sup>rd</sup> word.
  - 7) Lots of Viking Metal coverage!
  - 6) You're from PA (something in the water?).
  - 5) You give the 80's their due and not try to hide the fact that we all love the 80's!
  - 4) Fates' Ana-- the truth at last!
  - 3) From Within the River Styx (see #5).
  - 2) You use intelligent words (we're not all stupid)!
  - 1) It's free (thanks so much for that)!
- Dislike:
- 10) The term "Gods."
  - 9) In order to get my letter published in your 'zine, all I have to do is suck ass?
  - 8) Not as many demos as I'd like.
  - 7) Mark, can you please stop comparing every band to MANOWAR? Yes, I know it is you.
  - 6) Ink stained fingers (but who doesn't?).
  - 5) Some of the covers are really dark (printer?).
  - 4) No editorial in Vol. 2, No. 3... why?
  - 3) Another CANNIBAL CORPSE interview! Enough!!
  - 2) No more "Questions to Ponder"?
  - 1) More plugs for 'zines, please. Contact page?

This is my opinion, and like assholes, everyone's got one. But, I know that you guys need the criticism--constructive that is. I really appreciate you giving me, and my best friend, Chris, a free ride because we're locked up. It means a lot. The vast majority of the people I've contacted have been more than righteous in their generosity (especially you guys from PA: Burt, Phil Newman, Wayne Klinger, Paul Autry, and Dale Roy). I've got nothing but great 'zines from great people.

I don't know what happened, but I didn't get Vol. 2, No. 2. Maybe it was lost in the shuffle. I feel like an asshole mentioning it, but I don't want to miss an issue. So if you got one hanging around, can you send me one? I would be entirely grateful. Well, I thank thee yet again for the mags. If you need anything in the way of postage, let me know and I'll do my best. I hope to hear from you soon. Keep the Faith and Raise the Battle Call Loud and Clear! Metal Forever - Forever Metal!

In my Box,  
Lee Walch  
Concord, NH

P.S. Settle down, Mark. You're right, MANOWAR do put on a kick-ass stage show, so I'll give you that.

Okay, time to clear the air here, as my motives have been questioned on many an occasion. Yes I do praise MANOWAR often, but you may not realize that I do not mention them as often as you may be led to believe. Yes, I enjoy Power Metal and that rugged streetwise sound of the older bands, but what you don't know is that I write nearly 70% of the Death Metal reviews, most of the non-Metal reviews (ie. MORTIIS, GRABESMOND, etc.) and a handful of the other material. If you haven't noticed, I normally mention MANOWAR in situations where I felt their influence shined most. MANOWAR's music and message have infected my life and will continue to do so. The reason I probably mention them so much, may also subconsciously stem from the fact that there aren't many people in the US who openly champion the band, and defend them whenever possible. They have always been

the target of criticism in the US for never changing their style or attitude which in itself is something to be commended in this day and age), and, in the immortal words of Billboard Magazine, "their lyrics are total cheese." This last comment truly stings, because it means that the person who wrote that remark did not even make an attempt to absorb the words and look beyond the mere print. MANOWAR are just like everyone else, busting their asses day in day out, but the major difference is that they always try to have a good time doing it! As I've said before, Metal is not just a genre of music, it's a culture, a way of life.

As for your other criticisms, (10) "Gods" is a term we like to use (as do ALL Metal magazines) to distinguish the truly exceptional among those who walk the Steel path. Yes, you may think it sounds hokey and at times blasphemous, but this merely solidifies our devotion to Metal. So call it cheese, we'll call it Faith! (9) No you don't have to suck ass, did you read that lovely letter from the KORN fan??? [or the anonymous e-mail from that dude who called us "narrow-minded?" -Tom] (8) We review every demo we receive. If you have some local bands & their contact info, please, by all means, send them our way, and we'll be more than pleased to give them proper Promethean treatment. (6) That's just nit-picking. When we accumulate more advertising dollars, the paper quality will eventually improve. Stick with us; we're getting there! (5) Yes, that was a printing error. (4) Lack of an editorial: hmmm, best way to explain it is simply that it's our fault, and we really didn't allot the proper time to rant about something that wasn't already mentioned somewhere else in the issue, be it in a review, interview or otherwise. (3) Did you actually read the CANNIBAL CORPSE interview? We try not to give our readers the average bio-like interviews that you see in 90% of the mags out there, that is, unless no one really knows anything about the band. We felt that the CANNIBAL interview was a fine work that displayed the unity that must occur before Metal can truly progress and become appreciated in the US. It also shows that CANNIBAL is not one of those bands that tries to keep the fans to themselves, they take risks and branch out the community, which in turn translates to greater strength and appreciation. (2) Questions To Ponder was a segment utilized to let everyone know that we are humans like you, with our own personality quirks (also wondrously exhibited in the Fates' Ana section). And it was also used as a way to fill some space until we acquired enough content to fill a decent sized mag. But hey, if the demand is strong enough, we may re-instate the segment. Only time will tell. And finally (1) plugs for more 'zines. This is an interesting topic because, as we started our own magazine, we felt that our views and opinions really weren't mirrored very well in the Metal community, so we needed a 'Voice' for our opinions, in hopes to encourage others to step up and join with us in sharing of opinions, for it is through these opinions that wisdom and understanding are achieved. We normally try to plug other 'zines through advertisements, but we feel that a "Magazine Review" section would not work out too well, simply because there are just as many fanzines out there as there are bands, in which case, we'd have to start another magazine that focused on other magazines (for as you can see, Promethean Crusade is heavily CD review-centric), and that just sounds silly. [We review music and the bands that produce it-that's it! If you want magazine, book, comic book, or movie reviews, check out the other fanzines... they need your support, too -Tom] But we thank you for the letter, and through our written conversation, we hope that you, as well as the other readers, will gain a clearer understanding of what we are about and our intentions to campaign for Metallic Freedom!

With Steel-laden Regards,  
Mark Morton Editor  
Promethean Crusade Magazine

Promethean Crusade,

Mike here from DIVINE RAPTURE. First off, let me say that your magazine kicks total ass. This is a mag that I definitely hold in high regard along with ENSLAIN magazine. Two of the best 'zines in this area. Hail Metal! Hail True Underground support! I only have one complaint concerning our CD review in your Winter issue. Don't get me wrong; the review was killer and made me proud. It's just that at the end you mistakenly labeled us a Christian band!? I'd just like to clear that up and stop this reoccurring misconception. DIVINE RAPTURE is NOT a Christian band. Yes, my lyrics tend to be on the more spiritual side, and yes spiritual implies the belief in some sort of deity, but in no way do I mention Jesus Christ in lyrics. any of my I can understand the mistake, but each of us has to be more careful not to label any band without first digging deep to find the underlying truth, thus avoiding any misconceptions. My more recent lyrics for our newer material should make clear the dark, personal, internal conflicts and pain that make up our overall theme. If anyone wants to discuss my lyrics further they can write me at the address below. Anyway, Promethean Crusade rulz; keep up the good work! Continue to support the Underground. Forever shall Metal burn, churning passion within our writing souls!

Mike

PO Box 159  
Chester Heights, PA 19017  
[www.divinerapture.net](http://www.divinerapture.net)

Dear Promethean Jewshade,

I just got three copies of your shitty mag shoved in my face at our Cowtown record show. Boy, you fags suck seven year old little boy dick. I love your reviews... everything's great! So incredible! Go buy it or be a trend fag! Black Metal kicks ass (har har har)! This rules! That rules! Boy, you cunts are discriminating. More like paid-off. You stuck dog dick. You will never be THE GRIMOIRE so hang it up. Do the world a favor and stop wasting trees they are not worthy of your ink. *Fluf wieder sehen, niggers!*

Love,  
Mini Metal Monster

P.S. Fire Maria Abril. It upsets me when people fuck over Bill. After all, he's your real daddy bitch.

It's funny how letters like this never have a return address. This is the second overtly negative letter we've received and the second without an address... go figure. Anyway, as thoroughly entertaining as The Grimoire... is, and as much as I love it, I would never want our Crusade to become like it, as you have suggested. Bill's all about entertainment while we're all about supporting the Metal scene. It might appear on the surface that all of our reviews are unequivocally positive, but if you would really read the 'zine, you would see that we have negative and mediocre reviews aplenty. Besides, when you have eleven writers who LOVE Metal, why would they write negative reviews? I know for a fact that Bill actually likes half those CDs he calls gay, and he only writes what he does for the sensationalism of it all; all he wants are the laughs. And if we're getting paid off to write these reviews, I'd like to see the money, because no one here at the Crusade has made a dime off of this publication, nor shall we (if ever) for many, many years to come. But thanks so much for the letter... I laughed my ass off while reading it! -Tom

### Infernal Greetings!

Nick Scratch here. A friend sent me a couple of PC's (Jan/Apr '99 Summer/Fall '99) which I found to be fairly decent; however, a couple of inexcusable errors were printed, to which I feel I must offer some sort of rebuttal, so here goes!

First of all, the review of the CARPE TENEBRUM disc in the S/F '99 issue. You made a comment regarding Astennu, to which I quote: "Featuring one of the only Black Metal musicians from the land down under." Not only is this wrong, but it is an insult to the insane and diehard Australian Black Metal/War Metal scene!!! What about SLAUGHTERLORD, HOBBS ANGEL OF DEATH, SADISTIK ESEKUTION, BESTIAL WARLUST, DESTROYER 666, ABOMINATOR, GOSPEL OF THE HORNS, ANATOMY, VOMITOR, SPEAR OF LONGINUS, BAALBERITH, URGRUND, AGATUS, ANTICHRIST, TYRANT, SAMAIN, THE MURPHY BOYS, and finally Astennu's old Aussie band, LORD KAOS???. There is and has been a thriving and sick Underground Black Death War Metal scene "down under" since the 80's! Trendy ears be warned: most of these bands are totally raw and harsh, fast as fuck, and usually have vokills that will destroy your mind-- along with your eardrums! Check out a killer band called MARTIRE for a good example of this!

On to the next grip, heh heh... The review of the recent BURZUM disc, *Hlidskjalf*. First of all, you say Vikernes is a founder of Old School Black Metal, but what do you consider Old School? As for myself, being that I'm 34, I would go back to about ten years before BURZUM to bands like VENOM, MERCYFUL FATE, BATHORY, HELLHAMMER, SLAYER, and POSSESSED. You say Varg was a founder along with "What's his name"? What kind of

shit is that? MAYHEM began in 1984! Before BURZUM, "The Count" was in a Death Metal band called OLD FUNERAL; if it weren't for Euronymous' influence, there never would've been a BURZUM! The first BURZUM recordings were released on Euronymous' label, DSP. Also, the review leads one to believe this CD is a Black Metal album; BURZUM hasn't done Black Metal since *Filosefen*, which was recorded seven years ago. I think you should've specified that it is a one-man synth recording. And finally, how about this little flub: "The iconic *Transylvanian Hunger* album with Fenriz of DARK THRONE on drums." Well, I hope Fenriz was on drums since *Transylvanian Hunger* was a DARK THRONE album!!! ARRRGGHH! All Varg did was write the lyrics for half the record! Damn! I realize that we all make mistakes, but you are supposed to be well-informed zine editors! Don't make pseudo-informed comments when you are sadly misinformed!

Well, I'm feeling much better now, thanks! Hope you don't take all this personally. I just care deeply about this kind of music and I hate to see it maligned, even through misinformation. Well, I doubt this will be printed in the 'zine, as it's quite long, and also it seems that you only print letters that say nice things. HA HA!

L. Atkins  
Santa Rosa, CA

*I don't want to sound pompous or egocentric, but we generally only receive positive letters, which is why it seems that that is all we print. In fact, I wish we would receive more letters like this, because I know we make mistakes sometimes, and it's the coolest fucking feeling in the world to know that someone is reading our 'zine as intensely as you are. We know we're not*

*perfect, but we try very hard to be as well-informed as humanly possible. When speaking authoritatively on any given subject, one must be exhaustive in his research and completely comprehensive in its promulgation. I will admit that neither I, nor Mark, have full and complete erudition of the entire Metal scene, but since our intense adoration of the Heavy Metal genre has endured decades, our writings come from the heart, which is easily recognized by our readers, and because of this we have gained the respect of most everyone who knows us and reads our publication. I must say, though, that no one knows everything about anything, which is what makes life so fucking interesting! Two slightly misleading reviews out of 166 that were printed is not bad, if I must say so myself. Anyway, the person who wrote those particular reviews no longer writes for us, which (according to you, I'm sure) is a good thing. I'm sure he wouldn't take it personally if he read this, and Mark and I are not so immature that we take it to heart either. We welcome all criticism from everyone all the time and revel in it! We aren't the be-all and end-all of Metal, though it is a goal of ours (it has to be if we want to succeed). Also, why would we not print this letter? It's informative to us, and this important for our readers! Promethean Crusade is all about the music, and if there is a grain of truth in any letter concerning the music we live and breathe, we will certainly pass it on to our readers, for we want them to be equipped to properly spread the gospel of Metal to all who will have it! [Knowledge yields understanding, which in turn, translates into wisdom. If you (or any other reader) have knowledge to share, we welcome you to call us on it, for it is through unity of fans that the blood of Metal flows. ~Mark] This publication is a forum for all to speak the truths of our Faith, and if there have been false teachings, they should be amended! Thank you! ~Tom*

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with respect to how many back/future issues you would like to receive; please be specific!! Make all checks and money orders payable to Tom J. Hughes!!!



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# Conquering of The Arenas

## Sirius *Aeons of Magick* (Nocturnal Art Productions)

Sirius has been bestowed the great pleasure of being on the elite roster of Samoth's own Nocturnal Art Productions. Bands like Sirius and label mates, LIMBONIC ART, were handpicked for their promising talent. Let it be known that this scrutiny for talent certainly shows. Sirius, like LIMBONIC ART and the mighty EMPEROR, definitely stand out from their Black Metal peers in a great many ways. Surprisingly enough, the band hails from Portugal, but do not let this fool you, for Sirius is not another MOONSPELL knock-off by any means. What is attempted in the music is the construction of vast soundscapes through immense orchestration highlighted/accompanied by fast, pummeling Metal. The result is a mind-altering, complete success. One may say that this description fits countless other bands, but what must be remembered is how many bands truly pull such a feat off. None of the orchestration contained within this disc comes across as cheesy, Goth-inspired ramblings. Instead, the disc as a whole can be compared to a symphony where themes are presented, developed, and resolved. A perfect example would be track four. Entitled "The Stargate," it's a brilliant instrumental that would fool even the most trained ear into thinking this was the accomplishment of a Classical composer. In fact, many of the melodies presented within the disc are reminiscent of the great German school in the Romantic Period (i.e. Wagner, Strauss, etc.). Another mark of genius is that, seemingly at all times, there are counter-melodies dancing in

## Kamelot *The Fourth Legacy* (Noise Records)

Have you ever heard an album where you could just sit back, close your eyes, and let the music sweep you into an expedition within your own mind? Kamelot's aptly titled *The Fourth Legacy* achieves just such a monumental enterprise! From the ripping neo-progressive Metal lead-in of "New Allegiance," it becomes immediately clear that this is not your run-of-the-mill American Metal CD. For within that seemingly complex arrangement there is the underlying emotive spark that launches your unseeing eyes across time and space. Each track is a visit to an exotic, ancient location in time, where your senses are invaded by images of the past, created by the delicate movements and passages. Kamelot wields their ability to translate musical signatures into tangible emotions and intuitive imagery like the legendary painters of old utilized color and brush texture to manifest visions of the human will! When you listen to *The Fourth Legacy*, you're not just listening to immortalized Melodic Metal music; you are actually experiencing the blood and toil of thousands of years of worldly inspiration!

and around the main melody, whether it be from the guitar or a result of the orchestration. Unlike EMPEROR, there is not a constant, contrapuntal effect, but rather a very methodical accent of melody. At no time does the music become a blurred barrage of notes. The disc has an enormous, full sound, and an unrivaled level of maturity. The vocals are in the Black Metal style, though not overpowering; any other vocal style would truly come across as pretentious. It must be said that this disc is not for everyone, but it does have the appeal of often-pleasing original melodies to catch listeners' ears that would typically be turned off by Black Metal. The bottom line is that Sirius is miles ahead of most bands, and their compositions speak for themselves by ushering in the dawn of a new era of sophisticated art.

## D.C. Cooper (InsideOut/Century Media)

One of the pitfalls of getting old (let's just say I bought *Reign In Blood* on vinyl when it was new) is that everything seems to either sound too different or too familiar. I like to hear new things, but not too new mind you. I'm not impressed that you can grow incomprehensibly and I'm also not impressed that you can play every IRON MAIDEN song note for note. It is unfair to judge today's bands against yesterday's stars and at some point you have to shut off the part of your brain that thinks like that and just listen to an album for what it's worth. D.C., ex-ROYAL HUNT (an underrated, unappreciated band if there ever was one) vocalist has got a formula down that works and works well: soaring melodic vocals over tight and intermittently heavy guitar parts with a touch of keyboard now and then. I thought I was listening to an old QUEENSRÛCHE album when I heard the first few notes of "Dream," but once I told my brain to stop analyzing and listen, I had a much more enjoyable experience (although that thought did creep back in once or twice more when I wasn't paying attention). The songs on D.C.'s first foray into the solo world are well written and extremely well played, Guenter Werno's acoustic piano on "Chained" is beautiful, and there is just enough of an edge to remind you that it is indeed the year 2000. "Three Generations" is probably my favorite song here; you can't help but sing along even if you're hearing it for the first time and don't know the words. If you dig good, solid music (no matter what time period we're talking about), and even if you're not a fan of ROYAL HUNT or Progressive Metal in general, you should have no problem enjoying this stellar release.

## Gothic Knights *Kingdom Of The Knights* (Sentinel Steel)

Sounds kind of like the second (or third) coming of the Templars, doesn't it? Well, it's not far from the truth. Gothic Knights does have a remarkable resemblance to fellow Swedes HAMMERFALL, but the tricky thing is that these guys are from New York! Every song is anthemic, mighty, and powerful, with a steady hammer-banging pulse. The lyrics are oftentimes tongue-in-cheek with an air of MALMSTEEN-ish pomposity (never thought anyone would ever make a reference to anything about



MALMSTEEN outside of his guitar playing, huh!), but this is part of the package. There seems to be a bit of Speed Metal in the Knights' blood, because throughout their 'MAIDEN'/PRIEST heroics, a certain belligerent penchant for vicious chopping filters through the Crusading pageantry. The band is definitely treading through a previously blazed trail, so it impossible to take seriously, but it is entertaining for any fan of the Power Metal syndicate. I would only recommend *Kingdom Of The Knights* to those truly devoted to this scene, for it would be looked upon as a figure of ridicule by the rest of the Metal community. Contact: Sentinel Steel Records, P.O. Box 123, Rockaway, NJ 07866; or call 973-398-3436.

## In Memorium

An Ancient Word  
(Moribund Records)

How this band got signed I will never be able to fathom. After first looking in disdain at the song list and seeing only four, I soon rejoiced, though I soon found myself suffering through the first track, wondering when the fuck my agony would end. Sloppy and, well, quite frankly, stupid and cheesy riffs quickly worked at destroying my sanity. Song two brought forth more cheese with a typically stupid ambient keyboard intro. My hopes for In Memorium rose as the guitars kicked in with a cool riff, but those hopes were quickly dashed as the song progressed. In short, these guys have no clue as to what the term "overdoing it" means!! I fucking felt like shooting myself because of that cool riff and here's why: *it's one riff repeated over and over and over 39 times in a row for the entire first three minutes of the song!!!!* Feel lucky that I'm the only one that had to suffer through it. The rest of the CD consisted of more poorly put together songs, shitty vocals, and boring, repetitive riffs. They tried to play Black Metal and failed miserably. Don't buy this CD. Don't even ask anyone to put it on for you. It's that bad.

## Night In Gales

Nailwork  
(Nuclear Blast)

Now this might sound a little strange, but hear (try to supplant my voice in your head while you read) me out. I'm very happy that, with this new release,

Night In Gales have finally developed their own sound, unique unto themselves. However, I don't like this disc nearly as much as I do *Thunderbeast*. *Towards the Twilight* is good, and so is *Nailwork*, but fucking *Thunderbeast* ripped my head off!! So how do I reconcile these two

opinions? *Nailwork* sees Night In Gales shake off their IN FLAMES-clone status, and they are here applauded and congratulated for it, but I don't like *Nailwork* as much as I do their older ones, where there appeared to be a bit more melody and



structure. This album is extremely aggressive, painfully abrasive, and structurally insane. Their bio states "melody vs. malevolence," and while that statement of their sound holds true for their first two releases, I would say here that there is almost all malevolence and very little melody. If that appeals to you (I'm certain that not all of you are as prone to loving melody in your Death Metal as much as I am), then by all means pick up *Nailwork*, for it is a great album in its own right; it's just that I miss the melody. Whatever you do, please don't let my little bitch and complaint hold you back from checking out this masterful work of art filled with rage, brutality, and aggression.

So here goes... congratulations, Night In Gales, on producing a blistering work of pure Death Metal art that I don't like as much as your other blistering works of pure Death Metal art... I told you this review might sound strange!

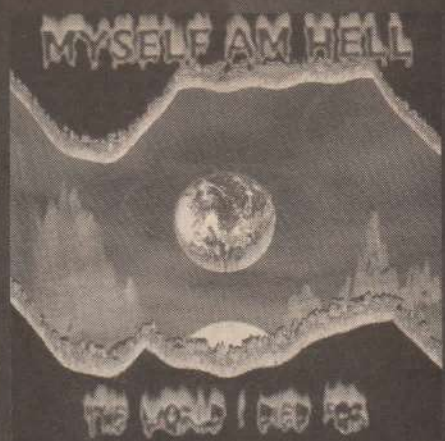
## Sentenced

Crimson  
(Century Media)

*Crimson* is surely a step forward for this band, because I'm telling you what, I didn't like *Frozen* at all. And maybe I'm talking to all the wrong people, but no one I know liked it either. Being introduced to Sentenced through their *Love and Death* EP (still my favorite Sentenced release), I picked up *Amok* and *Down* and can tell you that this new release is their best one since the inception of their current vocalist, Villi Laihiala. Straying further from their strictly Metal roots with each release, Sentenced continues in the more Rock-oriented approach to their songwriting,



but is that necessarily a bad thing? Certainly not! I'm all about the Metal (and this IS a METAL release, mind you, just not so Metal that your neighbor might actually think you've ended your cat-sacrificing days... know what I mean?), but



## Myself am Hell

Self-titled and *The World I Died For*  
(Demos)

Good ol' fucking Death Metal! In my PRECIPICE review, I wrote that tons of mediocre bands get signed. Well, these guys are far from mediocre— they're fucking awesome! Why don't they get recognized by any of the labels out there?! Ugh, I'm disgusted! I think I'll bang my head a little bit, step away from my computer, and then continue with the review.... OK, I'm back. While this is only an immediate first impression, a cross between MALEVOLENT CREATION and CANNIBAL CORPSE is a good start in describing their earlier sound (circa 1996) on the first, self-titled release. They throw in some clean, melodic intros on a couple of the songs to break up the monotony, which is quite refreshing. Moving onto their more current material, *The World I Died For* shows some impressive growth and maturity. Some technically exhilarating guitar solos can be heard, and there can be detected as well some beefed up vocals and an overall intensification of their sound. The songs are faster, chunkier, and the clean melodies are replaced by blazing drum intros or distorted guitar riffs. My favorite part of the album would have to be the last song, a cover of MEGADETH's "Tornado of Souls." It's so worth getting in touch with them for this extremely Death-ized song alone ("It's the kiss of... DEEEEEAAAATTTTTTHHHH!!!"), but the other five original songs certainly warrant you contacting them as well. PO Box 416, Merrick, NY 11566. [www.myselfamhell.com](http://www.myselfamhell.com). [Yeasatan@aol.com](mailto:Yeasatan@aol.com).

variety is the spice of life, and bands need to grow and develop with each release, and Sentenced is doing just that. With memorable choruses, catchy riffs, great vocals (Laihiala's vocal range is quite exceptional on this release), and dynamic sounds

which range anywhere from those proverbial metallic crunches to the more sublime acoustic and piano intros, *Crimson* has led Sentenced back into my good graces. The songs seem to meld into one another with precision and ease, and have that funny way of sticking in your head long after you've turned off your stereo. The album overall strongly reminds me of *Down*, so if you really dug that sound, you'll certainly love this release. If you're like me and have lost faith in the band over the past year or so, don't fret and be sure to check this out; I assure you, you won't be disappointed.



## Deranged III (Listenable)

DAMN! This album is a speeding fucking roller coaster of DEATH! I've always enjoyed these Swedish killers' previous material when I heard it; *Rated X* and *High on Blood* were both chaotic slabs of blood-soaked mayhem. Deranged's new release *III*, however, takes the Deranged sound and ups the ante: more speed, more brutality, and better musicianship. Dripping with SLAYER-isms, these songs take no prisoners. From "Ripped Raped Randomized" (with its crushing midsection around 2:58) to "Festering..." and "Thrill Kill," Deranged dares you to tell them that Brutal Death is dead. The full sounding production makes sure you can hear every hideous grunt and razor-sharp riff, while allowing the rhythm section to pummel you into submission. The band is tight and assaulting, making sure that each cutting riff makes a deeper gash than the last. The 35-minute running time is also good for this style; short and (not so) sweet, because by the time you reach the end of "Razor(rection)" with its appropriate flat line ending, you will have endured a good beating. Listenable Records, BP. 559, 62 311, Boulogne/Mer, France.

## Primary Slave Data Plague (Visible Noise)

After discovering that Primary Slave was founded by ex-CRADLE OF FILTH (a.k.a. Ladle of Milk) guitarist, Paul Allender, I was expecting the music to be some overdone excursion into Gothique Vampirism. Much to my surprise, it wasn't. The only problem is deciding whether *Data Plague's* trendy "Metal" sound is actually worse or better than a band composed of extras from *Interview With the Vampire*. To keep this review consistently blunt, Primary Slave are the European version of the DEFTONES, or perhaps any other "Yo-band" that has ever held a slot on the Ozzfest tour. What Primary Slave is lacking though, is the appeal of the DEFTONES. Granted, I'll give my hail to True Metal all day long before giving a nod to "90's Metal," but one has to admit that the DEFTONES and MACHINE HEAD can hit on a good groove every now and then. Primary Slave truly tries to catch that groove, but it just doesn't come across as either original or pleasing to the ear. What does come across is a forced feel, like the band is trying way too hard to sound like some of the aforementioned bands. The results are not necessarily sloppy, because the music is actually pretty tight, but rather choppy and inconsistent. I've made up my mind... do yourself a favor and buy HECATE ENTHRONED instead!

## Entombed

### Monkey Puss: Live from the London Astoria (Video) (Earache)

On March 18, 1992, the London Astoria was witness to the supreme Entombed show of all time. The legendary "Gods of Grind tour" made its stop that night never to return. In many ways Entombed never returned to the band that belted out the Death Metal that night. I mean, we all know the story of Entombed's slide into the poor MELVINS-like excuse for a band that is slumming around these days. I'm positive that I'm not the only one who would love to turn the clock back and witness the show live and in person, but until we figure out a way to move through the dimensions of time and space, Earache has blessed us with this little video cassette. First things first: all five promotional videos put to film while Entombed were employees at Earache are packaged with the live show (Bravo Earache, Bravo!). "Left Hand Path," "Stranger Aeons," "Hollowman," "Wolverine Blues," and the horrendous "Night Of The Vampire" are all here for your viewing pleasure. I cannot give Earache enough credit for this, for I have literally spent years trying to track down all of Entombed's promo videos, and now in one fell swoop this video cassette puts my many years of searching to an end (it is good to rest, my friends). The live show opens with a close-up of Nicke Andersson's snare drum, revealing the words "Monkey Puss" scrawled across it, and before you know it the band has flawlessly slammed its way into "Living Dead." If the cover of the video didn't clue you in, L.G. Petrov was providing the growls this night (and every night scene), and he handles the *Clandestine* material as if it were he singing on the disc. (Quick note: Nicke Andersson provided the growls on the studio recording, not Johnny Dordevic, as the credits of the disc imply). The Tomb were in fine form that night in March, running through what

## Broken Hope Grotesque Blessings (Martyr Music Group)

I have to admit not being overly enthused about *Loathing*, Broken Hope's release prior to *Grotesque Blessings*. In fact, I've never really cared for Broken Hope's output in general. However, I am a big man and can admit it when a band really comes through and delivers some fine, blood-soaked Death Metal, and this is exactly what Broken Hope has done. With *Grotesque Blessings* they have really changed my opinion of the band. Their departure from Metal Blade seems to have sparked something in Broken Hope far more vicious than their gore-soaked lyrical content: technicality! This is just what they needed to break away from the pack of CANNIBAL CORPSE clones that litter the Death Metal battlefields. Brian Griffin and Jeremy Wagner unleash the best riffs I've ever heard from the duo, technical and brutal, yet with enough stop-start-kill-the-drummer-hook-riffs to make each song memorable. The



surely could be the track listing of a "Best Of" release. "Stranger Aeons," "Sinners Bleed," "Evilyn," "Crawl," and of course, the closer, "Left Hand Path" are all performed by a band clearly in their prime, all pistons firing. It's no wonder that the band would be enraged by the release of this video now, for it must surely remind them of what an extremely punishing band they once were. They have since become a mere shell of that band. Hopefully, Entombed will return to a more aggressive sound in the near future, but if not, we still have this video to remember them by.

## V/A Legion of The Scroll #12 (Grimoire of Exalted Deeds comp)

Bill Zebub is at it again, and who can blame him? He holds the monopoly on tasteless humor, unrelenting criticism, and devotion to the underground, and for all those qualities, we here at PC must give him props. It is truly through his own unique sense of humor and wit that he gets the message of Metal to the masses, for it is certain that all press is good press, especially in the underground. That being said, let's move on to the comp before Bill's ego flies through the ceiling (ummmm, too late!). Presented here is just about every style of underground Metal that exists. Granted, some of these bands stand out more than others, like the mighty CEPHALIC CARNAGE and THEORY IN PRACTICE. COLDER THY KISS and HERESIAH represent the Doomier side of things, while DIVINE RAPTURE and SOILS OF FATE play Grindcore. Possibly the best reason to pick this comp up is to hear Bill doing what he does best... joking around. There are a few excerpts from his radio show that are sure to have you laughing uncontrollably. To check this comp out, and Metal's most notorious fanzine, *The Grimoire of Exalted Deeds*, drop Bill a line at: Grimoire of Exalted Deeds, PO Box 1987, Clifton, NJ 07015.

production of the disc (by Brian Griffin himself) brings to mind (particularly the tone of the guitars) the sound of CARCASS's *Heartwork*. Joe Ptacek's vocal lacerations are far more clear this time around. Now don't get me wrong, you can't understand a damn word without the lyric sheet, but the vocals do seem to be more up front in the mix. Speaking of the lyric sheet, I want to go on record and say: under no circumstances should Broken Hope eeevvveerrr again release a CD that doesn't contain a lyric sheet. There are two pages of "thank you's," yet they fail to print a crucial component like, oh, I don't know, the words to the songs! Those of you whom are privileged enough to own a computer and have access to the Internet can get a full Lyric sheet at [www.brokenhope.com](http://www.brokenhope.com). That gripe aside, this is certainly the best Broken Hope release to date, and Martyr Music should be commended for snapping this band up and pushing them in the proper way. I salute Broken Hope and Martyr Music with the sign of Metal (devil horn fingers in the air).

## Nocturnus

*Ethereal Tomb*  
(Season Of Mist)

What is the recipe for a successful comeback album? It is quite simply to re-evaluate your strengths and weaknesses, learn from past errors, and express the way you feel now, rather than how you felt... say seven years ago. This leads us to the return of Nocturnus, a band that was once both praised and simultaneously criticized for utilizing keyboards in a Death Metal setting. Well, after a seven year hiatus of soul-searching and observation, the band has decided once again to grace (or disgrace, depending on your outlook) us with a third album. Major differences are obviously a new lineup (excepting the guitarists [Mike Davis and Sean McNenney] and keyboardist [Louis Panzer]), the re-evaluation of their gimmick, and all-around musical output. Song-wise, the band has chosen to use the expression of groove-based riffing within near-progressive structures, which relates the band's direction to fellow Floridians, DEATH. But you wanted to know about the keyboards, right? Rather than using the keys as a lead instrument following the guitar lines, Louis Panzer has decided to utilize the PVC ivories in their intended fashion-- as environmental enhancement-- thus giving each track both the Sci-Fi element that has become a

trademark of Nocturnus' sound as well as an eerie, arcane feeling that makes one's skin crawl. After completing this puzzle of sound and energy, the *Ethereal Tomb* creates a subliminal theme that, through the widespread reliance on technology, Man's salvation will ultimately be his downfall. Through extensive listening, you can almost envision the future of Man, be it resulting in *The Matrix*, *Maximum Overdrive*, *The Terminator* or even *Planet Of The Apes*. Beware, for you too may find yourself trapped within the *Ethereal Tomb!* [www.nocturnus.com](http://www.nocturnus.com)



## Trauma

*Daimonion*  
(Pagan Records)

This Polish Death Metal band embraces a brutal and melodic approach to their music in this double-EP styled album. The first half consists of six new tracks: two of which are an intro and outro, and the remaining four are actual songs. Though there are only four new songs, all of them are well worth the listen. Stylistically they remind me a lot of what VOMITORY would sound like mixed with a lot of American styled Death in it. Overall the effect is well executed and evokes headbangers to live up to their name. The second half of the disc is a good representation of what they've progressed from. The material is from 1992, originally showing up on *Invisible Reality*. Obviously not re-recorded, one can hear the drop in production quality as well as the difference in musicianship. Although the music is decent, there is a slight lack of tightness to the band, and there's some damn cheesy keyboard parts here, too. It's a huge difference in sound when compared with the newer, aforementioned material, but that should be expected considering the time that has passed since their older material was written.

## Demons & Wizards

(SPV)

Oh, you didn't know? Your ass better call somebody! Ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls, children of all ages, SPV proudly brings to you, the Heavy Metal tag-team champions of the world, Hansi Kursch and Jon Schaffer, representing Demons & Wizards! For those of you who don't know already, Hansi is



lead vocalist and bassist for German Power Metal legends, BLIND GUARDIAN, and Mr. Schaffer is guitarist and main songwriter for U.S. Heavy Metal saviors, ICED EARTH. Rounding out the band is fellow Iced Earthling, Mark Prater on the drums (and consequently, the album was produced by ICED EARTH producer, Jim Morris, too). The two Metal icons first got the idea for this all-star project back in the spring of '97 when their respective bands toured together. So does this CD live up to the hype that surrounded it, or does it flop just like "Glacier" did in WCW a few years back? The answer is... we got a winner here! Yes, the CD has an "Iced Guardian" feel to it, but the guys have also created their own sound here. Opening tracks, "Heaven's Denied" and "Poor Man's Crusade" have the trademark ICED EARTH galloping guitar sound, but instead of Matt Barlow, you hear Hansi's voice blasting out of your speakers; then you know you've got something special here. "Fiddler on the Green" and "Path of Glory" have a BLIND GUARDIAN feel to them due to those tracks being partially acoustic. You will not hear any of the choir-like choruses found on *Nightfall in Middle Earth*; instead, you will hear a much simpler, metallic style. For those of you who loved the trilogy on *Something Wicked This Way Comes*, well guess what? Jon and Hansi have written another one! The songs "Tear Down the Wall," "Gallows Pole," and "My Last Sunrise" tell the story of Azrael, a gnome. A superb effort from two guys who have stuck to

their guns and made music that they believe in, rather than sell out and do trendy crap. Until the new IRON MAIDEN is released, this is the metal album that is a must-have. Special thanks to Mark for allowing me to review this masterpiece. In the words of Wayne and Garth: I'm not worthy!

## Himinbjørg

*In the Raven's Shadow*  
(Red Stream Records)

Himinbjørg are an interesting band to say the least; they're a Viking/Black Metal hybrid out of France. It's not exactly where one would expect such a band to hail from, but it certainly is nice to hear of bands from other countries that are not necessarily looked upon as big producers of Metal. *In the Raven's Shadow*, the follow-up to their spectacular *Where Ravens Fly*, is a pretty muddy production laden with a bad mixing job. The drumming is somewhat sloppy, the guitars are so fuzzy that I could only distinguish what they were playing when there were single note rhythms, and the bass is overbearing half the time. This is extremely unfortunate, for the songs themselves are exceptionally good, but the lack of production quality and bad mixing took a lot away, and the MY DYING BRIDE-length songs became a bit repetitious, taking away even more from my enjoyment. I'm going to keep this release on the backburner and wait to see if there is some production improvement on their next album.

## Stratovarius

*Infinite*  
(Nuclear Blast)

I suppose Stratovarius needed to get some things off their chests, and I don't mean their former record label. Where *Destiny* was a dreary, depressive ode to loss and isolation, *Infinite* is its cure, being both energetic and filled with renewed vigor and hope. Every Stratovarius album is a veritable Pandora's Box of emotion and curious discovery, but what truly distances *Infinite* from the past is the intense focus on 'the songs.' While former albums relied largely on musicianship and playing ability, *Infinite* showcases the band's finely honed attention to songwriting details. Each track is an adventure, smothered with infectious musical sensations and enveloped by Timo Kotipelto's ever-passionate vocals. Stratovarius had tinkered with album-encompassing thematic elements through personal experience on *Destiny*, and now that their souls are metaphysically cleansed, they have set new goals and view the world in a new light throughout *Infinite!* Stratovarius is consistently evolving, perfecting the art of symphonic-stylized Metal and, through experience and heightened awareness, setting the sky as a limit seems meager! *Infinite* is only the beginning....

*Reviews continued on page 20*





# OLD MAN'S CHILD

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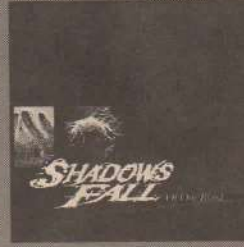
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## By Tom J. Hughes

*Please excuse the standard Q&A format here, folks. This interview was conducted via e-mail, as time did not permit the following to have proceeded otherwise. Broken Hope's latest release, Grottesque Blessings, is certainly Broken Hope's most ambitious effort to date, and it should reinvigorate old fans of the band, as well as bring on some new converts. Brian Griffin, the main driving force behind Broken Hope, is a very busy man, as he runs his own production studio as well as contributing full time to his "other" band, EM SINFONIA (melodic Doom, as opposed to aggressive Death). He is living proof that it is only through hard work and incessant dedication that success is achieved, and if everyone were as dedicated to the scene as Brian, his band mates, and the folks at his record label, Martyr Music Group are, the Metal scene right now might not be as stagnant or mediocre as it often times appears to be. They've got a pretty kick-ass webpage at [www.brokenhope.com](http://www.brokenhope.com). Also, check out EM SINFONIA's webpage at <http://members.aol.com/emsinfonia>.*

**Promethean Crusade:** Talk about going on the road as a guest guitarist with HATE ETERNAL in early 2000, replacing Doug Cerrito.

**Broken Hope:** That was just a rumor blown out of proportion. I was in fact going to try out, but our schedules conflicted and I was unable to get down to Florida when they needed me. It would have been great, but I am too wrapped up at the moment with the studio and getting the new EM SINFONIA record done.

**PC:** Do you want to attempt to branch out with production and do it more often, perhaps as a second career?

**BH:** Recording and producing has been full time for me for years now. I have my own studio Quali-Tone now and in a few years I plan to get a better one built.

**PC:** What do you try to do with a band to bring out the best in their sound?

**BH:** The key is to make sure the band is using quality equipment and that they are confident in what they are playing.

**PC:** What was the reasoning for omitting the lyrics on the new album?

**BH:** We just wanted to save money on our layout and make sure we were able to recoup the production costs.

**PC:** What were break-up rumors based on?

**BH:** We went through some line up changes and opted to take some time off so I could work on Em Sinfonia before we put together another album. Naturally, after not doing anything for a while, people decided to spread rumors of our break up. It never happened. We just wanted to make sure we took some time off to put together some new material.

**PC:** Any word on who the permanent bass player/drummer will be?

**BH:** We don't have a permanent drummer yet, just a few interested people at this point. Our new bassist is the violinist of EM SINFONIA, Sean Baxter. He worked out great for us on the last tour.

**PC:** What about the dramatic shift in writing style. The guitar harmonies are a lot slicker and well thought out. Was any of this due to your time with EM SINFONIA? Did it have anything to do with the change in lyrics, as well?

**BH:** We just progressed as players and songwriters. The stuff in the past was slapped together because we were always under pressure to release something and we didn't have the time to work it out properly. Now we are working on our own terms.

**PC:** What about the gore shtick? Why keep up with it (is it only because it's such a popular thing to do in DM)? Do you feel that it's a trendy thing to do? Or do you feel that it has become your (and other's) staple, and people expect it from you?

**BH:** We have been doing it since the beginning and it would be wrong to change. It has been ten years since we began recording with gore lyrics and we want to stick to our roots. With the new album we have explored some other topics as well.

**PC:** What do you think about melodic DM? Do keyboards and melody have a place in DM, or is that why you did something like EM SINFONIA?

**BH:** Some bands can do it in Death Metal, but Broken Hope will never incorporate that stuff into our songs. It is something I did with EM SINFONIA because I always wanted to experiment with those sounds. EM SINFONIA and Broken Hope are two separate entities for me.

**PC:** What are the biggest differences between being on a major label like



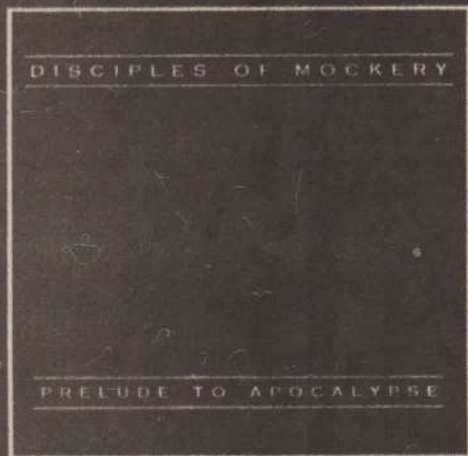
**Metal Blade and a smaller, indie label like MMG?**

**BH:** We get more personal attention from Martyr because we are their priority band. It has helped us with advertising and record sales. *Grottesque Blessings* is our quickest and best selling album thus far.

**PC:** What do you think about Jack Koshick pushing all these Metalfests? The more he puts on, the less people attend each one, and the more mediocre a turn-out, the more mediocre a show. Or do you see it as having just the opposite effect, the more Metalfests, the more Metal, and the more converts?

**BH:** I am sure Jack has his reasons for doing the fests. As long as bands play them, he will have them. They benefit up and coming bands and give them exposure. Jack is a cool guy and he does good by the bands. It is very difficult to pull off what he is doing and he has lost money at times. The fact is he is doing it and nobody else is. If he didn't have them, then there would be a lot of bands that would never get that kind of exposure in front of Label reps and zines.

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# The Cold Beyond

## The Call of the Black Horde

By Tom J. Hughes

Photos by Tom J. Hughes and Chrissy Gulezynski



*In between checking out the plethora of bands that infiltrated New Jersey for this year's Second Annual March Metal Meltdown, I had the opportunity to sit down with all three members of Milwaukee's own The Cold Beyond. Formerly DEAD BY MORNING, these three men, Lord Sithicus (vocals/bass), Asylum (guitar), and Void (drums) proved to be very insightful and emotive about the ever-growing, ever-expanding, and ever-morphing genre of Black Metal. It's a genre they collectively as a band excel in, and I must say that their set kicked my ass all over the RELAPSE Stage! Get in touch with them to pick up a copy of their latest demo, and be on the lookout for these guys in the very near future. Contact: LordSithicus@aol.com or send \$1.00 for their demo to: The Cold Beyond, c/o Sithicus, 4414 S 14th apt. # 3, Milwaukee, WI 53221.*

**Promethean Crusade:** So would you guys care to discuss the break up of DEAD BY MORNING?  
**Lord Sithicus:** The band didn't break up; we just changed the name. Steve (former bass player) obviously left because he had a new path to follow. We commend him on that and wish him the best of luck and Brian (former guitarist) is just another matter that is not worth discussing. We don't wanna talk shit, so it's just not worth it. We just feel it's better to be just a three-piece.

**PC:** Well, I'm a bit concerned... I have to be honest with you guys... I'm a little concerned about the sound. Well, maybe it was the stage itself, maybe it's the venue

**LS:** The stage was horrible. We couldn't even hear anything up there. I could hear my vocals and that was pretty much it.

**PC:** Yeah, that's understandable, but I'm talking about the overall beefiness of the sound-- going from five guys to three-- obviously that's going to affect your sound. Is that a concern for you guys as well?

**Asylum:** Well, with the guitars, since now there's only one, it's a concern. I'm working things out right now and as we go along. The reason we probably sounded as thin as we did was because they only had one cabinet-- it was a half stack-- and I was just going through that. And it was all the way up to ten...

**Void:** At practice now we have two cabinets, so the sound is really full, and plus, adding distortion with the bass now, that's really thickening shit up too. So I'm not really worried about it. I know we're confident enough to pull off a full sound and really be crushing like we should be.

**LS:** If I could add just one thing, too: IMMOLATION came through as a three-piece and were just absolutely devastating. I mean, they were so good you couldn't even miss the fact that there were only two guitarists. I think it's all in like-- well, obviously not being on their level yet it's gonna be harder for us, but eventually, we can do it.

**PC:** As far as yourself going from being just the vocalist to expanding your role and playing the bass too, how has that affected you and the band?

**LS:** Well, personally, as far as the presence I felt like I still had real control. Even though today was my first show doing that, and after two months of working very, very hard, I hope I pulled it off to a decent degree. And I'm sure with time it will just improve more and more. Going back to IMMOLATION, I mean Ross is just an amazing frontman, and he plays bass, and if he can do it, I'm gonna fucking try my best.

**PC:** With your new direction, you had mentioned you're going to push the more extreme side of things. Does this mean you're done with the slow shit?

**LS:** No, there may be some slow parts and slower music; I mean, whatever we feel like writing is what we're gonna write. It's like, it just seems that with the name change and with us like... well, I personally feel like we just took a big step into a defining style and sound whereas before we were kind of like searching for what we were trying to get at. Now it's like we said, "OK, we got a direction, we got a purpose, we know exactly what we're trying to do with this band," and now we did it. Like HYPOCRISY, you know, before they were like, well, how they were! And now they've kind of changed and evolved into this entity that is all their own. I feel like that is what we're working towards. As long as we're happy, I think that's what's most important. What makes us happy, and as long as we're content, that's all that matters. And if our music really is as cool and affects people like everyone says... I mean, good music will spread regardless of what name you go under.

**PC:** If any of you guys were to give the State of the Metal Address, what would your main points be and how would you go about writing/speaking it?

**AS:** I think Metal belongs in the underground. That's where it came from and that's where it should stay. It's not for everybody, obviously, and to try and make it that way, it's just not going to happen.

**PC:** So you don't want to see it get popular and be all over the radio and

**AS:** Well, it would be nice to see that, especially for our band because we'd sell more and make more money, but what normal person is going to watch something like us on MTV?

**Void:** Yeah, I really have a gripe with the music scene. I think it's really fucking retarded right

now because of all the different shit like, "Oh, we play Grindcore, we play Goregrind, we play Death Metal, we play Black, we play Gothic." Fucking whatever! That's causing more barriers. I mean, with our band I think we have enough elements where people that listen to Grind would like us, people that listen to Death Metal would like us, people that like the more Gothic kind of Black Metal would like us too because of the melodies. But there's that wall up that says we're Black Metal and that really closes a lot of doors where people could be exposed to a lot of killer shit. Another thing, as far as Black Metal, I'm really disappointed in the fact that a lot of bands are not as extreme as they used to be. That's another important point. I think Black Metal is losing its fucking whole push, and to me that's why the Death Metal scene is so cool right now because all the bands are just pushing the limits of what's extreme and what's heavy and who can have the sickest vocals. That's cool, but Black Metal is kind of just sticking in its little realm and not expanding. I think a lot of Black Metal bands are tame and that really irritates me, because this is the most extreme shit, to me. As far as speed and still being musical, I think Black Metal could be way further than it is right now.

**PC:** Do you feel it is your calling, your goal, your mission, to push the Black Metal scene then, and to get it to where it's supposed to be?

**Void:** I would really like to. I mean, SATYRICON's new album is brilliant; I mean, it's doing new things within the genre. But generally I think Black Metal as a whole could be way, way more extreme, and that's what I really want to push for with this band. I mean, I'm just speaking for myself. I don't know about the other guys here, but they seem to

**LS:** Return to the grim feelings. Returning the grim atmosphere and the hatefulness and the darkness from the old times. When True Black Metal first started, it was a feeling. It was more than just music; it was a lifestyle. It was something that totally just possessed you completely. The grimness and the whole darkness of it was like nothing else, and we want to bring that back and make it scare people again, in a sense. I mean, not that it's out and people have already seen it, and I guess maybe it's not as much a shock anymore and this and that, but there's always new things you can do; there's always new elements you can add and still retain the spirit of what it was. Like he said, the new SATYRICON is a testament to that. I mean, of the old guard, that's like the only Black Metal band that kept the spirit and feeling, yet they changed totally, and nobody can deny that it's not grim, dark, ugly, and cold as fuck! That's what we're trying to accomplish with our band.

*Continued on next page*



Continued from previous page

**PC:** So you think Black Metal is getting weaker, too?

**LS:** Oh definitely! I think Black metal lost its spirit a long time ago. I think a lot of the new bands that people are passing off as Black Metal, to me, are simply not.

**PC:** And are bands like CRADLE OF FILTH or DIMMU BORGIR responsible for that?

**LS:** Bands like CRADLE and DIMMU have Black Metal elements to them, but they're not Black Metal bands, and people should not pass them off as such. They're more like their own thing and to me, DIMMU just jumped on the CRADLE bandwagon. They were so much more their own band with their own identity on their first two albums, and they lost that completely; that's the thing that sucks. I'm not saying anything about production and this and that, because that's what a lot of people would say: "Oh, they're just complaining because they don't sound like DARKTHRONE." That's not it, because I would love to hear DIMMU with that killer production they have, but still play in the style they did; I would love that. But they didn't. They totally changed and became a CRADLE wannabe and that just sucks.

**Void:** I think CRADLE OF FILTH wrecked the scene (everyone laughs). I don't care how big they are. I don't know... Black Metal has a mustache now.

**PC:** Does this have something to do with the introduction of keyboards, female vocals, orchestration, or what?

**LS:** I don't think that that's the problem if it's done right; I just think it got out of hand. There's too many people doing it and there's too much of it.

**AS:** It's not supposed to be pretty; Black Metal was never meant to be pretty. You can't sing about Satan like DIMMU BORGIR does and have pretty keyboards.

**LS:** Yeah, the package isn't complete. They're putting forth this dark, grim atmosphere or image of being evil and Satanic, but their music doesn't back it up. Then you look at us: you see us live, you look at our lyrics, and you see a complete package. We're not fucking sitting there playing acoustic guitars and singing about flowers and stuff like that while looking like this!

**Void:** And what you said about female vocals and keyboards... man... it's gonna sound like we're totally sucking on SATYRICON's balls, but that

new album has female vocals and keyboards and it's still fucking ugly; it's still an ugly, grim album. I think that with any music, you can introduce any kind of element, and as long as it's done right it'll sound good. I just think that the way people have been utilizing female vocals and keyboards is watering down the ferocity of what Black Metal should have.

**PC:** So are you guys anti-melody and anti-beauty?

**LS:** We just want the hatefulness to be there. It's not about the melody or the keyboards. The keyboards themselves are not the problem; it's the fact that when you hear the keyboards it sounds like a happy video game (imitates sounds that you might hear from a pinball machine) as opposed to something more grim. I mean, as much as we're ripping on CRADLE, on their first album, the keyboards sound evil and dark. But then you hear DIMMU's *Enthroned Darkness Triumphant* and the keyboards sound like something you'd hear on a RUSH album, know what I mean? With all due respect to that kind of music, there's a place for that stuff, and if you're going to do it, at least try and keep it in context with the rest of what you're doing. Don't just be like, "Well, we're gonna use some keyboards here." Look at LIMBONIC ART; they're awesome! They're phenomenal. There are bands that do it good, and then they are bands that fail miserably.

**PC:** And it sounds like the bands who fail miserably are the most popular.

**LS:** Personally, I like CRADLE OF FILTH. I liked them since their demo days and I still think they're cool. I don't think that their keyboards are as killer-sounding as they used to be, especially on *Dusk*... their first album is by far my favorite, but I think that those guys have stayed true to what they've been about since the beginning. But there's a lot of other bands out there, and DIMMU is the perfect example, that just don't. If you're going to be a more Gothic and atmospheric band-- I mean look at DISMAL EUPHONY. Those guys are killer, totally, but they don't walk around trying to promote themselves as being this evil, Satanic Black Metal band like DIMMU does.

**PC:** So you're not anti-beauty or against operatic music, just when it infiltrates Black Metal?

**LS:** I just think it has its place and it should be done properly. You can make something beautiful, and it can still be grim and ugly, but in a different way. It's like, you can create that kind of majestic atmosphere without these circus-sounding keyboards.

**Void:** It can be done, as long as it's done with taste and as long as it keeps that feel of what we think Black Metal should be.

**PC:** I know you guys are friends with Jack, and I was wondering if I could get your opinion on something. Overall, I'm kind of disappointed with this year's March Metal Meltdown thus far. I think that Jack is pushing it and trying to put on too many fests in too short of time differentials. I think it tends to promote mediocrity, and then you have less and less people showing up for each festival it's like a downward spiral. I'm all about the fests, don't get me wrong, but

**LS:** Jack is a really good friend of mine, and I give him total respect and support for what he is trying to do, but there shouldn't be too many. If you're going to do it... like, the one here isn't so bad, and maybe the one in Texas, and definitely the one in Milwaukee. I mean, three times a year is still pushing it, but I've been hearing upwards of five or more and to me that's insane. I think it takes away from the specialness of the fests, it takes away the--

**Void:** It's going to kill attendance at each fest because with Milwaukee it was a big exodus and



everyone came to Milwaukee. Now people have one, you know, "right in their neighborhood" that they can go to. So now people who would go to Milwaukee that live on the East Coast are like, "Well, I just saw the Jersey fest, so why should I go to Milwaukee, too?" Same thing for people who live in or around Texas. I don't think it's a good move at all.

**LS:** It's also the fact, too, that eventually you're going to run out of bands. One of the things that makes Metalfest so special-- it's such an event-- is that you get bands that nobody has seen before like IMMORTAL, EMPEROR, MAYHEM, CRADLE OF FILTH, SENTENCED, WITCHERY... all these bands that you see once simply because they just don't come around that often; they're European acts. That was the cool thing about Metalfest: you got to see bands that you generally wouldn't get to see-- ever! Now it's just like there's only so many bands that you're going to bring over here that have a legendary status that people are going to drive hundreds of miles to see. If you keep putting on a million shows like this you're going to run out of bands, and then you're going to be in trouble because nobody's going to care; nobody wants to see bands that they're able to see all the time.

**Void:** It's even like that for me now. I come to Metalfest and it seems like you see the same group of bands every year. There are some bands that I really, really like, like INCANTATION-- I'll see them every time-- but there's only so many bands you can see so many times. Metalfest gets very redundant, and if it's already like that to me now, adding three or four more is just going to totally kill it for me.



## Anno Daemonicus (Demo)

When first looking at the cover itself I wasn't impressed in the least. The logo was very cheesy and the band members' faces were superimposed in the sky above a snow-covered landscape. "Obviously," I thought, "one more shitty, unoriginal American Black Metal wannabe band." I don't think that one can get any more typical in the department of album covers. The only band that I've seen that can get away with the superimposing of faces is GORGOROTH. Upon opening the jewel case itself, I was even less impressed, for my intuition proved true. Anno Daemonicus is indeed from the US and gave themselves



## Anno Daemonicus

stupid names such as "Count Evillee" and "Danochar." In addition to the crap I was seeing so far, I noticed the band obviously took the time and money to make an actual cover, but the CD itself was a blank Memorex writeable disc. I wouldn't be complaining, but if one is going to make a cover, the *least* they could do is write something on their damn CD (I'm not asking for CD art necessarily, but *something*!). Lastly, upon playing their disc, my intuition proved completely on track. Anno Daemonicus is indeed one more shitty, unoriginal American Black Metal wannabe band. It doesn't take much imagination to figure what they sound like and it certainly isn't worth my time to describe it. If you feel like contacting them here's their info. Amaymon 697 Sawyer Rd. Greene, ME 04236.

## Deceased *Supernatural Addiction* (Relapse Records)

How King Fowley and Co. can continually outshine themselves album after album is a complete mystery to me. There are no ups and downs with this band; each progressing album is a new development and evolution in the sound and mythos of Deceased! Propelling beyond mere labels, Deceased can now only be categorized as Metal, for no sub-genre can contain the flamboyant nature of the band's evolution! With the escalating integration of classic Metal stimuli, the band honestly stands on its own and proudly displays its denim-clad heritage. *Supernatural Addiction*, the band's latest endeavor, openly exhibits King's adoration for the bizarre and unexplainable, as portrayed in retellings of familiar myths and legends of both the print world and film universe. Continuing the anthem-like songwriting style last heard on 1997's *Fearless Undead Machines*, Deceased propagates more spellbinding guitar harmonies while spinning yarns of ghosts, possessed dolls, and other subjects that the human subconscious dare not relinquish! It is this quality that grants the album a book-like impression, for each song is the sonic translation of a pre-existing story. Leave it to Mr. Fowley to turn Man's fears and superstitions into Heavy Metal anthems! Upon completion of the album, I must pose one question: does Metal get any truer than Deceased?



## Coalesce *0:12 Revolution in Just Listening* (Relapse)

The painting on the album cover caught my attention right away, so I figure it should be the first thing I mention. It is a painting of two babies in the womb, connected at the torso opposite each other. I guess what can be deciphered by this is that it can be about the symbiotic relationships people have in life; either that or they just wanted to use a freaky painting for an album cover. Nevertheless, it is a great painting for a great album. Coalesce is another one of those heavy, Hardcore Metal bands who are bold and aren't afraid to do things that are non-conventional as far as heavy music goes. At the end of the second song, "Cowards.com," the vocals were played with during the mixing process and were chopped up and repeated rapidly. This gave the song an interesting and powerful effect, giving the song a whole new dimension. The dissonant chords and guitar noises, placed in various songs, are also a powerful effect. The most brave and notable song is "Jesus in the Year 2000/Next on the Shit List." The song opens with radio static and a couple of voices discussing Jesus and prophets, then a mellow, dark piano is heard, and then the song comes in over this totally unrelated piano piece. The song is apparently about a friend of theirs named John who had faced a tragic and unnecessary death and how he isn't forgotten. This album should not be passed up, with songs like "Burn Everything That Bears Our Name," "While the Jackass Operation Spins the Wheel," and "Sometimes Selling Out Is Waking Up."



## Monumentum *Museaum Hermeticum* (Necropolis Records)

Don't buy this disc. Don't listen to it. Seriously, this band from Italy is the absolute worst Metal band I have ever had the misfortune of hearing in over ten years. They have an absolutely shitty sound quality and no musicianship whatsoever. I have no clue what genre of Metal they are making the pathetic attempt of falling into. They sound like beginners picking up instruments for the first time and recording their own jam session. *They're not even in tune!!!!* I couldn't even listen past the second song. It was that bad. They make IN MEMORIUM sound good. If all of what people have heard from Metal are bands like Monumentum, it's no wonder they think Metal sucks! OK, fuck this band, and fuck this review! I'm getting aggravated simply thinking about them.

## Sculptured *Apollo Ends* (The End Records)

The End labels their band, Sculptured, as "avant-garde" Death Metal. Sounds good to me, although I didn't notice the word "weird" mentioned anywhere in their press releases either. If music like this is going to be labeled as "Death Metal," then I may have to re-think my position on that whole genre, although I still don't care for the "brutal" style vocals. Sculptured's style of Death Metal mainly involves power-style chords wrapped around dual vocals of a clean and brutal style, along with trumpet (Burke Harris), trombone (Clint Idsinga), and various other media effects. Don Anderson (guitar) and Brian Yager handle the vocal duties and while neither is credited with a certain vocal style, whoever is responsible for the clean vocals sounds like he has OZZY OSBOURNE somewhere in his lineage. The vocals aren't as high-pitched as OZZY's, but he has that slightly raspy style that is similar. Of note is that John Haughm of AGALLOCH plays drums and Jason Walton (also in NOTHING) is on bass. On a song such as "Snow Covers All" you get a good idea of what Sculptured is all about: guitar work that has parts that are throwbacks to IRON MAIDEN back in the 80's, the dual vocal styles, a trumpet solo thrown right into the middle of the tune, and even a little whistling interlude.

I know it's in there somewhere, but I haven't found the exact spot where they put the kitchen sink into that song. "Apollo Destroys, Apollo Creates" is a neat, ten-minute instrumental that begins with a guitar that is heavily distorted and is borderline noise (which oddly enough reminds of those bass solos that Michael Anthony used to play at VAN HALEN concerts in the 80's), which continues for the first half of the song and closes with the last part being taken up with some very melodic and delicate guitar work; it's a clever title for such a song. Throughout the disc you get the touches that separate Sculptured from the herd: the brass instruments, slower and more melodic guitar playing than their counterparts, the unique vocal style of the clean vocals, and the "non-standard" structure of the songs at least non-standard for your typical Death Metal group. Anyone looking for something different from the standard Death Metal fare should give Sculptured a listen. Contact Don Anderson at [Sculptured117@aol.com](mailto:Sculptured117@aol.com) or at The End's website: [www.theendrecords.com](http://www.theendrecords.com).



## Triumphator *Wings Of Antichrist* (Necropolis)

Yes, on the surface, you may immediately pass them off as 'just another Black Metal band trying to be like EMPEROR.' This is where the misconception sets in: the Black Metal genre has been so flooded by mediocre bands, that even those whose hearts are truly in the music get tossed aside in favor of the 'Big Guns!' Yes, Triumphator does employ excessive use of the blast beat to make their point, and yes, the guitar work is at times so hyperactive that it sounds indistinguishable from the crash cymbals. But, what you're not noticing is the precision and subterranean grasp of technique, which is terribly under-rated in this day and age. I would definitely go on record as saying this is just as abrasive, as bitterly fast, and as soul-blinding as MARDUK, but Triumphator have a knack for production and sound quality that also normally gets pushed aside in the BM community, most likely to make room for the ever-important 'image!' Okay, so the band does become excessive with the Anti-Christian lyrical imagery, but let that not shield your ears to the surgical accuracy of their songwriting. *Wings Of Antichrist* will not only appeal to fans of blistering Black Metal, but also to those whose consciousnesses are susceptible to grinding Death Metal, even those champions of SODOM, DESTRUCTION and WEHRMACHT! Triumphator's brand of extremity is designed to simultaneously melt your auditory sense, psyche, and life-essence!!

## Cradle of Filth *From The Cradle To Enslave* (Metal Blade/Music For Nations)

Yes, it seems that IRON MAIDEN's would-be successor to the British Metal throne, Cradle Of Filth, has returned, if only briefly (whilst they complete their next inhumane abomination), to treat us to an EP and coordinating home video. The EP serves multiple purposes (yeah, most folks think they're just out for a quick buck, claiming that CoF is "mainstream"?? How can Metal ever be mainstream??? Think about it!), as it is a way to wash the 'green-ness' off of their new lineup, give the world a taste of their current direction, as well as treat their fans to some more cover tunes! The band is ever increasingly the target of criticism among the devoted 'Underground' moguls, as with each progressing release, CoF's sound becomes more polished (thanks to looser budgets), and they grace the covers of many, many renowned publications worldwide. My question to you 'experts'

## Defender *They Came Over The High Pass* (Necropolis)

Is it I, or is there a shortage of true, honest, meat-and-potatoes Metal out there today? Everyone either has a gimmick, or they flaunt their playing ability rather than doing what they do for the sake of the Metal! Defender seems to know exactly what I'm talking about. What they've done on *They Came Over The High Pass* was looked to the past for a possible future. The music on the disc is nothing short of blood-pumping, fist-banging battle hymns! Opening the album with sounds that may mislead you into thinking this is going to be Black Metal music (the intro being wind blowing, labored breathing, and the sounds of mountain-climbing or someone painstakingly stomping through snow, kind of like an old BATHORY album), Defender instantly



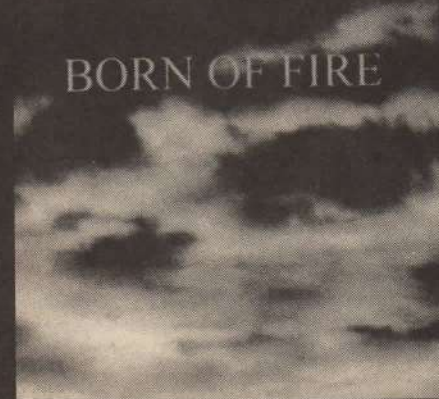
dissolves any anticipation of blitzkrieg onslaughts. Rather, they aim right for the heart and come barreling through your ears with the sounds of IRON MAIDEN-like anthems, minus any 'air-raid sirens!' The IRON MAIDEN reference holds true for most of the album, as Defender have managed to fuse a *Somewhere In Time*-ish songwriting style with a delivery and vocal performance which rings of earlier *Killers*-era material. But Defender is by no means a bunch of plagiarists, for they harness this influence and weave in Ancient folk underpinnings that give the tracks a unique, mystical vibe. Throw in fantasy-styled lyrics and you have an album of odes, or tributes to mythical legends of times long past, like Gilgamesh, Beowulf, Jason, Sinbad, Väinämöinen, and even Finrod Felagund. *They Came Over The High Pass* is truly an inspiration and a glimmer of hope, revealing that the marriage of the 'old' with the 'new' can create something magical and memorable for fans of all walks of Metal!



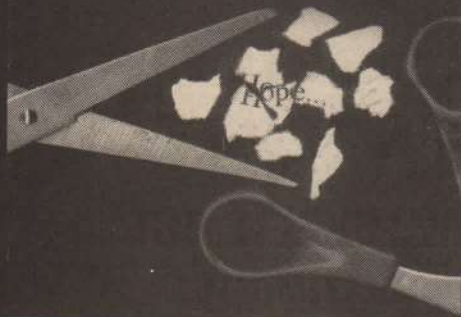
## Born of Fire *Born Of Fire* (Tyrannical Music)

Ahh, it warms the blood to see US bands keeping it real, keeping the flame of True Heavy Metal burning. Phoenix's Born Of Fire treat us to four self-produced songs of deliciously melodic and emotionally tantalizing classic Metal in the vein of *The Warning*-era QUEENSRÛCHE without the 'Old School' feel. It's very contemporary, fluid, and overall haunting in its display of the human trait of 'yearning.' The vocalist is a dead ringer for Geoff Tate in his powerful *Rage For Order* days, as he spews precise vocalizations of desire and discord. The guitar harmonies are both sobering and aggressive in their goal to achieve a sense of pain and anger. Periodically, one becomes entranced by the flow of emotive energy generated by the band, and this deserves commendation, for few bands, especially unsigned ones, possess this trait, and it is they that will truly stand the test of time. Born Of Fire is not your average American Metal band; support them now, for you may see yourself within their music; it's a mind-opening experience. Contact: Born Of Fire, PO Box 35130, Phoenix, AZ 85069-5130. Check out the website, [www.BORNOFFIRE.cjb.net](http://www.BORNOFFIRE.cjb.net)

of extreme music is this: if CoF is so mainstream, how come they haven't sold a gold record yet?? Enough bickering, and on to the music!! The two new tracks, one being the subject of a controversial yet amusing video, display the band's ability to compose entertaining epics with a flair for simple-sounding arrangements. There is a further focus on a lower-end bass sound (rather than the previous fret-board dancing of Robin Graves), and even the drumming is less dynamic (missing the Nicko McBrain worship of Nicholas Barker), but this does not prevent the band from creating horrific atmosphere, for the terrifying Gothic Horror movie soundtrack style remains intact. Their cover of THE MISFITS' "Death Comes Ripping" comes across as more of a sarcastic parody than an homage (my opinion may be jaded, since I was never a fan of THE MISFITS anyway), and their take on fellow Brits ANATHEMA's "Sleepless" retains the intended Gothic fervor, adding CoF's typical flair for the grandiose. The disc is rounded out by a crushing rendition of MASSACRE's "Dawn of Eternity," which is both mortifying and energetic, and an alternate mix of *Dusk...And Her Embrace*'s "Funeral In Carpathia," which is more frenzied than the original and features a contrasting, darker vocal mix. All in all, it's a decent little package, but as I always say, never judge a band solely on the performance on an EP; the true test of CoF's viability will come with their next full studio release.



# SEVER THE FALLEN



## Sever the Fallen In Pieces Lie the Remains of Hope... (Tribunal)

Wow, this surprised the fuck out of me! I've never heard of these kidz from Jersey, but they explode with fury on this five-song disc! First off, let me state that vocalist Jim Murray has an incredible voice. I can't believe this band has only one singer, as it sounds like two tormented souls issuing these harsh screams and deadly death vocals; they can't both be the same person... can they? Oh yes, my friend, IT IS, and it's SICK! On the musical end, things are just as impressive. Sever the

Fallen offer us five tracks of absolutely pummeling, chaotic Metalcore, complete with doublekick drums and crushing breakdowns. If pressed for a comparison, I'd say that these guys are in the vein of COALESCE, UNEARTH (from Massachusetts), and TURMOIL (if they were good, that is). Hardcore kids and open-minded Metalheads alike, contact this band and get your fucking head kicked in! While your at it, ask Tribunal about another one of their acts, PRAYER FOR CLEANSING: awesome, vegan Black-edge Metal. Tribunal Records, P.O. Box 49322, Greensboro, NC 27419-1322. E-mail: tribunalHQ@hotmail.com.

## Various Artists

### Slave To The Power: The Iron Maiden Tribute (Meteor City)

I saw an ad for this album in a music industry magazine and immediately had to have it. Of course, any self respecting Maiden fan would do the same, although I must admit that the Iron Maiden tributes of the past bordered on blasphemy. Meteor City is a so-called Stoner Rock label based in Albuquerque, New Mexico, but not all the bands here favor the sweet leaf and it's genre of Metal. Names like SEBASTIAN BACH, IRON SAVIOR ("Running Free"), RAY ALDER (with COSMOSQUAD doing "Murders in the Rue Morgue") and CHRIS CAFFERY (with JOHN WEST doing "Run to the Hills") pop up here-- and with stunning results. From the very first track, SOLACE's version of the ever-popular (!?!!) "Another Life," you immediately get the impression that you're in for something truly

unique. Former SKID ROW frontman SEBASTIAN BACH sings the hell out of "Children of the Damned" and in the liner notes gives his testimony on the Maiden legend: "[the song] taught me a lot about singing at an early age, as for Maiden, they refuse to compromise." This is a welcome element missing from most tribute albums. I like to hear why these artists selected certain songs and to hear them tell their own Iron Maiden stories. Twenty-six tracks are spread over the two discs, covering the first seven albums (thankfully leaving out the later years) with not one, but two versions of "The Trooper." I was a little shocked at the lack of popular songs (no "2 Minutes..." and no "Hallowed..."), but happy to see lesser known tunes like "Total Eclipse" and "The Prophecy." Most Metal fans will not be familiar with many of the names here, but who cares? The renditions are all great, with no filler and no reason to skip past a really horrible song that makes you want to puke. A few tracks stand out as completely original like everyone's favorite Finnish band, HOYRY-KONE (!?) doing the funniest and most amazing version of "The Trooper" I have ever heard. Just when you

thought you'd seen it all, these guys bring a full horn and string section to the mix. Right now you're thinking Muzak right? You couldn't be more wrong. They keep the guitars and are faithful to the original gallop that Steve Harris intended, but a solo trombone handles the vocal line while a chorus of castle guards from *The Wizard of Oz* (yes, the "oh-WEE-yoh" guys!) mumble in the background. As if that were not odd enough, a violin solo is included in FATES PROPHECY's version of "Wasted Years," and ETERNAL ASYLUM do a Reggae interpretation of "Innocent Exile." As an interesting personal note, Mark Morton and I were backstage at last summer's Maiden show in New York City when he pointed across the room and said with awe, "that's CHRIS CAFFERY." Chris was so impressed with the show that he gives his mini review in his liner note the following testimonial. "I just saw [Maiden] recently in New York with Bruce and Adrian back in the band... LONG LIVE IRON MAIDEN!!!!!" What more can you say except to hope for good things from the recently completed album now awaiting release, *Brave New World*.

# HOWLINGBULL AMERICA

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**Dismember**  
**Hate Campaign**  
 (Nuclear Blast)

After flirting with the so-called genre Death & Roll on 95's *Massive Killing Capacity* (a disc that I completely love, by the way; I don't care what anyone says), Dismember opted to return to the root of all their evil and give us the aptly titled *Death Metal* as a follow-up. *Death Metal* was just that: Death Metal personified. I was really worried about Dismember at that point, for I thought they might have trouble topping that mammoth disc. I will never worry about Dismember again, because they have done what I thought impossible: they have topped themselves. Ten times the earth has circled the sun since Dismember first appeared on the scene in that "ever-flowing stream" of Swedish Death Metal. To celebrate this anniversary, they have

presented unto us, the Death Metal legions, an album I consider to be the band's best collection of Death Metal songs since *Like an Everflowing Stream: Hate Campaign*. I suppose I should get this out of the way now: the addition of Sharlee D'Angelo (from a couple of bands you may have heard of, including MERCYFUL FATE and WITCHERY, to name only two) makes little (if any) difference in Dismember's sound. I'm not really slamming him, for he's actually a better bass player than Richard Cabeza, it's just that his addition does not change the dynamics of Dismember's sound in the least. One of the main things that has always drawn me to Dismember has been their employment of something I would like to call brutal melody. *Hate Campaign* is full of this melodic violence, rendering the songs instantly enjoyable, yet with enough layering of the riffage that enables you (the listener) to find something new with each successive listen. The songs are arranged on the disc much like



HATE CAMPAIGN

SLAYER arranges their songs, stopping for only a fraction of a second before blasting you with the next dose of pure Death Metal. I love this technique; it allows no time for recovery and really makes the listener think of the recording as a whole instead of just individual songs. "Retaliate" and "Enslaved To Bitterness" should be considered... no... WILL be considered and are among the best songs Dismember have ever put to disc; it's really that simple. I was once told that Dismember is the MANOWAR of Death Metal (credit to "The Total Package") in that they never compromise their sound and stand true in the face of all the trends that come and go. While this statement is surely true, I would liken them more to MOTORHEAD for the exact same reasons, and the hope that Dismember can persevere as long as Lemmy and the boys have. As long as Dismember is flying the flag of hate, our beloved Metal of Death will never die. *Hate Campaign IS Death Metal!!!!!!*

**Malevolent Creation**  
**Manifestation**  
 (Pavement Music)

I suppose this release is designed to hold the diehard fans over until MC get things in order in the studio... either that or it's a cheap way for Pavement to make a quick buck off of a hard-working band. In any event, it's a pretty cool comp., spotlighting the 'best' of Malevolent Creation's current relationship with Pavement Music. Disc One, the 'official best' consists of three tracks from 1997's lackluster *In Cold Blood*, four from 1995's rebirthing *Eternal*, two of the three studio tracks from the *Joe Black* extended EP, one lone song from the ground-splitting debut *The Ten Commandments* (which sounds remarkably like a recent re-recording), and a whopping six of the



thirteen songs from the band's last studio effort *The Fine Art Of Murder* (which seems a bit ridiculous to me, since it's not that old). As you can see, there are no studio tracks from the much-heralded *Retribution*, nor from its follow-up, *Stillborn*. *Retribution* peeks through in live material presented on Disc Two with three tracks, plus one live version of "Multiple Stab Wounds" (from above-noted *The Ten Commandments*). Disc Two is rounded out by three live enhanced PC Video songs, which capture the intensity of Malevolent Creation's stage performance to a point (for nothing can truly represent the 'real' thing!). So, it's a decent package for someone who's been intrigued to check out MC, but does not know where to begin (with the noted lack of ample representation from their Roadrunner years, which is most likely tied up in legal red tape). My only major concern is, what exactly was Pavement's motivation for releasing this? Don't 'best of's...' make a band seem dated?

**Somnus**  
**Awakening The Crown**  
 (Root Of All Evil Records)

Immediately catching my attention with tantalizing album art featuring a woodland monarch at unrest on his stone and wood-constructed throne, with a raven perched atop it, I knew I was in for something a bit different. Blazing through the speakers comes arcane dark Metal, bordering on the Black, but too controlled and focused to be from Scandinavia. My thought was that maybe some Germans whom were fans of both BLIND GUARDIAN and ANCIENT WISDOM decided to see their vision in unlight, but alas, imagine my surprise when I found that the band was from Cleveland, Ohio!!! How could anything this

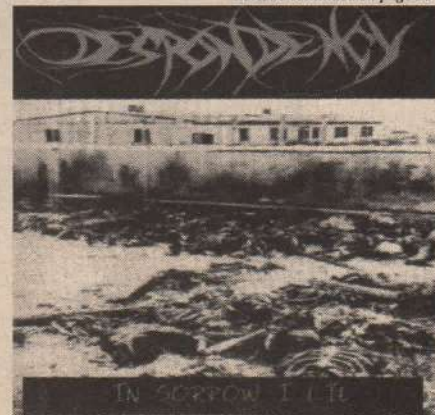


inspired and calculated originate on our on soil? Then I thought for a moment and realized that this was that same band that recorded a more intense version of "Seasons In The Abyss" than the actual authors of the song (on last year's Dwell Records' *Gateway To Hell* compilation)! *Awakening The Crown* then deserved my undivided attention! Each song on the album is a self-contained tale, depicting visions of ancient warfare, great quests, regal turmoil, and magical ceremonies within an atmospheric and disparaging setting. The album is a milestone for America, for it shows that there is hope for us yet, and that the Europeans aren't the only people with a zest for taste and class! Experience Somnus and become engulfed by a new age of enlightenment! Contact: Root Of All Evil Records, 636 North Snelling Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55104; or go to the website, [www.rootofallevil/leftalone](http://www.rootofallevil/leftalone).

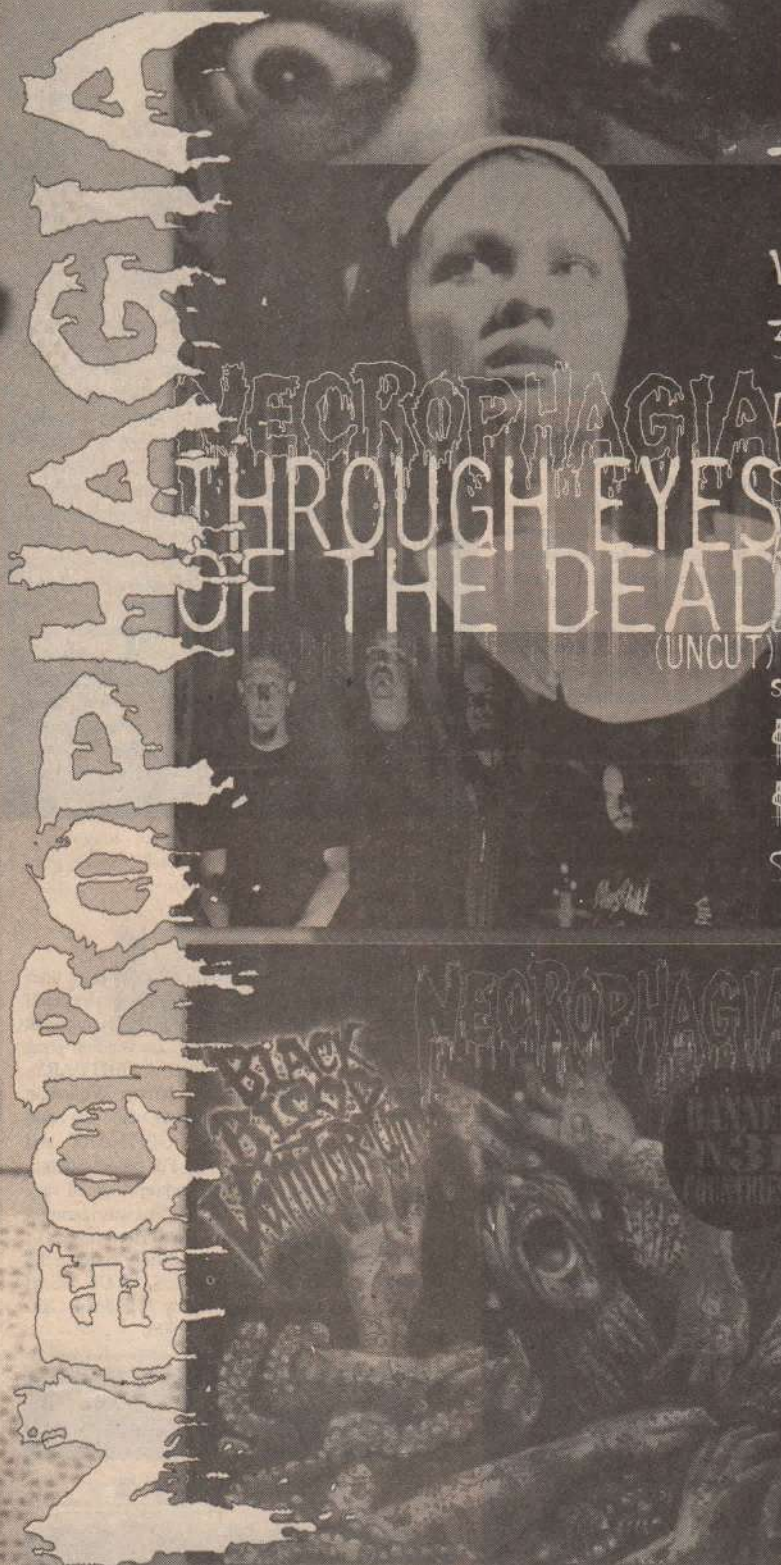
**Despondency**  
**In Sorrow I Lie**  
 (Demo)

I love it when a band makes the effort to print their demo material onto a CD format. It really shows belief in the material that they're producing. This is just what Despondency has done. *In Sorrow I Lie* is a four-song mCD of CANNIBAL CORPSE / OBITUARY-inspired, no-frills Death. Vocalist Jeremy Whiteman worships at the altar of Chris Barnes while the band fills the air around him with OBITUARY and CELTIC FROST-inspired riffing. For being a demo, all the instruments are captured and represented very well in the mix; and believe it or not, this was recorded in the lead throat's damn house! Devil Horn fingers to Despondency for a job well done! I fully endorse the purchase of this demo, so send your \$7.00 US / \$8.00 world to: Despondency c/o Jeremy Whiteman, 200 Felicie Dr., Lafayette, Louisiana 70506.

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In this world of trends, one would think that the Metal scene, being as underground as it is, would be untainted by trends and "glamorous" imaging. But alas, we live in the United States, where anything and everything can be twisted, misconstrued, remolded, and manufactured for public consumption. For perfect evidence, turn on any music video channel on your television; everything is one big commercial! But, although the Metal genre has fallen victim to this horrid state of affairs, if you dig deep enough into the Underground, you will find that some honesty and purity still exists within its soul. The fire still burns within a very unlikely (and unpopular) sub-culture, the Death Metal community. While other factions of the music industry compete with business savvy and treat all artists as mere pawns in their corporate fantasy, the Death Metal scene thrives on its own, without the major label push, without the "assistance" of music television, and without the utilization of radio. Death Metal thrives on the adoration of its devoted fans and the "family" values that exist within band interaction.

AngelCorpse is a fine example of a band that supports these values of keeping the scene alive through shared experience. Read on, as guitarist Gene Palubicki enlightens us all to the ties that bind!

Promethean Crusade: In a previous issue, I had discussed with Alex from CANNIBAL CORPSE about the importance of taking younger and more obscure bands on the road to widen the community, spread and share the fan base, and give some of the smaller guys some much-needed exposure. You seem to be exhibiting the same ideal by taking KRISIUN out on the road. Do you feel that there is a kind of camaraderie within the Death Metal community that does not exist in other sub-genres of Metal?

AngelCorpse: It does seem that some of the other genres try to stay really exclusive to what they're about, and they don't want to take out a band that would threaten their own credibility. So definitely, if we feel there's a band that could be the "new thing," something that might even be more over-the-top than us, we're not afraid to bring them out! A band like SLAYER is obviously afraid to have a more extreme band come out on the road with them, because it would threaten their credibility, where as we really wouldn't want it any other way! When we play a show, we want that show to be great from start to finish: no "filler" bands, no "extra" bands, just everything over-the-top... a perfect show!

PC: It also makes everything feel like a kind of brotherhood among fans and the bands!

AC: Exactly, there's no question of feeling like it, it just is! We're all part of the same family, we're all working toward the same goal, it's just that everybody has their own take on it. That's what it's all about, having a 2-3 hour show that's the same level of intensity coming off all the time!

PC: I find that the Death Metal community is also different in that the Black Metal scene is very egocentric and based on their self-image...



## Becoming Your Own God

By Mark Morton

AC: Well, it's all about that! Now the true colors are showing that the Black Metal genre is wasted; it was all created on hype! And, in my opinion, there were not very many

outstanding records from the Black Metal genre at all. And Death Metal, even from its beginnings before the Black Metal trend, has always been the strongest style! And now, ourselves, KRISIUN, DIABOLIC, HATE ETERNAL, we're all basically here to lay down the law that Death Metal is the most invincible style of the extreme music genre in general! And there's nothing that can fuck with it! This is the Supreme shit, and we are stampeding all the other stuff!!

PC: Does this message transcend to the overseas bands as well?

AC: Most definitely; the Black Metal scene was very, very big, but thanks to excessive touring by bands like KRISIUN and such, the fans are coming back over to the Death Metal side more and more, because they realize that's where the real talent is! They're re-sizing the scene because they see that the Black Metal scene is fading, and the real power of Death Metal is being understood once again, and it's going further than it ever went before. It's getting the respect now that will solidify it forever!

PC: That's also made obvious in the US, seeing as there are way more Death Metal package tours than any other genre of Metal!

AC: That's because Death Metal is the last of sincere Metal that is left! The KORN-type bands and your LIMP BIZKITs aren't really Heavy Metal at all. The popular magazines may refer to that stuff as the New Metal, but it's not! It's some Pop-sub genre that's not even what Metal is all about! All the Rock 'N Roll, Glam, and Hard Rock bands aren't really around anymore; the only sincere and true stuff is just the Death Metal scene and hard stuff of that caliber that's doing anything in the US to keep the torch lit!

PC: The Inexorable seems to have an

underlying theme of a "war on ignorance." Is this true?

AC: Yeah, definitely. That seems to be a consistent issue with all our releases, but yeah, you can call it a war if you want. It's a wake-up call to get off your ass and become a master in your own world.

PC: Where does all the anger come from?

AC: It's a rage and it's a force, but it's not really just ignorant raw anger. It's a controlled focus towards a goal. There's a definite harshness and fierceness that can be misinterpreted as anger, but it's not. When working intensely towards your goal, yeah you do become infuriated at times, but that helps you; it makes the blood flow more openly. It's all about forcing yourself to your ultimate goal and achieving it by every means at your disposal!

PC: The band seems to have a violent self-image, due to some of the press photos and articles. Is this a goal of yours to strike fear in others, or is it a means of opening the world's eyes to general hypocrisy?

AC: I don't think our photos are all that scary, but we do want to present a strong image; we want people to see that. We want people to be exposed to strong things and become stronger themselves from it. We don't want to give anyone the impression that being a weaker individual is all right. Strive where you're at, even if it's at the bottom, and rise up and become a stronger person from this! If there's any kind of image we want to portray, it's to become the most powerful that you can through experience. We're not negative people. What works for you should be able to work for anybody. They just have to find their own version to get to their end; it's all relative. You have to work hard and brutally to get to where you want to be. Its standard evolution!



# Bal Sagoth

By Stephen Stalker

An interview with Bal Sagoth's main songwriter and vocalist, Byron.

**Promethean Crusade:** What is the Metal scene like over in England anyways? Is it a strong Metal scene?

**Bal Sagoth:** Yeah, I mean over here, unfortunately the Metal scene isn't very powerful at all. Most of the people that are into Metal over here tend to like things like FEAR FACTORY, MACHINE HEAD, KORN, all that kind of thing, where as the more extreme people that like the Black and Death Metal are very much underground. They are very much a minority. It's very kind of cult, more injured scene these days. The real kind of mainstream Metal bands are unfortunately the kind of focus of the English Metal scene, which is a shame really, because it would be nice for the more extreme stuff to get more recognition over here.

**PC:** Yeah, that's exactly how it is over in the States too. FEAR FACTORY: they play a show and everybody goes. KORN: everybody goes. If any Black or Death Metal band come through, then only just a few hundred people out of the whole entire state go! So are there constant changes in music trends over in England or is it pretty much a solid "This is what we like right now," and years down later, "Okay, this is what we now like"? Cuz over in America, it's like every other month there's an entirely new market for music, with entirely new bands, and it's ridiculous with the mainstream.

**BS:** I think that's pretty much true here as well. People, one minute, they'll be into the kind of stuff like OASIS, and that kind of thing, the next minute they'll be into something completely different. As far as Rock goes, and Metal, they'll be kind of into KORN one minute and then the next big thing to come over they'll be into that, so there are very much shifting tastes/people in the mainstream as well. Over here people basically will be into whatever is popular at the moment.

**PC:** Okay. With your band, is that a goal at all or would you feel any part of success if say, one day your music was part of the total mainstream area? Or do you think you'd just ignore it and think, "Well, it's just trend of the minute"?

**BS:** I think if we were to break through to the mainstream without actually compromising in any way, without changing our sound, or our approach,

or our ideologies, that would be quite an accomplishment. I think people generally do tend to look at us as a very weird band and they do tend to kind of regard us almost as a novelty to a great extent, where as bands like CRADLE OF FILTH, they get a lot more exposure than we do. They're treated a lot more respectfully, and all that kind of thing, by the press and stuff so I can't personally see Bal Sagoth ever breaking through into the mainstream. I think if we did it would be a very, very big surprise.

**PC:** What do you think about when a band, in order to gain a lot of popularity in the mainstream or are pushed by the record companies, changes their style or changes their image to be part of the big mainstream act?

**BS:** Yeah, that's always been something, which I've very much frowned upon. It's pretty lame when that happens. It's like bands who do that, you tend to think, "Do they not have any integrity? Do they not have any kind of artistic integrity? Are they just prepared to do anything just to sell albums?" It is a shame when that happens. They'll start out being one thing and they'll get a very strong and dedicated fan base and then they'll completely change in order to sell records. It's a sad state of affairs. It's always something which has pissed me off.

**PC:** What would you say the best and worst countries you've toured are?

**BS:** Well certainly as far as the crowd response goes, Southern Europe is certainly good territory for us. The south of France is an excellent place to tour because the crowds really get behind you and give you a good passionate support. Italy as well, and Spain. Germany is not particularly good for us. We've never really had a following in Germany, which is surprising because, you know, this kind of music does tend to be quite popular over there, but certainly the farther south we go in Europe it's a better response, Eastern Europe as well. That's pretty good. It's essentially sort of the Mediterranean area were we tend to get the best gig responses.

**PC:** That's weird, because I think from what people know from Germany over here is what we always hear, is that Germany always has the most fanatic fans of music in general and that they especially always eat up music like yours and their own bands like HELLOWEEN and BLIND GUARDIAN, and that any band that travels over there always stops through Germany and has a good response.

**BS:** Well, they do tend to be very arrogant. They just tend to sit back and their opinion seems to be, "Okay, entertainers," since so many bands go through there that they seem to have lost a certain degree of devotion and certainly a degree of passion. They do tend to be very kind of analytical about it all, where as we'll go down to Spain or Italy and the crowds, they'll just go completely

wild, and they'll really give a very crazy, barbaric response to us. It is weird, I mean I've heard from other bands that Germany as a market for live shows does tend to be going downhill these days.

**PC:** What goals do you have as a whole, you know, as a band and as an individual with Bal Sagoth?

**BS:** Well, ultimately I would like to kind of turn the whole Bal Sagoth concept into a kind of franchise. I'd like to expand into other areas of the

media so we could expand from doing albums and transfer the concept into other things, like perhaps even comic books, video games, that kind of thing. I'd often wanted to have a range of Bal Sagoth action figures on the market, all that kind of thing. And it's pretty far fetched and it's pretty crazy, but ultimately that is my grand design for the band.

Realistically that probably won't ever happen so I think on a realistic level our goals

would be to continue to make albums, sort of become better with each album and sort of push the boundary further with each album we do and sort of incorporate more symphonic elements into it, more orchestral lunacy, that kind of thing, and just see where we go from there.

**PC:** Do you think that there's any chance of Metal, as a whole, becoming more popular again and more mainstream?

**BS:** Hmm. It's interesting. For instance, you look at Germany, and the resurgence of that traditional Metal style like HAMMERFALL, and all that kind of thing. It really is ridiculously popular over there. HAMMERFALL and bands of that kind that regularly get into the German mainstream music charts, not that they top the Metal charts, but that they actually cross over into the kind of mainstream, record buying public's charts, which is interesting. So unfortunately, the Black Metal and the more extreme stuff doesn't tend to get that kind of profile or recognition that certainly with the more traditional stuff, you know it really has already, in parts of Europe anyway, crossed over.



Continued from previous page

**C:** You said on your website that your lyrics are pretty much there and only there. What about all the fans who don't even have net access in the first place, and therefore no access to the lyrics off of your new album?

**BS:** That is very much a concern. I made the decision to actually make the lyrics an exclusive on the web site because that way I could add chapters to the lyrics and make them kind of an ongoing saga on the web site without having them consigned to the printed page. Plus Nuclear Blast was making a lot of mistakes and errors with the printing process because they tended to have trouble with a lot of the more archaic words I use and obscure terms and everything. Hopefully, if things go according to plan, maybe Nuclear Blast might re-release the CD or perhaps even do a gate-fold LP with the lyrics included in the near future, if sales are quite promising. And for people that don't or can't get access to the lyrics at the moment, hopefully they might know someone who can download them for them or print them out, and that kind of thing.

**PC:** I noticed that on your new album, listening to it, the keyboards are very much in the front. I personally thought on some parts they were a little too loud, but that's just my opinion. Were you happy with the whole mixing and production?

**BS:** For the new one, certainly. We thought we got a very good mix, a very good sound, a very clear, powerful sound. A lot of people expressed concern with our last album that they thought that the keyboards were too dominate in the mix and they tended to drown out the guitars a little bit, but for this one we upped the guitars in the mix considerably. We adopted an approach to the keyboards, which was more akin to our keyboard approach on the *Starfire* album rather than the *Battle Magic* album. So the keyboards essentially are the center of the band. They are the kind of prime, the core of the band. All the music is written on the keyboards and all the other instruments essentially revolve around the keyboards. They write their parts to gel to what the keyboards are doing so generally we are very pleased with the production and the sound for the new one.

**PC:** Okay, that certainly does explain a few things. To someone who hasn't heard your band before, they probably wonder, "Why aren't the guitars louder and the keyboards lower?" and knowing that the keyboards are the center and, not just intentionally or unintentionally louder in the mix, certainly will be able to appreciate it more.

**BS:** I hope so. We record the keyboards in a purely orchestral way. We lay down the different tracks for the brass sounds, and the string sounds, and perhaps the woodwind and then the timpani, and then the choir parts. So the keyboards are really the most complex

aspect of the band and it takes longer to record them than it does any other part. So yeah hopefully people can appreciate it. They are the core of it all.

**PC:** So what inspires you guys with all your concepts and music?

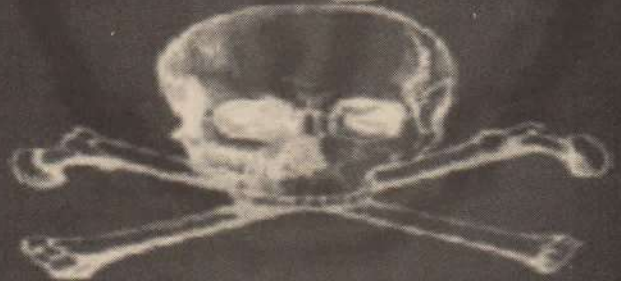
**BS:** Well, as far as the concept, goes I've always been inspired by science fiction, fantasy stories, that kind of thing. The works of writers like Robert E. Howard and H.P. Lovecraft particularly inspire me, as well as things like obscure myths and legends, like the legends of Atlantis and ancient civilizations, that kind of thing. Films inspire me a great deal too, as well as things like cartoons and comic books-- all kinds of things. Musically we are very much influenced by classical music to a great extent. (Basically) things like Wagner, Holst, Orff, those kinds of things, as well as film soundtracks, especially the science fiction, fantasy, and historical films. Like *Star Wars*, *Conan*, and *Excalibur*. It's definitely an influence for me... all kinds of epic things.

**PC:** So what brought about the change in labels?

**BS:** Essentially we had done three albums for Cacophonous, and although they had done as good a job as possible for us, they are a very small label. They have a very limited distribution. I used to get letters from people saying that they just couldn't find our albums anywhere. They wanted to buy them but they couldn't find them. None of the stores carried them. They couldn't find them in the distro lists. So we figured, "Okay, it's time to move on to a bigger label," and hopefully with their increased distribution service and their increased profile, they would be able to get albums to people who wanted to buy them so that's essentially why. Of course Nuclear Blast is so big now we're just one band amongst many now, where as on Cacophonous we were the main band for a few years so it's just something we'll just have to accept.

**PC:** Does that put any stress on you knowing you went from top dog to just

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one band out of many or do you guys have a whole lot of personal competition wanting to be the most successful or do you just not care about what other bands do?

**BS:** Yeah, I mean, we generally figure it didn't really bother us being the main band on the label to just another band. We know that there are so many bands on Nuclear Blast that sell countless thousands more albums than we do, but it doesn't bother us. DIMMU BORGIR and COVENANT, they do what they do and we just do what we do. It's fair enough how we accept that and we'll just continue doing what we do and if people embrace it, if they like it, well, you know, it's just a bonus at the end of the day.





Reviews continued from page 23

**Soilwork**  
*The Chainheart Machine*  
 (Century Media)

Oft-compared to fellow Swedes IN FLAMES, Soilwork are continuing to transcend expectations with their second release, *The Chainheart Machine*. Not only does this album allow them to shrug off the IN FLAMES-clone status, but it also propels them beyond the category of NWOSDM. Do not fret, though, for there are still the AT THE GATES-styled low-end chugging riffs and blazing melodies,

but Soilwork have finally solidified their own identity amidst their peers and it is through blending the typical Swedish formula with their own simple technicality that this is accomplished. From the opening chord on the first track, *The Chainheart Machine* grabs the listener's attention and proceeds to never let up. Like the great Thrash of years

gone by, every track has something unique to offer, while not being spread too thin to come across as a disjointed venture. Soilwork are definitely more akin to Thrash than to Death Metal, a tag that has been too often placed upon them. All fans of great guitar work are sure not to be disappointed, for there are tons of breath-taking solos throughout, and like the great Metal of yester-year, every instrument pulls its own weight. It seems that Soilwork have taken hold of the proverbial flame and now fit logically as the next link in the metallic chain of great musicians. We shall all eagerly await their next venture, but how could this ever be topped? BUY THIS NOW!

**Darkseed**  
*Giving into Darkness*  
 (Nuclear Blast)

With the exception of *Spellcraft*, there have always been Gothic elements intertwined with Darkseed's semi-melodic, Doom/Death Metal. This writer will probably forever hail their '94 mCD *Romantic Tales* as his favorite Darkseed release, but *Giving into Darkness* now runs a close second. The music's Gothic elements are herein brought to the forefront, and much of the keyboard work brings to my mind images of tall, slender, very white-skinned ladies wearing long, black dresses dancing to the songs in a Goth club somewhere. Opening with a very strong and memorable track, "Forever Darkness" (reminiscent of newer CREMATORY), and moving onward to tracks like "Can't Find You" and "Autumn," it is clear that Darkseed have shed all of their Death elements and replaced them with very dark, moving Gothic/quasi-Doom components. The guitar solos display genuine passion, the vocals cry out in sincere sorrow, and the music overall conveys a sense of orderly rage that is released in a most artistically and tasteful fashion. All in all, this is a very emotional album, quite different from anything else Darkseed has ever released, and if you like your Metal sometimes slow, oft times powerful, and all times passionate (imagine CREMATORY crossed with ENTWINE), then Darkseed's *Giving into Darkness* is most certainly for you.



**Dead Silent Slumber**  
*Entombed in the Midnight Hour*  
 (Hammerheart)

Sometimes artists must take time away from their main projects in order to release the most complex of their thoughts on their own and in the way they see fit. Dead Silent Slumber is the solo project of Jens Ryden, the frontman for Sweden's NAGLFAR. He proclaims, "NAGLFAR may be my main band, but Dead Silent Slumber is, like, my main interest." That is clearly evidenced by the powerful non-stop attack of *Entombed in the Midnight Hour*. The opening track, "In the Glare of the Moon," is perhaps the most fitting of all openers, for it immediately grabs one's attention with its fast, intricate guitar riffs combined with maniacal screaming. The disc in its entirety is a musical journey through darkness, and there is much diversity displayed as the journey progresses. The fourth song, the title track, is a peaceful dirge consisting of elegantly played acoustic passages and soft, yet evil, vocal stylings lying underneath one of the most soothing female voices to be heard. The key to the success of *Entombed in the Midnight Hour* is something that few artists seem to grasp: the tasteful use of melody. Jens uses melodies to convey his innermost emotion, which are often brutal, dark, and evil, yet at times somber and contemplative. Power is achieved through diversity, for no two tracks sound the same. This is the work of a more-than-accomplished musician. Solos are done in taste, while at the same time showcasing great versatility and talent. This release should be listened to in its entirety, for even though each track is diverse enough to stand on its own, the various tracks work together to convey a unifying theme of darkness. Please note that this reviewer has not settled on categorizing the work or labeling it with any overused genre-fitting title, for Dead Silent Slumber is strong enough to stand on its own against the greatest. It is an arduous task to think of any release in recent years that can compete with supplying the listener with just the right amount of heaviness, melody, and overall original appeal. Perhaps this is just a sign that true creativity is back in fashion. Whatever it may be, let it be known that Dead Silent Slumber gets this writer's nomination for album of the year!

**Svartharid**  
*Forthcoming Storm*  
 (Napalm Records)

Most of *Forthcoming Storm* could be classified as mid-paced Black Metal. The closest point of comparison would be *Stormblast*-era DIMMU BORGIR. Like that album, the orchestration and guitar work are closely in tune with each other. The music never becomes too fast to come across as jumbled and incoherent, but at times, a diversion would be nice. Distinct European chords and overtly dramatic keyboard passages are evidenced within. If this sounds like a million other bands to you, then you are absolutely right. The burden of this disc is trying to find something unique in and of itself to set it apart from the masses, but alas, this is yet another generic face in the crowd.

**Public Disturbance**  
*Possessed to Hate*  
 (Retribute Records)

I'm really glad that this CD came my way, because it opened my ears to something they have not yet heard and opened my mind to a thought not yet... uh... thought. I almost completely blew this CD off; I mean, five young dudes with short hair apparently looking happy just doesn't scream METAL to me. But then I popped the disc into my CD player and all hell broke loose! The opening is as memorable as SEPULTURA's intro (the one they always used to play in their *Arise* days) and the beginning of METALLICA's (yes, I know it's a cover, but I have never heard the original, so we're going with this version) "Am I Evil." Public Disturbance don't play Death or Thrash Metal, though, they play Hardcore—English Hardcore (as opposed to American, or more specifically, NYHC). Hailing from the birthplace of Metal (maybe that's why this type of Hardcore is so appealing to me), these dudes will go toe to toe with any American Hardcore band in the scene today and just kick their groove-oriented asses. Punk aggression fueled by angst and determination drive this music, and it's so fucking insane that I don't even have time to wonder where the guitar solo or the almighty riff went—these guys say to hell with that shit! They're just having a good time! And so will you if you decide to give this a few spins in your CD player. Retribute Records, PO Box 76, New Ferry, England, UK, CH63 0QT. Cmead@perception.u-net.com.



## Dio *Magica* (Spitfire)

Legendary Metal vocalist Ronnie James Dio has returned from his four year hiatus with a new album, and it's actually a concept album, the first of its kind in his career. It is based upon the tale of a book of spells, entitled *Magica*, and the music draws influences anywhere from RAINBOW to 'SABBATH. Returning to the Dio camp are *Dream Evil* axeman Craig Goldy, drummer Simon Wright, and longtime bandmate Jimmy Bain on bass. So far, the CD has gotten a mixed reaction from longtime fans: some love it and others found it boring. "Fever Dreams" has a "Man On The Silver Mountain" feel to it while the opening riff on "Challis" sounds like TED NUGENT's "Cat Scratch Fever." "As Long as it's not about Love" has a folksy, medieval flair to it and the track, "Turn to Stone," is one of the standouts on the disk and will bring back memories of Ronnie's golden days. Although *Magica* will probably not win Dio any new fans, longtime Metalheads should enjoy this one.

## The Cold Beyond (Unofficial Demo '99)

The artists formerly known as DEAD BY MORNING are back with a fucking vengeance. While this demo does not fully capture the pure essence of their new moniker, (additional sounds are performed courtesy of former band members, Stalker [bass] and Scorn [guitars]), it does give the listener an idea of what these three remaining men are all about: pure, fucking Black Metal—no happy keyboards, no catchy melodies, and no gimmicks! Pure hatred, evil, aggression, and slaughter rise up to bathe you in the blood of their musical carnage, and the wasteland left over from this musical warfare on your ears is nothing short of... well... beautiful in its own twisted, sick, and demented way. Shakespeare wrote about it and THERION sang about it, and yes, indeed, there is beauty in black. To perform one's art in such a way that it stirs the soul to that place outside of our bodily cage in which it hitherto would not have been capable of travelling otherwise is what it's all about, and The Cold Beyond takes you there. They take you to those places you fear the most and they challenge you to look at the world around you and decide if indeed you will choose death or if you will choose life. You have to choose one or the other, for no man can serve two masters, and their music is proof that true Black Metal will always be about hatred, it will always be about scorn, and it will always be about the darkness rather than the light; and indeed, this is beautiful because too many Black Metal bands try to have the best of both worlds—happy music with hate-inspiring lyrics—but The Cold Beyond takes both and symbiotically transforms them into one hate-filled musical opus that either draws you inextricably towards them or repels you absolutely away from them. If you join their Dark Horde, you will surely be called to a life devoid of hypocrisy, for their music is true unto itself and it cannot be sinned against. Most cannot endure such a commitment, and to them I suggest they stick to their CRADLE OF FILTH or DIMMU BORGIR CDs—they want their cake and to eat it too. If you're all about the Dark Side and hail Darth Vader or Satan as an icon of pure evil, then join The Cold Beyond's Dark Horde, otherwise, don't even bother because you are not worthy. Contact: [LordSithicus@aol.com](mailto:LordSithicus@aol.com) or send \$1.00 for their demo to: The Cold Beyond, c/o Sithicus, 4414 S 14th apt. # 3, Milwaukee, WI 53221.

## Joyless (Demo)

When you think about it, NAPALM DEATH were so heavy so long ago that it is almost unbelievable. Can you believe that *Scum* was released in 1986? And to think that people nowadays start bands in order to sound like *Scum*... truly amazing! What we have here is a very traditional Grind band in Joyless. Very much in the vein of *Scum*-era NAPALM DEATH, Joyless are separating themselves from the pack in doing very long songs that include slower parts. This fact doesn't change the fact that they sound very raw and to the point. Dual vocals add to the mix by giving another dimension, which is very much needed since the guitar-drum attack gets pretty old after only a few minutes. This is nonetheless a fairly good demo, though a different guitar sound and some better songs should help them get signed. Send a few of those dollar things to: Yan Chamberland, 1621 Lindsay, Mont-Joli, Qc, G5H 3A5, Canada.

## Agathodaimon *Higher Art of Rebellion* (Nuclear Blast)

*Higher Art of Rebellion* is definitely a step-up from Agathodaimon's Nuclear Blast debut, *Blacken the Angel*. It also sees the band turning towards a few different directions as well, becoming more of an experimental entity than an outright Black Metal band. There is still the element of Black Metal within, especially in the vocals, but the overall sound is much harder to classify. The guitar tone is definitely that of a Doom band, for it is pretty much a meat-and-potatoes, low-end heavy, sludgy sound. The keyboards put the band in the more Gothic realm of things with passages that sound much like older MOONSPELL and the like. Speaking of older MOONSPELL, there is an almost constant vampiric feel to the album. I must say, though, that Agathodaimon's shining moments are when they sound like a Doom band. It's as if the band is being pulled in many different directions, and Doom would have to be the most ideal, for it is these moments of straight-forward guitar, drums, bass, and vocals that the band sounds the most real. It will be interesting to see what direction the next release will take.



## Jacob's Dream (Metal Blade)

Let's take a brief moment to talk about dreams. They can be good, or they can be bad. It was Martin Luther King Jr. who once said "I have a dream." Well, so do I. My dream would be to see Heavy Metal get its just due and not have to play second fiddle to the trendy bullshit that the corporate cocksuckers keep shoving down our throats. My dream would also include not being looked at funny just because I still have long hair, wear a leather jacket, and still wear jeans that cover my underwear. Now I know you're saying to yourself, "What the hell does this have to do with this CD?" Well these five guys from Columbus, Ohio also share my vision. This is American Power Metal at its finest. Lead vocalist David Taylor sounds a lot like Geoff Tate of QUEENSRÛCHE. Hell, it wouldn't surprise me if he was in a QUEENSRÛCHE tribute band before joining Jacob's Dream. In fact, the CD reminds me of *The Warning*, but a helluva lot heavier. The dual axework of Gary Holtzman and John Barry is top notch. The lead-off track, "Kinescope," sets the stage for this disc and features some very catchy keyboard work as well. The instrumental, "Black Watch," brings to mind IRON MAIDEN in some parts of the song. This is an excellent debut from this band and is highly recommended for all Power Metalheads out there.

## Volatile (Demo)

This mCD represents everything a young band should not do, almost. The only thing they did right was engineer the album correctly (it does sound really good), which is worth mentioning because production and engineering are many bands' flaw. Unfortunately, Volatile has many other kinds of flaws. For starters, they are trying to be heavier than they are. They rip off SLAYER so much that it is embarrassing, and more than that, they rip off the slower SLAYER songs that weren't that good in the first place! After this debauchery they try to sound melodic and it doesn't work at all. This is a classic case of a band simply over doing it. Send an e-mail to [devilman@intergate.bc.ca](mailto:devilman@intergate.bc.ca) and ask them what's up.

## Various Artists

*A Hog Wild Tale of Terror*  
(Razorback Records)

Jill Girardi and Billy Nocera have a well-deserved reputation of being true supporters of the Metal Scene, especially the Death/Grind/Gore genres, and this comp is a great way for the curious to hear the heaviest and sickest bands in the American Underground today. With twenty-five bands represented here, there are bound to be a few stinkers, those who stand out, and those who are, well, just kind of there. Without going through every band, let me just say that, surprisingly, many of the bands here are quite decent. Most are VERY underground, with the production qualities following suit. First, the good: MACHETAZO (on Razorback) are a screaming Spanish grind band, ENGORGED (also on Razorback) have themselves a crazy Death Metal attack, IMPALED, A Hog Wild-Tale Of Terror



MURDER INC, SCRAPE (good Death/Grind), GODLESS TRUTH, local MA deathsters TERATISM, BIRDFLESH, and NEOPHYTE, who actually incorporate some (gasp!) melody! Next, the bad: DRAWN AND QUARTERED, CIBORIUM, FLESHITIZED, LAST DAYS (horrible vocals), and CRYPT. There are more bands on this comp to check out, as well: I thought VASTION were really good, EXPOSED SOULS had a SLAYER-esque quality to them, REINFECTION grooved in the New School Death Metal style, and GOREROTTED, stuck to the tried and true CANNIBAL CLONE... ahem, I mean CORPSE sound. This is a great comp for those into this type of thing, and a must for the avid Gore/Death freak. Drop Jill or Billy a line at Razorback Records, c/o Billy Nocera, P.O. Box 321, Farmingville, NY 11738. E-mail Billy at [WNocera@aol.com](mailto:WNocera@aol.com) or visit their site at <http://maxpages.com/razorbackrees>.

## Tourniquet

*Microscopic View Of A Telescopic Realm*  
(Metal Blade)

Now, I'm tired of seeing this band get bashed left and right due to their religious beliefs!! So what if they're Christians; their music can kick the snout out of most bands out there today!! Yes, the lyrics express certain spiritual beliefs, but the unique thing about Tourniquet is that their lyrics possess a duality in which the subject matter relates to everyday life as well as their spiritual views, so no offense should be taken by anyone! Musically, the album is a return, of sorts, to the heavy abrasiveness of 1992's *Pathogenic Ocular Dissonance*—with a 90's sophistication, of course. Granted, due to multiple lineup changes, their sound was destined to change, so yea, we will miss the silken vocals of Guy Ritter, but the acidic nature of Luke Easter's voice suits the band's current direction just as well. Tourniquet is definitely looking to the future with technological themes throughout the album art, certain vocal

## Various Artists

*True Kings Of Norway*  
(Spikefarm/Spinefarm)

Here we have a Black Metal fanboy's wet dream, a montage of rare 7" EPs from the genre's elite monarchs ANCIENT, ARCTURUS, DIMMU BORGIR, EMPEROR, and IMMORTAL. I must confess, while not being an expert on the Black Metal scene (I haven't even read *Lords Of Chaos*, "gasp!"), this disc truly captures the original heart and vision of these bands before bigger budgets, labels, and scene exploitation diluted their aspirations of purity in darkness. Just looking at the inlay card, which openly displays the incestuous insipid state of the scene, one easily realizes why there is such turmoil and competition within Black Metal circles; it's basic sibling rivalry. But let's not dwell on that, for now; let us rather

explore the inner workings of the compilation. EMPEROR's tracks from their 1992-recorded *As the Shadows Rise* EP gives us a taste of the raw, simplistic, wraithlike energy that gave the band notoriety. Unfortunately, this quality was eventually quashed to give way to their current extreme, technical sound. IMMORTAL's contribution, a 7" from 1992, although under-produced and a bit muddy, still gives us a decent taste of their frosty venom, which comes across as sounding like early MORBID ANGEL. The chilling and haunting nature of DIMMU BORGIR is presented with their 1994 *Inn I Evighetens Morke* EP (which is also available as bonus tracks on the Nuclear Blast reissue of *For All Tid*), and cements my opinion that they possessed a more threatening and soul-scorching tone in their pre-*Enthroned* *Darkness Triumphant* days. And what can be said of ANCIENT, whose last decent work was 1996's Metal Blade-released *The Cainian Chronicle*? The 1994 *Det Glemte Riket* EP featured in this compilation, while simplistic, displays amazing songwriting of epic proportions, which makes me wonder: did the money go to

melodies, and song-writing style. Yes, Ted Kirkpatrick, the sole original member, is still pumping out melodic Heavy Metal that would make Phil Anselmo cry with bitter envy. The chops are vibrant, the breakdowns are humbling, and there are more Prog-like time changes than you can shake a DREAM THEATER at. The true triumph of this disc is that it is aurally stimulating (those Classical signatures get me every time!), emotionally nerve-wracking (one minute you're banging your fist, and the next you're reaching for the box of tissues), and mentally challenging, for you are not merely getting your booty kicked by mad riffage, you're brain is working in overdrive (provided you read the lyrics). Overall, it is a great album to reintroduce Tourniquet to the Metal public, and I thank Metal Blade for finally having the balls to give them another chance!!



## Deadbodieseverywhere

(Deathvomit Records)

This self-titled release from West Coast Powerviolence outfit Deadbodieseverywhere is the first release from Necropolis Records' sub-label, Deathvomit Records, a label dedicated to extreme Grindcore and Death Metal. The next slated release on Deathvomit will be IMPALED, featuring Kam from MASSACRE, but let's cut to the chase on Deadbodieseverywhere. Honestly, this kinda sucks. DBE play spastic, pissed-off Powerviolence, complete with blast beats and that horrible, annoying barking vocal style which seems so prevalent in bands of this style (SPAZZ). When the band locks into a groove (BRUTAL TRUTH style), it becomes bearable, but overall it's just boring. There's really no use in naming any song titles, as they all kind of run together and sound the same. There are a few bands in this genre which appeal to me, but unfortunately, DBE are not one of them. Maybe I could deal with a 7-inch, but not a whole album's worth of this stuff. Better luck next time.

Aphazel's head, or did Kimberly Goss suck the talent right out of him? The *True Kings Of Norway* disc comes to a close with a couple frightening passages from ARCTURUS' 1991 *My Angel* EP, which spotlights the band in rare form, freezing your soul with ominous, heavily keyboard-laced psychoses. This disc is a must have for anyone who ever liked Black Metal, for it truly displays each band at its best, so check it out and become awash in sinister splendor. [www.spinefarm.fi](http://www.spinefarm.fi)



## Disciples of Mockery Prelude To Apocalypse (D.O.M.)

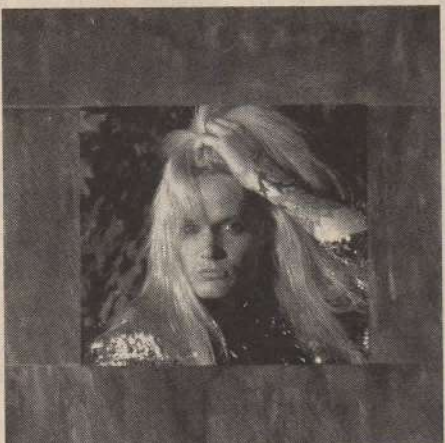
Prepare your soul, for it surely shall be burned by D.O.M.!! This band, composed of ex-INCANTATION members, including abyssal-throated front man Craig Pillard, is out to rape the world of its innocence and destroy those that dare to obstruct their path! Make no mistake; D.O.M. is a battalion on a mission: a mission of vengeance, destruction, and a torrent of un-niceties!! While not relying on technical overkill or the grinding mayhem that has become the signature of their former band, D.O.M. practices the art of brooding malice, bringing the harsh bitterness to a rumbling boil through slow grooves and de-tuned horror. The progression of the disc (a trudging procession of dismal Doom with scattered remnants of fleeting spitfire energy) leaves one with the impression that the human race is destined for self-destruction, and D.O.M. is just propelling the inevitability along. With tracks like "Literal Upheaval of the Earth," "Sustained In Desolation," and "Rotting Immaculate Like You," does the band sound like it's out to make friends? I don't think so; take heed, for as the sky turns to black, you will be witnessing the *Prelude To Apocalypse*. Contact: D.O.M. at their official website, <http://artcon.rutgers.edu/artists/say10/dom.html>. E-mail them at [twocount@bellatlantic.net](mailto:twocount@bellatlantic.net), or send \$13 to Disciples Of Mockery, 153 Oaktree Avenue, South Plainfield, NJ 07080 USA.



## Sevenday Curse After the Storm (Tortuga)

I must say that Sevenday Curse is one of the cooler band names too come along in quite some time. Having a cool moniker is not the only thing that Sevenday Curse have going for them because *After the Storm* has some seriously killer moments to it. The song structures are a little on the haphazard-ish side (something I hope they'll outgrow). However, the album contains some of the best break-neck riffing I've heard from a new band calling the United States their home. I'm sorry to report that this is criminally under-produced, but due to the extremely raw nature of the band, it's really of no consequence. That being said, a better production would certainly clean up some of the finger scraps, along with some of the other anomalies I became aware of after repeated listenings. As I said above, the 'songs' are more or less only riffs and speeding melody lines that are strung together haphazardly, thus only the most attentive of listeners will be able to hang on for the duration of all nine songs (ten if you count the hidden live track). I fully expect Sevenday Curse to develop into a serious force to contend with. Fans of AT THE GATES will want to be on board for this ride. Here's the info: Tortuga Recordings, PO Box 15608, Boston, MA 02215.

stuff, I would blow my larynx right out onto the floor. The guy still has a monster set of lungs. "Rock and Roll" is Bach's ode to the Hard Rock that we grew up to back in the 80's, while "Superjerk, Superstar, Supertears" is a short, acoustic flavored ballad that's a 180 degree turn from most of the newer material. On "Done Bleeding," it sounds like Bach and Friends are using a slowed down 90's version of PANTERA for some inspiration. The live songs concentrate more on the *Slave to the Grind* album than my personal favorite, which was the s/t debut (*Subhuman Race* gets a couple of cuts too). Bach can back up his leather-lunged style live, although he scales back (for the most part) on the live version of "I Remember You," which is even more acoustically driven than the studio version, but "Monkey Business" rocks out and drives the Tokyo audience wild when it breaks into BLUE OSYTER CULT's "Godzilla." There is absolutely nothing original here, and some of the kids may not like it because it sounds "dated," but at least we know that with Sebastian Bach and Friends, there'll still be someone left around that remembers how to rock... and have a little fun while doing it. [www.spitfirerecords.com](http://www.spitfirerecords.com).



## Sebastian Bach and Friends Bring 'Em Bach Alive (Spitfire Records)

Sebastian Bach and his former group, SKID ROW, are always going to be remembered by me as one of the last Hard Rock bands to achieve world-wide fame and fortune before acts like NIRVANA and PEARL JAM came along and killed the era of Metal/Hard Rock as being loud, fun, and melodic. The reason I think that the "music" passing for Metal nowadays sucks is because it is no longer enjoyable, and more importantly, you can't sing along to it anymore. Say whatever you will about Sebastian Bach and the ever-growing belief that he may be a world-class jerk in person, the man sticks to his principles and still knows how to rock. The new songs on this disc (of which over half of the tracks are live versions of SKID ROW classics) don't measure up to the thunder that SKID ROW was able to produce ten years ago, but it's still miles ahead of what's on any given "Rock" station at the moment. Bach still has that incredible yelling vocal style that really made the old SKID ROW tunes; if I attempted to sing along to any of that older

## Ameeting Unrelenting Punishment (Dog Records)

This demo recording consists of very intense Thrash Metal and almost sounds Bay Area in origin, but the band is actually from Nevada. Ripping through a barrage of ground-swelling chugging and Old School groove, Ameeting comes off as the modern descendent of DEVASTATION or FAITH OR FEAR, for they share similar acidic vocal patterns and menacing guitar blazes. There is a definite emotive foundation within these three tracks of churning belligerence, as there are subtle hints of early MEGADETH-like sentiment in the structural underpinnings. This is definitely a band worthy of expanding their horizons, tightening little things up (certain passages seem to become redundant), and hitting the road with the likes of PUNISHER and TESTAMENT to reintroduce the US to ass-kicking, mosh-infested hardcore Thrash, which always possessed a message of 'unity through violent adornment!!' Contact: Ameeting, 15 California, Henderson, NV 89015. E-mail: [ameeting@aol.com](mailto:ameeting@aol.com)

## Le'Rue Delashay Musick in Theory And Practice (Root Of All Evil Records)

Mr. Delashay once again invites us into his parlor of mystery and awakening with a brand new release on Root Of All Evil Records. The follow-up to 1998's *The Court Composer* sees the modern musical sculptor challenging the mind and daring the listener to release from earthly bindings to transcend to a higher plane of consciousness. Within the complex structures of these soothing (and sometimes fear-provoking) symphonies lies a veritable catacomb of experience enticing the mind to open of its own free will and explore the inexpressible recesses of one's own subconscious. This is the true charm of Classical music, through the release of a composer's own inspiration, the listener becomes inspired himself through his unconscious interpretation of the passages. Those who fear such an 'awakening' oftentimes pass these experiences off as petty, half-baked and ridiculous, for their opinions are based solely on the learned perception, but a true lover of music allows himself to gain wisdom through experience and inner-exploration. Le'rue Delashay's only purpose is to present the door; only the listener possesses the key with which to open it. Contact: Root Of All Evil Records, 636 North Snelling Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55104, or go to the website, [www.rootofallevil.com](http://www.rootofallevil.com).

Reviews continued on page 35



# Armored Saint

## The Fire Still Burns

By Jeff Kent

John Bush and I have something in common: Neither of us has read *The Power of Positive Thinking*. When I recently asked him what his expectations were for the newly released Armored Saint album, he chuckled to himself and said, "low." And who can blame him? He and his band Armored Saint have been through a lot in the last two decades, from an amazing debut EP, to commercial disappointment, to critical acclaim, and everything in between. They have always been looking towards the stars, but never quite figuring out how to get there. "I figure if I set my sights low and the record does remotely well then I'll be happy."

Amazing, this man thinks exactly like me! Oh sure, I've been criticized for it by my wife and my peers, but I've found that it works for me, and John shares my enthusiasm for it. "We made this record mainly for ourselves. We weren't thinking about our fans at the time; we were just having a blast." The idea here being that a good time had by the band would translate into a great recording that everyone would benefit from. John, I hate to say this, man, but mission accomplished.

*Revelation* is everything that an Armored Saint fan could want. It's loud, fast, and full of fire, just like the band planned it and just like the Old School fans remember. "We didn't want this to be some wimpy album, we wanted it to come back with a bang." In what appears to be a common theme among '80's Metal bands recording in this new century, Armored Saint wanted to "capture the quintessential 'Saint sound that we get when [we] play live: that gritty no holds barred sound that we're capable of, but never got down on a recording." Produced by bassist Joey Vera and played with a "do it right, don't just do it" attitude, *Revelation's* guitars "are blasting" and you can certainly hear (what John calls) Joey's new "animalistic" personality.

"Joey really stepped up for this project. He went from mild-mannered to animal. The change has been amazing and very productive for him and us." After guitarist Dave Prichard's death, Armored Saint wanted to make a record in his honor, hence we have 1991's *Symbol of Salvation*. Nine years later,

though, Dave is still on their hearts and minds. "We wanted to prove that we could come out and make an album that wasn't about Dave." He does receive a writing credit for the song "What's Your Pleasure," about which John said "we never really liked that song even when it was written, but we worked on it and made it into what it is today."

The Armored Saint saga can be summed up in two words: bad timing. The self-titled EP released in 1983 had fans and critics alike clamoring over them and eagerly anticipating a full-length, which came a year later: *March of the Saint*. "That record was over produced and slick

to the point where it didn't sound like what everyone was expecting, leaving a lot of people disappointed." So they went in the opposite direction next with a record (*Delirious Nomad*) that was critically acclaimed, but too raw to be a commercial success in 1985 America. By the time the band figured out how to get the most out of themselves in

the studio, the Grunge explosion was upon us and no one was interested anymore.

"We were always lumped in with these bands that people told us we sounded like, but we didn't sound anything like them really. From the beginning we tried to distance ourselves from the pack in terms of music and image. Then we dressed in those ridiculous outfits, which just ended up confusing people. Don't get me wrong, I have no regrets about any of that, but I can look back on it and laugh. We were young and stupid and we thought we knew what we were doing at



the time." Older and wiser perhaps, John and the band have lost the leather and armor, adopting an all-black look that returns the focus to the music, where it belongs.

"We set out to challenge our own integrity, to try and make something that sounded like us, but also sounding new. Most people may not realize that half of these songs were written years ago." Uncomfortable with the use of the word "reunion," John reminds me that Armored Saint never officially broke up. "Joey and I knew that we'd record together as 'Saint again someday." That's not to say that ANTHRAX is out a singer and FATES WARNING is out a bass player. "I'm still a member of ANTHRAX as far as I'm concerned. Those guys have achieved a legendary status I think and I'm happy to be a part of it."

Facing a completely different musical scene than the one that 'Saint walked away from almost a decade ago, Bush isn't worried. "You can't let the outside opinions get to you." Fans new and old are more than welcome to come out and see Armored Saint play live. Yes, they will be touring, or as John prefers to call it, "playing some shows." Being an aging Metalhead myself, I tend to notice the age range at shows I go to these days and I think to myself, damn, these kids weren't even alive when I saw this band the first time. "Yeah," Bush agrees, "I look out into the crowd and see these little kids that are young enough to be mine and it's a little scary, but there's not an age limit on this. It's not like once you turn 30 you're not allowed to listen to Metal anymore." I sure hope not, if that were true I'd have to get a lot of listening done before the end

of the year. "Can you imagine Scott [Ian] going up to Tony Iommi and saying, 'I used to listen to you guys all the time?' That would never happen. I'll keep doing this as long as I love it. It will never be about the money like it is for some bands. I won't mention any names, but let's just say they wear a lot of makeup [laughs]." The new independent label-based Metal scene is so much more conducive to having fun. Expect to have a lot of fun listening to *Revelation* and expect to have even more fun if you're lucky enough to see Armored Saint perform live later this year.





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EYEHATE GOD - In The Name Of Suffering (CD \$10)  
EYEHATE GOD - Take No Names For Pain (CD \$10)  
EYEHATE GOD - Dogesick (CD \$10)  
EYEHATE GOD - Southern Discomfort (CD \$11)  
FEUERSTURM - Import black metal comp. (2CD \$12)  
FEUERSTURM II (new 2CD black comp.) (2CD \$12)  
FIRESPEAR - (Century Black comp.) (CD \$21)  
THE GATHERING - Manditory (CD \$10)  
THE GATHERING - Nightmares (CD \$11)  
THE GATHERING - How To Measure (CD \$11)  
THE GATHERING - Superheat (live) (CD \$11)  
GORGOROTH - Pentagram (CD \$10)  
GORGOROTH - Antichrist (CD \$10)  
GORGOROTH - Under The Sign Of Hell (CD \$10)  
GRAVE - Into The Grave (CD \$8)  
GRAVE - You'll Never See (CD \$10)  
GRAVE - Souless (CD \$10)  
GRAVE - Rating Life (CD \$10)  
HASTE - Pursuit In The Face Of Consequence (CD \$9)  
ICED EARTH - Iced Earth (European cover) (CD \$12)  
ICED EARTH - Night Of The Stormrider (CD \$8)  
ICED EARTH - Burnt Offerings (CD \$10)  
ICED EARTH - The Dark Saga (CD \$10)  
ICED EARTH - Days Of Purgatory (import 2 CD set \$20)  
ICED EARTH - Something Wicked... (CD \$11)  
ICED EARTH - Alive In Athens (2CD \$15, 3CD box \$25)  
IDENTITY 5 (new comp. 11 different bands) (CD \$21)  
IN THE EYES OF DEATH - classic death comp. (CD \$8)  
JAG PANZER - The Dark Ages EP (CD \$8)  
JAG PANZER - The Age Of Mastery (CD \$11)  
JUDAS PRIEST TRIBUTE [US version, 10 trk.] (CD \$11)  
JUDAS PRIEST TRIBUTE Vol. 1, import (CD \$12)  
JUDAS PRIEST TRIBUTE Vol. 2, import (CD \$12)  
KATONIA - Brave Murder Days For Funerals... (CD \$11)  
KRISTIAN - Conquerors Of Armageddon (CD \$11)  
LACUNA COIL - Lacuna Coil EP (CD \$8)  
LACUNA COIL - In A Reverie (CD \$11)  
MAYBALL - Ball Of Destruction (CD \$10)  
MAYHEM - De Mysteriis Dom Sathanas (CD \$10)  
MAYHEM - Live In Leipzig (official live album) (CD \$11)  
MEKAUDAER - Master Killer (CD \$10)  
MEKAUDAER - The Five Deadly Venoms (CD \$11)  
MOONSPELL - Wofheart (CD \$10, Digipak CD + 112)  
MOONSPELL - Irreligious (CD \$10)  
MOONSPELL - Second Skin (4 new + live) (2CD \$11)  
MOONSPELL - Sin/Pecado (CD \$11)  
MOONSPELL - The Butterfly Effect (CD \$11)  
MORGHOTH - Eternal Fall/Resurrection Absurd (CD \$8)  
MORGHOTH - Cursed (CD \$10)  
MORGHOTH - Odium (CD \$8)  
MORGHOTH - Feel Sorry For The Fantastic (CD \$8)  
MORGHOTH - The Horror Grandeur (CD \$12)  
NEVERMORE - Nevermore (CD \$10)  
NEVERMORE - In My Empire (CD \$8)  
NEVERMORE - The Politics Of Ecstasy (CD \$10)  
NEVERMORE - Dreaming For Decadence (CD \$11)  
NOCTURNAL RITES - Tales of Mystery... (CD \$11)  
NOCTURNAL RITES - The Sacred Trillixian (CD \$11)  
NOCTURNAL RITES - The Sacred Trillixian (CD \$11)  
NOCTURNAL RITES - The Sacred Trillixian (CD \$11)  
OLD MAN'S CHILD - Born Of The Flickering (CD \$11)  
OLD MAN'S CHILD - The Pagan Prosperity (CD \$11)  
OLD MAN'S CHILD - Ill-Natured Spirit (CD \$10)  
ONLY LIVING WITNESS - Prone Mortal Form (CD \$8)  
ONLY LIVING WITNESS - Innocents (CD \$8)  
OPETH - Orchid (CD \$11)  
OPETH - Morningrise (CD \$11)  
OPETH - My Arms, Your Hearse (CD \$11)  
OUT OF THE DARK LEVEE / Gath\_Sam\_Moon... (CD \$5)  
RADNAKA - Raitsa And Tranquility (CD \$12)  
RADNAKA - Requiem For The Other Side (CD \$11)  
ROTTING CHRIST - Thy Mighty Contract +2 (CD \$11)  
ROTTING CHRIST - Mystical Meeting (PiLP LP \$10)  
ROTTING CHRIST - A Trichard Of Lost Lovers (CD \$10)  
ROTTING CHRIST - A Dead Poem + Bonus CD (CD \$11)  
ROTTING CHRIST - Sleep The Angels +1 (CD \$11)  
ROTTING CHRIST - Enter Paradise (CD \$8)  
RUNEMAGICK - Supreme Force Of Eternity (CD \$12)  
RUNEMAGICK - Enter The Realm Of Death (CD \$12)  
RYKER'S - Life's A Gamble... (CD \$11)  
SACRAMENTUM - The Coming Of Chaos (CD \$11)  
SACRAMENTUM - Thy Black Destiny (CD \$11)  
SAMUEL - Worship Him/Blood Ritual (2 CD's for \$12)  
SAMUEL - Blood Ritual (CD \$10)  
SAMUEL - Ceremony Of Opposites (CD \$8)  
SAMUEL - Passage + Xtras CD (2CD \$10)  
SAMUEL - Exodus CD (CD \$8)  
SAMUEL - Eternal (CD \$11)  
SATYRICON - Nemesis Divina (CD \$10)  
SATYRICON - Nemesis (CD \$12)  
SENTENCED - Shades Of The Past +3 trk. (CD \$12)  
SENTENCED - North From Home (CD \$11)  
SENTENCED - Amok (CD \$10)  
SENTENCED - Love And Death (Digipak CD \$8)  
SENTENCED - Down (CD \$11)  
SENTENCED - Story (incl. Trapper EP, 15 trk.) (CD \$11)  
SENTENCED - Frozen (CD \$11, Digipak +4 trk. \$12)

SENTENCED - Crimson (CD \$11)  
SKINLAB - Bound Gagged & Blindfolded (CD \$11)  
SKINLAB - Disembody The New Flesh (CD \$11)  
SOLWURK - The Chainheart Machine (CD \$11)  
SONATA ARCTICA - Solitude (CD \$12)  
SOUTHERN AS-ASYPH - Feeding On Angels (CD \$12)  
STRAPPING YOUNG LAD - Heavy As... (CD \$10)  
STRAPPING YOUNG LAD - City (CD \$11)  
STRAPPING YOUNG LAD - No Sleep Till Bedtime (2CD \$5)  
STUCK MOJO - Snappin' Necks (CD \$11)  
STUCK MOJO - Violated EP (import only) (CD \$8)  
STUCK MOJO - Pynch (CD \$11)  
STUCK MOJO - Rising (CD \$11)  
STUCK MOJO - HVY1 [15 live + 2 new] (CD \$11)  
TANNARD - Disco Destroyer (CD \$12)  
THEATRE OF TRAGEDY - Theatre Of Tragedy (CD \$11)  
THEATRE OF TRAGEDY - Velvet Darkness... (CD \$11)  
THEATRE OF TRAGEDY - Aegis (CD \$11)  
TIAMAT - The Astral (CD \$8)  
TIAMAT - Obscure (CD \$11)  
TIAMAT - Widdhony (CD \$11)  
TIAMAT - Gaia EP (import Digipak) (CD \$10)  
TIAMAT - Deeper Kind Of Slumber (CD \$11)  
TIAMAT - Skeleton Skeleton (CD \$11)  
TROUBLE - Plastics (new 4+1 bonus) (CD \$8)  
TURNMELT - From Bleeding Heart (CD \$10)  
TURNMELT - The Process Of (CD \$11)  
TWIN OBSCENITY - For Blood, Honour & Soil (CD \$11)  
ULVER - The Madrigal Of Night (CD \$11)  
UNLEASHED - Where No Life Dwells (CD \$8)  
UNLEASHED - Shadows In The Deep (CD \$10)  
UNLEASHED - Across The Open Sea (CD \$10)  
UNLEASHED - Victim Of The Night (CD \$11)  
UNLEASHED - Warrior (CD \$11)  
WYLANDER - Reawakening Pride Lost (CD \$12)  
WATERS BANE - Heart Of A Killer + live (2CD \$12)  
ZONATA - Tunes Of Steel (CD \$12)  
Video: Music TV, Go To Hell! - 15 videos (VHS \$15)  
Video: Declaration Of Independence - 19 vids (VHS \$15)

And some other titles we carry for labels we like:  
3RD & THE MORTAL - In This Room (CD \$12)  
16 - Blaze Of Incompetence (CD \$11)  
ABIGOR - Supreme Immortal Art (CD \$12)  
ABRUPTUM - Vi Sionis Veris Negare (CD \$11)  
ACID BURN - Summon The Beast (CD \$14)  
ACHERON - Those Who Have Risen (CD \$11)  
AETURNUS - Shadows Of Old (CD \$11)  
AGALLOCH - Pale Folklore (CD \$11)  
AGATHOCLES - Humarragance (CD \$11)  
ALCHEMIST - Lunasphere (CD \$11)  
ALCHEMIST - Spiritlich (CD \$11)  
ALGOLAN - General Emerit (CD \$12)  
ALLEGANCE - Vrede (CD \$12)  
ALTAR - Provok (CD \$11)  
AMON AMARTH - Sorrow Throughout... EP (CD \$9)  
AMON AMARTH - Once Sent From Golden (CD \$11)  
AMORPHIS - The Karelian Isthmus (CD \$11)  
AMORPHIS - Tuoniela (CD \$11)  
ANCIENT RITES - The First Decade '89-'99 (CD \$11)  
ANCIENT WISDOM - The Calling (CD \$12)  
AND OCEANS - The Symmetry Of (CD \$12)  
ANDERSEN, ANDRE - Changing Skin (CD \$12)  
ANGELCORPUS - The Inevitable (CD \$12)  
ANGRA - The Holy Box [Italian box set] (3CD \$25)  
ANNIHILATOR - King Of The Kill (CD \$12)  
ATROCITY - Non Plus Ultra (Best Of) (2CD \$14)  
ANCIENT RITES - The Calling (CD \$12)  
ANVIL - Speed Of Sound (CD \$12)  
ARTENSION - Forces Of Nature (CD \$11)  
ARTILLERY - B.A.C.K. (CD \$12)  
AS DIVINE GRACE - Supernature (CD \$12)  
ATROCITY - Halleluciations +4 bonus tracks (CD \$11)  
ATROCITY - Non Plus Ultra (Best Of) (2CD \$14)  
AT THE GATES - Gardens Of Grief EP (CD \$10)  
AT THE GATES - Slaughter Of The Soul (CD \$12)  
AURA NOIR - Deep Tracts Of Hell (CD \$11)  
BABYLON WHORES - King Fear (CD \$11)  
BAD SAGOTH - Battle Magic (CD \$12)  
BARATHRUM - Saattana (CD \$12)  
BATHORY - Under The Sign Of The Cross (CD \$12)  
BATHORY - Blood Fire Death (CD \$12)  
BATHORY - Hammerhead (CD \$12)  
BATLEZONE (Paul Di'Anno) - Feel My Pain (CD \$11)  
BEHEMOTH - Satanica (CD \$12)  
BEHERITH - Beast Of Beherith (CD \$12)  
BETHLEHEM - S.U.I.Z.E.D. (CD \$11)  
BETHLEHEM - The Priest Of Blood (CD \$11)  
BLACK STAR (ex-Caravan) - Barbed Wire Soul (CD \$12)  
BLOOD STORM - Death By The Stormrider (CD \$11)  
BOLT THROWER - Mercenary (CD \$14)  
BROKEN HORSE - Grottesque Blessings (CD \$12)  
BRUTAL TRUTH - Goodbye Cruel World (2CD \$11)  
CAGE - Unleaved (CD \$12)  
CANONIA - Process Of Self-Development (CD \$12)  
CANONIA - Epicus Domicus Metallicus (CD \$12)  
CANNIBAL CORPSE - Gallery Of Suicide (CD \$11)  
CANNIBAL CORPSE - Bloodthirst (CD \$14)  
CARBONIZED - Screaming Machines (CD \$11)  
CARCASS - Necromantic +3 bonus (CD \$12)  
CARCASS - Heartwork +1 bonus (CD \$12)  
CARNELIUS FORCE - Wines Of Blood (CD \$11)  
CARPATHIAN FOREST - Black Shining... (CD \$12)  
CATAMENA - Mourning Crimson (CD \$12)  
CATAMENA - Our God Has Landed video (VHS \$15)  
CELESTIAL SEASON - Forever Scarlet Passion (CD \$11)  
CELESTIAL SEASON - Solar Lovers (CD \$11)  
CERENUS - The Summer - Aesthetics (CD \$11)  
CHILDREN OF BODOM - Hatebreed (CD \$11)  
CHILDREN OF BODOM - Dead Air For Radics (CD \$12)  
CHROME LOCUST - Chrome Locust (CD \$12)  
CIANIDE - Death, Doom & Destruction (CD \$11)  
CONVERGE - When Forever Comes Crashing (CD \$11)  
D.C. COOPER - D.C. Cooper (ex-Royal Hunt) (CD \$12)  
DORNER - Punishment For Decadence (CD \$12)  
CORNER - Corner: 16 trk. comp. (CD \$12)  
COVENANT - Nexus Polaris (CD \$11)  
CRADLE OF FILTH - Principle Of Evil... (CD \$12)  
CRADLE OF FILTH - Vampire EP (CD \$10)  
CRANIUM - Speed Metal Sentences (CD \$11)  
CRANIUM - Easy Tears (VHS \$16)  
CREST OF DARKNESS - The Ogress (CD \$12)

CRO-MAGS - Revenge (CD \$11)  
CROWN - Venom (CD \$12)  
THE CROWNS - The Burning (CD \$14)  
THE CROWN - Eternal Death (CD \$14)  
THE CROWN - Hell Is His Eyes (CD \$12)  
CRY HAVOC - Pitch Black Blues (CD \$12)  
CRYPTOPSY - Blasphemy Made Flesh (CD \$11)  
CRYPTOPSY - World Of Black And Silver (CD \$12)  
DAEMON - Seven Deadly Sins (CD \$12)  
DAEMON - The Second Coming (CD \$12)  
DARK ANGEL - We Have Arrived (CD \$11)  
DARK TRANQUILITY - Synchronicity (CD \$12)  
DARKTHRONE - Gosford (Digipak CD \$11)  
DARKTHRONE - Ravishing Grimoire (CD \$12)  
DARKWOMDS MY BROTHERED - Witch Hunt (CD \$12)  
DAWN - Slaughtersun (CD \$11)  
DAWN OF DREAMS - Fragments (CD \$12)  
DEAD HORSE - Horsecave +6 bonus (CD \$11)  
DEAD HORSE - Passenger (CD \$11)  
DEAD SILENT SLUMBER - Entombed (CD \$11)  
DEEDS OF FLESH - Path Of The Weakening (CD \$12)  
DERANGED - Scapholds Of The Dead EP (CD \$8)  
DESTROYER 666 - Unchain The Wolves (CD \$11)  
DESTRUCTION - Sentence... (import) (CD \$11)  
DESTRUCTION - Refrain (CD \$11)  
DESTRUCTION - Best Of (CD \$12)  
DESTRUCTOR - Maximum Destruction (CD \$11)  
DEVILYN - Reborn In Pain (CD \$12)  
DIABOLIC - Supreme Evil (CD \$12)  
DIABOLICAL MASQ - Nightwork (CD \$12)  
DIABOLIQUE - The Black Flower (CD \$12)  
DIGITAL RAIN - Drowning In The Out (CD \$12)  
DILLINGER ESC. PLAN - Calculating Infinity (CD \$11)  
DIM MAK - Enter The Dragon (CD \$12)  
DINMU BORGIR - Enthroned Darkness... (CD \$11)  
DINMU BORGIR - Spiritual Black Dimensions (CD \$11)  
DINMU BORGIR/OLD MAN'S CHILD - Split (CD \$11)  
DISGORGE - She Lay Guttered (CD \$15)  
DISMAL RAIN - All The Lies Devis (CD \$11)  
DISMAL EUPHONY - Lady Ablaze EP (CD \$10)  
DISSECTION - Storm Of The Light's Bone (CD \$11)  
DIVINE EMPIRE - The Past Is Alive (Digipak CD \$11)  
DIVINE EMPIRE - Redemption (CD \$12)  
DODHEIMSGARD - 666 International (CD \$12)  
DREAMS OF SANITY - Masquerade (CD \$12)  
DYING FETUS - Purification Through Violence (CD \$11)  
DYING FETUS - Killing On Adrenaline (CD \$11)  
EBOY TEARS - A Handful Of Nothing (CD \$11)  
EDGE OF SANITY - Purgatory Afterglow (CD \$12)  
EDGE OF SANITY - Crimson (CD \$12)  
EINHERRER - Dragons Of The North (CD \$12)  
ELECTRIC WIZARD - Superconver +2 trk. (CD \$12)  
ELIND - Weeping Paths (CD \$12)  
ELYSIAN FIELDS - Aeterna (CD \$11)  
ENOCHIAN CRESCENT - Babalon Patrak... (CD \$11)  
ENOCHIAN CRESCENT - Omega Teleology (CD \$12)  
ENSLAVED - Vikingir Veldi (CD \$12)  
ENTHRONED - Prophecies Of Pagan Fire (2CD \$14)  
ENTHRONED - Left Hand Path (CD \$12)  
ENTOMBED - Clandestine (2 Bonus CDs) (CD \$12)  
ENTOMBED - Monkey Puss (Live) (CD \$12, VHS \$15)  
EPOCH OF UNLIGHT - What Will Be Has Been (CD \$11)  
EQUIMANTHORN (Abs) - Nindungas... (CD \$11)  
EVERGREEN - The Dark Discovery (CD \$12)  
EVOL - Portraits (CD \$11)  
EXCITER - Violence And Mercy (CD \$11)  
EXCULCATATING TERROR - Divided We Fall (CD \$11)  
EXTREME NOISE TERROR - Damage 381 (CD \$12)  
FACE OF ANGER - Faceless (CD \$12)  
FALKENBACH - Magni Blaindinn Ok... (CD \$12)  
FALL OF THE LEAF - Evascent Everfading (CD \$11)  
FLESHRAV - Blooded Massacre (CD \$11)  
FLERKY - Last Hand Path (CD \$11)  
FLOWER KINGS - Flower Power (CD \$12)  
FOREST OF IMPALED - Demonvoid (CD \$11)  
AURA NOIR - Deep Tracts Of Hell (CD \$11)  
FROM THE DEPTHS - Elysium (CD \$11)  
FURBOWL - The Autumn Years (CD \$10)  
THE GALLERY - Faithful Passion (CD \$12)  
GAMMA RAY - Gamma Ray (CD \$11)  
GAMMA RAY - Alive '95 (2CD \$12)  
GAMMA RAY - Powerplant (CD \$12)  
GANDALF - Deadly Fayrlates (CD \$12)  
GARDENS OF GEHENNA - Mactem Saluta (CD \$11)  
THE GATHERING - Always... (remix) (CD \$11)  
THE GATHERING - Almost A Dance (CD \$11)  
GENEVA (Nor) - Goodbye King (CD \$12)  
GENEVA (Nor) - Admiring Black (CD \$12)  
GOD DETHRONED - The Christum (CD \$11)  
GOD DETHRONED - Bloody Blasphemy (CD \$14)  
GOD FORBID - Reject The Sickness (CD \$11)  
GODSEND - A Wayfarer's Tears (CD \$12)  
GODSMIT - The Godsmite (CD \$12)  
GOREFEST - Chapter 13 (CD \$11)  
GORGUS - Obscure (CD \$12)  
GRAVE DIGGER - Knights Of The Cross (CD \$12)  
GRAVE DIGGER - Excalibur (CD \$12)  
GRIEF - Torso (CD \$11)  
GRIEF OF ETERNAL - Nightspasm (CD \$12)  
GROTESQUE - In The Embrace Of Evil (CD \$12)  
HATED U.S.A. - Raging Success +2 trk. (CD \$11)  
HADES (Nor) - If At First You Don't Succeed (CD \$11)  
HADES (Nor) - The Dawn Of The Dying Sun (CD \$11)  
HADES ALLMIGHTY - Millennium Nocturne (CD \$11)  
HAMMERFALL - Heading The Call EP (CD \$8)  
HAMMERFALL - The First Crusade (VHS \$15)  
HEAVENLY - Heavenly (CD \$11)  
THE HAUNTED - The Haunted (CD \$12)  
HAWKWIND - Best Of (CD \$12)  
HEAVENS GATE - Menery (CD \$11)  
HECATE ENTHRONED - Kings Of Chaos (CD \$12)  
HELLCROPPERS - Superstrophy To The Max (CD \$12)  
HELLCROPPERS - Payin' The Dues (CD \$12)  
HELLCROPPERS - Hammer - Aesthetics (CD \$11)  
HELLOWEEN - Walls Of Jericho... EP (CD \$11)  
HELLOWEEN - Best Of Rest, Rare (CD \$12)  
HELSTAR - Nosferatu (CD \$12)  
HEMLOCK - Funeral Mask (CD \$12)  
HOLYTHORN - Domus Mundi (CD \$11)  
HUGHES, GLENN - The Way It Is (CD \$12)  
HUNTER - Hunter - There's Something About (CD \$12)  
ILL LITERATURE - the premiere metal 'zine (\$4 MG)  
ILLWILL - Evolution [Andy LaRocca] (CD \$12)  
IMMOLATION - Failures For Gods (CD \$14)  
IMPETRO - Ultimo Mondo Cannibale (CD \$11)  
IMPEY - Skullfucking Armageddon (CD \$12)  
INFLAMMATION - Dirty Deeds (CD \$11)  
INFERNAL MAESTRY - None Shall Defy +2 (CD \$11)

INFERNAL MAESTRY - Unholy Than Thou (CD \$12)  
IN FLAMES - The Jester Race (CD \$11)  
IN FLAMES - Whoreale (CD \$11)  
IN FLAMES - Colony (CD \$11)  
INFLAME - Five Across The Eyes (CD \$12)  
INVOCATOR - Dying To Live (CD \$12)  
INVOCATOR - Early Years (CD \$12)  
IRON MONKEY - Our Problem (CD \$12)  
IRON SAVOUR - Interlude (CD \$11)  
ISENARD - Hymntone (heat, ferroc) (CD \$12)  
ISIS - The Mosquito Control EP (CD \$8)  
IVORY TOWER - Ivory Tower (CD \$11)  
JACOBI'S DREAM - Jacob's Dream +1 trk. (CD \$14)  
JUDAS FACTOR - Ballads In Blue China (CD \$11)  
JUDAS PRIEST - Jugulator (import) (CD \$10)  
JUDAS PRIEST - Live '98 - Meltedown (2CD \$12)  
JUNGLE ROT - Darkness Foretold EP (CD \$8)  
KAMELOT - The Seventh Legacy (CD \$12)  
KAMMBA - Fra Umveltungen (CD \$11)  
KARMA TO BURN - Wild Purgatory (CD \$12)  
KATAPLYSM - Victims Of This Fallen World (CD \$12)  
KATAPLYSM - Northern Hyperblast Live (CD \$12)  
KATONIA - Dance Of December Souls (CD \$12)  
KEVIN OF BLESSIN - Aegen (CD \$12)  
KILL IT THIS - Devil (CD \$11)  
KILLERS - New Live & Rare (2CD \$14)  
THE KOVENANT - Animatronic (CD \$11)  
KRABATHOR - Mortal Memories EP (CD \$8)  
KREATOR - Chosen Few MCD + 2 videos (CD \$9)  
KREATOR - Voices Of Transgression comp. (CD \$12)  
KRISTIAN - Blackforce Domain (CD \$12)  
KRISTIAN - Apocalyptic Revolution (CD \$12)  
LABYRINTH - Timeless Crime EP (CD \$12)  
LACRIMOSA PROFUNDERE - Memorandum (CD \$12)  
LACRIMOSA - Elodia (CD \$12)  
LAIBACH - Nova Aropola (CD \$12)  
LAKE OF TEARS - A Crimson Cosmos (CD \$12)  
LEFAY - Symphony Of The Damned +4 (CD \$12)  
LEKILLER - Autumn (CD \$12)  
LIMBONIC ART - Ad Noctum (CD \$12)  
LIONS SHARE - Fall From Grace (CD \$12)  
LIV KRISTINE (L.O.T.) - Deus Ex Machina (CD \$12)  
LOBOTOMY - Born In Hell (CD \$12)  
LONGBARD, DAVE & Friends - Vivaldi (CD \$11)  
LOVE LIKE BLOOD - Swordfights (Best Of) (CD \$11)  
LUCIFERION - Dark Religion (CD \$12)  
MACGABRE - Unsanctory EP (CD \$9)  
MACGABRE - Provenance Of Cruelty (CD \$12)  
MALIGNANT ETERNAL - Alarm (CD \$12)  
MANOWAR - Into Glory Ride (CD \$14)  
MANOWAR - Hell On Stages (2CD \$18)  
MANTAS (Venom) - Winds Of Change (CD \$12)  
MARDUK - There's No Peace EP (CD \$8)  
MARSHALL LAW - Warning From History (CD \$12)  
JIM MARTIN (ex-Faith No More) - Milk & Blood (CD \$11)  
MASTERMIND - Angels Of Apocalypse +2 (CD \$12)  
MASTERS OF REALITY - Western Lode (CD \$11)  
MAYHEM - Deathcrush (CD \$11)  
MAYHEM - Melancholicia (CD \$11)  
MEMEMTO MORI - Songs For Apocalypse (CD \$12)  
MEMORY GARDEN - Tides (CD \$11)  
MENTAL HOME - Vale (CD \$12)  
MENTAL HOME - Black Art (CD \$11)  
MERCESS - Unbound (CD \$12)  
MORNING RISING - Upon Dead Ears (CD \$11)  
MESHUGGAH - Chastepop (CD \$12)  
METAL CHURCH - Live '86 [official live] (CD \$12)  
METAL CHURCH - Masterpeace (CD \$11)  
METAL MULTA VOL. 1 - Metallica Tribute (CD \$12)  
METALLUM - Millennium Metal Chapter 1 (CD \$12)  
MINDROT - Soul (CD \$12)  
MISANTHROPY - Visionaires (CD \$12)  
MISTY WARGOOTH DARGESTRA - The Key (CD \$11)  
MISTROSTROYTY - In Dark Purity (CD \$12)  
MOONSPELL - Under The Moonspell EP (CD \$9)  
MOONSPELL - Altars Of Madness +3 (CD \$12)  
MORBID ANGEL - Formulas Fatal To Flesh (CD \$12)  
MORDED - The New Room (CD \$12)  
MORGANA ELFA - Fata Morgana (CD \$12)  
MORGON - Solitude (CD \$11)  
MORLOYD - Parody Of The Mass (CD \$12)  
MORTIS - The Stargate (CD \$12)  
NAGLAR - Diabolical (CD \$11)  
NAPALM DEATH - Words From Ext Wound +3 (CD \$12)  
NEBULA - Let It Burn +2 Bonus (CD \$11)  
NECROPHAGIC - Holocauste De La Morte (CD \$11)  
NECROPHAGIC - Blood Bathomitorium EP (CD \$8)  
NECROPHOBIC - Darkside (CD \$12)  
NEUROSIS - Through Silver And Blood (CD \$11)  
NEUROSIS - Times Of Grace (CD \$11)  
NIGHTFALL - Lesbian Song (CD \$12)  
NIGHTINGALE - The Breathing Shadow (CD \$10)  
NIGHTMARE - The Scourge (CD \$12)  
NIGHT IN GALES - Thunderbeat (CD \$11)  
NIGHTWISH - Angels Fall First (CD \$12)  
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# SOILWORK

## Fine Tuning the Chainheart Machine

By Chris Hawkins

*Soilwork are set to conquer the Metal world with their new release, The Chainheart Machine. Be sure to check out the review elsewhere in these pages. Peter Wiches, Soilwork's guitarist, was a pleasure to talk to and we hit it off right from the beginning. So just sit back and enjoy this most Metal of chats!*

**Promothean Crusade:** I always like to talk to guitar players, man. I play too. What type of guitar do you play?

**Soilwork:** Actually, I have a sponsorship with a Japanese guitar called Kaparison [not sure how it's spelled ~Chris].

**PC:** Hmm...never heard of that.

**SW:** It's kind of a new, but good guitar. Before I played with Blade guitars. What do you play with yourself?

**PC:** I've got an ESP 7 string. I just got it and ALL I do is play it!

**SW:** [laughs] That's awesome!

**PC:** What do you guys tune to? Do you play 7 strings?

**SW:** No, we only have 6 strings, but we tune down to B.

**PC:** You must use really heavy gauge strings.

**SW:** Yeah, we've got like 54 for the highest one and then like 12 on the lowest. So I guess you use like a 10 or a 9 for your lowest?

**PC:** Yeah, a 9 actually.

**SW:** Yeah, that's okay because you have a straight tuning since you have that extra string. You are able to take much higher pitched tones than I am.

**PC:** Naw, man... just heaviness!

**SW:** [laughs] You just play on the low B the whole time!

**PC:** Actually, when I first got it, I couldn't help but do that 'cause it was soooo low. No, I'm over that initial phase, but I don't really do solos or anything like that. You guys use some interesting chords. Not really power chords...

**SW:** Which kind of chords are you referring to?

**PC:** Well, you know most Metal would be from a power chord, but I've noticed mainly most of the Swedish bands have some really interesting sounding chords.

**SW:** Well actually if you take like an E on the A string then you can take an A on the G string I think it is, then you can get more melodic types of tones. If you take that tone and move it around, you get more melodic types of things.

**PC:** I've noticed in comparison, say European bands compared to American bands, the European bands tend to have way more colorful chords. Over here, we're still stuck on the power chord.

**SW:** Well that's true maybe. You can definitely hear a big difference between American Metal and European Metal, but at the same time I think that the Swedish Metal maybe is a lot more melodic.

**PC:** I literally just got the new album and really like it. It seems like you've blended the aggression with technicality but still maintain the melody.

**SW:** Thank you.

**PC:** Are you the main songwriter?

**SW:** Yeah, but with some help from the other guitarist. For *The Chainheart Machine*, I wrote like 80% of the music.

**PC:** Is it more of a process where you just come up with riffs or do you approach the songs as a whole?

**SW:** That depends. Sometimes the songwriting goes very, very smooth, and you have all the stuff figured out in your head before you do it, but sometimes you have to sit down and improvise on one riff until you get other parts. It can be very, very tough, but we always work with computers when we write our music, which helps.

**PC:** In what way?

**SW:** Well, we use them in recording. Our other guitarist has a huge studio in his house and we make lots of demos. We give them to the drummer, so by the time of rehearsal, he already has it down. It goes very neat in rehearsal, and you can do some adjustments there because everyone is already familiar with the material.

**PC:** That sounds like a good format, especially the way band practices often wind up going. One minute, you're practicing, and the next, half the band has left to go to the bar!

**SW:** Yeah, exactly! Lack of inspiration can be a bummer. When you lose it, it's very hard to do the music. I was in that period just a month ago. I thought my job sucked so everything was shitty with the band, but now that the record has been released in the U.S., it's been cool and we're all excited. We've been writing new material and we have three new songs.

**PC:** Awesome. Are you going to put those out anytime soon?

**SW:** I think we're going to do a full album at the end of the summer. Actually, this album was recorded a year ago so we've had some time.

**PC:** Are you planning on doing more covers?

**SW:** Actually, we're planning on being on a tribute to ABBA.

**PC:** ABBA?!?!??

**SW:** ABBA! [both laugh] Yeah, I think it would

be really cool to mix our music with that and make it more brutal.

**PC:** I must say that a lot of the better covers are of songs that aren't even heavy or Metal originally.

**SW:** Yeah, I think that's what is cool about people in the Metal business who aren't so narrow-minded. They have a wide perspective of music and can do something very original like that.

**PC:** Well, it's all music in the end anyway. When will this be out?

**SW:** We haven't recorded it yet, but it should be out in the spring on Nuclear Blast.

**PC:** Is the scene pretty close-knit in Sweden?

**SW:** Yeah, I'd say so. ARCH ENEMY is from the same town as us...

**PC:** Really? They were over here not too long ago...

**SW:** Yeah, Mike is the one who helped us get signed, actually. He sent our demo out to many different labels so we owe ARCH ENEMY.

There are some people in the scene we usually call the music police. They stand at concerts and check out if you do any mistakes.

**PC:** The guys in the back with their arms folded?

**SW:** Yeah! There are a lot of those here in Sweden, but mainly I think everyone gets along pretty good.

**PC:** Would you say Sweden is your favorite place to play?

**SW:** No, we've gone to Japan, and it was the coolest thing we ever did. Everyone was screaming as soon as the first melody began. After the show, we felt like METALLICA!

**PC:** They knew all the songs?

**SW:** Yeah, they knew all the songs, and they were singing along in the choruses! Between the songs there was so much crowd participation. We got 100% response from the crowd, and that was amazing.

**PC:** That's awesome. What would you identify as the main difference between American and Swedish bands?

*Continued on next page*



Continued from previous page

SW: That's very hard to say. I'm not going to criticize American Metal because I like a lot of it. I like NEVERMORE, and I like DRIFTONES, PANTERA, but they don't use the same type of melodies as we do. Maybe we're more influenced by heavier stuff. We mix our music with screaming vocals. This is my opinion, but most of the American bands use more melodic vocals than we do. This is cool because it separates the two crowds or scenes in the business. For example STRAPPING YOUNG LAD, they are from Canada, but...

PC: Well, same continent...

SW: Yeah, they still use this brutal sound, but they have vocals that are melodic above it. We're going to do something similar for the next album.

PC: Clean vocals?

SW: Yeah, but we're still going to keep the screaming vocals, but make a more industrial type of sound.

PC: Is that a result of using the computer so much in recording?

SW: Yeah, we're gonna use a lot more keyboard effects. It's still going to have a lot of solos, killer riffs, fast beats.

PC: Where do you see Metal going in the next Millennium?

SW: Good question. I'd say it's gonna be a lot more industrial, but I'd like to see it keep a lot more acoustic instruments like real guitars and real drums, not sequencers and drum machines. That's boring. Maybe Heavy Metal will make a comeback.

PC: Well, HAMMERFALL sure is trying!

SW: [laughs uncontrollably] Yeah, I'd just wish they would bring back Headbanger's Ball!!!

## Monday Knights King Of The Death Match (demo)

If the title doesn't give it away, this band is a rabid group of wrestling fans (Monday night being the penultimate night for televised wrestling programs), and they express their love of the 'sport' and appreciation for a living legend (no, not Larry Zybysko), but Mick (Cactus Jack/Sack, Mankind, Dude-Love) Foley!! The music is un-serious, but fun-loving Power Metal, complete with falsetto Warrel Dane-ish vocals. This is definitely a party band with a focused desire to perform in the live setting, if only to Power bomb Drunk Terry Flunk through a flaming table in a barbed-wire, exploding ring! The songwriting borders the MANOWAR/DIO line of might and pomp, which fits perfectly with the attitude expressed within the three songs that compose this disc. Call me Luscious Johnny Stark (and give me one-too-many shots to the bread-basket), but I really dig this music, for even the most serious of music fans need to sit back and take a break from the intense mania that weighs down the modern music industry! Monday Knights is absolute Metal music for true fans made by true fans! And if you want to dispute it, I'll put your weak ass through Hell In A Cell!!! Contact: Monday Knights, 2530 MCR, Centereach, NY 11720. E-mail: MondayKnights@aol.com

## Agressor Medieval Rites (Season Of Mist)

It's not everyday that an extremely talented Death Metal band utilizes a plethora of musical training and composes a body of work that leaves your mind numb and your jaw locked open... well, besides OPETH! And it's also hard to believe that the band in question has been releasing material since 1987!! Enter France's Agressor, a band whose performance prowess is only super-ceded by its adoration for the extreme! Switching from aromatic, acoustical medieval-folk melodies (complete wooden flute accompaniment) to blistering Death Metal is an art form in itself, for it truly takes a band with defined vision to effectively execute such a daunting task! Not only does Agressor succeed in this Herculean endeavor, but the band does it with seemingly effortless precision, leaving the listener awestruck. Even a brutalized version of KING DIAMOND's "Welcome Home" is treated like child's play with this band! Dan Swanö and Mike Akerfeldt be warned, you guys have exceptionally gifted competition! Contact: Season Of Mist, 24 rue Brandis, 13005 Marseille, France; or e-mail [season@worldnet.fr](mailto:season@worldnet.fr).

## Bal Sagoth The Power Cosmic (Nuclear Blast)

Behold, true masters of their craft! For those into fantasy and science fiction, this album is right up your alley. Bal Sagoth is a very original hybrid of Power and Black Metal from England who make their mark on music-- and do it damn well. From the melodic riffs to the double bass on the drums, the music is tight. The vocals serve to bring the musical sounds into words, conceptualizing the images of the music in your mind. I only have one complaint about this album: the keyboards are mixed too loud. Don't get me wrong, the keyboards are good, and the symphonic keyboard instrumental for the first track brilliant, but simply too loud. It's worth your money to get this, as it is an excellent album.



Reviews continued from page 31

## Fermento

*Symbols Of Decrepitude / Symbols Of Supremacy*  
(Goremania Records)

This is some seriously sick shit!! Fermento are a three-piece outfit from Spain that can easily disembowel BROKEN HOPE while simultaneously exsanguinate DYING FETUS with a straw! This is extremely low-end brutality at it's 'finest!' The vocals are on par with the legendary DEMILICH (meaning somewhere between a frog's croak and a human belch), and the music, well, you just have to hear it to believe it! Fast, grooving, evil, intimidating... this is shit that would make DEICIDE pray!!! Of course, there is the obvious BROKEN HOPE tongue-through-cheek lyrical influence, but the blast-to-groove ratio makes you want to jump into a mosh pit with a chainsaw! Humanity is not safe while bands like this exist! How can you not like this?? Fuck your glamour, fuck your message, fuck your gods, and fuck your cat! THIS IS THE END!!!! Contact: Goremania Records, P.O. Box 44, 04750 Dalías (Almería), Spain.



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## Steel Prophet

*Messiah*  
(Nuclear Blast)

Now this I like, or in the words of Mark Morton, "Yeah, Fuck Yeah." Being an aging headbanger, I find it hard to deal with some of the new breed of Metal bands, but Steel Prophet has it all going for them: a great vocalist, tight musicianship, and cool Power Metal songs. What do they sound like? I won't name names, but let's just say that if Steve Harris, Kirk Hammett, John Arch, Kai Hansen and Stefan Kaufman, Bruce Dickinson, Jim Matheos, and Adrian



## Yellow Machinegun

*Spot Remover*  
(Howling Bull America)

Alright, let's just start by saying this band consists of three young ladies who look like they shouldn't have any connection to Metal in any remote way. Yet these three young ladies tear it up like nobody's business in the Metal band, Yellow Machinegun. Hailing from Japan, these three girls play an aggressive and in-your-face breed of Metal. Musically, they are brutal and lyrically they are just as great: very simple, yet very deep. Pondering the many questions and issues of life— everything from the meaning of existence and the ultimate human need to the freedom of simply being home alone. It is simply an honest album from three honest, young ladies. There's no bullshit KITTIE action here, folks, this is REAL Death/Thrash for all your pining ears! Contact: Howling Bull America, PO Box 40129, San Francisco, CA 94140-

## Shockmachine

(Sanctuary)

I love HELLOWEEN, and when I saw the little, evil pumpkin sticker on the cover that said "featuring Markus Grosskopf," I was excited. That excitement died as quickly as it did when I heard IRON MAIDEN's *X-Factor* for the first time. Olly Lugost's vocals just don't do anything for me, I'm afraid; you might say he suffers from Blaze-itis. The songs are cool enough, but how about an instrumental album? Markus' bass chords that begin "Fame" are eerie and melodic all at the same time, and I won't go so far as to say the vocals ruin it, but I'd love to hear that opening section expanded upon instrumentally. It's not all bad, however. The anthemic "I'm Gone" gallops along, riding on Markus' tight bass, and it seems that here the short barked gruff vocals fit rather nicely. Really, though, I want to like this more than I do... maybe next time,

Smith all got together and formed a band... yeah, fuck yeah! If you know and love these names as much as I do, run and run fast to get this album. Seriously, this is some great, great stuff; it's classic, Old School Metal all the way around. They've been featured on numerous tribute albums from Dwell and Century Media, but not because they are cashing in on another band's sound. I firmly believe that they sincerely love the music that they play and will make no apologies for it. This, their second album for Nuclear Blast, features all their strengths. It's beyond me to think that I have been missing out on this band until now. I would have quit whining about the current crop of crap that's out there now and spent all my hard-earned

## Pain Of Salvation

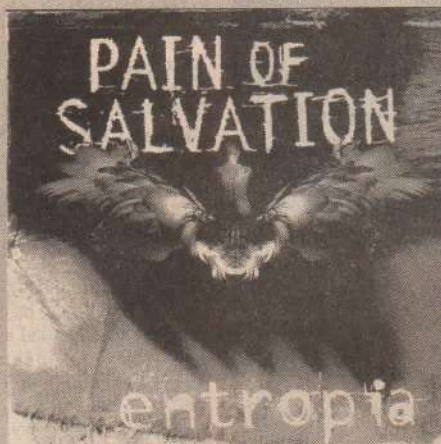
*Entropia*  
(InsideOut Music)

When I started writing for PC, Tom and Mark gave me a few guidelines. They said to be fair, positive (or at least constructive), to give each disc several complete spins, and to never say anything bad about MANOWAR or DREAM THEATER! Well OK, maybe that last part wasn't true, but the writers here see it as the great-unwritten rule. That part about fully listening to each disc before reviewing it is probably the best advice they gave me. Sweden's Pain of Salvation have tons to offer and there's no way to encapsulate all their talents into the first thirty seconds of each track. You see, that's the way I usually listen to a new CD. Dozens of new albums cross my desk every day and one gets to the point where you can sort out the crap pretty quick. I had dismissed this album pretty quickly, even though I loved the review of their second release, *One Hour by the Concrete Lake*, in the last issue of PC. It wasn't until I let a friend, who had also liked that review, listen to *Entropia* that I realized what I was missing. He handed it back to me with a big smile on his face,

and that smile was the best review anyone can give. On my second listen, I too heard what he had heard. PoS combine all the aspects of a great Metal album (or any genre of music) into one blissful musical experience here on *Entropia*. It can chug and burn or it can be intricate and delicate. Each musician sounds like an amazing soloist just waiting for his turn to step into the spotlight and shine, but in the meantime he is supporting his bandmates impeccably. The standout player here is without a doubt David Gilddenlow, a truly gifted vocalist who uses his voice like a finely tuned instrument. The almost acapella harmony vocals of "Plains of Dawn" are gorgeous, but just as you're getting all teary eyed from the story, the guitars crunch in and slam you around in a rough and tumble finish. Too many so-called Progressive Metal bands focus on their chops and forget to have funnot so with PoS,

cash on the Steel Prophet catalog. Hell, I'd even put up with the Death growling on all those Dwell tribute albums just to hear them. "Mysteries of Iniquity" is a prime example of their talent. *Messiah* has got ever shifting tempos, memorable solos, intelligent and easily deciphered lyrics, a sense of tension and release... did I mention that they could do it all? I think I did, but it's worth saying again. And they're from America too-- California no less. I find myself saying, "This part sounds just like..." but before I can get the name out I'm saying, "Now it sounds just like..." Who cares who they sound like? They sound like Steel Prophet and they sound damn good. I could listen to this stuff forever, and I think I will.

This album is amazing on a technical level and a lot of fun to listen to; it will always keep you guessing. The songs are so full of ideas that I could probably write an entire review for each one in its own right. I was especially pleased to hear the Jazzy Fusion (I'm guessing a Kabuki X-Factor Bass?) during "People Passing By," and the soaring choruses are fun to sing along to in a Power Metal kinda way. Maybe it's because I just had a baby a few weeks ago, but there appears to be several tracks with a Father/Son aspect, such as "Winning A War." There are elements of other



bands here (namely FATES WARNING, FAITH NO MORE, DOKKEN, QUEENSRYCHE, DREAM THEATER, and many more), but these and others were mentioned last time out (ask Tom about back issues...), though I might add the manic elements of SYSTEM OF A DOWN to the mix. It must be noted, however, that PoS maintain their own voice throughout, despite any comparisons. If you like your Metal with a lot of depth, emotion, and plenty of skill, Pain of Salvation is your band; this is the most complete album I've heard in a long, long time. Oh, and by the way, I think DREAM THEATER have finally redeemed themselves with their latest release while MANOWAR, much like Vivian from The Young Ones, are "Very Metal." Thank you, and please enjoy the next review.



## Seasons of the Wolf

*Lost in Hell*

(Earth Mother Music/SOTW)

Florida's Seasons of the Wolf have (more or less) adopted the tag of "New Age Metal" while I would just file them under "Really Cool Shit." You decide. These guys have elements of Goth, Power and Progressive Metal in their music, so it's hard to lump this band into any one category. The singer, Wes Waddell (brother of guitarist Barry Waddell), seems to be the bastard child of OVERKILL's Bobby "Blitz" Ellsworth and KING DIAMOND, with Blitz passing along the majority of the genes. Oh, and Wes doesn't seem to be as pissed off as Blitz. Keyboardist Dennis Ristow has a truly evil sound that suggests DEEP PURPLE's Jon Lord trying to break into a funeral dirge (or at least play some truly twisted calliope music) while backing up MERCYFUL

FATE. The overall sound of SOTW is Metal, but with Wes' vocals and Ristow's keys, the music ends up sounding like something that Edgar Allan Poe would truly dig. The instrumental, "A Face in the Mist", just begs to be on a horror movie soundtrack, while "Vengeance" is a tale of revenge that features a chilling maniacal laugh in the background and uses quotes from William Shakespeare to fine effect. To prove their sound isn't a one-trick pony, the song "Witchfinder" has occasional keyboard and guitar parts that wouldn't have sounded out of place on some of RUSH's late 70's offerings. However, the track that really proves Seasons of the Wolf cannot be easily defined is "Interstellar", which comes off as a witches brew of TOTO (rhythm comparable to the song "Africa"), THE ALAN PARSONS PROJECT (percussion and keys), BLUE OYSTER CULT (the overall feel of the song) and the soulful guitar style of JOURNEY's Neal Schon outstanding track! I want these guys to play my

next Halloween party and/or wake... to help support the band, give 'em a shout at <http://members.aol.com/bloodtree/>

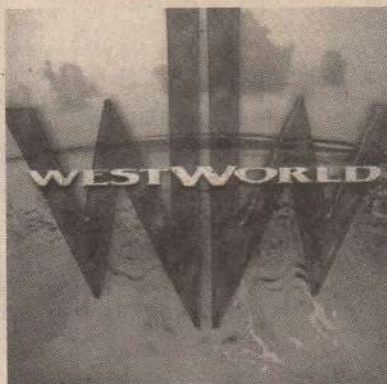


## Twisted Tower Dire

*The Curse of Twisted Tower*

(The Miskatonic Foundation)

First of all, I have to say that any release by a label that uses the name of H.P. Lovecraft's fictional Miskatonic University has to have redeeming qualities. While Virginia's Twisted Tower Dire aren't going to break any new ground with their brand of Classic Heavy Metal, at least they aren't selling out and playing the pseudo-Metal that is currently polluting the radio today. With the average track length of over six minutes for the eight songs, these guys like to pummel your ears for all it's worth, and it allows the band to show a little diversity in each track. On "Hail Dark Rider", Twisted Tower Dire gets the ultimate MANOWAR stamp of approval for their chant of "Hail, Hail, Hail!" (just missing a "Kill!" in there guys) while occasionally tossing in guitar riffs that resemble a Metallized version of various Classical/Operatic themes. Vocalist Tony Taylor's voice doesn't stray too much from his clear mid-range delivery he doesn't growl too often and doesn't reach for the high notes either; he just belts out the tune at one range. "Lament: Nocturne" kicks off with a whispered delivery and psychedelic guitar before getting down to business, and the ten minute instrumental, "The Valkyrie Death Squadrons" starts off with nice acoustic guitar and blends into power chords with great Viking-style howling/chants that turn up here and there throughout the song. It's a cool tune that has numerous rhythm and time changes. The final cut, "The Witch's Eyes", sums up the band well with an acoustic start-up that blows into in-your-face Metal with background vocals that are yelled at high level with that glorious Viking style. *The Curse of the Twisted Tower* isn't very original, but who cares? Long live Metal! Hail! Hail! And Kill!! E-mail contact: [twistedtowerdire@hotmail.com](mailto:twistedtowerdire@hotmail.com).



## WestWorld

*WestWorld*

(Spitfire Records)

AOR (Album Oriented Rock) heaven forms a "super-group" consisting of Tony Harnell (TNT) on vocals, Mark Reale (RIOT) on guitar, Bruno Ravel (DANGER DANGER) playing bass and John O'Reilly (RAINBOW) laying down the sticks. I heard TNT's "10,000 Lovers" once on the radio I thought it was one of the worst songs ever recorded and never gave TNT another chance, but the other three bands represented here are all personal favorites from various times in my youth, so I expected some good AOR from these guys. The opening track, "Illusions", is vintage 80's AOR, and would race up the charts if anything with melody could gain a foothold on these 90's, noise-infested Rock stations. Harnell's voice sounds great and the keys (played by Mark Wood) make this one of those irresistible toe-tappers. "Pidgeon Hole" shows Reale doing his best Ted Nugent impersonation with some guitar work that's right off of "Free For All" while "Heart Song" is the traditional AOR acoustic guitar-driven ballad, on which Harnell's vocals really shine. "Bring the Water" is the most interesting track. The intro with the fancy acoustic guitar layering and Harnell's vocals seriously remind me of late 70's STYX with Tommy Shaw on vocals before falling back into the Pop Metal mainstream. The rest of the disc showcases the melodic groove that most of the 80's AOR bands played, whether the song is dominated by electric guitar or keyboards; both of which make a showing. The last cut is "Suicide" a tune that features only Harnell's voice, acoustic guitar, and harmonies that back up the rest of the band. MR. BIG, anyone? To get your AOR fix, grab this disc, hop in the car, roll the windows down and head out on the highway....

## Candlemass

*From The 13<sup>th</sup> Sun*

(Music For Nations)

Yeah, the band may have been immortalized by their onetime vocalist, the screaming monk Messiah Marcolin, but his departure has not hindered Leif Edling's mission in the least. His continuous goal to paint the world black comes a bit closer to fruition with *From The 13<sup>th</sup> Sun*, a depressing carriage ride through the hills of confusion and the valleys of reflection and regret. Yes, the band that took BLACK SABBATH's teachings to the next lower, darker level offers up some of the most profound graceful Doom Metal this side of the *Forest of Equilibrium*. Leif and company have given life to a four-dimensional reason to contemplate and question the worth of your existence. Although many of the vocals sound completely lifted from BLACK SABBATH's self-titled debut, Candlemass' unique method of classically flavored Doom Metal is sure to throw your mind into as much perpetual torment as have their illustrious past releases *Nightfall*, *Ancient Dreams* and the eternally enchanting *Epicus Doomicus Metallicus*. Outside of the vocals, what sets this album apart from anything the band has done in the past is the interplanetary synthesizer interludes and fills throughout the disc, which not only give the album a conceptual quality, but it also enhances their emotionally devastating notion that Man is insignificant in the cycle of the cosmos; worlds will continue to thrive and exist after the extinction of the Homo sapiens species! So please, grab a bottle of the strongest alcoholic beverage you can find, pop this disc in, and prepare for the unmaking of your pitiful existence!





## V/A A Sentinel Steel Records Comp *True Metal Triumphant: Volume One* (Sentinel Steel)

HELL FUCKING YEAH!! FUCKING METAL!! Listening to this makes me want to go out and kick every kid's ass that dons a MARILYN MANSON or LIMP BIZKIT rag! Power fucking Metal abounds here, mixed with some Old School Thrash and Speed. Of course, there are some Progressive elements here as well, but they are few and far between. The musicianship of all the bands on this comp is truly exceptional, and melody fused with aggression is what they're all about. ONWARD and AXEHAMMER were my two favorite bands, perfectly offering that blend of masterful riffing (the opening riff on AXEHAMMER's "Sands of Time" is so godly!!) and majestic melody, not to mention excellent lyrics, well-played and memorable solos, and powerful choruses. LEGEND MAKER gets my vote for 'MAIDEN clone of the year. Also bearing some strong resemblances to HELLOWEEN, no Power Metalhead will be able to resist their melodic riffage and amazing breakdowns coupled with fantastic soloing and Prog elements. MANILLA ROAD offer some doomier aspects to the mix (a la middle-of-the-road 'SABBATH) and SACRED OATH fuse Power with Thrash (reminiscent of TESTAMENT's *The Legacy* and METALLICA's *Kill 'em All*). All in all, this is the perfect disc for anyone into the aforementioned bands, MANOWAR, PRIMAL FEAR, JUDAS PRIEST, DIO, NEVERMORE, and ICED EARTH. Hell, if you're not into even just one of these bands on this compilation (upon being exposed to it, of course, because I wasn't into any of them either before this rest assured I am now, though!) then I would say you ain't fucking Metal! Go to your fucking SLIPKNOT concert and suck their fucking cocks for all I fucking care! Man, this music raises my ire... Hail Sentinel Steel for keeping the torch of Metal alive and burning!! By all means, contact them at PO Box 123, Rockaway, NJ 07866. (973) 398-3436.

## Godbelow (Demo)

Godbelow is a band from Syracuse, NY that play an interesting mix of traditional Metal and Hardcore. While a big Hardcore scream is to be heard throughout, melody is the key here, as they have a lead guitar that is constantly keeping a melody line; this helps the music flow very well from one riff to the other. They are somewhat like a Hardcore version of IN FLAMES. They still need to work on most of the songs, as they miss that little spark to send them into orbit, but nonetheless, this is a very decent demo from Godbelow. If you like it melodic, yet still aggressive, then this is for you. Send all your inquiries to: Godbelow, 116 Steward St., Syracuse NY, 13203, USA.

## Black Army Jacket 222 (Reservoir/Chainsaw Safety)

16 songs, 27 minutes, a drum god, and a shitload of Hardcore... now this is a record! This is a pretty decent output from those Hardcore/Power Violence merchants. I would've liked a few more blast beats from Dave Witte, formerly of HUMAN REMAINS, but I can deal. Ranging from pure Hardcore to Grind and then to Sludge, the album

## Raison d'Être *Collective Archives* (Cold Meat Industry)

*In Sadness, Silence and Solitude*, Raison d'Être's last album, didn't impress me too much, but it has grown on me since. What CMI are presenting us with in *Collective Archives* is a retrospective of the projects' first five years: from 1991 to 1996. Almost all the songs of the album were unavailable or at least rare: music from VHS videos, compilations and demos— all were re-mixed at one point. What we then have are two CDs of very intelligent Dark/Ambient music with the evolution of the artist behind it. You can clearly see the evolution from the primal, keyboard-based beginnings to the more Noise-influenced, current sound, all with samples that enhance the music like nothing else could. As always, CMI offers tremendous packaging that puts every label to shame, whether it be underground or mainstream. This is really a great purchase if you want to own a great Ambient record.

## Dying Sun *Nondescript?* (Demo)

*Nondescript?* is Dying Sun's second release (I think) and is a three-song demo of upbeat Stoner Rock. They are very much like FU MANCHU, but a lot less "stoned" and psychedelic. The music is much less "spaced out" and much more Rock oriented. The songs are not that bad, but the tone of the lead guitar is really annoying, so annoying in fact that it ruins the three songs here. Nonetheless, this is a decent demo that could help them in their development, but it can't get them signed; they still need some work in every aspect of their music. Ask them for it at: Dying Sun, Graeme Duff, 17 Falkland Ave, Newton Means, Glasgow, G77 5DR, Scotland.

is very diverse and not too many songs are alike. Fitting right into the Southern Californian Power Violence scene, they have a lot of similarities with bands like SPAZZ, BENUMB, CAPITALISTIC CASUALTIES, and so on— and they're from New York! They have a pretty decent sound, which is often a rarity for this type of band (unfortunately, most bands in these genres sound like shit on the record). Fortunately, it is not too long of a record, for more than a half hour would have been too much. If you like good, aggressive Hardcore, then I cannot do anything but to recommend it to you.

## Imperial Domain *In the Ashes of the Fallen* (Pulverised)

Another Swedish band with great music (I don't know what is in Sweden's water, but I think I am going to import it and make a bundle!). I am starting to think that half of Sweden's population is doing heavy music; this IS the ultimate talent pool of the planet! Imperial Domain are playing a melodic kind of slow Death, a kind-of mix between IN FLAMES, ENTOMBED, and IRON MAIDEN. Very melody-oriented, the songs have simple Rock song structures, which is sad considering they could have done better with more work on this. Pretty decent leads are found throughout the disc and most of the execution is good. There are some songs that are pretty old, considering that they were written between '94 and '97, but this fact isn't that big a deal because they don't sound very dated. What is more of a surprise is a few engineering and production mishaps by Tomas Skogberg (the man is losing it). Although not very original, *In the Ashes of the Fallen* is still a very interesting album.

*Reviews continued on page 43*

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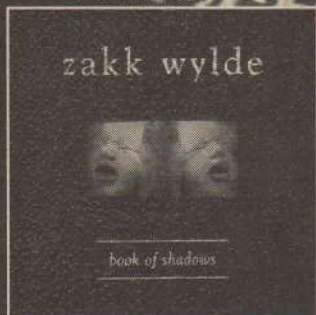
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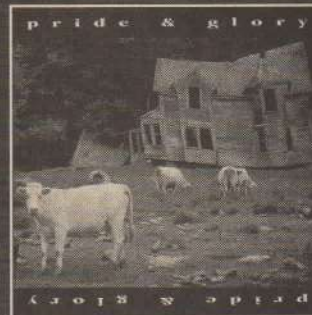
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# Therion

## A GLIMPSE OF THE DRAGON'S BELLY

BY TOM J. HUGHES

Christofer Johnsson has proved in both of the conversations I've had with him that he is one of the most thought-provoking and intelligent men I have ever had the pleasure of speaking with. The man is a walking encyclopedia, seems to know everything about anything, and NEVER stops talking! I couldn't get him off the phone, not like I wanted to stop talking to him, but I really had other things to do! Seriously, in playing back the conversation we had, we talked more about religion, the geography and politics of the United States and Sweden, world hunger and pollution, the political schemes that existed in W.W. II-era Europe, and the sex lives of different cultures throughout the world than we did about his band and the Metal scene! I feel like I'm cheating you, the reader, in presenting you with this extremely chopped-up, edited-down conversation, but I know that I certainly cannot print our entire conversation, for we talked for close to two hours. So I transcribed only that which pertained to Therion's music, lyrics, or the Metal scene in general. Do yourself a favor and check Therion out if you haven't already, for Christofer's music is far superior to most of the music that exists in the world today, for it's born out of a mind that operates on a level far above most other persons that have ever treaded this terrestrial ball.

**Promethean Crusade:** First off, Christofer, I'd like to congratulate you on another very impressive release. I'm really digging it. I've got everything from *Of Darkness...* on up, with the exception of *Beyond Sanctorem* and Therion: They are hard to get in the States, because those first two were only exported over there, I think, but there will be a re-release of those with bonus tracks and shit, so hopefully they will be easier to get in the future.

**PC:** Yeah, but Nuke has been saying that for years now, at least since *Vövin* came out!  
**TH:** Yeah, it seems like they've been pushing this for ages, and I think they bought the rights right before the *Vövin* album was released, but then that album came in the way, and then came *Crowning of Atlantis*, and now comes *Deggial*, so they just keep putting it aside, I think. Then they lost

some of the bonus tracks and we had to restore them from an old audio tape, so I don't know.

**PC:** While we're talking about your older stuff, since it is completely different from the stuff you're doing now, if Nuke ever does re-release it, don't

you think people will be like, "What the hell is this?!"

**TH:** Well, a lot of people are curious and in so many of these interviews, I've said that it is a completely different band, in effect, because it's Death Metal. So people pretty much know what they're getting into, but I think I'll put a sticker on the jewel case saying, "Warning: Death Metal Inside!"

**PC:** Do you even like Death Metal anymore? Was that just a phase you went through or what?

**TH:** I like it, but I don't listen much to it. It's like, if someone played it for me, I'd like it, but I don't feel like listening that often to it. I guess it's because I don't have this teenage aggression anymore.

**PC:** So yourself being such an experimental person when it comes to music, I'd like you to define Metal.

**TH:** Metal? Let's see... I don't think there is such... I mean, you can combine Metal with anything. It's so much more than some long-haired weirdo making a lot of noise on the electric guitar. I don't know, some people say that DEEP

PURPLE is Metal, but to me that's Hard Rock. For me growing up, Heavy Metal was bands like JUDAS PRIEST and IRON MAIDEN and ACCEPT. Then you had these bands come along and say they were Power Metal, Black Metal, Death Metal, Thrash Metal... whatever. I guess unless you have long hair and play the electric guitar making a lot of noise you're not Metal.

**PC:** So would you even consider yourself Metal, or not?

**TH:** I think we're a Metal band of some sort. A lot of the things we do are very far from Metal, and then there's some things we do that are very Metal, like "Flesh of the Gods" is obviously a Metal song. I think that songs like "Seven Secrets of the Sphinx" and "Enter Vrilya," they're Heavy Metal songs but with operatic or classical arrangements. A song like "Deggial," which is in two parts, the second part sounds like VOIVOD almost, so there's a lot of things that really are

Metal. And a song like "Eternal Return" that starts with a very romantic classical structure suddenly goes into this IRON MAIDEN thing and then goes back to the classical style, and then at the end there's this IRON MAIDEN type of galloping written into the back while having operatic vocals. So, the Metal is there, more in some songs than in others, but our root will always be in Metal. We kind of consider Therion more or less a Metal band, and it's Metal fans that buy most of our records.

**PC:** Since you're incorporating so many elements of opera and classical music into your Metal,

do you think that someday you would ever write a full-scale classical piece, or is Metal in the blood?

**TH:** I have been thinking of doing something completely classic for a long time, but then I would not call it Therion. I did that little soundtrack for

an art film [the film is entitled "Golden Embrace" and the soundtrack he is talking about appeared on the Therion release, A' Arab Zaraq Lucid Dreaming ~Tom], which didn't have any Metal in it, and that was nice, but it was on such a small budget and the pieces were short. It would be nice to write a proper opera, but probably people wouldn't give a shit about it until fifty years after I was dead, then they would put it in the opera house. That's how it usually works when you're a classical composer. People piss on you when you write it, but after you're dead they call you a genius! Actually, there is a masterful Russian writer whose story I would like to compose music to, kind of like Stravinski did with "Peter and the Wolf," so after I'm done with Therion I will probably take ten years and do that. Hopefully, I can do Therion for another twelve years or so, but you never know, because people might get fed up with me...or something!

**PC:** I don't think that people could get fed up with you because you're on the cutting edge of Metal and so many people are emulating you.

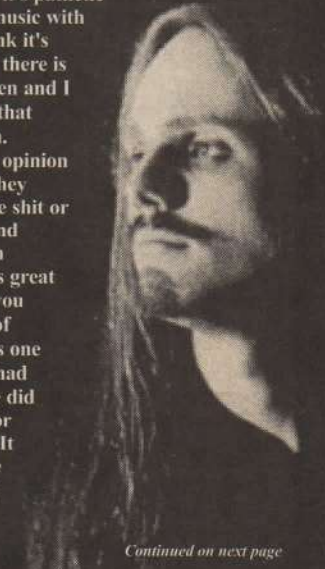
**TH:** I think we are living in quite happy days now, but you never know in ten years. Maybe people will be so violent then that all they will want to hear is Punk music or whatever. Who knows, maybe the next big thing will be elevator music.

**PC:** Some bands like the GATHERING are receiving some backlash from people who say that they should be more Metal. Are you receiving any of these outlandish comments and what do you think of people like that?

**TH:** I don't think anyone would be stupid enough to say that to me because why should I care? It is quite a stupid person who would say to me, "You have to be more Metal," because I fucking write whatever I write. I don't think anyone would make a fool out of themselves like that, at least not on the planet that I live on. I mean, what am I going to say? "Oh yeah, of course. If you say so. I think now I'll go out and write the next BATHORY album." I like BATHORY, but I wouldn't want to play that music. The thing is that we're just doing our thing and Therion is a love-it-or-hate-it type of band.

Either you think it's pathetic to mix classical music with Metal or you think it's brilliant; usually there is nothing in between and I like to do things that create an opinion.

Everyone has an opinion about Therion: they either think we're shit or we're brilliant, and there's nothing in between, which is great because at least you have some kind of opinion. This was one of the things we had in mind when we did the front cover for the *Theli* album. It was the first time ever I had heard people speak so much about the cover!



Continued on next page





Continued from previous page

Normally, no one gives a shit about the cover, but now everyone's talking about this satanic dog, 50% of the people who bought it said that it was the ugliest cover they had in their entire collection, and the other 50% thought it was really cool. But that was our point at that time, to create an opinion, and I think it follows through in the music of Therion, too.

PC: I'm glad you brought up your album covers, because the last three have been brown, boring, and repetitive. Your older ones kick total ass, and *A' Arab Zaraq Lucid Dreaming* is freaky as hell, so would you care to explain your most recent album covers?

TH: I would say that the idea with the *Vovin* cover was to make the opposite of the *Theli* cover—something that everyone must say is OK. I wanted a cover that everyone would think was good looking, so I chose a nice picture that contained some symbols. The "clavicula nox" symbol was very important, and I used it on both *Vovin* and *Crowning of Atlantis*. Of course the eleven-pointed star, which is the symbol of "Kliffoth," has been used traditionally on quite a few albums. So there was thought behind all of them, the symbols being the most important element to the covers. With the cover of *Deggial*, all you have is that symbol, though it is inverted through some fucking Macintosh or something.

PC: Yeah, it's really hard to make out what exactly the symbol on the cover is.

TH: Well, it's a piece of art that they severely altered, but you have to understand why that symbol is so important. Of course, the song, "Deggial," is the central part of the album, and it has many esoteric and philosophical themes both lyrically and musically running through it. The main theme arises from old Arabic legends that tell of an anti-messiah named Deggial that will proclaim a Nietzschean message that God is dead and that man will become like gods, which is far more interesting than the story in the Bible about the anti-Christ. And the anti-messiah, Deggial, should not be confused with the Christian anti-Christ because I would say that the Christian anti-Christ is an unsophisticated symbol.

PC: What attracts you to the mid-Eastern religions as opposed to the Western or Eastern types of thought?

TH: It's the original of all the Western religions. I mean, you have a mixture between the Assyrian and the Egyptian religions, which were built on the Babylonian religions of ancient Mesopotamia. It all started somewhere, and through time it became distorted into monotheism.

Judaism then turned into Christianity, which spread like a cancer upon the world and destroyed a few continents, like North and South America and Europe, taking away all the original cultures. Up here in the North, in Scandinavia, the whole culture here was completely wiped away by Christians, while in North America the same thing happened with the Indians. Look at Australia, too; you also have it there. So there's stuff on the album, which are pre-Christian, songs like "The Invincible," which deals with links between Nordic cultures and the Deggial concept. In the prophecies and sagas of the old Nordic people, a strong one from above is foretold and he will restore the old traditions and revive the gods of the past. The followers of monotheism will try to defeat him, according to this mythology, but the strong one is also known as The Invincible. So you can see a parallel here with the more Persian idea of Deggial, which is a legendary figure that will lead the people in a non-monotheistic direction. But this is a more atheistic concept which is more in accordance with Nietzsche, where man himself will become like gods, whereas the legend of The Invincible tells of a strong one from above who will restore the old religions that existed before Christianity.

PC: So all this myth and legend you're talking about, would you call it religion, and if so, what's the difference between myth and religion?

TH: Well, I study many occultists, and what the occultist does is take a lot of elements from various religions, and most religions have those common elements. But I would never call myself a religious person because I don't worship, pray, or submit to anything, but I accept all these elements as realities. I think of all these different spiritual elements as mainly the same forces with different names, which have manifested themselves differently in different cultures. These philosophies around worship have been something created by man. Some people say the Bible is right while others say the Koran is right. Then you have these other Nordic books. Probably, it's all the same creational or providential force in all of them. The Bible is just a stupid book written by men and should have nothing to do with what you really worship. It's still very interesting that you can find some occultist action even in Christianity, like the Gnostics, who were Christian mysticists. So even in Christianity, which is normally the most boring religion I can think of, you can still find some traces of interest. It's much more interesting if you go back in time when all these mystic elements were alive, because the more and more forward in time you go, the more materialism has replaced the mystic elements, and I think your country and its Protestantism is the greatest example of that.

PC: Well, I can wholly agree with this last statement, and I don't want to get too far off track, but

TH: Well, this isn't an esoteric magazine, though it's quickly becoming one, wouldn't you say?!

PC: Well, one last question along these lines then we'll drop it [Actually, we didn't drop it and continued to talk about religion for the next forty minutes!! Being a Christian grounded in a faith worked out through many years of studious research, I found many flaws and weaknesses in his arguments and we

intelligently and cordially discussed our opposing viewpoints. Since this is supposed to be about music, though, I edited all that out. Sorry if this disappoints you, but if you want to argue with me, just e-mail me, but don't be a belligerent asshole or I won't give you the time of day. ~Tom]. Would you say that there is only one truth manifested differently in various religions, but it's really all the same thing when we boil everything down?

TH: I don't think there is such a thing as one truth. It's just a creational force, or one absorbing force, like yin and yang. I wouldn't think that you could define it with human words; it's not that simple at all. It's probably beyond what we can understand, but you can always try to make some sense of it and research it. It's kind of like monkeys staring at the moon and wondering if it's an orange or not.

PC: So when are you coming to the United States?

TH: That would be nice, but there are some monetary problems in the way. And the problem also lies with the American music industry itself. Only in Germany do you have five major Metal magazines that you can advertise in and get the word out to the masses through interviews, articles, and cover stories. In America, you have many people reading fanzines

and who are dedicated, but it does not reach the masses. A lot of people in America who bought the new METALLICA would probably like Therion because there are heavy guitars and classic stuff in both bands. I think we are a braver band than they are, but in theory, at least, many people who would like them would probably like us, too, but how would you promote that? MTV doesn't give a shit about Nuclear Blast or Therion or anyone else. They just see some pricks in Europe

with their violins! So it's impossible to get into the market because they own the market. The people making the fanzines and promoting it are doing a good job for other people who already like it, though, and who are already into bands like Therion, PARADISE LOST, or TIAMAT. Getting in touch with the radio-listening people is a tough thing to do, and it's almost impossible as far as I can tell. We sell over 100,000 in Europe, and sell only like 17,000 in North America. The market should be more equal, but the way the music industry controls the market is the biggest reason we can't come to America. It's unfortunate because I'm sure there are an equal amount of open-minded people who would buy our album if they only heard of it. It irritates me because we could sell 100,000 in America too if we had the right channels to do it. And I know Nuclear Blast America is working very hard, but they can only do so much.

PC: I just see a lot of European bands coming over, like MESHUGGAH and AMORPHIS a year or so ago, more recently the GATHERING, IN FLAMES, MOONSPELL, and a host of others, but not Therion.

TH: Well, all they have to do is pick up their guitars and come on over. See what I mean? We could play a small set, but I feel like we would be cheating our American fans, and plus, it wouldn't be Therion. I would be very happy to go over and play a festival like Milwaukee or something, but someone has to organize that. And I would do it for free, too; I would be perfectly happy if Therion broke even on a tour there, but someone has to put up the money, and we spend so much money in the recording studio that Nuclear Blast is not going to give us another \$100,000 to go on tour. It only makes sense because then they'd be losing Money on the band.



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Reviews continued from page 38

## Electric Wizard Supercoven (Southern Lord)

Quick, somebody either shoot me now or maim these guys before they record another CD; at this point I don't really care which option the reader chooses (I bet I know which option the gang at Southern Lord will choose)! Damn... don't get me wrong, I like old BLACK SABBATH and I like some Doom Metal (although I prefer the more polished side of Doom in bands like SOLITUDE AETURNUS), but damn! Electric Wizard plays a sludge-filled style of SABBATH-ish Doom that can only be identified as Stoner Rock. In this case, the "Stoner" part of the description would have to apply more to the band members themselves than with what their audience may or may not be smoking, because EW would've had to be stoned out of their ever-lovin' minds to think that four songs of this noise spread out over 50 minutes was a good idea. Electric Wizard must've stolen every riff their haze-influenced little brains could recognize off of both SABBATH's s/t debut and *Paranoid* before going into the studio. This wouldn't have to be a bad thing if through the fog they could've remembered that

SABBATH also liked to speed things up occasionally with songs such as "Paranoid" and the latter half of "War Pigs," but not Electric Wizard. These four songs drag on (and on and on and...) with tortoise-paced psychedelic riffs and mostly unintelligible warblings of Jus Oborn, eventually pulverizing the unfortunate listener's brains into something probably resembling tofu pate. Actually, the last two songs are "bonus" tracks consisting of a demo version of "Wizards of Gore" and a live version of the band's namesake, "Electric Wizard." Honestly, you can barely notice any difference in production between the demo/live tracks and the new songs; all tracks are equally muddy in sound. Hardcore fans of Stoner Rock will absolutely love this CD, as it will give them some background music in their attempt to try and successfully tie their shoes, and with that 50-minute CD length they might just finish before the "music" runs out. Masochists (or the terminally stoned) can inquire about the band at [www.southernlord.com](http://www.southernlord.com).

## Holy Mother My World War (Shock Records)

Never a band to remain settled for too long, Holy Mother is back with a follow-up to 1999's now classic *Criminal Afterlife*, and let me tell you, this band is bitter! Being forced to dwell beyond Underground in the US (they hail from New York), the band holds little back, launching a viscous onslaught on US hypocrisy and pretentious apathy! Distancing themselves from their previous DIO and JUDAS PRIEST-imitating labels, Holy Mother has mutated into a sound they can truly call their own. Vocalist Mike Tirelli's delivery never sounded so enraged (reminding one of a C.H.U.D.-spawned combination of *Slave To The Grind*-era Sebastian Bach and a young METAL CHURCH-spewing David Wayne), the string-work grooves and shreds with vengeful purpose, and Jim Harris' percussive assault makes perfectly clear that Holy Mother is declaring war on the US music scene! Every song on the album fills the listener's mind and heart with growing spite, but inspires all who will listen to do everything in his/her power to fight in the white-knuckled brawl for Metallic Freedom!! While this is the final release of Holy Mother on a.b.s. Records (based in Germany), expect to see more militant ravings from the band on the home front very soon! *My World War* is the quintessential vehicle that expresses the injustice that befalls every Metal band and fan of heavy music in America! Don't fuck with a band of bitter New Yorkers!!! Contact: Holy Mother, P.O. Box 169, Selden, NY 11784; or on the web at [www.clm.de](http://www.clm.de).

## The Flower Kings FlowerPower (InsideOut America/Century Media)

Wow... over 142 minutes of excellent Progressive Rock from Swede Roine Stolt and The Flower Kings; to try and write a review that would do this release justice would take pages (upon pages), so I'll just touch on the highlights. The Flower Kings are not your typical *Promethean Crusade* fare, because there is very little that is Metal about this group: if you are familiar with SPOCK'S BEARD and are a fan of seventies-era YES and GENESIS, then you'll have an idea of where I'm coming from. *FlowerPower* is a two-disc set that showcases some very fine playing from Stolt and company (including Stolt's younger brother, Michael, on bass), with all of the technical artistry and excesses of Progressive Rock that wins either lifelong fans or constant critics. Case in point: the first "track" is the 18-part "Garden of Dreams," which is a few seconds shy of an hour in length (and some of you thought FATES WARNING's *A Pleasant Shade of Gray* was a long song)! During this hour-long extravaganza you hear elements of PINK FLOYD in some of the slower moments, instrumentals that would fit on any ALAN PARSONS PROJECT release, pedal to the metal keyboard solos, SATRIANI-style guitar work, and to top it all off, occasional choir and chanting elements interspersed throughout various pieces. Whew! Disc two starts off with a song that has a very IQ-

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like element to the keyboard sound, but also resembles SPOCK'S BEARD in the song's eclectic structure. One of my favorite tracks is the aptly titled "Hudson River Sirens Call 1998" which is an eerie combination of dark-sounding keys, female vocals reminiscent of FLOYD's *Dark Side of the Moon*, and what sounds like a children's choir "humming" towards the end. Tomas Bodin's keyboard playing is superb throughout, and Roine Stolt and Hasse Froberg do an excellent job on vocals; Stolt's style is more mid-range with Froberg handling the higher notes. As mentioned at the top, there isn't enough space to give this title the review it deserves. Just let it be stated that if you are a fan of modern Progressive Rock played with an ear turned toward the 70's, then you will have to pick up this release. E-mail The Kings at [flowerkings@foxtrot.se](mailto:flowerkings@foxtrot.se) or check out [www.insideoutmusic.com](http://www.insideoutmusic.com) for further information.



## Aphasia

*Beyond the Infinite Horizon*  
(demo)

This promo is a two-song affair taken from their latest EP, *Beyond the Infinite Horizon*. What I have is twelve minutes of music, which is not bad, considering that there are only two songs. The music consists of a Black-Death mixture, similar to a mix of early **ROTTING CHRIST** and mid-era **OPETH**... except for the vocals. Sakis and Mikael Akerfeldt have exceptional vocals (especially Akerfeldt) that these two guys obviously don't have; they sound cheesy as hell. Musically, there is certainly something under the lid. The songs are well executed, and even though the songs have complex song structures, they flow very well. This is above average when it comes to self-produced recordings. I believe that if this trio would become a quartet, adding a decent vocalist, they would have a great chance at getting signed. Send \$14 (Canada) or \$12 (US) to get the whole EP at: Aphasia, Stéphane Houle, CP St-André, BP 32111, Montreal Qc, H2L 4Y5, Canada.

## Aztec

*Loss of our Final Pride*  
(Raven Music)

Like **ENOCHIAN CRESCENT**, the vocals are the weakest point in the band. What I said about that band goes for these guys too, with the exception of clean vocals, as there are none on *Loss of our Final Pride*. **Aztec** is a melodic Black Metal band out of Israel. Though the music itself has a solid presence and the production is good, the riffs tend to be simplistic at times, that is, when they're not changing a note or two from **IRON MAIDEN**'s riffs and calling them their own. Don't start thinking this band is as good as **MAIDEN**, though. The solos pretty much blow and like other bands I've reviewed so far, **Aztec** is way too repetitious. Here are a few hints for all you new and upcoming bands: Don't repeat too much, don't rip off other bands' riffs, don't play Black Metal if you're going to play happy riffs, and make sure your vocalist is good. OK, that pretty much says it all.

## Therion

*Deggial*  
(Nuclear Blast)

*Deggial* for me is like what **PAIN OF SALVATION**'s *Entropia* was to Jeff (read about the album elsewhere in this issue): proof that you cannot listen to a CD and immediately formulate a working, knowledgeable opinion of it. At first, I was all about giving this disc a bad review. "It doesn't live up to the masterful *Yavin* or the spectacular *Thell*," I thought. "It lacks the raw edge of *Lepaca Kliffoth* and the heavy beauty of *Symphony Masses*..." I immediately concluded, I'm so fucking stupid sometimes it's not even funny! I should take my own advice for once, or better yet, learn from my own experience. The **GATHERING**'s *How to Measure a Planet* at first did nothing for me, but I find myself listening to it now more than ever! Hell, even **DREAM THEATER**'s *Images and Words* (my favorite album of all time for all eternity) didn't strike me as exceptional at first, but now... well, you get it! So all's I can say is that it's a damn good thing I

## Precipice

*The Foundation/Black Sun Rising*  
(demo)

Oh boy, this CD passed through a few writers' hands here at the Crusade and it looks like the buck stops here. OK, Tom, open up your mind a bit... lets look for something here.... Honestly, after some repeated and intent listenings (I gave this CD many chances to sink in), I have to say that it isn't as bad as I originally thought. When I let myself really get into it and feel the rage and anger, I kind of dug it. That's not to say that I'll come back to it after this review (chances are I'll never listen to it again... there's just too much damn music out there), but it just proves that every band has *something* to offer the listener if that listener indeed really gives the music a chance to speak to him or her. Folks, please don't write shit off right away. I know it's always your first intention and largest temptation, but give the art a chance, Brother! As far as the art of **Precipice** goes, it's your typical Hardcore mixed with **Death** and **Thrash**. It's certainly not awful music by any stretch of the imagination, just pretty damn average. Their newer material (*Black Sun Rising*) is far better than their older stuff (*The Foundation*), and with some growth, development, maturity, and the right connections, I don't see why (if they keep at it) they couldn't get signed someday. Shit, there's a fuckload of average bands that get signed, so why not these guys? Network yourselves, guys, make the right connections and get in tight with the right people. Keep plugging away and creating your art and let it see where it can take you. And for you readers out there, let's stop writing everyone off so fucking fast; give our young artists their just chances at affecting us. **Precipice**, c/o Dave Silverstein, PO Box 6971, Spring Hill, FL 34606. [Worldafterwar@usa.net](mailto:Worldafterwar@usa.net). [Http://precipice1.8m.com](http://precipice1.8m.com).



kept *Deggial* in my CD changer, because now it's grown on me and I love it!! Let me officially begin the review by saying that if you are not familiar with **Therion**'s Classical-meets-Metal sound, then you are in for one fucking beautifully tasting ear candy of a treat! How shall I put this: If **Therion** were a piece of meat, they would be a filet mignon. If they were a car, they'd be a Ferrari. Well, why don't I just drop the plural here and refer to the band as a he, because **Therion** is basically a one man band: Christofer Johnsson. I've said it before and I'll say it again: the man's a fucking genius! Everything he puts out is masterful and a pure delight to the ears. Utilizing a full orchestra and choir, Johnsson has written an opus that begs listen upon listen upon listen. Violins, cellos, flutes, clarinets, piano, and the organ all come together here with crunching guitars and other powerful metallic elements to form one beautiful treasure trove of musical bliss. The singers he brought in are in top form on this album, culminating their heavenly voices at the end in a heart-wrenching rendition of the classical Opera piece "O Fortuna." Galloping Power Metal is fused with some Progressive or Doom elements here and

## Hersiarh - *Dragons of War*

**Enid** - *The Sorcerer's Casket*

**Zavorash** - *In Odium Veritas*

**Draconis Sanguis** - *Gloria Draconil*

**Elfen** - *Eldamar/Minas Morgul*  
(Elven Witchcraft)

First off, before I even touch the music, I must once again speak my mind and give my advice. Don't fucking rip off artist's work and use it for cover art without due credit to said artists, and if you do credit them, make sure you do it *with* permission. Yes, I know this is the Metal underground and chances are said artists will never know their work is being plagiarized, but come on folks. Have a little fucking decency and originality! I especially hold **Elven Witchcraft** under the gun. Though I couldn't identify all the Tolkien artwork's creators and artists, I recognized one artist that I happen to like very much, Michael Whelen. Any of you into fantasy probably recognizes the name and those who aren't probably think I'm an anal retentive asshole for ripping on a band for ripping off other's art. Well, I don't really give a shit... Now that I've said my piece I'll get on with the review. All of **Elven Witchcraft**'s bands revolve around fantasy. **Hersiarh** and **Enid** are both bands that explore fantasy through epic and ambient songs: **Hersiarh**'s highlight the beautiful female vocals and **Enid**'s the epic keyboards. **Zavorash** and **Draconis Sanguis** both go the other route and opt for the good ol' primitive Black Metal. **Zavorash** in particular is reminiscent of early **SATYRICON**. I found the throwback quite refreshing. The last band in the label's package was **Elfen**, whom I didn't get into at all. I found the songs quite boring. The first four that I mentioned, although not top notch bands, certainly have a good start at becoming very accomplished someday. For those of you who want to have images of fantasy evoked, they are well worth the listen. I will certainly be looking forward to their next releases. As for **Elfen**, they aren't worth the time or money.

there, all the while melding flawlessly with the Classical arrangements. Truly a pleasurable work of art if there ever was one. once again Christofer has proven the fact that he is a masterful musician; he's the quintessential composer of Metal, if there ever was one! All Hail **Therion**!!

THERION  
DEGGIAL

**Best Of Tales From The Pit**  
(Metallian Productions)

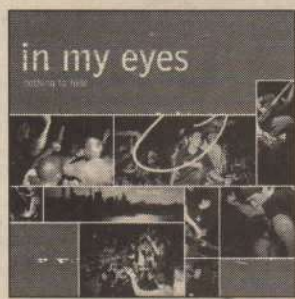
Ahh, the video magazine. Nothing can quite compare to a well-organized video magazine, especially one that both spotlights ass-kicking Metal bands, but also features the best music that said bands have to offer! This compilation displays highlights from ten years of Jerry Allen's great camerawork, exceptional video-editing, and most importantly, Jerry's own in-depth and personalized interviews with many Metal bands that the world merely takes for granted as ignorant with nothing to say!! This video definitely proves that there is more than meets the eye when it comes to the personalities and lifestyles of Metal's most notorious icons, who are now regarded as underground or 'Old School.' This video has it all: special guest hosting by EXODUS' Paul Baloff (complete with drunken wit, EXODUS band update and workout segment), more guest appearances than you can shake a stick at, and tons of Jerry Allen's patented self-produced music videos. This one tape has bigger balls than a rhinoceros in heat!! Where else can you find a SLAYER interview that focuses on the band's goals and visions throughout their career and how the crazed fanbase is viewed from their own eyes? Where else will you see, immortalized on film, Rob Flynn's hard-ass, Oakland-based (long-haired) rage before he turned MACHINE HEAD into a mainstream franchise, thus making the whole interview sound like a lie in retrospect? (Oh well, I guess we'll have our memories of the band's brutal origins!) You've also got GWAR's exquisitely brutal sense of sarcasm (and sick sexual colloquialisms), Glen Benton's (of DEICIDE) anecdotes of a tormented childhood and his take on religion (it should also be noted that the guy didn't look like he'd slept in a

freakin' month!), vintage ANTHRAX (complete with Joey Belladonna) defining social sarcasm while being shockingly serious, a brief visit with Danny Lilker of SOD (with a run-in by ex-TESTAMENT's Greg Christian— I told you there were a bunch of guest appearances), a quite calm and soft-spoken SEPULTURA (with Max Cavalera) describing the way their heritage is brought forth within their music (and then an update with vocalist Derrick Green on how they approach music without the assistance of MTV), a DARK ANGEL retrospect (the BEST FUCKING THRASH BAND THAT EVER EXISTED) featuring Gene Hoglan (who discusses child-rearing and sexual adventures), METAL CHURCH's David Wayne explaining his ties between religion and Metal, a 1990 JUDAS PRIEST feature with Rob Halford pointing out definitive highlights in the band's career and the positive nature of Metal, David Vincent & Trey Azagthoth of MORBID ANGEL discussing religious philosophy, the GENITORTURERS explaining their unity of Metal, body-piercing and bondage as a culture (which still freaks me out!), a behind-the-scenes look at PANTERA showing how Metal they can be (complete with commentary by the aforementioned icon, Gene Hoglan), a heart-pounding in-studio interview with Chuck Billy, Eric Peterson, and Dave Lombardo regarding their latest musical onslaught, which goes

by the name of *The Gathering* (and Eric discusses his obsession with *Planet Of The Apes*), and MOTORHEAD keeping things raw through to the 21st Century! The tape comes to a dramatic climax with a sobering tribute to the late El Duce and his band of social reformers, THE MENTORS. This segment is complete with interview footage from all members of the band, including the lady's man, Sickie Wifebeater and the ever-knowledgeable Dr. Heathenscum. This segment brings a tear to my eye with every viewing... he truly was a saint! *The Best Of Tales From The Pit* draws to a close with a recent update with SLAYER, who give us their impression of modern Metal and the status of Thrash! Every feature within this tape comes complete with vintage official video footage as well as Jerry-shots (live video footage intermingled with studio-recorded soundtracks), so you are guaranteed the ultimate Metal viewing experience! *Tales From The Pit* is essential to keep your eyes on Metal and Metal in your mind, so get in touch with Jerry and subscribe!!!! Your life might just depend on it! And for those of you who don't check this tape out, may you one day be passed through the bowels of Galeocerdo Cuvier! Send \$20, plus \$4.00 for shipping (now, dammit!!!) to: *Tales from The Pit*, c/o Jerry Allen, 1926 Contra Costa Boulevard, Suite 158, Pleasant Hill, CA 94523. And while you're waiting for the tape to arrive, check out the official website: [www.talesfromthepit.com](http://www.talesfromthepit.com).

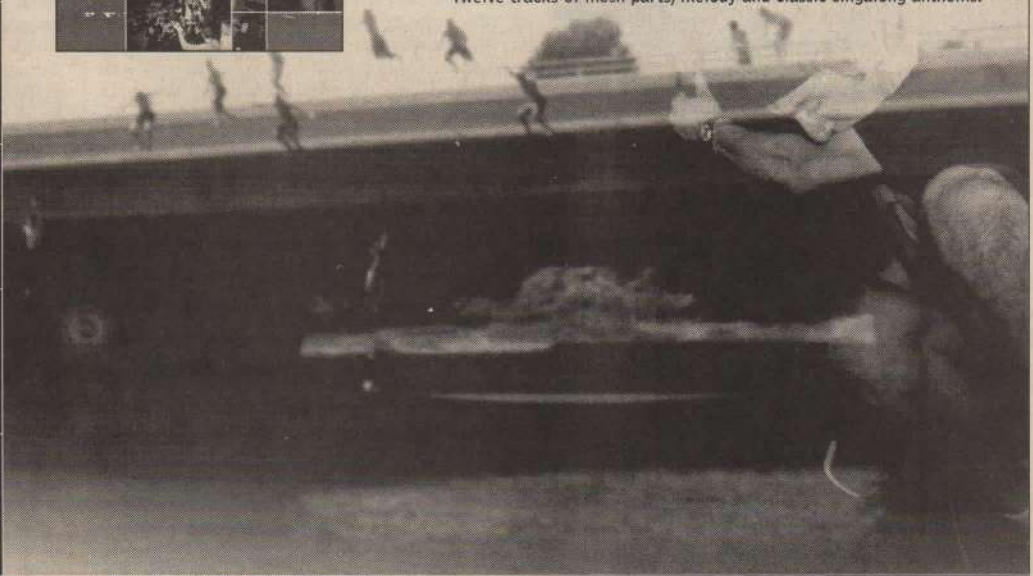


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## Devilyn *Reborn in Pain* (Listenable)

There's nothing new here, but *Reborn in Pain* is very impressive nonetheless. Poland's Devilyn deliver eleven songs of pure, aggressive Death Metal. MORBID ANGEL, POSSESSED, and GORGUTS all play a major roll in Devilyn's sound. In fact, the vocals on *Reborn in Pain* sound so much like GORGUTS' Luc Lemay, that prior to reading the band bio I thought that this may be some sort of side project, but this is not the case. Each song on this disc is strung together by a bizarre noise (not unlike SEPULTURA's *Arise*), and the songs themselves are extremely well constructed. Riffs, leads, drum patterns, and bass are all performed adequately by their respective manipulators. If "Darkness Feller" and "Banished Alive" don't get your head bobbing and your mouth frothing, then surely nothing will. If you're a fan of any of the bands mentioned in this review, this disc should be a welcome addition to your CD collection. So instead of getting that cool new KORN album, why don't you get something of a little more substance?



## Vital Remains *Dawn of the Apocalypse* (Osmose Productions)

Vital Remains has always been a heavily under-recognized force in the extreme Metal community, and with the release of *Dawn of the Apocalypse*, they will indisputably break free of the stigma of being 'just another Satanic Death Metal band!' Yes, they may follow the 'Left Hand Path,' but taking a deeper look into the lyrics and music on the album, I see the band walking a similar path to that of the irreverent ANGELCORPSE. Both bands have undertaken a Crusade to expose the world's blind ignorance and crush it in a hailstorm of blood and fire! *Dawn of the Apocalypse* is the latest chapter in the band's war on human lethargy, and with such a bombastic arsenal of visceral energy at their disposal, turning the other cheek is not an option! Vital Remains has mastered the art of sophisticated musical warfare, by employing the forceful wrath of foreboding, merciless vocals, the deceptive charm of sweltering guitar melody, and a rancorous death knell represented by a rampaging percussive offensive! This is just too callous to be true...

## Requiem *Christ Has Risen / U.S.S.A.* (24-Seven Records)

Well, this is just a bit different, reminding me of the good ol' days when DRI was in a *Thrash Zone*, EVICTION felt that the *World Is (H)Ours Away!* and THE CRUMBSUCKERS had not yet huffed PRO-PAIN. Las Vegas-based Requiem's brand of Crossover-inspired Metal has transcended time and successfully captures the essence of the 80's movement, in which political and social unrest were married with a moshy, Metal edge



## Agent Steel *Omega Conspiracy* (Candlelight Records / Plastic Head Music Distribution Ltd.)

With the onset of futuristic and technological fears that go hand-in-hand with the anxiety of a new millennium, it is only fitting that Thrash Metal icons Agent Steel return from the ashen depths to act as messengers for the End Times. Re-inventing their trademark bombardment of shred-ability, the band picks up right where they left off over ten years ago—like being trapped in time by an unseen force. No matter, as the band's Bay Area technique serves as an appropriate device for warning the world to the conspiracies that are no longer theories, but government realizations designed to shield the public's minds from the imminent doom from beyond! But seriously, the guitar work on the album is amazing and reminds one of the days when no one thought anything could be heavier or more intense than the Combat label! While still possessing that Old School vibe that comes with playing Thrash Metal, there is a timeless quality within the band's viscous speed assault, and their supernatural, liquefied soloing only adds to Agent Steel's mystique! The future is now; the Arrival is imminent; prepare, for the *Omega Conspiracy* is no longer a myth! Contact Candlelight Records, 2 Elgin Avenue, London, W9 3QP, UK; or go to the website [www.candlelightrecords.co.uk](http://www.candlelightrecords.co.uk).



while retaining the integrity of the style's originators. It's amazing to hear a modern band championing a facet of Metal history that had become lost in the shuffle and eventually reserved for the Hardcore community. *Christ Has Risen* specifically targets the social problems dealing with humanity's lust for wanton destruction and Man's inability to reason with his own kind (with an early CRO MAGS-like musical setting), while *U.S.S.A.* focuses on the gradual decline of American Freedom, due to the increasing laws passed to limit basic human rights (and features distinct DRI and SICK OF IT ALL overtones). So if you want to check into some decent heavy music while becoming shockingly aware to the horrors of the modern world, get in touch with Requiem, c/o Berry Ruffin, 1200 Nth Lamb Sp #36, Las Vegas, NV 89110.

## Infernal (Crook'd Records)

The current project of NASTY SAVAGE front man Nasty Ronnie sees our 'hero' delving into the recesses of evil Metal. Fear not, for you can still expect a skull-splitting performance, but the vocal style has changed from the alcohol-induced sewage to reverberating guttural howls. The music is menacing and cold, a far cry, however, from the raw street-edge of his former band, and reminds one of the fusing of polar opposites DISMEMBER and SACRED REICH. Lyrically, the sarcasm dwells between the lines, while Ronnie's pagan musings double as his back turning away from society, which seems to be the subject of many present Death Metal bands. I am left with mixed feelings about this project, for as we all know, you must progress in order to survive, but I can't help but wonder why Ronnie turned to Death Metal; must be due to the over-saturation of the scene down in Florida. But I'll learn to live with it, because it isn't bad; it may be a bit loose and rough around the edges, but there is a definite potential for definite menace! Visit [www.crook-drecords.com](http://www.crook-drecords.com) AND [www.borntoride.com](http://www.borntoride.com) for more info.

Reviews continued on page 50



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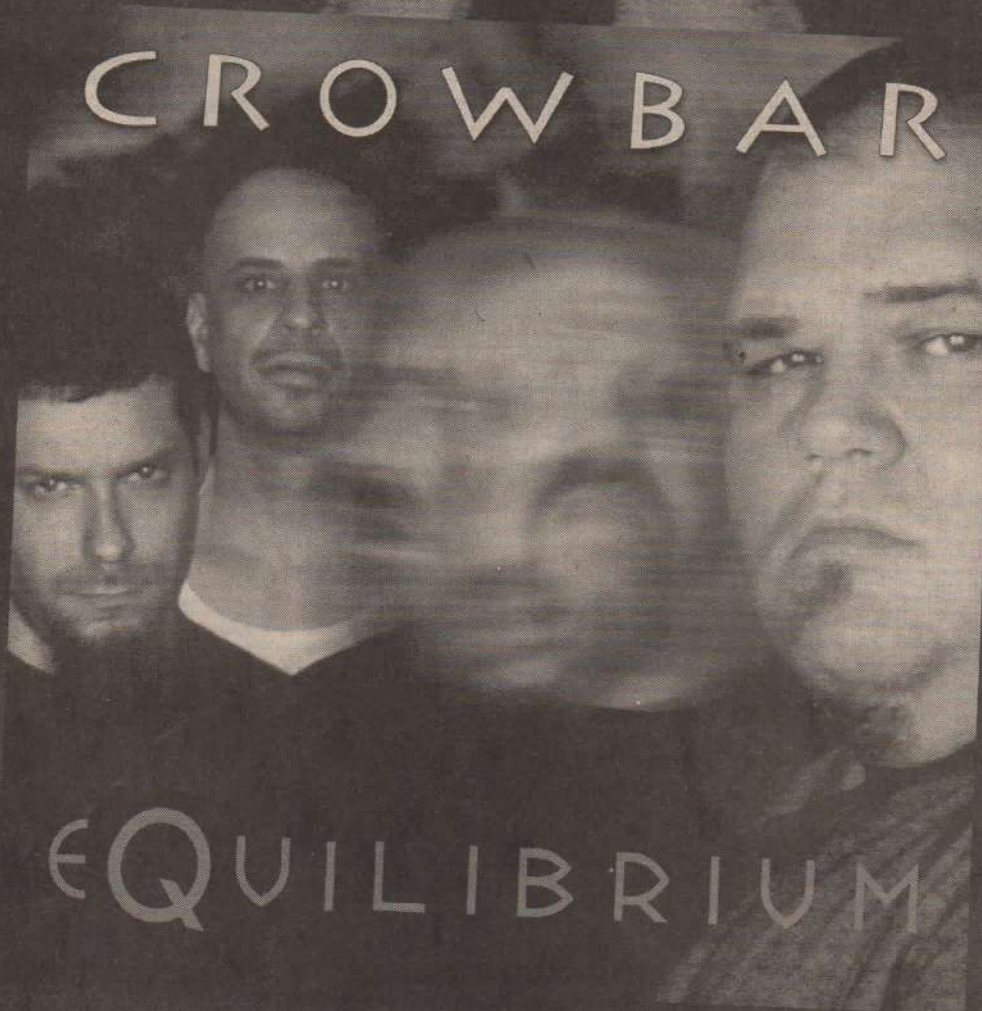
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Gary Numan-New Dreams For Old, John Mayall-Live at the Marquee, The Masters, Hair of the Dog-Rise  
The Exploited-The Singles, The Anti-Nowhere League-The Singles,  
Inhale (various artists)-Stoner Rock Compilation

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## Addicted to Metal

By George Pacheco

**ALL HAIL THE KING!!** King Fowley and his band of Metal Merchants, Deceased, have been cranking out quality Heavy Metal before any of these "retro Thrashers" and "True German Power Metal from Sweden" groups bought their first KREATOR or IRON MAIDEN albums. From their primitive origins on the Gutwrench 7" and their first album, Luck of the Corpse, to their sci-fi technical Metal masterpieces, The 13 Frightened Souls and The Blueprints for Madness, down to the "VOIVOD meets MAIDEN in a graveyard" sound of 1997's incredible Fearless Undead Machines (hands down one of the best albums of that year!), Deceased have stuck to their guns and have released the best album of their career in the form of Supernatural Addictions. A tour de force of Heavy Metal mayhem, this CD mixes the influences of Deceased's past with their current sound, to create an album that is neither dated nor cliché.

I had the opportunity to catch up with drummer/vocalist King Fowley at this year's March Metal Meltdown. I had been waiting to talk Metal with this man for some time now; hopefully you'll enjoy reading this interview as much as I enjoyed conducting it! Thanks to Gordon at Relapse Records and King for a great interview!!

Promethean Crusade: First of all, I really love the new CD, congratulations. So, what's been going on with Deceased in between Fearless Undead Machines and the new one?

Deceased: Whew... we're recording the *More Death Metal From the Grave* CD from Poland [on *Still Dead Productions* ~George], which is basically re-recording some old tracks and doing some demos for the new stuff. We've been writing that, playing gigs out, doing some stuff for some tribute albums that have been coming out. We did MERCYFUL FATE, we did the MOTORHEAD tribute, the IRON MAIDEN tribute, that Dwell Records stuff; they put out the tribute stuff. So, we've been doing those. They'd give us some money to record a track, and we'd save a little left extra money to record some demo stuff for the new album we've been working on, so it worked out. But we've also been playing gigs up and down the coast, as well.

PC: So, tell me about the new album.

DE: Well, it's called *Supernatural Addictions*, obviously. It deals with supernatural ideas and tales, things from beyond, ghost stories, haunting movies and memories, you know, that story in my mind. We have stuff like the movie *The Blair Witch Project*, which I thought was killer. As far as musically, it's a continuation of *Fearless...* but three years gone down the road. We've got some more ideas. We want to play some stuff faster, some stuff slower, some stuff more noisy, some melodic; the wheel just turns again: 3 more years. Now we want to get out and play for the people and have fun.

PC: On the subject of lyrics, the last album had a George C. Romero vibe to it, *Day of the Dead*, *Dawn of the Dead*, and stuff like that. On this one, each song has a different inspiration to it. Stuff like the *Blair Witch... Twilight Zone...* It was weird because I had totally forgot about that episode ["Twenty-two," the inspiration for the first song on the album, "The Premonition" ~George].

DE: You went back and watched it?

PC: Yeah!

DE: You're one of the few people I've talked to that actually went back to find out what it's about; I'm hoping people will do that.

"Flight Twenty-Two" is a freaky story, man. It's really old, but then when you see it shot on videotape, it's really weird. Its just stuff that scared me as a kid and freaked me out. Some of it freaks me out now, like *The Blair Witch Project* freaked me out, man.

PC: I agree with that, man. I saw that movie a couple times and in the theatres you would either hear complete silence or "hoos" and hissing.

DE: Right, it was hate or love. The thing with *The*

*Blair Witch Project* is, it wasn't really the Blair Witch that scared me, it was just the unlocking of the boogeyman in your mind when you were a kid. It kind of brought that back. Everyone's got some freaky shit they grew up with. Everyone's had supernatural stuff happen to him or her. I'm sure you have, I know some supernatural stuff has happened to Gordon, here, too.

PC: I thought that movie kind of brought back the "old horror" style. Where it was what that you didn't see what killed ya, you know? I mean, anyone who's been LOST can identify. I know I've been lost a couple times, so I could identify with it.

DE: Yeah, I agree. I totally think that with the way they went about it, the way that people felt shortchanged, they thought the ending was wrong. I thought it was perfect. It leaves you with your imagination to create what you want for the ending, just to do things with your own mind. Nothing can beat that. Unfortunately, not for stupid PANTERA fans. It's for those who have minds of their own too, like I said before, to get out there and unlock those boogeyman doors.

PC: Do you have any favorites out of the songs you've written so far?

DE: I love "The Premonition". I think that's one of the best songs we've ever written. That's why we had a big talk in the band between Mike and I, because he was really vocal on beginning with "A Very Familiar Stranger" track because of the way it comes out real fast, it just kicks your ass. But I said, "no, I think "Premonition" really sets the tone, then we can take it up and break it down". I'm a real supporter and fan of well-paced albums. You don't want to give your best 3 songs in a row and then take it down. I don't think we have any

filler tracks, but I know which ones are highlights for the album, and I know the pace of them and put them in the right spots. For example, "Elly's Dementia" wouldn't work being put 3rd on the album, you know? It's a perfect closer for us, because it's a closer. You have your closer songs, you have your epics, you have your fast numbers, your slow numbers, and that's just how we feel. I like "The Premonition," I like "Elly's Dementia," and I like "A Very Familiar Stranger" a lot. The song I wish I could have done a little more was

"Chambers of the Waiting Blind." I wanted to do a bit more with the beginning with the production value; meaning like putting a bit more hypno-spacey, eerie, ghostly type things. But being that we had fourteen days and four of them, it kind of turned out wishy-washy because of a power outage. That was because of when we did the album, Hurricane Floyd came through here and washed the power out for a few days. We had to make up time, and work overtime to try to basically try and get fourteen days work done in ten.

PC: "Stranger..." and "Premonition" were definitely highlights to me, too.

DE: Yeah, I was talking to Jeff Wager and he was telling me that "Stranger..." have him a real freaky, dreadful feeling that he never had while listening to music. That's cool for me; that means that we achieved what we wanted to do. We wanted to make all the songs eerie, but it's hard to make a line between dark and doom laden, but yet aggressive. I think that with this album, we go in weird directions with it. It's real melodic, and it's real fast, and it just hits you at different times when you don't expect it. That's kind of the roller coaster ride, and that's what we think about it.

PC: You've been writing songs about stories and such like this since your earlier albums like, "The Triangle" and "Shrieks From the Hearse." It seems like your lyrics have never been just abstract thoughts, but rather based on inspirations or a story. There were a few songs on the album where I wasn't familiar with the inspiration, and I was wondering if you could tell me a little about them. "The Hanging Soldier" was one of them. (Geez, George, where were you in High School, wasn't this required reading in American Literature? Find the book, and learn about the twisted fate of Peyton Farquar! ~the too well-versed ed.)

Continued on next page





DE: Well, that's based on a book called *An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge* about a man during the Civil War. It is in the Northern States, and the Southern man goes there and gets caught on their lands, so they go to hang him. Right before he hangs, though, as they're all standing around, the noose breaks, and he falls into this water below. So he swims and gets away, and he can't believe that he got away from all of these people at war. Basically what happens is, he falls in this water and he gets away. When he's swimming, the original story says the lake is almost 3-4 miles long, so he's swimming underwater forever and ever. He's just going, thinking about all these things about war, and death, and about how he never got to live his life, about how he has his wife and family waiting for him, and about how he's fighting this war for this country that really honestly and truly, what would become the U.S. would be just like property, you know? He basically didn't want to be there, but he was forced there because of the war. So what he does is he gets away, and he gets back home. He runs to the steps and he sees his wife and child there, and everything is beautiful. Then, all of a sudden, the story shifts back to him hanging on the rope, and he is really dead. That was the last flashing second of his life. People always say, and I totally get chills thinking about it, but people I've known who've been in car accidents, they say, "My life flashed before my eyes." For one second it was right there, you know? But what about the people who don't get to tell you what happened? Some people will go, "Oh this happened, and I thought I was going to die." OK, but the people who don't come back and that last second of their life, and that's basically where the story comes from. The story has been adapted many times and many different ways. The movie *Jacob's Ladder* is a total take on that. Many people don't realize that, but that's where the idea comes from. It's by a guy named Ambrose Bierce, and I read the story when I was real young. I actually took the idea, the visuals I took from it, from another *Twilight Zone* episode, which was "Occurrence..." and was the only *Twilight Zone* episode that Rod Serling did not have anything to do with. He bought the film. It was a silent 22-minute black and white film; some French people put it out. He played it in the U.S. one time, it was nineteen sixty-something when they showed it, and it was one of the longest segments ever on CBS TV when there was nothing. There was silence, you just watched it. It's a very freaky thing. It's on a video you can get now about treasures of the lost *Twilight Zone* episodes, and that's one of them. It's haunting as hell, very creepy.

PC: Have you written any new stuff yet?

DE: No, we haven't written anything, but we have some ideas. I've even told the others I don't like mentioning any new ideas because it always seems like some steals them! For example, we did a cover song thing. We were going to do a bunch of stuff, and I started naming off titles. Soon enough, man, we had "Evil Invaders," and all of a sudden HYPOCRISY did it. Then we were going to do "Witchhunt" from PILEDRIVER, and then all of a sudden you have MARDUK doing PILEDRIVER covers. When it comes time, we'll just do it. I will tell you that the next album is going to be a very, very dark album. Totally not from the same school, though. You'll be surprised; the angle we're going to take might freak people out. I don't mean the music; I mean lyrically. It's going to be very violent and aggressive.

PC: On the *More Death Metal From the Grave* CD you did some covers, right?

DE: Yeah, we did EXCITER's "Violence and Force." That was a studio version. We did live

versions of 'MAIDEN's "Wrathchild." We do SLAYER's "Die By the Sword" studio version. We do METAL CHURCH's "Metal Church" and "Bombs of Death" by HIRAX. We did a DOORS cover for the DOORS tribute that never got to come out on Relapse. There are also some old songs that were redone with better production. I produced that, and it sounds pretty good. We did it real fucking cheap, I think. It took like three days to do everything, but it sounds better than the old albums! (Laughs)

PC: To talk about the music a bit. Mark and Mike's guitar playing has improved more and more with each album. On the last album you could tell there was more of a melodic edge, 'MAIDEN-ish type stuff. It's really been brought to the forefront on the new one, especially in the solo department...

DE: As far as the solos, they've always been there. It's just sometimes they never get a chance to show up because for some reason the music has been so violent and aggressive and over the top. It's been almost like they've never had a chance; it's been like, "there's ten seconds, now throw in a lead and get out of there!" Now, we build around solos and in the rhythm section at times. They've always been great players.

PC: The solos seem to come from the school from when the solos meant something rather than... (I do my best SLAYER imitation here)

DE: The solos are a part of the song; they're harmonies and melodies. They're almost lyrics in their own sense. My friend Jim, the bassist from OCTOBER 31 and I went to see QUEENSRÛCHE the other night and we were saying about how, without Chris DeGarmo, the solos aren't there; the songs just aren't speaking to me the way they used to. That's the part of the band we always want to improve on was the soloing, and the natural rhythms and the pacing of the band.

PC: Was there an effort to make the songs more memorable, to make them stand out more?

DE: Yeah, we always try to write the best songs we can at any given time. The fact that we know kind of where we're going now, and we know our strengths and weaknesses as a band, and we know what works and what doesn't. We can say, "Don't go there, because we're going to have this problem and too much with that part; we'll play it live, so don't even go there with that part..." or something like that. Then you will hear something and go, "That's great, let's build off this, let's get great harmony," so your strengths are coming along better. I've got so much music in my head both Metal and otherwise; I've been listening to music since I was born. You can throw on some oldies and I can sing along to everything from the BEATLES down to the PLATTERS and shit like that. I grew up with music, and I know a good melody, and I think that's why it's growing more and more catchy because my say with the arranging is finally taking charge. The band respects that, and we work within our vibe. Like I said, I'm a good arranger; the guys write a lot of riffs and we fuckin' put it together, you know? So then the band can listen later and say, "You know that part's bothering me," and then there'll be the little voice in our heads and we'll fix it. We're 31 years old; we should be better. We've been doing this for a long time; fifteen years now.

PC: Out of the two, which do you consider yourself more: a drummer or a vocalist? Or is it equal?

DE: You know, no one's ever asked me that! I think it's kind of an equal thing. I find myself more of a drummer because as I'm getting older, in fact I was just saying how I don't know how



much longer I can do this type of voice, because my voice it shot. Plus I won't shut up outside of it! (Laughs) I think a lot of people wish my voice would go away forever! Anyways, but I like to think of myself as more of a drummer. I like what I do vocally, but it's really draining, physically draining. Especially mine now, because I tell you man, when you're in the studio, I have the vocals up and the music so fucking loud in the headphones, and it's shit hot. I'm not bragging or anything, but I've never known anybody to record their vocals so loud the way I run the headphones. I'm talking, when we did *Luck...* years ago, I had smoke coming out of the headphones it was so loud. The thing was heating up the actual speakers! As I said, though, I like to think of myself more as a drummer. The vocals are there, and I appreciate it when people tell me that I'm a strong vocalist, but when you play live, you can't get it stronger because your sitting down, the lungs aren't expanding, your not moving around, your not warmed up, a lot of your power is somewhere else; your mind's splitting into pieces. You have to get the lyrics; you got to get the range, but I also try to entertain the crowd at the same time because we have no front man, so it's a lot going on.

PC: Do you think the genuine love for Heavy Metal has kept the band going?

DE: Definitely. That's our dedication right there. There's all these— I'm not going to name any names— people I just find that are just jack-offs and not into the scene. They just (I said this in another interview) put coal in the furnace, man. It just keeps us going forward. They're not going to stop us. We'll just sit in this corner, and you can have 300 of the biggest bands out there, and we'll still sit in this corner with the fuckin' underground guys and yourself and keep doing these interviews. That's what we're about, we're about coming here, standing in the rain, freaking out, going on, and listening to Heavy Metal all the way here and all the way home. Maybe throw on a little BLONDIE now and then (laughs). I got love for some Power Pop, and I love female vocalists.

PC: I know you dislike the Retro trend as much as I do. It seems like the Thrash trend has died down a bit to be replaced by Power Metal and 'MAIDEN influences on your sleeve. How do you feel if you get lumped in there, even though you've been holding older Metal as an influence for years?

DE: If somebody throws us in the lump, I can tell that they mustn't know us very much, or are unfamiliar with the career of the band. So right there I'll know there's a guy who is limited in his sources of what he knows; like, "Oh this DECEASED band sounds just like BEWITCHED!" or "They sound like GUILLOTINE!" or whatever. You know, that's cool; that's where he's from. What can you do? But if someone from the old days that we've known for years and knows DECEASED says that, I'd say, "You're full of shit." You don't know what we're all about. I hate the word "retro." To me, it never went away--like what I was saying about the last album: I used to be quoted over and over again saying, "Everyone's taking their 'MAIDEN albums out of the closet now and dusting them off. We never put ours away." When all that shit was around, jumping on a sound, fuckin' NIRVANA and all this shit, and everyone's putting all this machinery in their fucking music... FEAR FACTORY and all that shit, I was like, "Fuck that shit!" I was out buying *Fear of the Dark* 'MAIDEN [THANK YOU!! CLASSIC underrated album!! ~George]. I was the one into the Blaze Bayley IRON MAIDEN. I'll be honest, the last on with Blaze wasn't that good, but I LOVE *The X Factor*. I must have listened to that like 6000 times! I think it's one of the best, and definitely the darkest album they ever did.

PC: I'll definitely agree with that. [The music is great, definitely their darkest, but Blaze ruins it for me ~George]

DE: I think the production could've been better, but it's IRON MAIDEN. It's Metal; it's what they stand by. Steve Harris is my idol. He's the guy I look up to the most in music. I think he's a great guy. He stuck to his guns and he's going to play how he feels. It's his band and he runs the show; he started the band. Steve's the one who's going to get flack if they do a Rap song, you know? He wouldn't want to do it anyways. Bruce said, "Hey, let's go off and do a Rap song," like when Bruce left and went off and did a Rap version of "Wrathchild" with STUCK MOJO. Did you ever hear that?

PC: (My eyes slowly widening in horror of the thought) No, no I haven't!

DE: Oh god, I was fuckin' dying laughing when I heard it, and he was doing some fucking Jazz. Vegas lounge shit over it (starts making scat sounds). It was on this video in Europe and he did it, and Steve just would've went, "ha ha ha." That's why Steve had a problem with Dickinson for a while, saying, "Yeah, he'll do a Country music album if he knew it would sell." Yeah, and he'd say, "Yeah, these are my roots; I grew up with WAYLON JENNINGS," you know? That's how we feel. Deceased is Deceased. We're not going to do anything different, you know? The funniest thing we've ever done is the DOORS cover. That's probably the most off-the-wall thing Deceased will probably ever do.

PC: What song did you do?

DE: "Not to Touch the Earth." We did it because I like the song; it kind of fit what we were doing. A bit dramatic, kind of eerie with psychedelic riffs; weird... trippy if you want to



call it. But we're not going to say, "We're gonna do an R.E.M. cover... oh but it's gonna be Death Metal!" you know, "We're gonna do a death metal version!" That would be a joke, first of all. Plus, music is set in certain standards. For example, Deceased could never do a QUEENSRYCHE cover. We could

do the music, but then the vocals would sound out of place. It's hard enough to do the 'MAIDEN cover, that's pushing it as far as we can push it. That's even pushing it, but 'MAIDEN's our band; we love 'em and everyone into Metal has to love IRON MAIDEN.

PC: Yeah, I think it's kind of a pre-requisite.

DE: 'MAIDEN, old 'PRIEST, maybe a couple SAXON albums (laughs), that's all you need!

PC: You've shown

appreciation for bands like NASTY SAVAGE and RAVEN for years...

DE: Fuck yeah, man! I was over there beggin' Ben Meyer for some NASTY SAVAGE patches! Of course, I love RAVEN. I think the new album's disappointing.

PC: One For All?

DE: Yeah, *All For One, One For All*. They're doing the reversal. It's weak; they're lost, but at least they're still playing Metal and still doing what they want to do. I love ANVIL. That's why I'm here.

HOLOCAUST, SAVAGE... I'm here for DORO. When she does "Burning the Witch," I'm going to have a fucking hard-on, man! Gonna smash people's teeth in!

PC: I saw you last year jammin' to RIOT!

DE: Oh, I was going fuckin' nuts, man! I saw them in Texas, too, and they're like, "It's the same fuckin' guy yelling for "Flight of the Warrior!" I'm always up front for them, man. If I love a band, I'm there.

PC: Do you think the one thing modern bands can do is to expose people to their influences?

DE: Yeah, but at the same time they bring in another part of the music business I don't like, and that's milking the scene and following the trend. You got your HAMMERFALL's and such, and you could say, "Oh, but it's better than a PANTERA sound," and you're right, but at the same time, it's still selling out for the almighty dollar.

PC: Are you still doing the label?

DE: Oh yeah, Old Metal's kicking! We have a lot of stuff coming up. We got IRON ANGEL, we're working on some more WILD DOGS, we're working on the new IRON ANGEL, *The Rebirth*, and they're putting a new one out. It sounds like *Hellish Crossfire*.

PC: Do you find it hard to devote time between Deceased, the label, and OCTOBER 31?

DE: No, I love to keep busy. If I sit around, I get old; I don't want to do that. I want to stay busy all my life. I'm a hyperactive motherfucker, man. Look, last night we went out and got crazy-ass drunk and passed out, and here I am doing interviews; and Gordon appreciated that, being here at 1:00 and not getting enough sleep!

## Betrayer

### *My Twisted Symphony* (Raven Music)

No way! A Metal band from Israel, really!?! As of this moment I am truly convinced that our beloved Metal will never die! I was going to take a political and/or religious slant to this review, for Betrayer would really lend itself well to such an angle as the song, "Garden Of Memories," is dedicated to the slain Israeli leader Itzhak Rabin (I wanna know if these guys get nervous when starting their cars), however, I'm not going to simply because I don't really care where these guys come from or what religion (if any) they subscribe to. What matters here is that Betrayer is kicking out some serious mid-paced Thrash Metal (Sorry guys, you're just not a technical Metal band) that I truly enjoy. The five songs that comprise *My Twisted Symphony* abound with double bass runs and guitar hooks. Even though Betrayer are playing nothing new, I can't wait to hear a full length from them. And to think I was apprehensive when I saw a band with the name of my favorite KREATOR song! Contact Raven Music at PO Box 212, Raanana 43101, Israel.



## United

### *Distorted Vision* (Howling Bull America)

The Japanese Hardcore band, United, has a very Old School meets New School Hardcore feel with a good dose of Metal as well, along with some grooves thrown in for good measure. They perfectly and successfully combined all of these elements in their new album, *Distorted Vision*. The guitar work is phenomenal on this album and their lead guitarist plays some great solos. Vocally it is just as powerful with gang vocals that hit right on every time. The lyrics are very positive, too, with songs like *Trust Yourself* and *Change*. This is an album Metalheads and Hardcore kids can equally appreciate. Contact: Howling Bull America, PO Box 40129, San Francisco, CA 94140-0129.



## Embittered

### Degenerator

(Demo)

From what I can decipher from the back of the promo, these guys are very young; the HANSON brothers of Death Metal, cousins of the DEATH KIDS. They bear a similarity with the DEATH KIDS in that their music is not very good. In fact, Embittered have a classic case of 'I-overdone-it' syndrome. In trying to be more technical than they are actually capable of, they end up sounding silly. They have potential, as their riffs are very interesting and their song structures are to be applauded, but they can't seem to perform a proper transition from song to song, and the result is what seems to be an amazingly long song. I wouldn't give up if I were them because they have quite a good sound, they just need to grow up and mature. Send \$7 to Embittered, c/o Johannes A. Hansen, Vejlbystofen 102, 8240 Risskov, Denmark or visit them at <http://embittered.cjb.net>.

## Incide

### Downside

(Demo)

I hate to say bad things about bands like this that obviously work hard in their home studio to create a demo that they are obviously proud of. But (you knew it was coming, didn't you?), though there is a glimmer of promise here, most of the material sounds incredibly thin. I kept waiting for the big explosion of noisy guitar a la NIN or MINISTRY and it never came. I think they needed about forty-eight more tracks to record on. The vocals are probably the biggest downfall; they sound like they were recorded on an answering machine and the drums don't fare much better. Musically there is an attempt to imitate the bands mentioned above, but without the expensive studio equipment, Incide can't pull it off. I think I would like to see them live with a really loud PA in front of a bunch of adoring hometown fans. The one thing that did make me smile was the name of the third track, aptly titled "track three." Incide, P.O. Box 509, Manchester, MD, 21102.

## Armored Saint

### Revelation

(Metal Blade)

Ever run into an old friend that you haven't seen for ten or fifteen years and feel like it's only been that many days? The new Armored Saint album is just like that: an old friend, a comfortable pair of jeans, or a favorite chair. *Revelation* is Rock solid and the band is just as good as you remember them from the good old days. These songs sound as if they wrote themselves after years pent up in the brains of Joey Vera and John Bush, who teamed up to write half of them. While on a break from his "day job" in ANTHRAX, John and Joey went out drinking (how Rock 'n' Roll) and they both decided it was time to bring 'Saint back from the ashes-- no, not ashes, more like red hot coals. These two always knew they'd be back together after going their separate ways following Dave



...And The Physical Shape Of Light Bled

## Ancient Wisdom

...And the Physical Shape of Light Bled

(Avantgarde Music)

Avantgarde is the perfect home for this band of eclectic doomsayers. Not your typical Black Metal band, Ancient Wisdom employs the thematic element of atmosphere to drive their point home. Extensive deployment of piano and synthesizer musings set the stage for a truly horrifying experience. Like a dismal Scandinavian opera, the album creates musical impressions of fear, terror, romance, and bleak depression to invoke a sense of spiritual un-light. This is further enhanced by the lack of blast-beating just a steady pulsing of drums that makes ones blood turn cold. This, the band's third outing, continues Ancient Wisdom's journey through the dark recesses of the human soul, in which the deeper they go, the colder you become.

...*And the Physical Shape of Light Bled* is both an awakening to the realization that all that glitters is not gold, and a cessation, meaning that a part of you dies with but a mere listen; it's like the cold hand of Death rests on your shoulder by merely possessing the disc. So take heed, and learn from the experiences exhibited on the album, for should Light bleed too heavily, a new Ice Age shall ignite! [www.avantgardemusic.com](http://www.avantgardemusic.com)

Prichard's untimely death. "Pay Dirt" opens with a count off that sounds like it came straight off a rehearsal tape, quite possibly the first of these sessions. Within seconds the memories come flooding back, and it leaves you asking, "What took so long?" Bush has a quintessential Hard Rock voice that works much better here than with his NYC cohorts. The lyrically dark



## Sipowicz

(Demo)

We've got another great, Hardcore-type demo with Sipowicz. Here we face a more traditional Metalcore band with music that many leaders of the genre would dream to have. This easily compares to bands like ZAO, CONVERGE, and CONGRESS. They have emotionally screamed vocals with heavy, yet catchy riffs that really hit you in the right places. Nothing too original when it comes down to it, but that really doesn't matter; this is just a great Hardcore release and I really like it. If you think you'd like it, too, then ask these folks about it: Sipowicz, 104 Bernice Drive, West Seneca, NY, 14224, USA.

## Devin Townsend

### Infinity

(Hevy Devy)

At first, I really liked this album, but then after a while, I started to not like it at all. Then it kind of sank in and I am appreciating it more and more everyday now. *Infinity* is the brainchild of Vancouver, Canada's own musical genius, Mr. Devin Townsend: father of STRAPPING YOUNG LAD, creator of *Ocean Machine*, former member of the WILDHEARTS, IR8 (Jason Newstead's side project), FRONT LINE ASSEMBLY and VAL... how's that for a resume!? Described by himself as the closest thing to being inside of his head, I think this release is a good representation of his different influences and moods. It certainly sounds like a Devin album; the production is like everything he has done: deep and with so many layers it is a new listen each time. His voice is unmistakable, powerful, and diverse. Musically, it goes from straightforward Thrash to Funk, taking roots in metallic Rock with Industrial flavors. It is very hard to describe as it is very diverse and yet very focused. There are some very funny moments here and there, as well as some dramatic ones. I really have problems describing and letting you know what to expect. If you liked *Ocean Machine*, then you probably will like *Infinity*, even though it is very different. <http://www.hevydevy.com>

"After Me, The Flood" has the great line "Help me write these words down/It'll be a great song to die to." "Tension" opens with a bubbling solo bass riff that is immediately echoed by the twin guitars of Jeff Duncan and Phil Sandoval. The radio friendly "Creepy Feelings" follows, which is odd considering Armored Saint were never considered members of the upper echelon of money making Metal bands. Who knows, maybe this will be the big break they've been waiting for... Bill Willis may have been right after all! Included as a limited edition bonus track is the Flamenco Metal song, "No Me Digas," paying tribute to their East LA upbringing. Sung in Spanish, it is deeply disturbing and very heavy, kind of like a more metallic LOS LOBOS. The last track, "Upon My Departure," has lyrical overtones (as does much of the album) that suggest the deep feelings of loss for Dave Prichard. The words mean that much more to those of us who also know the pain of losing a close friend. Armored Saint could pay him no finer tribute than this beautifully crafted piece of work. Welcome back guys.

**Fister**  
*Pherenum*  
 (Extract Records)

This is a highly experimental album, and musically this album is all over the place. The album is very heavy, without a doubt, but it isn't Metal, Punk, or Hardcore by any means. Refreshingly, this band does not limit themselves as far as what they can or will do; in fact, as musicians, they are very brave. Fister are very technical musically, throwing in very random, unrelated guitar lines and guitar noises in the middle of their songs while simultaneously playing around with odd beats, time signatures, and off timings. Vocally they do some interesting combinations of different vocal styles as far as combining singing and yelling. They are highly reminiscent of REFUSED, another very talented and experimental Hardcore band. If you want to hear great avant-garde and technical, heavy music, do yourself a favor and pick up this album. Contact: [www.fister1.co.uk](http://www.fister1.co.uk).

fister

**Sinner**  
*The Second Decade*  
 (Nuclear Blast)

Now this is something I wish all Metal labels possessed the foresight to do! In order to properly expose a band that has already paid its dues overseas and has an extensive catalogue of albums in release abroad, it only makes sense to issue a compilation of their culminated efforts as an effective introduction to US consumers. Granted, Sinner has had a couple albums in release here already, but this compilation truly serves as an appropriate 'Welcome Mat' for the band on our shores. Yes, these anthologies can get expensive and would end up as a superfluous trend in the eyes of the media, but they would have their greatest impact at retail, especially when unreleased or 'special' tracks are included to appease to those previously converted! Other bands worthy of this type of treatment (in my eyes) include BLIND GUARDIAN, RUNNING WILD, GRAVE DIGGER, UDO, and CANDLEMASS. Even HELLOWEEN could benefit in the US from utilizing an anthology disc to reposition them in



the marketplace. STRATOVARIUS' *The Chosen Ones* release from Noise Records last year was a great effort, although most of their albums have been previously available here. But getting back to the subject at hand, *The Second Decade* features highlights of Sinner's extensive career of releasing powerful, melodic, energetic, classic Heavy Metal. Even their cover version of ACCEPT's "Balls To The Wall" appears on this disc. This is the perfect way to make the US public aware of Sinner's existence! Definite stand-outs on this CD are the tracks represented from the MEGADETH-like *Judgment Day* album and the HELLOWEEN-ish *The Nature Of Evil*. I implore every fan of Heavy Metal music to check this out and become familiar with a great band that really needs to get their feet wet in the US once again!

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## Krabathor

*Cool Mortification / Only Our Death is Welcome*  
(Morbid Records)

I admit, when I first received this in the mail, I wasn't jumping off my chair and running to my stereo to go listen to it. I already had a copy of Krabathor's *Lies* and thought, while it wasn't horrible, it didn't really rule my CD player, either. Oh, but I was in for a surprise when I tossed in this double re-release of Krabathor's first two albums, *Cool Mortification* and *Only Our Death is Welcome!* I was immediately assaulted by some truly kick-ass Old School Deaththrash! No my friends, this is no "retro" trend cash-in, this is the real fucking deal! Although both albums contain really strong songwriting, it is *Cool Mortification* that steals the show here. Awesome, ultra-catchy, yet heavy riffs collide with a big KREATOR-esque Thrash influence to create a pure adrenaline rush! Both albums hearken back to a time when Death Metal was a new and exciting form of extreme expression, rather than a clichéd genre of imitators and stagnation. A time when SOLOS, not "mosh parts" were highlights of a Death Metal song (no disrespect intended to DYING FETUS, who are amazing, but more towards their imitators). I see



now why Krabathor are so respected in the Underground scene, not only because they managed to rise to success from the Czech Republic (evident in the not-so-perfect English in some of the songs which is to be expected, of course), but because they are so fucking GOOD! In recent Krabathor news, longtime bassist Bruno has left the band, to be replaced with Old School Death Metal legend, Paul Speckman! So be on the lookout for a new Krabathor album in the future, but in the meantime, pick up this re-release while you can! Contact Morbid Records, Postfach 3, 03114 Drebkau, Germany, [info@morbidrecords.com](mailto:info@morbidrecords.com). [Http://www.morbidrecords.de](http://www.morbidrecords.de).

## Hoven Droven

*More Happy Moments...*  
(NorthSide)

Heavy. This is some heavy shit. Think *Riverdance* music written by MORPHINE and danced in combat boots. The mad Swedes return with their second album to be released in the US and have added a Hammond organ to the mix just to add a little more weight and perhaps up the DEEP PURPLE feel. Songs range from the ancient to the modern and feature Swedish lyrics that if done in English, would have the censors running for cover. Take "Herr Hillebran" for instance: he tied his would-be lover's hair to his horse's saddle and dragged her around for three days. That'll teach her! The result of growing up

in the darkness and light that is Scandinavia, all while listening to 'SABBATH and 'ZEPPELIN and keeping one foot firmly rooted in tradition, Hoven Droven lead the pack of Swedish Folk/Rock bands. Those of you with a computer CD-ROM drive can pop this in and watch a five-minute movie that chronicles the making of the album. There's something inherently funny about seeing a horse's nose poking into the studio window while the band jams away. If you have not yet picked up one of the many amazing titles from NorthSide's catalog, I strongly suggest you seek them out in the World music section of your local record store. They even have cheap samplers (cheaper than food!) so you can have a 'taste' without wreaking havoc on your wallet. If just one of you goes out looking for this and buys it, I'll be happy.

## Lux Occulta

*My Guardian Anger*  
(Pagan Records)

These guys deserve all the success they get in life. They're a fine example of the Metal scene and prove that there are still bands out there turning a blind eye to the classical boundaries of the genres. They do their own thing in their own way, not to mention that they are yet one more band that shows that European music tends to be the best as far as Metal is concerned. The CD also comes with a multimedia video of their song "Kiss My Sword" for your computer that is well worth the watch. In it one sees W.W.II clips and computer simulations, adding strong images to their music. After multiple listens, I'm still clueless as to what they could be classified as. The riffs, vocals, and drumming progress to and from abstract

rhythms into sudden stops and starts, and then into ambiance with perfect execution, all with varying degrees of Death, Swedish Death, Black Metal, and straight out ambiance (which brought to mind music that one might find in a Creation of the Universe video at a planetarium). Although the music threw me off many times, never once did they throw out their musicianship or originality... great stuff. Contact: Pagan Records, PO Box 12, 86-105 Swiecie 5, Poland.



## V/A

*Holy Dio: A Tribute To Ronnie James Dio*  
(Century Media)

If STEEL PROPHET's version of "Neon Knights" sounds familiar, it's because you may have heard it on Dwell Record's BLACK SABBATH tribute. It's worth noting, as this collection isn't limited to Dio's solo output, but also includes many songs from his days as Ozzy's replacement in the aforementioned 'SABBATH. All the usual suspects in Power Metal are represented here: HAMMERFALL, GAMMA RAY, JAG PANZER, FATES WARNING, and ANGEL DUST all contribute flawless performances. Wait, what's this? Is it, could it be? DORO? She's back! Praise the Metal Gods for the return of every 80's Metal guy's dream babe; admit it, you all had her picture up on your walls. Though she may prefer to be referred to as a Woman of Metal these days, she adds her "special" touch to "Egypt...." One bad thing I have to mention is that I grew up listening to *The Last In Line*, and I must say I'm disappointed by DESTINY'S END's version of the title track, even though the intro still gives me chills. If you're going to have a tribute to one of the seminal vocalists in Metal, then stick to singers that can do his songs justice. That said, whether you're reliving your past or encountering these songs for the first time, you're in for a treat. Dio may be a little guy, but he has a huge voice and will go down in Metal history as a true original. It's great to hear that his influence lives on in today's bands.

## Scaar

(demo)

Scaar is a four piece band hailing from Sweden. They play a melodic blend of Metal with an occasional JUDAS PRIEST riff thrown in. This five-song demo isn't bad, offering up some tasty licks; however, I don't find it very memorable. The biggest gripe I have are the one-word choruses repeated over and over. For instance, the last song, "Hellhammer," must've had that word repeated about ten times in the chorus. The band is recording another demo and I am curious to see what they throw our way next time. Visit their web site: <http://members.xoom.com/scaar>. Email: [scaar@hotmail.com](mailto:scaar@hotmail.com). Write to Scaar, c/o Alf Johansson, Bonder 1-633, 52 Eskilstuna, Sweden.

## Emperor

*Emperial Live Ceremony* (video)  
(Century Media)

If you were unlucky enough not to capture Emperor on their semi-recent U.S. tour, then this is definitely the video for you. Recorded live at London's famous Astoria, this is an extremely thorough set. Selections are taken from every release, and much to this reviewer's liking, the set is not just a plug for the new album. There is no exceptional stage show or theatrics contained within, so if you are searching for blood and gore, look elsewhere. But if you enjoy seeing an amazingly gifted and tight live band, this is your ticket. Some of the highlights include "With Strength I Burn," "Curse You All Men!" and of course, "I Am the Black Wizards," which surprisingly appeared as the third song in the set. Also tagged on the end is the music video for "The Loss and Curse of Reverance." This is a video for Emperor fans old and new.



As On a Darkling Plain

## Ten Jinn

*As On a Darkling Plain*  
(InsideOut Music America)

This is a massively cool release! If the general music-buying public wasn't made up of brain-dead teens and "adults" in their early twenties that think that KID ROCK and LIMP BIZKIT are good music (I use the term "music" loosely in this case), then a band of the caliber of Ten Jinn would get the recognition they deserve. Sadly, music of this quality is well above the heads of the masses, so Ten Jinn will have to settle for being lauded by those few of us that appreciate Progressive-styled Rock/Metal. *As On a Darkling Plain* is Ten Jinn's second release, and at the forefront of the disc is an eight-part, 40-minute title track that is based upon ideas set forth by novelist Anne Rice in her novels *The Vampire Lestat* and *Queen of the Damned*. Oddly enough, with vampires as the main subject matter for this work, the music is rather light-hearted overall. There are darker elements to be sure, but the music does have a playful feel. He may consider it an insult, but vocalist/keyboardist John Paul Strauss strikes me as playing the part of a court jester (or similar) during his performance on the title track. His vocal style gives one the impression of a malevolent tour guide, or better yet, a ringmaster for some diabolic circus. The vocals are rather "airy" and hearken back to the light-hearted statement from earlier, but there's an undertone of something darker beneath. The keyboard playing of Strauss and fellow bandmate Bob Niemeyer add to the carnival atmosphere with plenty of calliope-style passages, though these too have a demonic hint. The backing vocals are superb, adding another element to Strauss' "tour guide" style for this multi-layered song, and there are plenty of instances where the band uses haunting vocal/special effects to further the story, but without losing the light feel. The phrase "Neo-Progressive" probably fits Ten Jinn's music better than any singular term, but they do have song structures that wouldn't be out of place in other Prog-related bands, ranging from

straight-ahead Proggers like SPOCK'S BEARD to master Prog-metallists, DREAM THEATER. "Theater of the Vampires" is a short instrumental that has classical style piano amongst its "carnival of the damned" leanings, which flows into a fantastic five minute piece called "Those Who Must Be Kept," which I almost swear is the sequel to ELTON JOHN's instrumental "Funeral For a Friend," which opens his classic 70's tune, "Love Lies Bleeding." Don't laugh... "Funeral For a Friend" is a great Progressive-influenced song that showed ELTON's great piano work during that time period. Another influence for Ten Jinn, in my opinion, is the legendary QUEEN, which shows in the various vocal styles used by Strauss and Co., as well as the proficiency at which they traverse the spectrum of Rock music. Don't look at me like that; yes, I said QUEEN. They may not have been considered Progressive Rock (or even Metal), but they sure did have all of the corresponding elements. Once you get through the title track (I won't go into the lyrics, just turn out the lights and listen to this cool vampire tale for yourself), there's still thirty minutes of music left on the remaining six tracks. "Lost in the Money" is another playful, light rocker that speaks of greed, while "Rock" seems to be an analogy comparing the skipping of a rock in water with the evolution of man. "I Can't See"



further shows Strauss' jester-style vocal delivery and the final cut, "Lay Down Beside Me (In the Rain)" is more a straight-forward Rock song with Progressive leanings. Of note to Prog Rock fans is the fact that handling guitar duties with Michael Matier (who also plays midi guitar) is Stan Whitaker, who used to play in HAPPY THE

MAN, and currently also plays in SPIRIT NOISE. A quick hurrah to the rhythm section of Mark Wickliffe (drums) and Matt Overholser (bass/stick) who hold down Ten Jinn's bottom end with great musical dexterity. To finally shut myself up, let me recommend one of the best releases of this past year to any fan of intelligent Rock of the Progressive variety. A monster of a disc... Contact Ten Jinn through either their own website, [www.tenjinn.com](http://www.tenjinn.com) or through InsideOut's site at [www.insideoutmusic.com](http://www.insideoutmusic.com).

## Vanden Plas *Far Off Grace* (InsideOut Music America)

Germany's Vanden Plas usually gets lumped into the "DREAM THEATER clone" category, which I guess could be appropriate for just about any Prog Metal band, but unlike most of the bands that are labeled as such, Vanden Plas rises above it, in my humble opinion. VP has been releasing full-length CDs since '94 and has had the same line-up since 1990, so it's not like the band hasn't evolved on their own. *Far Off Grace* contains further proof (following 1997's excellent *The God Thing*) of what I believe is the main reason why they can stand out from the DT

## Enochian Crescent *Omega Telocvovim* (Avantgarde Music)

Pure darkness escapes the grasp of this Finnish Black Metal band; half of the riffs are downright happy in parts, not to mention fucking boring! The production is solid, which gives them a nice aggressive edge to their music, but unfortunately, they failed to take full advantage of it. My biggest complaint is with the vocals. I cannot help but thinking of a small child trying to do Black Metal. In short, the vocals are very weak and empty, even sounding as if someone crushed his testicles on the screams. The clean parts lack all sense of power and his voice cracks. Although Enochian Crescent is a band that has some musical ability, the pure musicianship is still very much lacking. *Omega Telocvovim* isn't an album to run out and buy unless you wish to inflict torment on others, but if that's the case, buy some Pop or Rap.

clones: singer Andy Kuntz. This guy has a unique sound; it's not the cleanest vocal style around, and he doesn't show the greatest range, but I'll be damned if he doesn't fit perfectly with VP's music. Kuntz' above-average, higher pitched style effortlessly seams into the band's music. The main problem I have noticed with most Prog Metal bands that have come along since DT set the standard is that the vocalist cannot match the band's technical ability. This is not the case with Vanden Plas. Musically, *Far Off Grace* does use the "standard" Prog Metal formula of crunching guitars wrapped around melodic piano/keys work, with those louder guitar parts usually showing up in the choruses. "Into the Sun" has some very good DT *Fill*-era keyboard playing, while "Don't Miss You" is a beautiful ballad driven by Kuntz' vocals and Gunter Werno's keyboard playing, although lyrically it takes the opposite viewpoint of most "love" songs of a slower nature. The promo copy of *Far Off Grace* identifies nine tracks on the CD, so imagine my surprise when I think I get to the end of the disc and hear the opening refrain to a song from my head-banging days with the hair bands of the mid 80's. Vanden Plas does a killer version of DOKKEN's "Kiss of Death," which sounds even better with the Prog-style keyboards. For those of you that may be getting burned out on Progressive Metal because too many bands copy DT instead of trying to take that style of music and add their own stamp may wish to check out Vanden Plas for a pleasant surprise. More information on this fine band can be found at their label's website: [www.insideout.de](http://www.insideout.de).

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# October Thorns

Words by Tom J. Hughes

Images by Tom J. Hughes and Heather Smith

*Paul Laplaca, the lead vocalist for one Progressive Metal's fastest growing bands, October Thorns, proved to be quite the insightful person in this interview. While we talked about many important things that have or are currently affecting the Metal scene today, the most important thing he stressed to me was that we're all in this Crusade together. "Just because I'm the singer shouldn't mean that I get to do all the interviews and receive all the credit," he told me. He's extremely proud of all the band members of October Thorns and all that they as a band have achieved together, collectively as one unit. Camaraderie is the key, and if it wasn't for a group effort on the part of many different people, no one would get anywhere with anything. It's that spirit of camaraderie that all Metalheads should have in supporting the Metal scene so that it can grow and develop, affecting more and more and more people in more and more profound ways. Competing with one another will never get us anywhere, and it will only bring down the scene. Record labels, bands, magazines, and fans all need to work with each other, not against each other, for it is only through mutual support of one another that our illustrious Metal scene will grow and improve. For more information on this great man and his amazing band, visit the October Thorns web site at [www.minea.com/ot](http://www.minea.com/ot). Also, check out <http://members.aol.com/~MIPProg> for October Thorns MP3's, as well as MP3's for other unsigned bands.*



**Promethean Crusade:** So you're pretty tight with Jack Koshick. What's up with the dude? Is he just a money-grubbing guy, promoting all these shows or is he really into the Metal?

**October Thorns:** Well, it's kind of complicated. He's really suffered for what he's been trying to do. My feeling from him is that, there's this guy who really doesn't seem like he has a lot of money. I mean you look at him-- maybe he's doing it on purpose so people don't accuse him of being wealthy from all these shows, but I don't think he's making a huge buck off this. And I'm pretty sure he's not into every single band that plays his events because most of them suck! It's a fucking nightmare: two days of barking dogs. I mean, yeah, I'm sure he doesn't care about the junior high school band that had mommy give them \$1000 to play on his stage, but if I was Jack and someone was handing me a grand, I'd be like, "Yeah, I'll put you on." You pay to play, and that's fine. But I think that the impression I got from him is he's truly a Metal fan, and he started talking to me about TALAS, what I grew up on because I'm from just south of Buffalo, so he started singing fucking "Sink Your Teeth into That!" and I'm like, "Whoa, this guy is for real!" You know what I mean, because when I first met him, he looks like your dad. He's in his forties, kind of overweight, he's kind of bulky, and you're like, "What the hell do you know about Metal? You're just doing this to fuck the kids." I think that's the wrong impression.

**PC:** So what's up with October Thorns? You guys recording anything?

**OT:** Yes, as a matter of fact we're in the process of mixing it, and I think we have like seven or eight songs all together. Probably by the time this interview gets printed, we'll have had some sort of release party and it'll be available.

**PC:** So what's up with this X-Fest you're putting together? It sounds very intriguing.

**OT:** You're releasing this in March, right? Well, you're going to be the first to hear about this officially, but as of right now, nobody in my band knows about this yet; I've been keeping it a secret. Basically, it's been real grassroots and word-of-mouth: finding out who manages who and getting in touch with them. So I got SYMPHONY X, PLANET X, ICED EARTH, ICE AGE, MOONSPELL, AMORPHIS, THE KOVENANT **PC:** Holy shit! I'm so fucking there!!

**OT:** I know, it's like so great! But the thing is I got all these

people and they're willing to do this, but I have to find some way of getting a real promoter to take care of this because it's way out of my hands. There's no way I can do this because it's definitely for real. I mean, I'm a musician trying to put together a show, and you wanna have someone who is a promoter and who has years of experience that can really deal with the legal issues and the contracts. So now it's just a question of getting this package to the right people and selling it to them. I know I can get a lot of interest in this and they just have to be willing to pay the money, because the bands aren't charging that much and they're being very reasonable when you look at the overall scheme of things. So I'm thinking that this could really be nice because New York has never really seen anything like this; there's never been a Prog Fest here and there's never been a multiple-band night like this. I'm really excited about it, and all I have to do now is get the promoters involved. And the thing that's really important is the word-of-mouth, because I have bands calling me, even Jim Pitulski from InsideOut, and they're saying they heard of something going on and they want to know about it, so there's a real buzz going around.

**PC:** Speaking of a buzz, I'm hearing you guys' name being mentioned here and there, getting in this 'zine or on that web page. You're opening for a lot of different bands, playing out to lots of people; I mean, you opened for MOONSPELL and IN FLAMES, two bands that sound nothing like you! Were you pleased with that show? The crowd didn't seem too into you. Is it even wise to play shows like that?

**OT:** Yeah... I know what you're saying... When we played Milwaukee, the crowd response was overwhelming. I never saw anything like that, especially from a crowd of strangers. So that's what you hope for, and if it's anything less than that, you're a little disappointed. But at the same time, we don't expect that much and we know we're playing in front of two great bands and that we're the opening band and that we're going to get the arms folded; there's no problem with that. We want the approval and support, but we're there to have a good time and put on a good show, and if people come along for the ride, everybody's welcome. If not, we'll see you later.

**PC:** You have a very strong IRON MAIDEN-type of sound, so I'd think people would really be digging you.

**OT:** That's cool! I haven't heard that from too many people because we mostly get the DREAM THEATER thing.

**PC:** Well that's definitely not a bad thing! I can hear a combination of the two...

**OT:** I think we're definitely getting more aggressive as we progress, and certainly over the year or so that we've been together we're starting to pick up on each other's influences. The younger guys in the band are definitely into more of the Death Metal scene and we've been playing these Death Metal shows, and it rubs off on you. You play all these festivals and you see a hundred bands playing this style of music, you start to glean the stuff that turns you on about it like the growling or the blast beats; you get into that kind of stuff. And then from my background which is completely Prog and song oriented, we start formatting that stuff into something that makes sense and something that has a certain structure to it that is acceptable to the mass market. It's not conscious, but those different elements come together, and I'm glad that you mentioned MAIDEN, because we're trying to get away from that DREAM THEATER comparison.

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PC: You mentioned the mass market, and that makes me a little uneasy. Your music is Progressive and melodic, you've got great, powerful vocals, but that type of music isn't exactly making waves in the American Metal scene. In trying to appeal to this mass market, you don't want to incorporate all this heavy stuff, making yourself more edgy or popular, compromising your sound just so you can gain a larger following. I mean, there's a line between integrity and compromise, between staying true to your art and selling-out. You know where I'm going here?

OT: Yes. We're definitely aware of the fact that heavy music right now, the stuff that is popular, is a hybrid with Hip-Hop, along with some Hardcore or Punk atmosphere as well. It's all a little simplistic, and as much as I enjoy some of that blending-- well, in a way, something like KORN or even KID ROCK, all that is kind of progressive; you're taking those very diverse elements and making them one style. That's kind of my definition of Progressive music, where your making things work that don't necessarily go together. So we look at that and

that's cool, but for us to jump on that bandwagon would be ridiculous. It's not in us to play that style and we're not an urban kind of group; it's not our background and it's not our environment. We know what's out there and we know what's selling right now and we know that to do that would be wrong because it's just not in us. Even if it was something we could play, no one would feel it because it's not from the heart. So, yeah, we're nervous and we look at shit and wonder what we're going to do because we're not purists to the point where we're going to stick to our guns. We all want to make music that people want to hear, so we're trying to walk that line where we don't want to sell out our integrity, but at the same time we don't want to be playing to only three people saying, "Hey, I've got my vision and nothing else matters."

PC: Yeah, it is a very fine line... "nothing else matters..." Reminds me of METALLICA. But after what you just said, I don't know if they sold out so much as they progressed. I mean, you can't play *Master of Puppets* forever; you have to progress and

OT: Now you're hitting a raw nerve with me by mentioning METALLICA. To me, progression for METALLICA should've been... well, listen to TESTAMENT's new album [*The Gathering*] or something brutal like that. That is progression. Just think of where METALLICA could've gone from... *Justice*. Can you imagine if they would've kept on going and breaking those boundaries, and instead they stepped back and wrote stuff that was more song oriented. And God bless them, because they have every right to do that. If you tour... *Justice* for two years you're gonna get tired of that style of music; anybody would. But I don't care for the new style; I think it's boring, it's not vicious, it's contrived. It's like with every one of his little grunts, "Yeah, YEAH!" I just wanna throw something at him! But I look around and I hear some of these bands who have taken the... *Justice* style and have broken barriers, like MESHUGGAH. You can hear METALLICA's influence there, but it's like Mach 10! So I don't see

METALLICA selling out either, so much as they have carried the flag of Metal for so long that they just passed it on. They were at a point where they could've shoved Metal down people's throats, because once "One" hit MTV, they exploded. The next album could've been vicious and people would've still bought it, but instead they put out the Black album and played Rock songs.

PC: Well, I'm not defending them, but I do say that you need to grow as a band.

OT: Right, and I agree. Look, they did an amazing thing for music and are historical, and if they feel like they want to play a different style of music because they're tired of the older stuff, they have every right-- but I don't have to buy it!

PC: So getting back to your band, you guys have been together only a year or so?! It's amazing all the press and publicity you're garnering, not to mention the tightness and unity you guys convey up on stage. I would've thought you'd been around longer than that.

OT: Well, you've really got to credit Dave Pando because he's been doing Catalyst Promotions for four years. He's very young, but he's got a business head on his shoulders like you wouldn't believe. The band had been without a singer for about two or three months, so we're counting the time that I joined the band as the year marker, but when I joined they already had two or three songs written. So when I first started he was, like, right there, and we already had gigs booked during the first week of rehearsal! The March Metal Meltdown was right around the corner, which was our second or third gig, and man was that something else when we hit that stage. We got out there and it was big! We got to play the main stage and that was a kick in the pants for us. And we had, like, a level jump at that point because after that, no one really wanted to play the bars and I

had to pull people back and say, "Wait a minute," because they're so young! The guitar player was sixteen at the time, two nineteen year-olds, twenty-two, and twenty-three, and was like, "Wait a minute guys, you need to play the bars. You need to make sure that you're making your mistakes in a place that doesn't matter so much." I mean, every gig matters, but you don't want to be out there on stage in front of 2,000 people at a Metal festival and have a string break and go, "Uh, I didn't remember my E-string," because at that point I'll kill you! So, yeah, we've been playing the festivals but at the same time I've been pushing for us to play the smaller gigs, to play as many times as possible, just to learn that sense of what you need physically to put on a good show and how you need to be prepared. You don't learn those things strongly enough until you fuck up; you never remember until you stub your toe. You've got to really hurt yourself and say, "Oh man, was that embarrassing!"

And we had a few of those nights where we were late for a gig or we forgot equipment, but through that we really tightened up as a band and we got our professionalism together, and now I feel we're ready for that next step.

PC: Are you gaining interest from any labels?

OT: Not too much. We've gotten a few independents, and I've definitely got some connections with some of the bigger independents who I want to get the press kit out to soon, but at the same time, we're mature enough to know that we're not ready for it yet. There's still things we need to go through as a band and as people, to develop, to be ready for that, because you don't want to be hit with a record contract and then go out there and fall on your face. There are too many things that can go wrong, and you have to get your bearings, and that only comes through experience.

PC: Understood, you don't want to move too fast. What are your main goals for the band, then?

OT: We definitely have things we want to accomplish and we're very ambitious about where this band should head. We're not leaving anything to chance and it's something that is very well thought out. We're hitting some brick walls in certain situations and trying to figure out what we did wrong or why something ended up a certain way, and we're trying to not let our downfalls or failures negatively affect us. Yeah, we've made a big mistake there, but that's good, because now we've learned something from it. But it's hard because there are so many things; you think you're on the right path and you think you've created a buzz and you're doing the right thing, and you go out to some of these shows and there's four people there. You take a step back and say to yourself that we're not as hot as we thought we were.

PC: It's a humbling experience. This magazine is going through that, too. I mean, we get all this positive feedback and everyone wants to distribute for us and we get all these great letters, but then we go out and try to get something going with this label or that distributor or publicist and they don't even give us the time of day. But anyway, don't want to get too far off track... earlier we talked a little bit about the American Metal scene. How do you see it in comparison to what's going on over in Europe? Our festivals only gather thousands, while their festivals attract tens of thousands of Metalheads.

OT: That's interesting because when I was growing up, Metal was MAIDEN, OZZY, and PRIEST. As I got older I heard *Master of Puppets* and I flipped. But once Grunge hit, there was no American Metal scene. There was certainly an underground following with Death Metal and such, but I would have to say that the European stuff especially the Swedish stuff like ARCH ENEMY, IN FLAMES, MESHUGGAH-- there's definitely something going on over there that we don't have; they've got something special. In terms of American Metal, I don't really see anything out there. Well, NEVERMORE, ICED EARTH, that's American Metal.

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PC: And I don't want to start a controversy, but it has been on my mind recently, this whole America vs. Europe thing. You know, living in a Capitalistic society where everyone's out for the almighty dollar, that society's art is going to suffer because integrity gets thrown out the window.

OT: Yeah, and I'm wondering if it is a cultural difference because if you look historically at something like Prog, let's narrow our scope a bit, early GENESIS, YES, and ELP were considered Top 40 over on the Italian charts, which is what I was looking at. And if you look at our charts in the same time period, I don't know who was topping the charts, but it certainly wasn't those bands. You know what I mean? I think there is a big cultural difference where people in Europe appreciate more so a technical mastery of one's instrument. We really don't have that here, and I hate to jump on the bandwagon and make fun of the new bands, but there really isn't a whole lot of virtuosity. And the only time we did have it was in the 80's and that was because of the Neo-Classical stuff, but that got to be so boring because people got tired of all the...

PC: hair spray?

OT: Yeah! The flashy guitar playing without any substance was very damaging to that whole movement. One YNGWIE is great, but twenty are bad. And twenty bad YNGWIEs with no heart is awful!

PC: Flashy guitar solos with no soul... yeah, once NIRVANA hit the scene, that certainly changed everything.

OT: It's a tough call, too, because the whole Grunge thing was a reaction to all that Glam stuff. And this was my whole time period, too, because I was in a Prog band at the time and we hated the hair spray bands. We hated CINDERELLA and DEF

LEPPARD and all that stuff. We were like, "When is music going to turn around?" And I told everyone in the band that it all runs in cycles, and the next cycle that comes is going to be a reaction against this and it's going to be huge, and it's going to be Prog. These bands are just singing about girls and this other bull shit and the next wave is going to be intelligent, technical music—and it wasn't; it was the exact opposite! It was so anti-technique that I was like, "Oh no!!" But it was cool, too, because you take a band like NIRVANA and what they were saying was in effect was make a song. Make a song that means something and that feels something... and do it with three chords. Do it so that anyone can do it. And there's a certain level of technique there, as well. Can you write a song that means something, period? Do you need to make something that is technically over the top? No, you should be able to play a great song and move somebody with simplicity as well.

PC: You're right, because *Nevermind* is a great album, but like you said earlier, 20 *Nevermind* clones is just awful, and it's that mediocrity that killed Metal. I think if everyone knew the amount of work, time, and effort went into producing good art—or good anything for that matter—there would be a lot less mediocrity in the world. I mean I'm all about the music and everyone doing their thing, but there's just so much fucking mediocrity. If you're going to do something, do it right, or else it's not worth doing.

OT: Well, the bottom line is that music is all about expressing yourself, and there's a lot of average people out there. Not to be "holier than thou," but it's like everyone has a right to express how they feel, which is what they're doing throughout the music. And if you cringe, it's just because that's who they are, which is not who you are. You can't make someone deeper than what they are. They are

expressing to them what is the depths of their soul, so you gotta respect that. Even the Pop Rock of RICHARD MARX back in the 80's, which really annoyed me, someone is buying his albums and someone is experiencing the depths of his soul through his music, and you gotta respect that. Even if it's Rap or Hip-Hop, you know, stuff that is completely foreign to me, but it's speaking to someone somewhere on some level.

PC: So you prescribe to a "to each his own" type of philosophy?

OT: Yeah, just don't play it in my car!!



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# The Man, The Myth, The Legend: Jack Koshick



By Paul Laplaca

*Unless you've been living in a cave during the past couple of years, you've surely noticed that Jack Koshick, mastermind behind the entity that is the Milwaukee Metalfest, has expanded his one show into many across the United States. While last year's first foray into this new series, New Jersey's March Metal Meltdown, was met with initial success, last month's second Meltdown was a dismal debacle (interesting side note: this interview was conducted before the aforementioned event). Last year's first annual November to Dismember in San Antonio, Texas was only moderately successful (and that's a conservative opinion), and we have yet to see a Mayhem in May in Los Angeles. This candid interview, conducted by none other than the vocalist for Brooklyn-based Prog-rockers OCTOBER THORNS (who have performed at the last three shows in Koshick's Metal Mania Series) allows Jack to talk a little bit about how the Metal Mania Series came to be what it is today. It also gives him a chance to defend himself against some of the fire he's been under these past few months.*

**Promethean Crusade:** How did you get involved with promotions?

**Jack Koshick:** Actually it's something I've always wanted to do. I remember seeing my first show and just knowing it was something I wanted to be a part of. I've always been a fan first and foremost.

**PC:** Are you a musician as well?

**JK:** No, I wish I was (laughs).

**PC:** What was the first show you attended?

**JK:** It was in 1967 before Metal: Gary Puckett and the Union Gap. I've wanted to do my own shows from the very beginning.

**PC:** Did you start small, doing single band shows first?

**JK:** Oh yeah. I've worked hard for it. The first Metalfest was fourteen years ago and we had to start small. I've always been completely responsible for paying the bands and taking the risk. It's brutal; more times than I can remember things have fallen apart.

**PC:** What happened in Texas?

**JK:** I think the problem with the Texas show [November to Dismember ~ed.] was it was the first time we had played there. But we still had people from Louisiana and Florida show up, and from all over the country really. But it's an expensive show to put on and that's the reason we ask unsigned bands to help sell tickets. If your band is worth being on that stage, then selling twenty tickets shouldn't be that big a problem. If you can't do that, then why are you wasting my time, and worse than that, why are you wasting your own time as a band?

Plus, you get a full two-day pass and get to play, hopefully, in front of several thousand of your closest friends (laughs), in front of 18-25 record labels and their A&R reps. Every year someone gets signed out of the Metalfests. You get to put it on your resume. I mean, if the only thing you've done before is open for a band called "Loaded Scrotum" (which is probably a killer band and real popular, but have never played outside of their hometown) and now you play the Metalfest and you share the stage with SOD, THE MISFITS, or SENTENCED, now you've got something to talk about.

**PC:** Yeah, for OCTOBER THORNS, we totally used that as a springboard to get into several magazines and it helped us get a lot of other shows. If you do it right, it can be a great experience.

**JK:** It's a great place to network. If your band really is something, it's a great place to show it off because the right people are there.

**PC:** What do you do the rest of the year?

**JK:** I'm a design consultant for the WWF and I do some other things, but the Metal Mania Series is a full time job.

**PC:** Who else do you have on your staff?

**JK:** Joe Arnett and Marianna Zandella have both moved on to better paying jobs, so I'm pretty much a mom-and-pop shop; I work out of my home.

**PC:** How much business training do you have?

**JK:** Well, I've managed a bunch of bands over the years, had some schooling...

**PC:** Do you have any advice for people wanting to get into promotions?

**JK:** Just jump into it with both feet. My first show I went out and got a credit card and maxed it out; I had a loss the first time through and through. I mean, I've done everything from, "Clean-up in aisle three!" to driving a bus.

You just keep pushing. I spent seven years in New York City and just carved a niche for myself in Metal. I mean, fifteen years ago I never thought I'd be

listening to music this extreme; my favorite band was TALAS.

**PC:** Yes! I'm a huge TALAS fan. [TALAS is bass virtuoso, Billy Sheehan's first band.]

**JK:** (Sings) "Sink your teeth, Sink your teeth into that!" (laughs)

**PC:** They just released a live album in Japan and still do a couple shows a year.

**JK:** I'd love to get them for a fest.

**PC:** You really should. I think they'd go over well. Getting back to that, there seems to be a history of mix-ups and cancellations associated with the fests. Have you jumped the gun in some of these cases and advertised bands before they were fully committed?

**JK:** That's not the case. Every band that we've announced or put on our website or in a flyer has been committed. Now, whether something happens where they get denied at the airport and can't get into the country or someone has a heart attack and dies, that's out of my control. You get 140 bands playing at these shows and



MOONSPELL AT  
NOVEMBER TO DISMEMBER  
PHOTO BY HEATHER SMITH

somebody is bound to drop off. A couple of years ago CORPSE was playing the Milwaukee Metalfest and their van broke down in Champaign, Illinois. There was no way they were going to make it up there. Also on that bus was the drummer from ANGELCORPSE, and they couldn't play the show either. I lost two bands that day because of truck failure. Is that my fault? You got MARDUK, they just plain did not get on the airplane and weirded out and blew off North America altogether and never told why. Is that my fault that it happened? No,

they didn't get on the plane. I'm always under attack; I've always got a damage control situation going on. Someone always jacks you on the price saying that you have an exclusive performance in North America and the next thing you know it falls right in the middle of a tour. It's happened to me several times. The only appearance of VENOM in America, period, in I don't know how many years, the same year that they headlined Dynamo they ended up getting \$40,000 plus airfare and hotel accommodations for five days; it adds up. You don't know how many times I've done a show and chased the tour bus just to say goodbye to my rent and food money for the next three months. You have to remember at the end of the day, no bands- no fans so you got to remember that. And we keep track of who did well, who got the biggest pop, who was great to work with, and who was an asshole.

**PC:** By the way, you've always had great crews. Everyone has always been very good to us at these shows.

**JK:** Yeah, it's not their first time at the rodeo. They've done a lot of shows.

**PC:** We had a great time in Texas. We all ended up at the same hotel with you and your staff, as well as MOONSPELL and IN FLAMES. It was cool to see you in a more relaxed setting.

**JK:** Yeah, we had a good time.

**PC:** What do you think your biggest accomplishment has been so far?

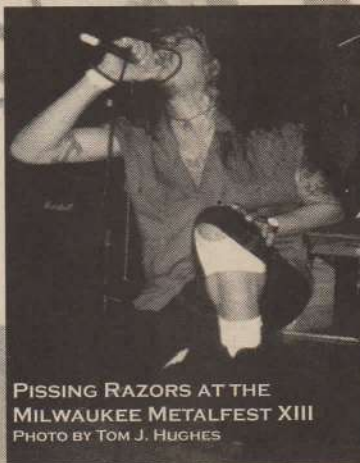
**JK:** You mean besides my daughter (laughs)? Besides my family, I would probably have to say the first Metalfest. I'm very proud of that. Any one really.

**PC:** Are you going to continue with the four shows per year?

**JK:** We're going to see how this year went before planning next year. We're trying to give ourselves 3-4 months between shows and that's not a whole lot of time. We've got really big plans and we're looking at some of the biggest headliners that we've ever had. We will probably go with three for now. The Mayhem in May show had to be rescheduled due to changes in the buildings insurance policy. The LA show has been moved to November but we haven't given up on Texas yet. We enjoyed a modest success in NJ and just hope to keep this series growing.



IN EXTREMO AT THE  
MARCH METAL MELTDOWN II  
PHOTO BY CHRIS GULCZYNSKI



PISSING RAZORS AT THE  
MILWAUKEE METALFEST XIII  
PHOTO BY TOM J. HUGHES

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It's somehow fitting that this interview was conducted in the vast wasteland that we humans have christened "Cyber-Space," considering the technology implemented on the nine cuts of insanity that Agoraphobic Nosebleed provided for The Poacher Diaries. Along with fellow Grinders CONVERGE, Agoraphobic Nosebleed have given the Grindcore community a seminal offering. If you believe the whole world is a conspiracy and all that you've been told is one huge fabrication perpetuated by our government in conjunction with the religious right, some may call you paranoid, but not me— not after the revaluation of The Poacher Diaries. The following is my correspondence with the man at the nerve center of all the answers, Scott Hull. Prepare yourself...

# Agoraphobic Nosebleed

## Welcome To The Nerve Center

By Keith W. Sullivan

Promethean Crusade: For the sake of our readers, let's get this out of the way: Who/how did you come up with the name Agoraphobic Nosebleed? Were you just juxtaposing bizarre words together?

Agoraphobic Nosebleed: We were playing Scrabble, and these were the letters that I had left and in order to validate my claim that it was a legitimate term, so I had to figure out something that actually had that name. So I started a band. It's much better than what the Ouija board told me, which was Lycanthropic Vaginal Midget Halitosis, which I felt was kind of a mouth full (heh heh).

PC: On the split with COALESCENCE, the in-between song samples, was it a case of "they get their choice and you get yours," or was it a collective effort between the two groups to keep a flow going to the CD?

AN: We didn't discuss any of the material, including samples, between bands. All members of each band signed non-disclosure agreements saying that no information would be leaked. One member, who I won't mention, will be shitting in a bag for the rest of his life for merely saying one of the words in one of the songs out loud in Chili's.

PC: I've never been a fan of drum programming, but I've never heard programming such as yours: it's insane to say the least. What kind of equipment do you use and what inspires you?

AN: Drum-machine bands are important because fast, tight drummers are the hardest fucking people to find. The elements of home recording and drum machines change the WAY music is written and produced and experimented upon. With any experiment, it's either successful or not. What inspired us to use a drum machine was 1) the lack of a good drummer and the impatience to find one, and 2) the ability to program exactly the drum patterns I want to use phrase by phrase, note by note, with exactly the right time sig./tempo changes I had in mind. It's sort of one step closer to having total control over the vision. These aren't songs: they're meticulously engineered machines.

PC: What are "The Poacher Diaries?"

AN: Beats me. Ask CONVERGE. I didn't know that was what this thing was going to be called until my copies showed up on my doorstep.

PC: I've noticed a lot of Grindcore and Noise-core coming from the Northeast lately. What's going on up there to inspire so much rage?

AN: I know what you're talking about; it does seem like the Northeast has a bitter slant to it. Maybe because of the high level of impatience and frustrations which are the underpinnings for life in Northeastern cities. Maybe we smoke too much.

PC: Are you disappointed that the New Year didn't bring the apocalypse?

AN: Well, I don't know what it is like in your area, but around here...

PC: So I see you'll be having drummer Dave Witte for some live performances. Now how the hell is he going to be able to pull off your INSANELY complex drum patterns? Will you be utilizing a drum machine along with a live drummer?

AN: I've practiced once with Dave. He's got a couple of tricks up his sleeve that enables him to pull off some of that shit, but we are in NO rush to get out and play. He lives in NJ, I live in DC, and Jay lives in Boston. All of this equals a huge logistical nightmare for practicing and shows.

PC: So what do you guys do other than create soul raping music?

AN: Jay has a piercing and tattoo studio up in MA. I lift weights and hang out with my bee-atch. JR sits at home and hates everything a lot.

PC: If it were offered, would you do a split 7" with The Backstreet Boys?

AN: Fuck yeah. Why, are you offering? We're much better looking. Not to mention the fact that we all have penises.

PC: Would it be fair to say that there seems to be a running theme of conspiracy and manipulation throughout *The Poacher Diaries*?

AN: Paranoia is really just a matter of heightened awareness, like when you start taking bricks out of the walls of understanding you build up around you over time. The point of Agoraphobic Nosebleed

lyrically is to deconstruct to the point where you don't even recognize yourself in the mirror. Try and see to what extent religion has been engrained in your life. Tear down everything around you that you've taken on faith over the course of your life, and you will find that most of it could be fallacy. The world is a sinister agent that needs to be turned upon itself.

PC: Let me ask the obligatory question: how do you feel about New Metal?

AN: What is New Metal and why is it capitalized? Where does it sit on the Periodic Table of Elements? Can I get cancer from it? Can I give it to children? [I believe it already has been ~Keith]

PC: I've noticed you were/are in a couple of other bands, is Agoraphobic Nosebleed your main focus now, or will you be doing other projects?

AN: I'm in PIGDESTROYER along with JR. My time is evenly split between AN and PD, but I used to do a power electronics Noise band called JAPANESE TORTURE COMEDY HOUR, but that evaporated. Jay does a

whole bunch of shit, most of which will never get off the ground. He does have a Techno project called UNHOLY BMX, which he's releasing on Satan's Pimp.

PC: Are there any plans on releasing the material from your many splits 7" in CD form?

AN: Funny you should mention that. The AN/CATTLEPRESS split is being remixed, mastered with bonus tracks, and is being readied for re-release. Everything else we've ever done will show up remixed and re-mastered as a discography sometime next year on Relapse's Underground Series.

PC: There seems to be a growing sense of technicality within the Grindcore scene. Do you see yourselves as being technical?

AN: In what sense? I mean, we are extremely technical in the sense that every note is deliberately constructed. Every time shift is planned meticulously. Fuck, I actually have to play games with the lowest common denominators to get our poly-rhythms to resolve. We are not, however, technical in the "flashy" sense. I've stopped wanting to be a flashy musician from the time YNGWIE's second album (and TONY MACALPINE's first album) came out. I really lost interest. I'm really only interested in sheer visceral energy.

PC: Where did the sound byte of "...if you build a widget in Saskatoon..." come from? I love that one.

AN: The movie *Cube*. Check out PHOBIA's latest record; they use the exact same sample. You gotta be quick when ripping off samples. It is a great sample. For me, that sample is the epitome of every crusty Punk kid's anti-government daydream, the resolution of which is the sample at the end of the song. There is no conspiracy. There is no greater good. There is no greater evil. It's nothing but a dark, black, fucking void. Oblivion.



## T.R.U.T.H.

*Deadspeak / Devoid of Life*  
(self-released)

I was listening to OPETH's *Still Life* the other day and suddenly came to the realization that I don't really need to be listening to it. I mean, I have *My Arms, Your Hearse* and *Morningrise* for crying out loud! With the exception of track four, there's no need to be listening to *Still Life* because there is really nothing new being offered. I hate to say it, but the same could be true for T.R.U.T.H. Don't get me wrong, there's nothing really wrong with the music at all; in fact, it kicks some serious ass on occasion, it's just that the band really isn't offering anything new to the scene. Let me put it this way: if OPETH never put out *My Arm, Your Hearse* and *Morningrise*, *Still Life* would rule, because there would be nothing to compare it to and the sound would be fresh, new, and completely insane. But the fact is that OPETH made no new strides with their latest release, and these two CDs by T.R.U.T.H. have been recorded by bands like PRO-PAIN already, so unless you're a dedicated Hardcore fan, I can't give them the proverbial two thumbs up. I give them one thumb up, though, for their thought-provoking lyrics, excellent production, and overall intense sound, but to warrant that extra nod of approval, you need something more, something over the top to transcend the average. The band definitely doesn't suck, but they aren't the sound of the future either. Hardcoreheads should definitely get in touch with them, for I've spoken to a couple of them and they dig T.R.U.T.H.'s sound (their moniker is an acronym for True Reality Undoes The Hatred; pretty darn creative if you ask me, and they have the conceptual and convicting lyrics to back this statement up, too), so it's probably only a matter of time until their musical prowess catches up with their lyrical talent. Contact: T.R.U.T.H., c/o Keith Coombes, 903 Custer, Cheyenne, WY 82009 or e-mail them at [keith@truthwy.com](mailto:keith@truthwy.com). [www.truthwy.com](http://www.truthwy.com).

truercalityundoesthehatred



## HammerFall

*The First Crusade* (video)  
(Nuclear Blast)

HHHAAAMMMEERRRFFAAALLLLLLL, WWWEEEEEEEEEEEEEE WWWIIIIIIIIIIII PPRREEVVVAAIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIII OK I just had to get that out of my system. Does it not seem as if HammerFall have been around forever? In reality, though, they have only been with us a little over three years now, in which time they have released two proper lp's and three ep/singles. Now, HammerFall have released their first long-form video, *The First Crusade*. The proceedings begin much like the two *A Year and a Half in the Life of METALLICA* videos do, with a steel smith fashioning the band logo out of a glowing-hot metallic substance. This is followed by an introduction by the two gentlemen that will be your hosts throughout the next 81 minutes: Oscar Dronjak and Joacim Cans. For the first proper music clip, "Steel Meets Steel," Oscar and Joacim take us

back through time to May 11, 1996, to witness the very show that landed them their first record deal. As Oscar states, it was Joacim's first show with the band, and the only show preformed with the *Glory to the Brave* line up. A couple of things I find intriguing about this clip are the alternate set of lyrics used (at one point Joacim sings something about "the silence of the lambs") and INFLAMES' six stringer, Jesper Stromblad, beating the piss out of the drum kit. The clip has its sure place in Metal history, and had the video ended there I would have considered my \$15.00 well spent... aaahhhhh... but this is only the beginning! The first of two videos for the song "Glory to the Brave" is the next piece of Metal to bless the television screen. I acutely like this version

(that happens to be the last appearance of Fredric Larson as a member of HammerFall) much better than the "more professional" version of the video, no matter what the band has to say on the matter. It should be noted, however, that the professional version is done in the "pop-up" video manner, in that it states various facts about the band members throughout the video; I found that to be a nice touch. Next up is the video clip for the Metal anthem "HammerFall." This clip is so 80's it hurts. Every cliché you have ever seen in videos from that era is utilized. The culmination of the clip turns out to be the Dreaming-girl-wakes-with-proof-of-visit-to-dreamland scenario, a la QUIET RIOT (remember the Metalhead waking with the mask). Considering that HammerFall is a band that revel in the virtue of decades past, the video is in complete harmony with the 80's vibe that the band, and fans of the band, find so entrancing. The proceedings continue with Magnus Rosen's actual audition video that he sent to the band as proof of his "skills."

There are several live clips that spring forth throughout *The First Crusade* some good, some bad, and some ugly. The good: during "Ravenlord," Andy Muck of STORMWITCH, is shown in his grand entrance inadvertently pulling the cord from the microphone (lovingly pointed out with an arrow and the word, "oops"). The bad: "Stone Cold" from the Dynamo festival '98. Besides the poor sound quality provided to the band, Joacim forgets some lyrics and ops to "scat" the melody line out. But hey, at least it wasn't doctored in a studio after the fact (METALLICA - *Live Shit Binge and Purge*). The ugly: the two ACCEPT covers of (featuring Udo Dirkschneider) "Head Over Heals" and "Balls to the Walls." I never really got into ACCEPT all that much and I find the recent ACCEPT worship a little excessive. It's clear, however, that HammerFall adore the band and it must be a dream come true for them to play with their boyhood idols. Outtakes, commercials, parties, and just about anything a fan of HammerFall could ever hope for is included on this video. My love for HammerFall's brand of Metal-praising anthems knows virtually no boundaries. Long may the Templers reign. May I close by saying, "A Metal heart is hard to tear apart."

## Diabolicum

*The Grandeur of Hell*  
(Napalm Records)

Diabolicum describe themselves as Infernal Industrial Black Metal Art. That pretty much hits the nail on the head. But at the same time, it is more than vaguely reminiscent of the description EMPEROR printed on the back of *Anthems...* (except for the Industrial part). *The Grandeur of Hell* is a noble under-taking to say the least, combining blasting electronic drums, synths, and sequencing with all the standards you have come to love in Black Metal, i.e. evil processed vocals, ultra-fast riffs, and the occasional keyboard interlude. Sounding at times like SATYRICON or even DAEMONARCH, *The Grandeur of Hell* unfortunately either did not arrive at the right time or does not have the unique qualities of those two bands to set it firmly apart in my memory. Fans of the style should check it out, though, for it is a step ahead of what many are doing.

## Fates Warning

*Live at the Dynamo* (video)  
(Metal Blade)

This was a very disappointing video. I wanted to so much get into it, but after numerous attempts I just couldn't. It was poorly directed and produced, and overall a displeasing release. You see, I'm a big Fates Warning fan, and I would love to endorse it, but I can't. Opening with "A Pleasant Shade of Gray," they play Parts II, III, V, VI, and VII... but not Part VIII! The best part of the song!! Throughout most of this part of their set, the keyboards overpower the guitar and the vocals are sometimes too far up or too far down in the mix. It's certainly not representative of their amazing sound as evidenced on their live release, *Still Life*, which features a recording of "A Pleasant Shade of Gray" in its entirety. "The Eleventh Hour," "Point of View," "Monument," and "We Only Say Goodbye" round off the last half of the video and it doesn't get much better.

For instance, the keyboard/guitar solo in "Point of View" sounds amazing (and it is), but it's not registered unto the eyes quite as nicely as it is to the ears. I mean, this is a video, not a CD, so you should see the interchange of sounds between Matheos and Keazer (keyboardist for this set) just as clearly as it is displayed unto your ears. And on "Monument," the keyboards and bass almost overpower the guitar during the long instrumental part, and to add to this "silence," the camera never focused on the guitar solo! When an amazing guitar solo is being played, I want to see it, not just hear it! The only good thing I can say about this video is that the band seemed like they were having a lot of fun up there on stage. Joey Vera and Ray Alder got the crowd clapping and dancing around, making faces and shouting out

the essential "hey hey hey" chants. The camera showed a lot of the crowd throughout the video, which was cool, and they seemed to enjoy the set a lot; I just wish I could've enjoyed this video more.

fates warning

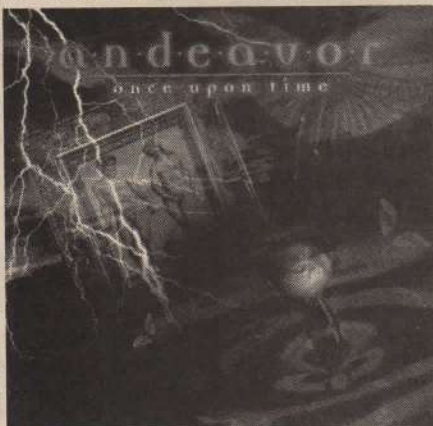


**Agoraphobic Nosebleed /  
Converge  
The Poacher Diaries  
(Relapse)**

"So here you are at the nerve center." And thus opens this split CD of grinding madness. You want speed? You want utter sonic mayhem? Look no further than Agoraphobic Nosebleed. For the first nine tracks of *The Poacher Diaries*, Agoraphobic Nosebleed take you hostage and there is no hope of a negotiator simply talking you free. With this release, Scott Hull (Hay Yo!.. I know it's Hull not Hull), Guitar/Drum Programmer, seems to be teaching the Metal world a lesson in chaos. I know some of you will cringe at the mere mention of programmed drums (I know because I'm one of ya), but hold on. I'm not talking MINISTRY, NINE INCH NAILS, or BECK drum samples here. This is more like a physics lesson from a crack-addicted Einstein! These are not "loops," but rather full, complete drum patterns of mind-blowing intricacy. Professor Hull's razor sharp guitar skills are also on display here, with passages that vary in influences as broad as DEICIDE to DILLINGER ESCAPE PLAN (and he can hold his own with either). If there's anything left after Agoraphobic Nosebleed are through with you, Converge will surely finish you off. Converge actually have a slower (at times), more pummeling pace than ANB, but that is NOT to say they are in any way less HEAVY! It's more like Converge show up to piss in the pool of blood that ANB spilled. After listening to these fifteen tracks, your brain will feel like it was scoured with a Brillo pad-- AND YOU'LL LOVE IT!!!!!!

**Andeavor  
Once Upon Time  
(Progressive Music Management)**

If Andeavor struggles along for a few years and is somehow forced to break up, then it'll be a damn shame because this one of the best straight forward Prog Metal discs I have heard in a long while. Andeavor is a band from Erie, Pennsylvania and can trace its beginnings way back to the 80's in a band called DAMIEN STEELE with guitarist Steve Matusik and Douglas Peck (vocalist/bassist in Andeavor). Joining with a few others they formed ANDROMEDA, until the mid 90's when they solidified the line-up with Steven Starvaggi on drums and Chris Rodler (LEGER DE MAIN, RH FACTOR) on keys. After a another couple name changes (one of them to the name Endeavor), Andeavor was born. These guys aren't necessarily rooted solely in the DREAM THEATER camp like most Prog Metal acts; the main similarities I can hear in the music is that the guitar-work has a RUSH feel from back in the *Grace Under Pressure* days, and Peck's vocals remind me a lot of another relative newcomer, Josh Pincus of ICE AGE. At times, Rodler's keyboard playing may lead you to think that he's been imported from Italy and used to play with any of a number of the fine Italian Prog Metal acts, because his playing has a very technical style that shows up in Italian bands like EMPTY



**Swordmaster  
Moribund Transgoria  
(Osmose Productions)**

The Swedish Terror Train returns once again to lay waste to all trend-followers with their unique brand of diabolic madness. While retaining their trademark dynamic skills as axe-masters, Swordmaster pushes the envelope, adding heightened melody and sinister atmosphere induced by bone-chilling solos, and ritualistic rhythmic harmonies. But make no mistake, Swordmaster will lay waste to your soul by encapsulating your auditory sensations with technically gruesome harmonies that not only infect your mind like a disease, but crawl into your bloodstream, paralyzing you until the inevitable end. 'Tis a frightening thought, but such is the way of Swordmaster! And Andy LaRoque's (KING DIAMOND) participation in the producer's chair only makes matters worse for you, for the man has perfected the art of making a guitar's sound clasp onto your brain and slowly eat through it until you are a mindless drone whose only reason for existence is to perpetuate the cycle and await absolution! Music should not be this suffocating, but such is the calling of Swordmaster! This is unholy Death Metal absolute!!



TREMOR and ARKHE. Rodler can handle the more melodic styles too, as evidenced on a slower tune like "Jigsaw." Andeavor creates songs that, while being powerful and showcasing technical ability, also feature very catchy chorus structures. I find that with most Prog Metal bands, you cannot always have a tune get stuck in your head to follow you around all day. Any number of Andeavor's songs will have that effect on you, though. Speaking of powerful, their nine-minute masterpiece, "House of Rags," is quite simply one of the most moving and powerful songs I have heard in years. The last time I can remember hearing a song that emotionally affected me that much was back in '89 when I first heard METAL CHURCH's "Anthem to the Estranged." Listen to Andeavor's story of homelessness and life on the streets, and try not to be impressed with its emotion-- simply brilliant. Fans of RUSH and DREAM THEATER are hereby ordered to immediately track down this disc and buy it so maybe Andeavor can get a couple-hundred thousand copies sold under its belt to further insure their days of recording. Well... what the hell are you waiting for? Buy the damn disc! Contact Andeavor through Progressive Music Management through e-mail at [lenrod@aol.com](mailto:lenrod@aol.com) or visit PMM's site at [www.velocity.net/~palaas/pmm/pmm.html](http://www.velocity.net/~palaas/pmm/pmm.html).

**Eternal Suffering  
Drowning In Tragedy  
(Extremities Productions)**

Yet another virulent Death Metal band that is not to be fucked with! Massachusetts' Eternal Suffering easily provides a viable menace to the current Death Metal community by presenting ten tracks of head-bashing, corpse-shredding, groove-soaked, explosive Death Metal... with a humorous edge! Although knee-deep in the human sewage of the album, there is no room for mercy, and *Drowning in Tragedy* is book-ended with tone-offsetting passages of dry humor. The disc kicks off with a sample of Mr. Rogers preparing you for a "...very angry..." song, where you are then catapulted into the maddening frenzy of the band's sickening brand of purulent carnage. After being bashed around, having your teeth kicked in and your chest concaved through the procession of the album, your reward for surviving is a Bonus Track! Counterbalancing the ferocity of the disc, on this eleventh track the band performs their instrumental rendition of SURVIVOR's "Eye of the Tiger" while samples from the after-school brawl movie *3:00 High* resonate throughout. Be forewarned, though, for to reach this prize, you must risk great bodily injury! Eternal Suffering is absolutely one of the young US bands that will help the Death Metal community survive well into the next Millennium, providing ample quantities of fresh blood for the sacrifice! Contact: Extremities Productions, P.O. Box 14356, San Luis Obispo, CA 93406; check out the website, [www.extremities.net](http://www.extremities.net); or contact the band directly: Eternal Suffering, 8 Off 2<sup>nd</sup> Brook Street, Kingston, MA 02364.

**Snapcase  
Designs for Automation  
(Victory Records)**

When I first listened to this album I thought I was listening to a different band. I didn't hear the tight, heavy, crunchy Snapcase that I knew. I heard rather a smoother and slightly mellower and experimental Snapcase. It is obvious after years of doing the same thing, Snapcase is trying new things. The album has an almost Post-Hardcore feel, but still very much contains the trademarked screaming that is connected with Snapcase. This is probably one of Snapcase's best releases because of it's boldness as far breaking new ground in music. Any Snapcase or experimental Hardcore fan should not ignore this album.



## Anarchy Divine *Awakening* (Demo)

The material on this demo tape was recorded way back in '96(!), so I'm not sure if this sound is representative of the band today. This was also recorded in one, five hour recording session with no overdubs or retakes. Although you can hear some mistakes throughout the course of this tape, they didn't do too bad for just five hours recording and mixing. That said, the music contained here is basically a form of Heavy Metal/Thrash which needs some work. While some of the riffs are decent, evoking memories of Bay Area bands such as early METALLICA and

## Judas Iscariot *Distant in Solitary Night* (Moribund Records)

Being the most avid and open-minded fan of Black Metal on the staff here at PC was perhaps the reason that Tom threw this disc my way. That remark was necessary in order to let all of you know that my dislike of this disc was not part of a distaste for Black Metal or even for under-produced Black Metal at that! Judas Iscariot is simply lacking in musicianship. The riffs are mundane, sloppy, two-chord blasts, while the drums are simply terrible. The drummer has no concept of rhythm whatsoever, and half the time appears to be trying to catch up to the guitars! Maybe the biggest disgrace is the blatant rip-off in the vocal department. It seems Judas Iscariot have been doing their homework in IMMORTAL class. Judas Iscariot is best summed up as a Black Metal band that is more concerned with being Black Metal than with quality songwriting. Bands like this certainly give the scene a bad reputation.

## Niacin *Deep* (Magna Carta)

Yet another "supergroup" of musicians performing technical instrumentals on the Magna Carta label. This time, however, it's not a group that was thrown together just for Magna Carta's benefit—this is Niacin's third studio release, and the first for MC. Niacin consists of ex-MR. BIG/TALAS bass player extraordinaire Billy Sheehan, Dennis Chambers (PARLIAMENT/FUNKADELIC, STEELY DAN) on drums, and laying down the main sound of the group with his Hammond B-3 organ is John Novello, who has played with MANHATTAN TRANSFER and TASTE OF HONEY among others. At this point, you might be able to guess that this isn't exactly a Metal release. All three are masters of their instruments and all are seasoned veterans of the music business. Chamber's roots are in Jazz, and he has the ability to take tunes written by Sheehan and Novello and really lay down a funky rhythm that also acts as the third voice of the trio. The trio concept is very strong on this record. Sure there are some great solos, but the overall feel is one of cohesiveness and

HEATHEN, the members of Anarchy Divine need to concentrate a bit more on improving their songwriting and lyric writing skills (some of the lyrics here are downright laughable). Two vocalists sing on this demo: guitarist/vocalist, David Piuri, sings on most of the tracks, while the other guitarist/vocalist, Keith Sullivan, sings on the songs "Written in Stone" and the title track, "Awakening." Out of the two, I enjoyed Keith's vocals more; he possesses a gruffer voice as opposed to David's, which is only so-so and lacks intensity. Both guitarists' skills are decent, although I hope they improve because the riffs and solos, while decent, never get too complex and, except for the aforementioned songs and another entitled "Executioner," none of the tracks really grabbed my attention. Anarchy

## Denial of God *Klabautermanden* (Hammerheart Records)

I was wondering if this band was still around. I was always curious to hear their debut, *The Ghouls of D.O.G.*, but never got a chance to. Well, here in front of me is Denmark's premier Black Metal band's (is that really hard to do?) new mCD, *Klabautermanden* and it is some brutal Black Metal. Denial of God consists of two members, Azter (axe) and Ustamallagam (he of the guttural, sick vokills), who describe their style as "Horror Metal." Apparently, they're supposed to have quite the interesting stage show to match that title, too. After a cool intro ("Stormvarslet"), we are immediately assaulted by the title track, which showcases a BM style which is heavier than most, kind of like a cross between BESTIAL WARLUST and IMPALED NAZARENE mixed with some breakdown sections. The third song, "Black Horror Metal" is an energetic, thrashy BM song with an Old School vibe to it, while also being somewhat anthemic. The fourth and last song is a re-recorded song called "Deathrone the Tyrant-God" and is a straight-ahead, blasting, blasphemous Black Metal attack. No Trends. Contact Hammerheart Records at P.O. Box 277, 6300 AG Valkenburg, The Netherlands. [HHR@xs4all.nl](mailto:HHR@xs4all.nl).

communication. Check out the unison lines on "Stompin' Ground" for exemplar stuff. As kind of a bone thrown to the Rock fans, Niacin performs their rendition of VAN HALEN's "Mean Streets." Billy's solo at the beginning is the kind of confident showiness that makes bassists all over the world give up and go home. Some of you may be put off by the lack of the traditional guitar, bass, drum lineup (the aforementioned Hammond B-3 takes front and center stage here), but if you're a musician of any kind, then you could probably learn a lot listening to this.



Divine, while possessing a certain charm, need to tighten up the ship, as I can't help getting the "bar band" feeling whenever I listen to this tape. If your interested, however, the cassette is \$5.00 and the CD \$17.00. Send check, MO, or well-concealed cash to Keith W. Sullivan, 1999 Marshall Rd., 1205 Spring Run Apt., Monaca, PA 15061. [liveformetal666@hotmail.com](mailto:liveformetal666@hotmail.com). [Http://www.members.aol.com/ecapiipse1](http://www.members.aol.com/ecapiipse1).



## Rapture *Futile* (Spikefarm)

Rapture have been compared to OPETH and KATATONIA, and though they fit comfortably alongside them in the melodic Death subsection of Metal, they have enough identity to stand on their own. The greatest gift music can give is emotion, to make the listener feel what the composer felt at that specific time, and to conjure new thoughts and feelings unique to each individual. It is with powerfully touching melodies that Rapture can lead the listener into a somber, contemplative state. Alternating between clean, acoustic passages and heavier, more Metal ones, one feels as if taken on a musical expedition through feeling. The peaks and valleys are not as drastic and abrupt as OPETH's are, but they are methodically produced. Also, the guitar work tends to rely more on simple, haunting melodies with rhythms that play subtly underneath instead of against the passage. There is nothing within that is overly complex, and the real beauty lies in the appeal of the work as a whole. It is apparent by simply listening that Rapture has a good understanding of music theory and composition, enough not to over-do things. This is a remarkable disc that should be experienced by all.

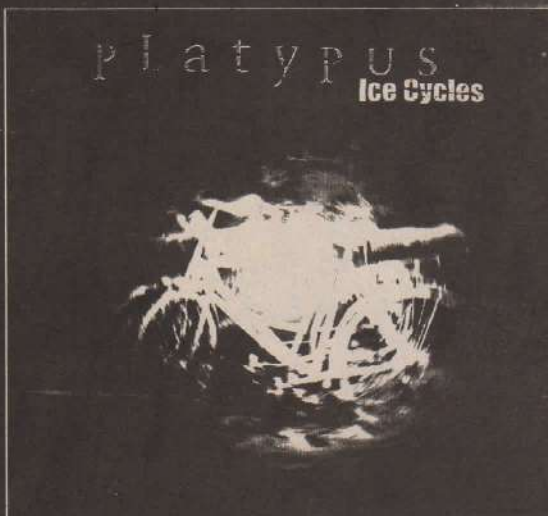
## Millennium *Angelfire* (Frontiers Records)

The production on *Angelfire* is amazingly clean. You can hear every vocal line, each guitar part, and all of the acoustic piano; everything just blends together perfectly. Millennium play a brand of music that is melodic (but never sickly sweet) and heavy (but never ponderous). To put it bluntly, Millennium play a style of Hard Rock that died out many years ago here; maybe that's why this is released on an Italian label instead of an American one. I see Millennium headlining European festivals while getting played on retro 80's Metal radio here in the US between power ballads by SCORPIONS and DOKKEN.



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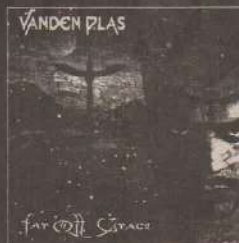
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# Arch Enemy

## The Immortal Pilgrims

By VJ Venkatesh

*The Death Metal scene, and especially the NWOSDM scene, as of late has been overpopulated with bands that spare no efforts to sound very much like a few worthy predecessors. While this results in some genuine talent and musicianship, it also leads to simply ersatz bands and some that lie unnoticed in the heap of musical output. A few bands, however, are setting their own unparalleled standards and in the process creating some compelling, extreme music. To be able to see one of those bands, Arch Enemy, and NEVERMORE (probably the best product to come out of Seattle) on the same bill led me to aural salivation. I had the chance to speak to Mike Amott and Johan Liiva from Arch Enemy minutes before their gig at the Worcester Palladium. Mike's musical accomplishments with previous bands and his technical genius with current acts Arch Enemy and 70's inspired SPIRITUAL BEGGARS leaves critics, including myself, with immense respect and admiration. Both Mike and Johan offered some great insights into their musical past, their blend of extreme music, and their take on Black Metal. He also amusingly scoffed at the idea that Chris, his younger brother, might be a better guitar player than he was! [www.archenemy.net](http://www.archenemy.net) is the site to visit for more info on the band.*

**Promethean Crusade:** Will we ever hear any of the music from your Punk Rock band with Chris?

**Arch Enemy:** [Laughs] No, no... that was just a joke really... just us fucking around...

**PC:** A lot of the lyrics and tunes seem to embrace a sort of negative energy. Is there something you look to for ideas or inspiration?

**AE:** No, not really. I kind of, you know, don't know what I look for when it comes to writing lyrics or what I use for inspiration. I guess most of it comes from personal experiences, things I've been through, and stuff like that.

**PC:** Members of IN FLAMES recently admitted that Arch Enemy was their favorite band and also the two of you [Mike and Chris] being better guitar players than they are. Are there bands in the scene that you admire in the same way, either as musicians and/or their songs?

**AE:** Boy, that's tough.... Umm, I don't know really... we've always been big fans of NEVERMORE; they're my favorite band and also on the same label as us, Century Media. In fact they're probably the only band we like on Century Media. This tour works out great for us, because me and Chris are big fans of NEVERMORE and we get to see them every night, for free, and they're really nice guys too... so... ummm, I'm not into happy sounding Metal... you know... I've always liked darker stuff so....

**PC:** Are you into Black Metal at all?

**AE:** I wish... if I could find a Black Metal band that had good musicians. Over the years I've been struggling to find a decent band and get into this whole Black Metal thing, because I really like the imagery and the things that go with it, but I just couldn't get into the music at all.

**PC:** What about DIMMU BORGIR, they are quite popular these days?

**AE:** [laughs] I don't know. They're kinda happy sounding, aren't they? I mean a happy band, don't you think so? That's what it sounded like to me when I heard them. I like bits and pieces. Some of the stuff I've heard from EMPEROR has been pretty cool, and I like IMMORTAL... what's the name of that album... *Blue Blizzard Beasts?* That was cool. Sounded a lot like MORBID ANGEL; I liked that one!

**PC:** What do you think of the Metal scene in Japan and it being so different from here and Europe?

**AE:** Its different in that Arch Enemy is the most successful extreme Metal band down there. [laughs] That's very different from here; we haven't had as much success anywhere else. Yeah, we recorded the live album down there, a couple of crazy shows in Tokyo, but we're the biggest there in Japan, which is strange really. I mean, we sell more records there than FEAR FACTORY or MACHINE HEAD; it's a totally different market down there. They know what they like: they really want extreme guitar riffing combined with some guitar melodies and harmonies, and that's what they get with Arch Enemy. Over here a lot of other stuff comes into play, like the image, saying stuff that's cool, dressing up in women's clothing, or like having red dreadlocks in your beard... piercings. They don't care about all that in Japan; they just want to hear the music, good music with fucking great

melodies, aggressive rhythms, and that's what they get with Arch Enemy. Over here, it's just a lot of other crap. You might have great music, but you have to have the right image to go with it to package it and sell it. But that doesn't matter; we're quite happy with what we do. We love playing Metal and that's it! **PC:** Given that you're kind of disappointed with the American music scene, do you think we'll get to see a package like the DT, IN FLAMES, CHILDREN OF BODOM and yourselves over here?

**AE:** I think the Metal scene here isn't as big as it used to be. We can't concern ourselves too much with what is going on here, you know? If the fans don't support or aren't into Metal as much as they support the Pop or Rap Metal

bands out here, then they won't get true extreme Metal like they do in Europe and Japan. They love it there and the market is much different.

**PC:** I know that there are bands not only from Sweden, but also from as far west as LA and even Japan that fly out there just to try and recreate that "Gothenburg sound." I fucking hate that term, but...

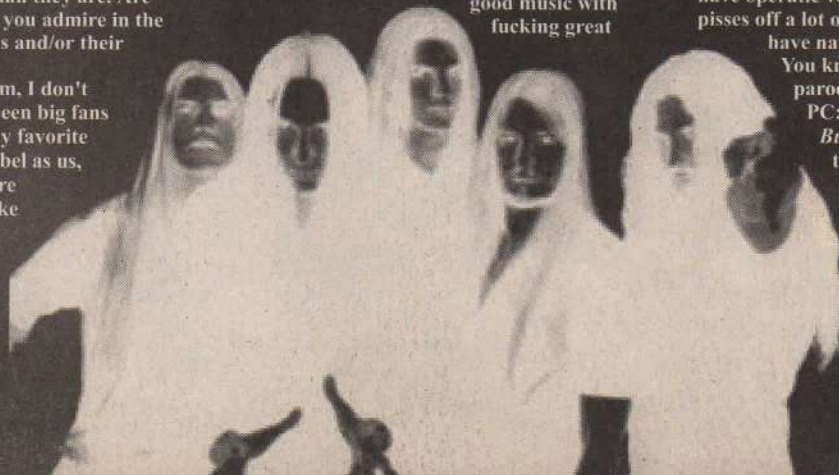
**AE:** Well see that's the thing, so far we recorded our albums there and we ended up getting an amazing sound on the records. Another band might go in there and get a shitty sounding record. You have to have the song to start with; it's not all smoke and mirrors; it's the playing, the right attitude. You can't go in there thinking that you'll get a great sound, what Fredrik does in the studio is... well, if the band plays great they'll sound great. Its as simple as that; he won't make you sound great or anything.

**PC:** Another interview of yours that I read, Mike, said that you're not that much into Death Metal anymore. Does that mean we might see a different direction on the new Arch Enemy CD?

**AE:** I don't consider Arch Enemy to be Death Metal, really. We'll always be an extreme Metal band. I don't want to be held back by any such barriers or try and fit those labels really. If someone listens closely they'll notice that it's so much more than that. We just want to be a really good Metal band. The fact that we don't have operatic vocals on our albums probably pisses off a lot of Germans, or that we don't have naked women on our album cover. You know, end up being a fucking parody of Heavy Metal.

**PC:** The songs from *Black Earth to Burning Bridges* seem to have that formula but may have gotten better, too. What's that like being a songwriter for the band?

**AE:** Well, we've come a long fucking way right? [laughs] I'm probably my biggest critic. And that always works well when you are writing songs. I'm never quite satisfied... I probably like *Black Earth* more than *Stigmata* actually.



Continued on next page



Continued from previous page

PC: Yes, I've heard that you weren't quite satisfied with *Stigmata* as a whole.

AE: [Johan] Yes, I'm definitely not satisfied with my effort on that one. I feel I could have done some of those vocals a bit differently.

AE: [Mike] Well it was just the entire recording process as a whole. The writing process and the timing for *Stigmata* was very difficult. I felt we didn't have the magic that made the first album special. It didn't quite feel the same. It did really well, though. It kinda helped establish us as a band and set us up to do *Burning Bridges*. I'm quite happy with *Burning Bridges*.

PC: Chris co-wrote some of the songs on *Burning Bridges* with you, are we going to see any songs from the other band members?

AE: [laughs out loud] No absolutely not. I mean we have such a good set up with the way it is now. We have a really good sound and that's fine.

PC: What was the songwriting process like for *Burning Bridges*? Did you and Chris work on each other's songs or did each of you come up with your own songs?

AE: Well we jam a lot. We play a lot on the guitar together. We come up with melodies, riffs and I come up with all the arrangements, write all the lyrics, the vocal arrangements stuff like that. Chris has played a bigger role in *Burning Bridges* than he has in the past. I'm not an egomaniac or anything, I think it was a lot more interesting on this one with the of us writing the songs, etc.

PC: Are you open to perhaps a different Arch Enemy acoustically? Perhaps change a few elements here and there?

AE: The main focus of Arch Enemy has always been the heaviness, the speed, and the melody. The next album won't be mid-paced with happy melodies. It'll be intense, probably the best Metal riffing you've heard and all the things you've come to expect from Arch Enemy.

PC: I guess right now there are a few bands trying to experiment amongst other things, adding orchestrations and all kinds of weird arrangements into their music, and also a few bands that stay true to their roots album after album. There are fans that would support, as well as criticize a band's decision to try either. How do you address something like that?

AE: Well we can't really care too much with what the fans have to say. I mean, at the end of the day, we have to be happy with the music we wrote and the songs we come up with. Obviously we do care about the fans as well so. All these bands you refer to, that add all these orchestrations and the choirs and excessive female vocals, if you look at the basic song you think its pretty cool, but then you look at the Metal by itself you know without all the orchestrations, its really fucking amateur stuff man; I hate that. If you can't get it done with your bass, drums and guitars, then don't do it, you know? You can't polish a turd, can you? [laughs] No matter how many layers of orchestrations and instruments you put on there, put some half naked woman up there, doing vocals or shit like that. Yeah, I'm really impressed!



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# MARCH METAL MELTDOWN

MARCH 10TH & 11TH

PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF ENSLAIN AND METAL RULES!

We really hate to say this, but this year's March Metal Meltdown pretty much sucked. It was poorly promoted, poorly organized, and poorly produced. If it were not for all the vendors, a handful of awesome bands, and the fellowship with all of our Brothers and Sisters of Metal, it would've sucked totally. So alas, there were some most excellent highlights... but the bad news first.

First and foremost, the venue was absolutely horrible. The New Jersey Expo Center just didn't cut it. Sure Asbury Park (last year's venue) might've been cold (It wasn't THAT fucking cold, though, last year... c'mon now! We're all supposed to be METAL now, aren't we?), but it was ten times better than the Expo Center. First of all, the place was hard to negotiate in. Sure, there was plenty of room to walk and stand this year... but there was hardly anywhere to SIT! At least last year we had that big hall with the seats (not to mention the giant auditorium that housed the RELAPSE stage in Milwaukee this past summer); they served as a cool vantage point to watch the bands! This year you had to scrounge your way to find a chair.

The biggest problem everyone had with the venue, though, was the room that held the RELAPSE/Meltdown Stages; it was a JOKE! A CURTAIN?! C'mon now, who's bright idea was that? Here's the situation: one semi-large room divided in half with a curtain straight down the middle separating two stages not even thirty feet from each other. This HAD to have seemed like a bad idea... so why not remedy the situation?! The room that housed the Nightfall Stage was very large, and if you took the time to explore it, you would've noticed SHITLOADS of wasted space! Plus, it's a fact that the Expo Center has removable walls that run on tracks so as to divide the large rooms up into smaller rooms with more adequacy than a mere curtain. They should've cancelled the stupid-ass wrestling that no one is even there to fucking see, put up a wall in the room that housed the Nightfall stage, and put two stages in there, leaving the smaller room as a "down-time" room for fans to take a breather, and for vendors to set up their tables in relative peace! It was great that there were vendors in every single room of the venue, but poor METAL MANIACS and RELAPSE! They had to listen to two bands playing simultaneously for the entire weekend!! Even the bands on these stages couldn't hear themselves! JACOBS DREAM had to stop their set after two songs cuz they couldn't hear shit! And VIRGIN STEELE's set suffered because they had to simultaneously play with MYSELF AM HELL! THIS WAS COMPLETE BULLSHIT!!! A big FUCK YOU goes out to Jack for allowing this debacle to take place!

Speaking of debacles, how about the shit that happened to SENTENCED!! The band flies over from Finland in their first U.S. appearance, and they get to play a whopping four songs! DON'T DO THEM TOO MANY FUCKING FAVORS!!! The organizers of the event should have had enough sense to keep the schedule running more on time than they did. BLOODSTORM and VITAL REMAINS' sets both ran overboard, and no one kicked them off the stage. SENTENCED were fucking headlining for crying out loud!! People drove

hundreds of miles to see them in particular and got thrown the shaft, hard core!! People were fucking pissed, too, and rightfully so. The coolest thing, though, was that after all the booing and screaming, many of the fans gathered in the one corner of the room where the band walked off the stage and applauded them for their stellar, yet all-too-short performance. More on them later.

Sound was another big problem that plagued many of the bands. Whoever was running those soundboards had their work cut out for them, because the acoustics in the place were horrible. To further this problem, amps kept cutting in and out and the mixing for many of the sets was way off. Sometimes you couldn't hear a band's vocals, keyboards, or bass! IMPALED NAZARENE and IMMORTAL had guitars failing on them in mid-set. TESTAMENT's sound was muddled and none of the guitar solos were audible. Of course, if you were doomed to play the RELAPSE/Meltdown stage, just forget about a flawless performance because you had to compete with another I-can-play-louder-faster-and-more-aggressive-than-you band right next to you! The Nightfall stage seemed to have the least amount of problems and the best sound overall, but of course, it could've been much better.

The following are individual summaries from each one of us here at the Crusade who attended the event and felt like sharing his views with the rest of you.

Tom J. Hughes:

So the plan was to get to the venue before 6:00 so I could check out Doom-masters, NOVEMBERS DOOM, but like most plans of mine, this one fell through. Unfortunately, it wasn't until 10:00 that I caught my first full set of any one band (snippets of others don't really count), and TWISTED TOWER DIRE fit the bill perfectly. I thought their vocalist was going to have a coronary! The dude's veins were popping out of his forehead faster than Mr. Olympia's on steroids! And the dude is short, too; he was like an explosive tin can full of dynamite. Boy knew how to wail, too, and the rest of the band, though plagued (of course) by competitors across the curtain, blitzed through a highly energized and all-too-short set with precision and emotion. Hail TWISTED TOWER DIRE!

I caught most of S.O.D.'s set, and they were thoroughly entertaining, but my main interest lied elsewhere. I wandered on over to the Nightfall Stage to get a good spot so I could check out SENTENCED. I was highly anticipating this show and the four songs they did play were amazing! Their sound was incredible, given the fact that most bands' sound was below average, and I was very impressed. Anger overcame me when they got kicked off the stage and I remember kicking over some chairs and threatening lives (since I'm not a big guy by any stretch of the imagination, you can imagine how silly this must've looked). I was soooo angry, though!! Their first appearance in the 'States

and this is how they get treated?! Jack and his organizers need to get their shit together, for this cannot ever happen again. It makes me feel ashamed to be an American. I mean, it's bad enough that Metal as a whole gets lambasted here in the 'States, but even our very own events shit on some of the finest talent that Europe has to offer! How do you expect any band to want to come over if this is how they get treated? You know how much money it costs to ship their asses over here, and then to kick them off the stage after only four songs. They're headlining the event for crying out loud! AARRGGHHH!!! I'm so angry just thinking about it! I'll shut up now...

We arrived late again on Saturday; damn plans are always falling through! I wanted to catch SOLACE IN THE SHADOWS, but my life is one constant event never happening on time because I'm always late... sorry. So the first band I ended up catching was DIVINE RAPTURE. Boy, did they kick some ass, too! There was an initial pit that started up with the first song, but the crowd settled down after a minute or so and ended up just standing there appreciatively, offering up the horns on request. Death Metal growls and high-pitched screams fused with an enormous sound and full stage presence to make for one invigorating set.

THE COLD BEYOND (formerly DEAD BY MORNING) hit the stage next, and I wasn't the only one anticipating a killer, blood bath of a show. The RELAPSE room filled up rather quickly, as people seemed eager to see what this new three-piece had to offer. To be completely honest, I thought they sounded better as a five-piece. Their sound was fuller, their stage presence was more intense, and Lord Sithicus, their vocalist, had more freedom to gallivant around stage like the raving lunatic he is! This is not to say they disappointed the crowd, or even me (just slightly), it's just that I have something to compare them to, and I now have to get used to this more stripped-down, yet highly potent sound. The band played a blistering set that never slowed down; their Black Metal onslaught was relentless, and I was drained afterwards. I don't know how they do it, but they're just so damn intense. And their fucking drummer... holy

hell!! Of course, no one can touch ANGELCORPSE's drummer, but as far as overall energy and intensity goes, Void can hold his own with the best of them. Sithicus was struggling a bit with playing the bass AND performing the vokills simultaneously, but I'm sure with time and practice he'll learn to loosen up a bit and be more potent than ever. Asylum's guitar sound was a bit muddled on the high end of things, but so was everyone else's who played this stage, so it wasn't their fault. Sound problems aside, their sheer talent, songwriting, and persona really wowed me, even though the crowd didn't really move around too much; I think they were, like me, trying to suck in this brand new Black onslaught straight from hell and wondering when these guys will get the record deal they soooo fucking deserve. Grim Hails are in order to the Black Horde that is THE COLD BEYOND!

Continued on next page



METAL RULES!  
PROMETHEAN CRUSADE:  
GOTTA LOVE THAT TUNA



THE COLD BEYOND



## IN EXTREMO

Continued from previous page

IN EXTREMO was the next band I checked out, and I think they were, hands down (but horns up!), the best band there. Their performance was absolutely flawless and so invigorating! They had a choreographed set matched by no other, and they really involved the crowd, too. People were chanting and clapping, singing and applauding, and just having a grand ol' time while the band marched and danced in time to the catchy and melodically rhythmic tunes! Their vocalist and one bagpipe player introduced each song, enlightening the crowd on the song's origin and composition, which was usually circa the 13<sup>th</sup> or 14<sup>th</sup> century! Bagpipes, lutes, and various woodwind-type instruments were combined with a modern Rock/Metallic vibe that totally drew in a huge crowd of fans; it's like going to a Renaissance Faire and hearing all the Celtic melodies and Old English tales, all while simultaneously seeing a Metal concert! You say that's impossible? Well, I challenge you to experience IN EXTREMO for yourself and try to come up with a better analogy! Anyway, they opened up with and played various tunes off of their latest release, *Verehrt and Angespien*, and played a few songs off of their debut full-length, *Weckt die Toten!* including "Ich kenne alles," "Herr Mannelig," "Pavane," "Ai vis lo lop," and "hiemali Tempore." Of course, all of their lyrics are in German or Old English, so no one could really "sing along" and understand what they were saying, but the spirit of the songs spoke for themselves and it was an emotionally moving set to say the least. By all means, contact Metal Blade ([www.metalblade.com](http://www.metalblade.com)) or go to your local record store and order these two spectacular and very eclectic releases.

The rest of the evening, for the most part, consisted of seeing bits and pieces of various bands, for there were so many I wanted to check out, but of course, due to simultaneous set times and time schedules, it made checking out a full set all but impossible; it's all very unfortunate, but until Jack figures out another way to put together a festival, this is what we have to deal with. I opted to check out VIRGIN STEELE instead of MYSELF AM HELL, but ended up "hearing" both of them anyway (that damn curtain thing again!). Despite the Death overtones bleeding through the air, VIRGIN STEELE played an amazing set, displaying their amazing talent and showmanship. It's unfortunate that a band as tremendous as they (in Europe the band is HUGE) get the shaft when they come to play in the United States (even more surprising

is that they are Americans themselves!). It will always be a mystery to me why things just seem better across the Atlantic, and I know it just can't be as simple as the grass being greener. There's a cultural thing involved; there's an appreciation and affinity for the arts in general that is just not as prevalent over here. Is it because our art is so tied to commercialism? I think so, but I think it goes even deeper than that... but I digress. VIRGIN STEELE's brand of Power/Prog Metal was indeed a wonder to behold, so contact Noise Records ([www.us.noiserecords.com](http://www.us.noiserecords.com)) and check out the amazing music you've been missing out on all these years due to your close-minded culture.

I REALLY wanted to check out DYING FETUS, but I missed them! Damn!! I heard they kicked so much fucking ass (typical of these masters of Death), and I'm glad to hear that they once again put on a killer show. Their live set is indeed a powerful juggernaut, something not to be missed by any fan of Death (unless you're a sometimes-incompetent fool, like myself), so definitely check out their shit and catch them live if you can. ANGELCORPSE knocked me out. I stood in awe of their ferocity and sheer monstrous atrocity. They definitely lifted my Metallic spirits and made up for me missing, not only DYING FETUS, but MORTICIAN, too. (Yes, I wanted to check out MORTICIAN, but remember what I said before about my plans?) I swear I thought they were gonna jump off stage and kick everyone's ass, and I was hoping that when this happened their drummer wouldn't come for me because he's quicker than a jackhammer and probably hits twice as hard!

I did manage to catch TESTAMENT's entire set, which was not without its flaws, but it was a great fucking show nonetheless. The only problems I had were that the sound was muffled, the vocals were too low in the mix, the guitar solos were inaudible, and they didn't get to finish their finale (nightmares from the previous night's debacle with SENTENCED came to the forefront of my mind, but at least TESTAMENT played a full set; they just weren't allowed to finish their encore). I'm hearing that people were disappointed that they didn't play enough older songs, but what the hell do you expect?! They have eight studio releases and only an hour to play! I was happy with the set, for they played classics like "Over the Wall," "Disciples of the Watch," and "Practice What You Preach" along with soon-to-be classics like "D.N.R.," "Low," and "Dog Faced Gods." The band was as ferocious as ever, and Chuck Billy ran around the stage playing his air guitar like there was no tomorrow. Even Louie Clemente (their original drummer who, consequently, is a native of NJ) was invited up on stage to play "Practice..."; that was really cool. Of course, there was a GIANT pit and people were throwing their bodies around and flagellating about like mad men. Myself, being the tiny beanpole that I am, decided to stay away from that arena and stuck to my own corner of the floor and moshed about in solitude... and I had a great fucking time, too!

Mike Yosko:

I only attended day two of The March Metal Meltdown, arriving in the afternoon, and spent most of my time browsing the various stands full of merchandise that were set up since there weren't any initial bands playing that caught my attention.

The first band I saw was DIVINE RAPTURE. I'm not really into Death Metal, but was curious to see them because they were a Christian band [NO THEY'RE NOT!! Read Mike's letter in the "Pandaros' Page" section elsewhere within these illustrious pages! ~ed.]. I only stayed around for about two songs because I couldn't hear them. The band playing on the Meltdown Stage (across the curtain) was kind of drowning them out, so I bolted. Two other bands that I happened to see were CEPHALIC CARNAGE and WYKKED WYTCH. Neither band did a thing for me, and CEPHALIC CARNAGE's vocalist bashed us 'zine writers, which didn't sit well with me.

I really looked forward to seeing JACOB'S DREAM; however, they stopped playing after only two songs because they couldn't hear themselves due to the noise coming from the RELAPSE stage. I met up with lead vocalist David Taylor after the abbreviated set, and he wasn't thrilled. The band felt that there is a bias in this country towards True Metal and European fans respect it more. I personally agree with him because it seems that if you're not rapping or growling, you're not cool here in the U.S. Germany's IN EXTREMO absolutely floored me. Clad in medieval garb, three bagpipe players marching in unison is a sight to see. They definitely attracted a crowd and won over some new fans. Big things are definitely in store for this band. I also got to see part of HADES' set. These New Jersey Metal veterans played some songs off the recently released, *The Downside*. They appealed to their hometown crowd by delivering a set filled with some Old School Metal. Legendary Metal vets from the Great White North, ANVIL, kicked some serious ass, hammering out some Old School Metal that even included a drum solo! Their fans went wild, especially when they played their set-ender, "Metal on Metal." Now, I really wanted to see VIRGIN STEELE live, but I only got to hear a few songs due to their delayed starting time and my wanting to see DORO at the same time. What I saw was very impressive, though.

After fourteen years of waiting, I finally got to see everyone's favorite ex-WARLOCK vocalist: the lovely DORO PESCH. Her band also includes ex-BRITNY FOX drummer Johnny Dee. She performed mostly songs from *Triumph and Agony*, including "Metal Tango" and "All We Are"; she had the crowd going nuts. Old School classic "Burning the Witches" was definitely a plus to hear. She will have a new album out this summer, so hopefully she'll grace the U.S. with a tour. I got to meet DORO and she definitely is the Metal goddess that I thought she was.

Thanks, Tony, for taking the pic w/ her for me!

Headliners TESTAMENT put on a brutal showing with cuts from *The Gathering*. The middle of the floor was one big mosh pit. I did overhear some fans complaining they wanted to hear older stuff, so it was great to hear the classic "Over The Wall" live. Original drummer Louie Clemente came up to join the band on "Practice What You Preach." Overall, it was a good day (except for running out of money!). The curtain dividing the two stages was my biggest gripe. I also wish there were more Power Metal bands instead of the over-represented Death Metal bands.

Continued on next page



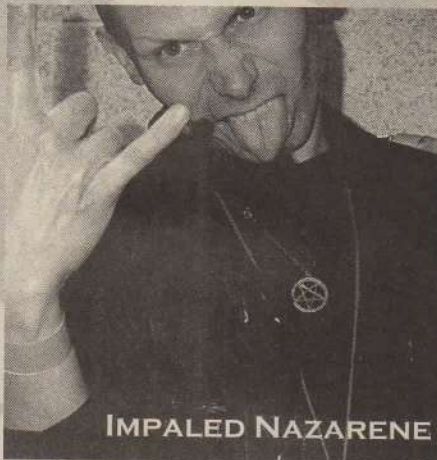
## DIVINE RAPTURE

George Pacheco:

The first band I caught was Mexico's finest, THE CHASM, on the Nightfall Stage (where I wound up spending much of my time during the fest). To put it bluntly, they kicked ass! It was an assault of mystical, Blackened Death, together with the vokills of one Daniel Corchado (ex-INCANTATION)! It was pure Holocaust; "Metal of Death," indeed! Next up was INCANTATION. This was my first time witnessing this legendary Death Metal band, and I can say it was worth the wait! They had an awesome and completely dominant stage presence. Their new full-length, *The Infernal Storm*, hit stores March 28<sup>th</sup> from RELAPSE Records, and if the intensity of their set is any indication, we have yet another platter of pounding Satanic Death Metal from Hell to look forward to!

After INCANTATION, U.S. Black-Thrash Metalers BLOODSTORM took the stage in full spiked regalia. Considering that I was previously not a fan of them, they were surprisingly pretty good. They sounded pretty tight and confident. Venomous Black Metal with a touch of Thrash was what they had to offer. Look for their new CD, *Pestilence From the Dragonstar*, on Mr. Metal Core himself, Chris Forbes' label, SoulSold Records. Contact Chris about this, as well as his great zine at PO Box 622 Marlton, NJ. 08053-1109. Ask him about his distro list, also. Tell him Metal George sent ya!

One of my reasons for going to this fest was IMPALED NAZARENE. Apart from some sound trouble with Alexi's (CHILDREN OF BODOM) guitar, the band put on a ripping set of alcohol-fueled, Black-Punk-Thrash insanity, all topped with Mika's skin-peeling vokills. They pulled songs from all their killer full CDs, some highlight's being "Winter War" (from *Suomi Finland Perkele*), "Karmageddon Warriors" (from *Latex Cult*), and "The Horny and the Horned" (from *Ugra-Karma*). The sound sucked, but IMPALED NAZARENE succeeded in overcoming it... total Alcoholocaust!!



IMPALED NAZARENE

S.O.D.: their "last show?" Who knows? All I know is, that the four-man mosh machine known collectively as the STORMTROOPERS OF DEATH pulled no punches and took no prisoners on this night! As I walked into the KNAC.COM stage (the main stage), I heard the familiar strains of the title track of their first masterpiece, *Speak English or Die*, and it was all over from there! All the classics were heard this night: from "Milk", "Fist-Banging Mania", and "United Forces" to newer 'classics' like "Monkeys Rule" and "Celtic Frosted Flakes." All were performed with the patented massive S.O.D. mosh. The very un-P.C. comments and "ballads" (taking on such distinguished corpses as Kurt Cobain- "You're dead!", Freddie Mercury- "You're dead", and a new one dedicated to deceased *Peamut* cartoonist, Charles Schultz- "Good grief! I'm fuckin' dead blockhead!") performed throughout the set by mountain/vocalist Billy Milano were fucking hilarious!! I hope this isn't truly the end for these legends, as they've truly developed into a great live act. If it truly is the end, however, all we can do is say thanks for all the memories!!

Thanks to set extensions and the glut of sub-par bands playing this goddamn thing, SENTENCED got to play a whopping 4 FUCKING SONGS. Needless to say, I was fucking PISSSED! Another main reason for my sojourn to this abyss known as Pennsauken, N.J. (and one of my friends' ONLY reasons!), this is just another shining example of why European bands don't



THE CHASM

want to play here. Where else does one of the goddamn HEADLINERS get the shaft? Hell, more than one person was raising a stink about this after the show got shut down, and I can't say I blame them one bit! To their credit, the four songs they DID play sounded fucking INCREDIBLE. They opened with "Farewell" off of their last album *Frozen*, leading into a new song off their new full length, *Crimson*, before ending their too-short set with a one-two punch of "Bleed" off of *Down*, and the excellent rendition of the classic "Nepenthe" from their penultimate opus, *Amok*. Let's just hope that this great band gets the quality tour and treatment they deserve, and we see them again in the U.S. sometime soon! Hail SENTENCED!

Moving along to Saturday, once again, the Nightfall stage was the place to be for much of this fest, and it was here that I saw my first band of the day. What better way to start the day than a little CORPSEVOMIT? I only have CV's demo, *Bastards of Foreverfilth*, so I was a bit familiar with the material. For those uninitiated, CORPSEVOMIT play a violent mix of chaotic Death-Thrash. It's definitely different, but it rules nonetheless! Contact: Pat Clancy P.O. Box 528207 Chicago, IL 60652. Email: [CorpseV666@aol.com](mailto:CorpseV666@aol.com). Next up on the Nightfall stage were some brutal friends of mine from back home, ANOXIA! Playing a strong set of CANNIBAL/KATAKLYSM-inspired Death Metal, I thought their set went over well. It was definitely cool to see them! For more info, contact them at: 98 Oakland Beach Ave. Warwick, RI 02889. Email: [ANOXIA0@aol.com](mailto:ANOXIA0@aol.com).

DISINTER was definitely a surprise. Damn! I reviewed their tape in the previous issue of Promethean Crusade, but that was nothing compared to the band now. Pulverizing people with a thrashing Death assault that took no prisoners, they began tossing out free tapes, which got the already enthusiastic crowd moving even more furiously. Watch out for this band... they're coming to get you! They have a new limited edition shaped CD out now with two tracks from the forthcoming full length, *Welcome to Oblivion*. For more info on that, definitely get in contact with Mike Le Gros, PO Box 34919, Chicago, IL 60634 (what's the deal with all these Chicago bands kicking my ass!? USURPER, CORPSEVOMIT, DISINTER... when will it end? Hope it doesn't).

The next band I caught was CONVERGE on the RELAPSE stage. They did not disappoint, as usual. Opening with "Conduit" off of their last LP, *When Forever Comes Crashing*, CONVERGE gave it their

all, despite the less than adequate stage conditions (the aforementioned two stages separated by a curtain, resulting in having two bands play at once with the sound bleeding back and forth). They gave an intensely physical, energy-draining set, evidenced by vocalist Aaron jumping over the barricade into the crowd to sing along. They mixed in some new material from their split CD on RELAPSE with AGORAPHOBIC NOSEBLEED, choosing to end with one of their best songs ever, "The Saddest Day," off of *Petitioning the Empty Sky*. The mosh pit erupted, giving an explosive end to a great set.

As if CONVERGE's little bit of insanity wasn't enough, I was then treated to one of the best sets during the fest in the form of Metal Merchants DECEASED! King and the boys came out in full force with "The Triangle" from their *Blueprints for Madness* release before launching into the first track off of their newest masterpiece of Metallic perfection, *Supernatural Addictions*, "The Premonition." I swear I didn't stop head banging during the entire set! They rounded out their set with a couple more older tunes in the form of "The 13 Frightened Souls" and "Robotic Village" from *The 13 Frightened Souls* EP before closing their with an awesome MAIDEN cover, "Wrathchild!" My only complaint here is that I wish they could have played longer (I would've loved to hear more from the new one, as well as more from their last opus, *Fearless Undead Machines*), as I could've watched all night! All Hail True Heavy Metal! All Hail DECEASED!!

Then it was off to see what all the hype was about concerning IN EXTREMO. I was greeted with a definite original performance, which was a weird mix of Folk and Metal that managed to sound both heavy/melodic and Folk/Metal all at the same time. A choreographed stage presence and an overall sense of fun made for an enjoyable and different change of pace. The crowd even partook in a little Euro-styled clapping, "hey-hey-ing" to the songs!! Going from one extreme to the other... I have seen the Apocalypse, and its name is ANGELCORPSE; they are truly the harbingers of Armageddon! They were such a tight, ferocious force live, it was not even funny! ANGELCORPSE will tear your head clean off with sinister efficiency. Their performance at this year's Metalfest single handedly made me a huge fan. Riffs and leads that threatened to skeeter out of control, double bass drumming which pounded your soul into oblivion, and the powerful presence of on one Pete Helmkamp, delivering his thunderous bass lines and demonic incantations of heretic supremacy, was all I needed to become an instant ANGELCORPSE convert! GO SEE THIS BAND LIVE!! To be blunt: they will tear you a new asshole. ANGELCORPSE stands alongside MARDUK, KRISIUN, and BOLT THROWER as the true purveyors of Metallic War Perfection. All Hail!

Unfortunately, due to fucked up scheduling, I had to divide my viewing time between ANGELCORPSE and VIRGIN STEELE, who were playing at the same time. I personally think VIRGIN STEELE should've played on a bigger stage; the band clearly felt a little weird playing some small stage in an Expo Center separated only by a curtain from another (Death Metal) band playing at the same time. I'm sure they're used to playing in stadiums in Europe. Being the consummate professionals, however, VIRGIN STEELE made due and let loose with a thirty-minute set of triumphant, majestic, MANOWAR-esque Power Metal. They all had great stage presence, moving about the stage effortlessly (while mugging for the cameras!). Frontman David DeFais is a super-talented keyboard player as well as vocalist as shown through the various songs taken from the new *House of Atreus: Act 1* CD. As an ending flourish, David brought out a large broadsword and set it aflame. All in all, I'm glad I got a chance to see VIRGIN STEELE play the U.S. Who knows when we'll see them again? Hopefully next time it'll be in a larger venue, which they deserve.

Ooops, I've got some last minute additions for ya. ALL OUT WAR: tough, Metallic Hardcore... heavy on the SLAYER riffs. They were good, but got a little boring after a while. For some reason, I enjoy the CDs better. I was psyched to see DARKEST HOUR's blend of AT THE GATES and Hardcore, but unfortunately, after only playing one song, something happened to the monitor, and DH didn't get to play... bummer. DORO: only caught the tail end of her last song. Speaking of tail, and I'm sure I'm not the only male who noticed this, DORO IS FUCKING HOT!! OK... have to catch my breath... IMMOLATION: man, I know a lot of people fucking worship this band, but I'm just not into them (sorry, Chris!). The only LP I dig from them is *Dawn of Possession*, and everything after that just falls flat to me. I hoped live that the story would change, but it didn't. The riffs don't do anything for me. Oh well, next... It was probably the fatigue setting in from MAJOR lack of sleep on my part, but I found myself not really getting excited for TESTAMENT or WITCHERY either. Now don't get me wrong, I love both these bands, but with TESTAMENT playing mostly stuff from *The Gathering*, *Low*, and *Demonic* (all good albums, *The Gathering* is a fucking great album, actually, but I was hoping for more older stuff), and the fact that I've seen WITCHERY before (they were good, apart from the shitty sound), I was just fucking EXHAUSTED. (I betcha ANGELCORPSE had something to do with it!)

Finally, I shook off the sleep to get up front for the Norwegian Frostdemons themselves, IMMORTAL. Unfortunately, the same fucked up situation that happened to SENTENCED hit IMMORTAL, as well! The band was cut off after playing only a few more songs than SENTENCED did. In ADDITION to this, the guitar sound kept fucking up on Abath's side, so once in a while (which became too often for my tastes) the only sounds coming out of the speakers would be the drums and bass guitar. Once again, this is no way to treat a European band's first visit to the States. Luckily, I knew I was going to see them again in April. The song selection was great for the set they did play. Songs from all of their classic albums made their presence felt: "At the Heart of Winter" and "Unholy Force of Evil" from *Diabolical Full Moon Mysticism*, and "Battles in the North" and "Unsilent Storms in North Abyss" from *Pure Holocaust* being highlights. All I can say is try to catch IMMORTAL if they come anywhere near you... you won't regret it!



JEFF OF METAL RULES! AND CHUCK BILLY OF TESTAMENT

The Total Package:

Yes, I will agree that the Fest seemed to cater largely to the Death Metal and Black Metal genres. A true METALFEST would have a better cross-section of bands (look at how Wacken & Dynamo are established overseas for examples), and I would have loved to see more bands from the Melodic/Power fields as well as Doom bands (which seem to really be making a comeback lately, but where are they in the live setting??). But, even you have to admit that a spotlight on Black and Death Metal in the US is something of an anomaly; these kinds of displays can do nothing but help the scene grow. I just wish the promoters realized that Metal fans are more multifaceted in taste than what was presented; it was the epitome of quantity over quality (I distinctly recall my mood souring upon hearing that there would be 4 stages; I knew it wasn't going to work well, because of the typical American Capitalist ideal: get the most money for doing the least work). And you can see from the anecdotes above that the bands were treated like crap. Enough ranting for the moment, let's get to some of the highlights that were memorable to me.

Okay, I, like many others, was inconsequentially late for the event (who would believe that you could get wrong directions to a hotel from the concierge themselves?? Alright, so I was out abducting house-pets and trying to pick up 13 year-old girls with Billy Idol... never mind). Needless to say, I was quite miffed when I did not get there in time to see the ever-unholy DISCIPLES OF MOCKERY, who I'm sure kicked a lot of ass early in the game. So rather than bore you with impressions that paralleled the aforementioned writers, I'm just going to give you some highlights. S.O.D. did put on an impressive show, although it seemed more like a stand-up comedy act, which I guess is kinda unique, but it caused long breaks between songs; it was still a good set. TWISTED TOWER DIRE, yes, they played their asses off, but every band that had the misfortune in playing in the "Wizard Of Oz" room (pay no attention to that band behind the curtain!) should be commended for sticking to their guns and playing the hands they were dealt. SKINLAB's live performance was much better than their last studio release, but it seems that the band is definitely headed for that "Mainstream Metal" sound, aligning themselves with MACHINE HEAD and quite eventually STATIC X (damn, it hurt to say that). DECEASED put on a tear-jerking set; their music was that beautiful! I shit you not, DECEASED is truly a band with which to be reckoned! The return of the mighty NOCTURNUS was quite a spectacle, keeping the fans enraptured through a set largely composed of new material with a bit of input from *The Key*. I was absolutely amazed at the tightness of their blistering set and full-bodied performance! I can't wait until these guys get a formal US tour; they deserve it! Unfortunately, due to my opting to become assimilated into their magnificence, I missed the opportunity to watch my favorite Canadians (okay, well, next to Mark Messier, Steve Yzerman and the McKenzie Brothers) ANVIL, who

undoubtedly had as memorable performance as their appearance at last year's March Metal Meltdown! Words cannot describe how absolutely amazing VIRGIN STEELE was. Having never seen them before, I allowed myself to become lost within their haunting melodies and classic Metal sound (and it was really great hearing live versions of tracks from *The House Of Atreus Part I*; if you don't have it, BUY IT!!!!!!) Hearing them perform "We Rule The Night" (from the classic *Noble Savage*) was also a treat, as well as an excuse to head bang and launch those fists in the air; yet another band deserving of a full North American tour!!!

Other than the obvious disorganization, the event was not a total loss, there were some great retailers present that sold a lot of rarities. (Too bad most of those same vendors wanted to charge an arm and a goddamn leg for some of these items!!!) That kind of ignorance is just unacceptable. Cut out the distributor but keep the price high so you get that much more profit?? Sounds like more Capitalist bullshit if you ask me, but hey, whenever you go to a Fest and want a helluva bargain, there's always the Century Media/Noise table: they know how to hook a Brother up! And I can't rag on the Necropolis booth, either, because they had their share of affordable goodies, too, but some of those booths were downright outrageous! And, I don't want to get into the prices at the concessions stands, but that's to be expected (and never enjoyed!). In order for future Fests to be a success, some things really need to be done with regards to set times. There were too many notable bands played at the same time, causing fans to "choose" one or the other; it's something that really bothered me, because most of the bands I wanted to see had set times that conflicted with other desirable acts! And more advance promotion needs to be orchestrated to ensure proper awareness. These events need to be treated as such, EVENTS, and all precautions and arrangements need to be organized at least two months ahead of time to truly make them MEMORABLE. This is all us Americans have to look forward to each year, all the "other" Festivals (OzzFest, Warped, etc.) are too corporate and don't give a rats ass about REAL METAL bands. More people need to get involved, a wider spectrum of bands need to be put into the mix (especially since most fans only get to see a Fest once a year... gotta make them unique), and we all have to pull together to keep the true spirit of Metal alive. without us, the devoted, where can it dwell in this country?



WITCHERY



DECEASED



By Chris Hawkins

Let it be known that I've never laughed as much or enjoyed any interview as much as this chat with Dan from S.O.D. As you will soon see, no group or subject was left unscathed. If you're easily offended, then this isn't the article for you; however, if your IQ totals more than that of a farm animal, you shouldn't have a problem. Here's the uncensored conversation.... enjoy!

Promethean Crusade: So what's up with S.O.D.?

S.O.D.: Well, we're playing the March Metal Meltdown next month and then we're doing like a two week tour of the States. I know we did a huge one in November, but this one's going to be more compact. It's gonna be more like the major cities. Where am I calling?

PC: I'm down in the South, but I'll be up to catch you guys at MMM.

S.O.D.: I get freaked out down there with all the billboards saying, "It's a child, not a choice."

PC: [laughs] Those are everywhere, especially out in the country.

S.O.D.: Well, what are you gonna do, man?

Believe me, you think New York is so liberal, but we have Cardinal O'Connor, the staunch Roman Catholic conservative asshole. He's the one who called Heavy Metal, "musical pornography." Man, I think that's poetry.

PC: Yeah, I've heard his name mentioned a lot...

S.O.D.: Well, apparently, I just read there's an American politician who actually mentioned ROTTING CHRIST. He called them gay too!

PC: He called them gay?!?!??

S.O.D.: He said, "the homosexual group, ROTTING CHRIST."

PC: That's crazy! How would you get homosexuality out of ROTTING CHRIST? I'd expect them to be against Black Metal, but...

S.O.D.: Well, he's just trying to throw everything he can to make them look bad.

PC: So is this senator the next on Sgt. D's list?

S.O.D.: [laughs] He ain't gonna get far enough to get your attention. He can just wallow in his own shit as far as I'm concerned. Whatever.

PC: [laughs] There's definitely an element of fun to S.O.D. I think that's one of the strongest draws to the band. Are you guys always having fun?

S.O.D.: Oh yeah, definitely. That's always one of the things with us. So many people think with a Metal band, you have to be so serious or evil...

PC: Grim and cold from the Arctic North?

S.O.D.: Yeah! Exactly. Meanwhile, you take someone like Fenriz [DARKTHRONE], he's one of the goofiest people I know.

PC: Seriously?

S.O.D.: Yeah! Yeah, but S.O.D.'s always had a very humorous element and when you see us live, Billy's practically like Don Rieckles between songs. You know you go from the hard, fast, crazy shit and the next minute you're almost pissing your pants.

PC: That's great...



S.O.D.: Well, I mean we were never... it's like the same thing with NUCLEAR ASSAULT, the big elements of humor and the same with BRUTAL TRUTH. We never thought that you have to be grim. It's like your music is intense and everybody knows that. So that's just our personalities. If you sat on the tour bus, you'd hear the same type of humor that flies out of Billy's mouth on stage. It's just the way we are and I don't see any reason to hide that behind some weird attitude.

PC: People are naturally drawn to that because you're not putting on this facade of being something you're not.

S.O.D.: Mmm hmm. You ever heard of this band BEWITCHED from Sweden? Well, the bass player also plays in this band, NAGLFAR, like a Black/Death Metal band from Sweden...

PC: Yeah, I've got some of their stuff.

S.O.D.: Yeah, well they toured with BRUTAL TRUTH a couple years ago in Europe and here's a funny story about the whole thing. He told me that when BEWITCHED was playing in Belgium, they were on tour with ENSLAVED, and they'd been hanging out all day, getting fucked up. When BEWITCHED went on stage, the singer threw his hair off his face and looked at the crowd and he just started to laugh. He was like, "Oh shit!"

PC: [laughs]

S.O.D.: And he put all his hair in his face and had to play the rest of the show with all his hair in his face because he was laughing. He said (in European accent), "I could not let them see that I was laughing because it would not look evil."

PC: Oh no!

S.O.D.: I said, "Are you serious?" He was like, "Yeah."

PC: I guess that's more of a European trait.

S.O.D.: Yeah, that's what we call "Incidental Black Metal Humor."

PC: [laughs] Nicely put.

S.O.D.: Satyr's [SATYRICON] got some of that, but he just does it accidentally.

PC: He doesn't even realize it, eh?

S.O.D.: Right.

PC: So are you guys trying to bring about the end of Political Correctness?

S.O.D.: Well, not single-handedly, but a lot of the stuff on the records is kind of like we're taking sentiments that we feel, things that you say out of frustration and just magnifying them to the point where you're actually talking about

giving out dirty needles to junkies when all you're really thinking about is, "Goddamn, I'm sick of these people bumming change off of me and having to step over them." That's just something you think about when you're having a beer, but you aren't really going to do. S.O.D. would take that and make it a lyric.

PC: That's the beauty of it, though.

S.O.D.: Yeah, the whole thing with "Speak English or Die" was just out of frustration where you get sick of dealing with people in New York who have jobs where you have to communicate. You know, like, "How much is this?" (In foreign accent) "Egghhh, Egghhh"

PC: [laughs]

S.O.D.: It wasn't totally out of mean-spiritedness which is where the humor came in.

PC: I didn't get a mean-spirited nature out of it at all. Don't you think things are a little bit worse than when *Speak English or Die* came out in terms of Political Correctness? People are really anal now!

S.O.D.: Well, with this record we made a conscious effort not to attack specific nationalities like on the first record...or, maybe not as much. You know, there's still little articulate humor things like, "there's just too many chinks" or something like that, but if you note that the true definition of a chink is a dent in armor, you can look at the lyrics for "Make Room, Make Room" and that's what it's supposed to mean. Now it's kind of like across-the-board-nihilism. Instead of just telling people to speak English, now we're telling people like junkies that there's just too many people in general. So you can't say, "Oh, they hate these people or that people." We just hate everybody! We're still as obnoxious as ever, but you can't call us like Fascist anymore, which was ridiculous in the first place.

PC: Definitely. So now the problem to address would just be overcrowding.

S.O.D.: Yeah, that's it. The Christians and the Catholics will keep telling you, "Keep having children and anything you do that prevents you from having children, like using a condom or having an abortion or being a homosexual..." all these things the Catholics are against and they intimidate these people. Of course, the people want to fuck. Everybody likes to fuck, right? So they fuck like everybody else does, but then they don't take care and they keep spitting out kids...

Continued on next page



Continued from previous page

PC: Just adding to the problem...

SOD: Then you read some shit in the paper about people throwing kids in garbage cans, because people have these kids and can't bring them up. The call abortion murder, but how about throwing a kid in a garbage can?

PC: Yeah, but the Church said not to have that abortion so it's all right...

SOD: Well, that's the thing.

PC: I guess the Pope endorses garbage cans.

SOD: Right. [both laugh] As long as its sanctioned by the Church.

PC: So what is the future of SOD after this tour?

SOD: Well, that's always hard to say. [both laugh]

PC: You're not going to wait another ten years?

SOD: No, we want to do some more international touring. As far as where and when, I don't know. I'm sure there's gonna be more stuff with the warmer months coming, maybe some of the European festivals. All I know is I'm sure there's gonna be some kind of activity because now the album's been out at least nine months, and more people are familiar with it.

PC: Have people's reactions been what you expected?

SOD: Yeah, I think they have been pretty positive.

With the first record, you've got a lot to go up against, but it goes back to the fact that when we first came out, we were one of the fastest, heaviest things and now you've got all sorts of crazy fast bands, so we weren't gonna come out and do blast beats the whole time just to keep up with everybody. Mostly people really dug it.

PC: Do your songs, say the different ballads, "Celtic Frosted Flakes", and "King at the King"

, which I HAD to play for everyone I know...

SOD: Yeah, it's pretty humorous.



PC: Did you guys just sit around and goof off or...

SOD: I think that's one of Billy's things, just some goofy thing he thought of. That and "Celtic Frosted Flakes" are like paying tribute to the bands we really dug. Good Old Black Metal.

PC: What other projects are you working on now?

SOD: Well, I've been playing in a band since '96 called HEMLOCK that plays Black Metal, and I'm gonna be doing this other thing. In April, I'm going

to San Francisco to do this band with Killjoy from NECROPHAGIA and Chris from AUTOPSY called RAVENOUS. That's gonna be Old School Death Metal... That's gonna come out on Hammerheart in the fall. With HEMLOCK, our new album, *Lust for Fire*, will be out on Full Moon in a month or two.

PC: Where do you see Metal going in the next Millennium?

SOD: Umm...I hate to answer those questions....

PC: [laughs] I'm sorry, but it's this theme I've got going. If you want to pass, it's all good...

SOD: Well, no. I'll make a little guess for you... Well, the Underground is always going to be the Underground no matter what it mutates into. There's always going to be the good old Xerox 'zines and shit like that, and even the web 'zines nowadays... The trendy shit comes and goes. You've got your KORNs and LIMP BIZKITs, and for some reason, people keep tagging that as Metal, but I think even the guys in those bands wouldn't even call it Metal. That's real popular now just like NIRVANA was in the early 90's. Those things come and go, and the Underground just continues. That's what's important. The Underground is the people who remembered SOD all these years! You know, it wasn't the people who were listening to PEARL JAM and are now listening to KORN.

PC: So the motto should be, "Strength through the Underground"?

SOD: Well, that's what got me where I am today if you call that anywhere...

PC: Hell yeah! SOD. BRUTAL TRUTH. NUCLEAR ASSAULT...

SOD: Well, all those bands never went to any awards ceremonies. It's just doing what you're doing and perseverance.

PC: Exactly!



## METAL RULES!



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After hearing the Accept tribute recently put out by Nuclear Blast, I immediately went to my drawer full of old Metal cassettes to dust off my Accept collection. As a fan of this underrated German Metal band since the early eighties, I was glad to see them receiving recognition some 20 years after their inception (twenty years... man, do I feel old). Formed in Solingen, Germany in 1977 (about the same time one Steve Harris was putting together what would become IRON MAIDEN) guitarists Wolf Hoffmann and Jörg Fischer, bassist/vocalist Peter Baltes, drummer Frank Friedman (soon after replaced by Stefan Kaufman), and the mighty vocalist Udo Dirkschneider started a band. Inevitably influenced by fellow countrymen THE SCORPIONS, Accept aspired to add some of the new urgency to their sound.

On the surface, there didn't seem to be anything special. Another Metal band with dual lead guitarists and a drummer using a double bass drum big deal. But add in the uniquely raw voice of Udo and the gracefully simple songs written by the band, put them all together on stage,



and watch the classical Metal spew forth. To create another dimension in their sound, bassist Peter Baltes occasionally took over microphone duties. This voice, a complete contrast to Udo's, kept things interesting and created some of their best tunes. Accept were also remarkably adept at compiling complete albums; the songs flowed from beginning to end. Intros and power ballads were interspersed with the requisite speed, leaving each song to tell its own tale.

Currently, Udo is working on new material for Nuclear Blast (as well as reissuing a number of his solo albums), and guitarist Wolf Hoffmann has recently recorded with Sebastian Bach for Spitfire Records. Hoffmann has also recorded his own CD of Classical pieces for the solo electric guitar. Check out Wolf's website (<http://www.wolffhoffmann.com>) for details on purchasing it and also read the comprehensive history of Accept along with photos of Wolf's personal collection of Accept mementos.

# ACCEPT

## Accept Breaker (Metronome), 1981

1981's *Breaker* begins with the frantic ride of "Starlight," with Udo's voice reaching just beyond its limit during the choruses. Their energy seems to grow with each release, as if they have more and more to prove. "Breaker" keeps the pace, if not stepping it up a notch. The band sounds angrier than ever before. Perhaps they are starting to get annoyed that the world hasn't noticed them yet. The songs on *Breaker* set the stage for Germany's next great contribution to Metal, HELLOWEEN. In fact, Kai Hansen himself may well have written the title track! "Can't Stand the Night," a power ballad that you'd expect to hear Baltes sing, is carried off eloquently by Udo, his patented screams reminding us just who the lead singer is in this band. This vocal choice adds yet another dimension to the Accept sound. The anthemic "Midnight Highway" combines a fun, party melody with their metallic dual guitars, which were one small step ahead of their time. The requisite, some may say formulaic, ballad sung by Baltes is "Breaking Up Again"; similar to "The King," it never quite becomes a true power ballad. Instead, it focuses on the acoustic lines and the delicate solo interplay between Hoffmann and Fischer. Things were soon to change. Interesting to note is that, of all their albums, *Breaker's* songs are the most well represented on the Nuclear Blast tribute with five, including PRIMAL FEAR's version of the title track.

## Accept Accept (Metronome), 1979

Listening to this album twenty-plus years after its original release just puts me in a great mood. I can remember scouring local music stores in the early eighties to find this cassette. My musical tastes then, as now, were always a bit underground. Also, being an avid collector and "completist," I was never happy to only own a couple of releases by my favorite bands; I needed them all. The sound that was Accept is already present here, and the melodic dual guitar leads and Udo's raspy voice are firmly in place. Though this album was never a commercial success in America, and only slightly better received in Europe, it set the tone for the years to come. Opening with the air raid-like guitars of Wolf and Jörg, "Lady Lou" gallops to life in true Classic Metal fashion. Harmony vocals are not far behind, and the blending of Udo's gruffness with the backing vocals lets you know immediately what you're in for. We get our first taste of Peter Baltes' ballad-suited voice with "Seawinds," a slow plaintive tune that is in no hurry to be over before the story has been told.



## Accept I'm A Rebel (Metronome), 1980

The opening track reflects the burgeoning Punk scene in Europe, and the simplistic chords along with the sing along chorus might make you think that the band has cashed in. Not so; remember that as Accept released *I'm A Rebel*, IRON MAIDEN was singing songs like "Running Free." Full of attitude, "Save Us" has a bluesy swagger that brings to mind AC/DC and what would later be the commercial screams of one Axl Rose. Accept, in retrospect, were the perfect bridge between their predecessors, THE SCORPIONS, and their followers, HELLOWEEN, encapsulating the power and melody of both. If you have a large music collection, pull out some of these bands' works and play them back to back. It's odd that for a band with such a unique singer in Udo, their most memorable songs (for me anyway) are those sung by Peter Baltes. The two gems of this record, "No Time to Lose" and "The King," are both Udo-less, yet just as powerful. I like to think of Baltes as



Accept's secret weapon. Accept themselves were always somewhat of an underdog here in the States, and even later when they had some commercial success, Baltes was still an unknown commodity. Playing to larger crowds in their homeland, they churned on. Hook-laden and catchy as hell, songs like "Thunder and Lightning" have you singing along not only to the words, but also to the guitar parts and solos. Each note is so well placed that you can't help yourself. Rarely recording a song of more than five minutes in length, Accept always stuck to the core of the matter. Even their epics, like the previously mentioned "The King," clock in at just less than four minutes (I'd swear this was a ten plus minute song); it's that good! Acoustic intro, haunting melody, soaring vocals, a good story-- what more could you ask for? After hearing THERION's version on the Nuclear Blast tribute, I'd love to hear them record all of Baltes' songs. It's also worth noting here that producer/arranger Dirk Steffens wrote about half of these tunes, including "The King" and "No Time to Lose."

**Accept**  
*Restless And Wild*  
(Portrait), 1982

Prior to the recording of *Restless and Wild*, guitarist Jörg Fischer left due to the stress of life on the road, which left all the guitar parts to be played by Wolf Hoffmann. That aside, the album begins innocently enough with a scratchy vinyl recording of the German folksong "Heidi." Rumors always had it that this was an actual recording



of a young Udo and his family, when in reality it happened to be a record that was lying around the studio. With classic metallic rebellion, the needle slides noisily off the record to be replaced by the piercing scream of Udo. Accept have moved firmly into the realm of Speed Metal here with "Fast as a Shark," yet the solos are still very melodic and tasteful. The backing vocals have also taken on a bit of a crowd sound. Signed to Portrait (a division of Sony, now home to IRON MAIDEN), the band is here to stay and ready to take on the

world and show what it has been missing these past few years. You can't help but listen to Udo's restrained vocals on the title track and root for him to let loose. "Neon Nights" opens with a Cliff Burton-esque bass solo and is one of the only slow songs on the album. Missing are the vocals of Baltes; if you haven't noticed yet, I'm rather fond of them. I'm not sure if this was a conscious decision of his or the band's. Perhaps none of the songs fit his style, though "Neon Nights" might have worked. Metal had begun to take a firm hold in the United States at this point with more and more fans flocking to arena shows by OZZY and JUDAS PRIEST, with IRON MAIDEN not far behind. What Accept needed was a **HIT!!**

**Accept**  
*Metal Heart*  
(Portrait), 1985

Entering the mid eighties as a relatively well-known force in the Metal world, Accept look to the distant future (1999!!) where all things including human emotions will be mechanized. Were they far from wrong? Recorded in the home studio of (and produced by) famous SCORPIONS producer Dieter Dirks, the sound is now even more polished. Jörg Fischer returns to add his guitar to its rightful place next to Wolf. The speed has returned as well, with heaving songs like "Wrong is Right." "Midnight Mover" also was something of a popular track for the band. Then came the dream gig of opening for IRON MAIDEN on their ambitious *World Slavery Tour* in 1985. Despite this exposure, Accept never quite made it to the heights that MAIDEN did. Concurrently, radio friendly tunes like "Screaming for a Love Bite" seemed to have compromised their metallic attack somewhat. Was life at a major label softening them or were they just making a last ditch effort to appeal to the wider audience that would make them a household name? Either way, Udo was becoming disillusioned and the masses weren't exactly pushing them to the top of the charts. Hey, who can blame them for wanting a piece of the big arena Metal boom? The tours of Europe and Japan continued, and Accept were willing to give this album one last shot, but were they "Bound to Fail?"

**Accept**  
*Kaizoku-Ban Live EP*  
(Portrait), 1985

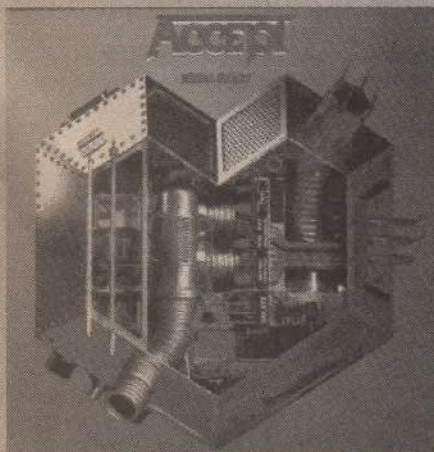
Recorded in Nagoya, Japan on September 19<sup>th</sup>, 1985 and released as a cassette EP almost immediately afterwards, *Kaizoku-Ban* is the first recording to document the band's raw live sound. Four of the six tracks are from *Metal Heart* and two are from its predecessor, but no sign of "Balls...." It's no secret to any of us that the crowds in Japan were, and still are, extremely receptive to all things Metal, and this EP proves it. I still remember buying this, looking at the recording date, and then looking

**Accept**  
*Balls to the Wall*  
(Label), 1984

If you only own one Accept album, chances are that this is it. If you only know one Accept song, chances are that it's "Balls to the Wall." Why was this their "big hit?" I'm not sure; maybe the rising influence of the music video had something to do with it. Who can forget seeing Udo riding that wrecking ball through the air or the crowd of angry teens banging their fists against "the wall?" With the tensions between the US and communist East Germany at an all time high, maybe we could associate with their attitudes... or maybe it was just a great ballsy Metal tune! A throbbing bass pulse signals "Head Over Heels," a mid tempo grind that builds to a great solo. The songs are beginning to sound more mature, no doubt reflecting the ages of the band members. The speed and aggression of *Restless and Wild* has been replaced with a more confident approach. Starting with *Balls to the Wall*, all of the lyrics were written by the mysterious 'Deaffy,' who later was to be discovered as the band's female manager (and current wife of Wolf Hoffmann), Gaby Hauke.



at the calendar with bewilderment. There's no way a band could release a live album this fast these days. Good luck finding this cassette EP, as it's currently out of print and to my knowledge has never been issued on CD.



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# KAMELOT

## Find the New Allegiance

By Mark Morton

*When a band releases a few albums of similar quality, they become stereotyped; this is just the inconsequential natural order of media. The burden is then placed on the band to both remain with that label and continue to feed the fans of that genre, or they can take a major risk and re-evaluate their strengths, change their sound, and hope for the best. Many bands that may attempt this task become too simplified, or too different from their original sound, and are shunned by all listeners and fall flat on their faces (unless a heavy marketing plan had been put in effect prior to its release, because in America, you still can 'fool some of the people all of the time'). Thom Youngblood realized the great risk he would be taking when trying to pull Kamelot away from their 'Progressive' stereotype. And although he did not make a conscious effort to simplify everything, the resulting miracle proved to be a more complete and satisfying release than anything the band had previously released. Kamelot has been redefined, and Thom is not concerned about the repercussions, for with but one listen, you will agree that *The Fourth Legacy* is an immaculate, breath-taking triumph of will!*

**Promethean Crusade:** Do you feel that, with *The Fourth Legacy*, you have finally broken the 'Progressive' stigma that has surrounded the band all these years?

**Kamelot:** I would think so. I've never felt that the group was Progressive. Growing up I listened to groups like YES and DREAM THEATER, but we never strived for a Progressive tag. We wanted to do a lot more with our music. With this album, we really went for a more straight-ahead Power Metal sound, but we'll always have that element. I don't know if I'd call it "Progressive," but a definite class of musicianship.

**PC:** One of the aspects of the album I've really enjoyed was the full-bodied, grandiose quality that wasn't openly apparent on the past releases.

**KA:** I think that's do to an underlying arrangement within each song that gives the album that element. The actual structures of the songs are actually simpler than what we've done in the past. The keyboard arrangements and string arrangements really give it that; I don't know if I'd call it "technical," but yeah, like you said, very full-bodied sound. Maybe that's something we were missing in the past. The simple structures probably make those string and keyboard passages stick out more in certain spots. On *Siege Perilous*, we thought the keyboard mix was way too loud, so with this release we made a conscious effort to make the keyboards more subdued, heard but not overbearing.

**PC:** How do you feel about living in a land where any Metal band that possesses a Progressive element immediately gets compared to DREAM THEATER?

**KA:** If you're going to be compared to someone, that's not a bad band to be compared to. I don't really think there's any comparison to DREAM THEATER on this record. I've heard it in the past, but I've never understood it. I think we've had certain influences from the past and on this record from QUEENSRÛCHE. DREAM THEATER was never really an influence for me, as far as composing.

**PC:** The QUEENSRÛCHE influence really shines through in Roy Khan's vocals.

**KA:** Yeah, definitely. Geoff Tate was always one of his idols, and if Roy were going to be compared to anyone, it would be Geoff Tate. However, I feel that Roy does have his own sound; you can always tell when it's him singing. But every singer gets compared to someone; it's just the way it is. There will always be someone pioneering before you, unless you yourself are that pioneer.

**PC:** Kamelot draws a lot of parallels to the situation that exists with VIRGIN STEELE. Do you feel a kinship with their plight, having a very European sound while living in America, where you are consistently under-appreciated or not even known at all?

**KA:** Yeah, I can relate to them, not only because they're successful in Europe and not known in America, but we're also on the same label; we both sing about things that aren't very stereotypical. And it's too bad, too, because I really wanted to do a tour with VIRGIN STEELE in '95. We were asked to tour with them, but we had to make some major changes. But yeah, I think it would be a very good package. But the US is really in need of a change in the way bands approach music. It's pretty bad when kids don't have to know an instrument to be able to play the new stuff that's out there like KORN. My nephew, who's really into that stuff, has great difficulty learning Kamelot songs, but it's cool, because he's actually getting into our sound.

**PC:** When you had recorded the album, I heard that you had isolated yourself from any outside influence. Where then, did all the inspiration come from that is displayed on *The Fourth Legacy*?

**KA:** I actually have a lot of different types of music that I like to listen to, which I also drew influence from. Also, I have done a lot of traveling, which definitely helps with influences. But I listen to a lot of different New Age music, which definitely helped inspire songs like "The Shadow of Uther" and "Nights of Arabia." So it comes from many different things; even just sitting with a guitar, sometimes a melody will just pop up in your head, and you work it out, and that's where a lot of songs start from.

**PC:** I really enjoyed all those Eastern influences and worldly sounds, because it gave the album a quality of something like a 'world cruise through music.'

**KA:** We didn't actually set out for that to happen, but that was an idea I had for a future concept album, which I was thinking of calling 'Journey Around The World' or something like that. I like all

different kinds of music. I definitely want to incorporate more Spanish music into what we're doing. I think it would be really fun to do a record that incorporates all different kinds of music but always keeping that Kamelot backbone. That's really important, otherwise you'd sound like ten different bands. We'd love to use more exotic elements, but we have to keep that defined Kamelot sound.

**PC:** Well, I truly feel that this was your strongest release yet, largely due to its 'natural' appeal. What kinds of emotions were you experiencing when you were writing the album?

**KA:** Well, I was really going through a lot of changes when I wrote this record,

and traveling, as I had said, helped me a lot. Going to Europe and seeing different ways of living really opened up my mind; growing up in America, you're stuck in this whole materialistic thing, where you have to have a certain kind of car and a certain amount of material possessions; it's just instantaneous gratification, there's no long-lasting peace. That's part of the spirit that went into this record. I'm really hoping that 'spiritual-realization' happens in America soon, things do seem to be slowly changing. It's really important to appreciate the value of things that aren't based on money. And Roy helped a lot with the arranging and vocal melodies, because letting him sing his own melodies or lyrics was really important to conveying the full feeling.

**PC:** I thought this worked really well, because through listening to the album and reading the lyrics, I was given the impression that the album possessed an underlying theme of soul-searching and self-discovery that leads to eventual self-actualization.

**KA:** Yeah, subliminally I think that's exactly what would happen. A lot of *The Fourth Legacy* has to do with "you're searching for salvation, reach inside." To look outside of that is unreal. I think a person has to look inside himself to find peace or to get what they want out of life.



**Alan Gilkeson...**

**Your guide to Heavy Metal**

**[heavymetal.about.com](http://heavymetal.about.com)**

Vahak "The Iceman" Janbazian:

DREAM THEATER - *Metropolis Pt. 2: Scenes from a Memory*

1. SYSTEM OF A DOWN - *s/t*
2. INCUBUS - *Make Yourself*
3. SEVENDUST - *Home*
4. ZAO - *Liberate Te Ex Inferis*
5. CANDIRIA - *Surrealistic Madness*
6. ROLLINS BAND - *Weight*
7. FAR - *Tin Cans With Strings to You*
8. P.O.D. - *Fundamental Elements of Southtown*
9. MEDESKI MARTIN & WOOD - *Friday Afternoon in the Universe*
10. THROWING MUSES - *The Real Ramona*
11. JEFF BUCKLEY - *Grace*
12. JULIANA HATFIELD - *Please Do Not Disturb*

Mark "The Total Package" Morton

MANOWAR & BLIND GUARDIAN entire catalogues: Why? Because 8 gods are better than four! (And because "Bright Eyes," "The Bard's Song In The Forest," and "Noldor" make me cry!)

1. GRAVE DIGGER - *Excalibur*
2. Jaws Soundtrack
3. KAMELOT - *The Fourth Legacy*
4. NOCTURNUS - *Ethereal Tomb*
5. QUEEN - *Jazz*
6. DECEASED - *Supernatural Addiction*
7. DYING FETUS - *Grotesque Impalement*
8. Planet Of The Apes Soundtrack
9. STRATOVARIUS - *Episode*
10. TANGERINE DREAM - *Underwater Sunlight*

Book - Since people seem to be plugging books this issue, I'd might as well throw my current page-turner: *The Silmarillion* by J.R.R. Tolkien. Only one little segment of the book has anything to do with the Blind Guardian album!

Michael "The Texas Rattlesnake" Rosser:

1. TEN JINN - *As on a Darkling Plain*
2. SPIRAL ARCHITECT - *A Skeptic's Universe*
3. AGALLOCH - *Pale Folklore*
4. DANGER DANGER - *thereturnofthegreatgildersleeves*
5. WUTHERING HEIGHTS - *Within*
6. EARTH WIND & FIRE - *Greatest Hits*
7. V/A - *Working Man: A Tribute to RUSH*
8. VANDEN PLAS - *Far Off Grace*
9. THE FLOWER KINGS - *flowerpower*
10. "WEIRD AL" YANKOVIC - *Running With Scissors*

Jeff "The People's Champion" Kent:

1. STEEL PROPHET - *Messiah*
2. JOE SATRIANI - *Engines of Creation*
3. METALLICA - *Ride the Lightning and Master of Puppets*
4. PAIN OF SALVATION - *Entropy*
5. ARMORED SAINT - *Revelation*
6. NECK - *Should My Fist Eye*
7. DEVICES - *The Ghost in the Girl EP*
8. BILL FRISSELL - *Ghost Town*
9. DEATHRAY - *s/t*
10. ELEVEN - *Avantgardedog*

# Gates' Arena

Tom J. "The Ayatolla Of Rock And Rolla" Hughes:

DREAM THEATER - *Metropolis Pt. 2: Scenes From a Memory and Live at the Marquee*

1. EMMYLOU HARRIS - *Wrecking Ball*
  2. IN FLAMES - *Colony*
  3. *The Horse Whisperer* Soundtrack
  4. DEVIN TOWNSEND - *Infinity*
  5. TRISTANIA - *Beyond the Veil*
  6. AYREON - *Into the Electric Castle*
  7. STEVE EARLE - *El Corazon*
  8. BLUE RODEO - *Five Days in July, Nowhere to Here, and Tremolo*
  9. RHAPSODY - *Symphony of Enchanted Lands*
  10. LUCA TURILLI - *King of the Nordic Twilight*
  11. NIGHTWISH - *Oceanborn*
  12. LADY V - *s/t demo*
  13. JIM CUDDY - *All in Time*
- Book - *Heavy Metal* by Deena Weinstein (HIGHLY recommended for ALL self-respecting Metalheads!)

Keith W. "The Game" Sullivan:  
Sounds currently stimulating my brain while opening my mind-- in NO order.

- X. MORBID ANGEL - All, but particularly *Angel Of Disease Bootleg live '92*
- X. DARKANE - *Rusted Angel*
- X. DREAM THEATER - *Images and Words* (Happy Tom?)
- X. SENTENCED - *Crimson*
- X. BLIND GUARDIAN - *Nightfall in Middle Earth*
- X. DEMONS & WIZARDS - *s/t*
- X. BROKEN HOPE - *Grotesque Blessings*
- X. SKID ROW - *40 Seasons* (Best Of)
- X. DISMEMBER - *Hate Campaign and Massive Killing Capacity*
- X. CYNIC - *Focus* (I can't STOP!!!!)
- X. MANOWAR - *The Triumph of Steel* (Happy Mark?)
- X. HAMMERFALL - *Glory to the Brave*

Chris "The Beast from the East" Hawkins:

1. AGENTS OF OBLIVION
2. DEAD SILENT SLUMBER - *Enthroned in the Midnight Hour*
3. HATEBREED - *Satisfaction is the Death of Desire*
4. ZAKK WYLDE - *Book of Shadows and Black Label Society*
5. NUCLEAR ASSAULT - *The Plague*
6. KING DIAMOND - *Fatal Portrait*
7. INTERNAL BLEEDING - *Driven to Conquer*
8. SYSTEM RED - *Channel*
9. ACID BATH - '92 Demo
10. ANATHEMA - *Eternity*
11. OPETH - *My Arms, Your Hearse*

Stephen "The Innovator of Offense" Stalker:

1. BLIND GUARDIAN - *Nightfall in Middle Earth, Imaginations From the Other Side*
  2. HYPOCRISY - entire catalog
  3. ULVER - *Themes from the Marriage of William Blake's Heaven and Hell and Kveldssanger*
  4. DISSECTION - *The Somberlain*
  5. MY DYING BRIDE - *The Light at the End of the World and Turn Loose the Swans*
  6. IMMORTAL - *At the Heart of Winter*
  7. IN FLAMES - *Colony*
  8. CARCASS - *Heartwork and Necroticism*
  9. LIMBONIC ART - *Ad Noctum - Dynasty of Death*
  10. AETURNUS - *Shadows of Old*
  11. TRAUMA - *Daimonion*
  12. BAL SAGOTH - *The Power Cosmic*
  13. LUX OCCULTA - *My Guardian Anger*
- Books - *The Time Master Trilogy* by Louise Cooper, *Ring of Intrigue* by Jane S. Fancher

Michael "The Franchise" Yosko III:

HELLOWEEN, GAMMA RAY, and anything else Kai Hansen touches.

1. HAMMERFALL - *Glory To The Brave*
  2. STRATOVARIUS - *Destiny*
  3. PC69 - *Electrified*
  4. LECOMPT - *Live At Jo-Jo's Bootleg #1*
  5. DRAGON ATTACK - *A Tribute To Queen*
  6. Y&T - *Down For The Count*
  7. MICHAEL KISKE - *Instant Clarity*
  8. EDGUY - *Vain Glory Opera*
  9. BON JOVI - *Crossroad*
  10. SHANIA TWAIN - *Come On Over*
- Book - *The Amityville Horror*

George "The Crippler" Pacheco:

1. DECEASED - *Supernatural Addictions*
  2. GARDENIAN - *Soulburner*
  3. SOILWORK - *The Chainheart Machine*
  4. GREY AREA - *Fanbelt Algebra*
  5. ANGELCORPSE - *Live at the March Metal Melt-down and The Inexorable*
  6. KRISIUN - *Conquerors of Armageddon*
  7. RAVEN - *Mad EP and Live at the Inferno*
  8. IN FLAMES - *Lunar Strain/Subterranean* reissue
  9. AETURNUS - *Shadows of Old*
  10. LORD BELIAL - *Kiss the Goat and Unholy Crusade*
- Book - *The First Pain to Linger* by San Rosenthal (Black Tape for a Blue Girl/Projekt Records)

# NEW FROM METAL BLADE

THE RETURN OF POLAND'S FAVORITE SONS...

## VADER

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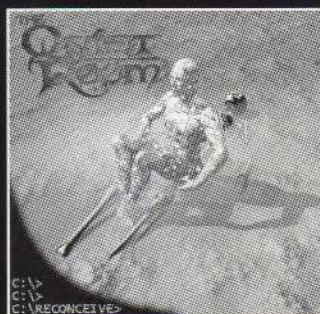
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"Revelation"



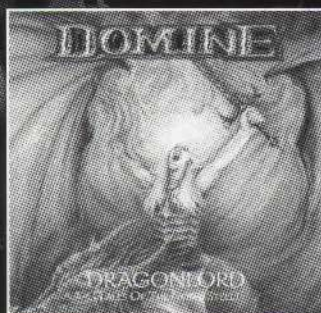
**CRADLE OF FILTH**  
"From The Cradle To Enslave"



**THE QUIET ROOM**  
"Reconcieve"



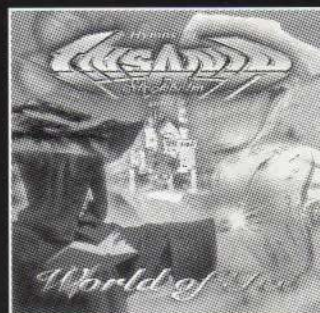
**FLESHCRAWL**  
"As Blood Runs From The Sky"



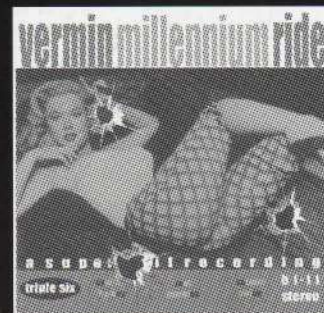
**DOMINE**  
"Dragonlord"



**LOBOTOMY**  
"Born In Hell"



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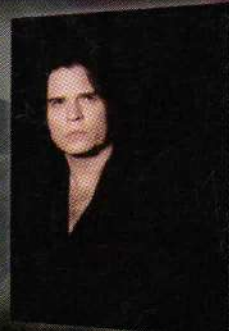
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