

February, 2001

The Dragon's Flight ISSUE 4

The Dragon's Flight Zine is produced by Dragon Flight Recordings LLC and Creative Forces with help from John Riendeau. This magazine was created to expose a mostly underground, yet incredibly healthy music genre. This is the fourth installment of our journey, where we encourage you to explore the artists, and the art they create.

If you have comments, or know of bands in the genres we cover that you'd like to read about, please write us.

Thanks, Clint

Dragon Flight Recordings LLC
The Dragon's Flight Zine
780 Reservoir Avenue
PMB 294
Cranston, Rhode Island
02910, USA
www.dragonflightrec.org
info@dragonflightrec.org

Interviews: Clint Listing
Reviews: Clint Listing
John Riendeau
Editor: John Riendeau
Design: Greg Ball

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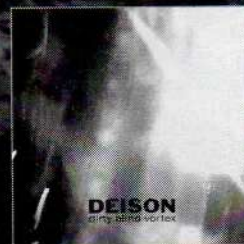


KK NULL / MOZ - "A Split Release" CD - \$11(us) \$13(wld)

KK Null presents five new tracks of frenetic electronics and rhythmic experiments, ranging from cacophonous to an almost tribal atmosphere. Ever evolving within a sphere of obscure tension the details reveal themselves with a stalwart elegance. Moz delivers 6 tracks of socially introspective Death Industrial and Dark Ambient. Drifting slabs contrast sharply with vitriolic sonics to render this misshapen pillar of sobering electronics. Limited to 500 copies.

DEISON - "Dirty Blind Vortex" CD - \$11(us) \$13(wld)

A fuming miasma of desiccated frequencies and oppressive atmospheres from this Italian purveyor of Death Industrial & Dark Ambient. "Dirty Blind Vortex" is a cryptic snarl of emotion and obsession, impulse and lethargy. Features contributions from Sshe Retina Stimulants, Govt. Alpha, Baal, R.H.Y. Yau, Lasse Marhaug and more. Limited to 500



GRUNTSPLATTER/SLOWVENT - "Split Release" CD - \$11(us) \$13(wld)

Gruntsplatter provide 30 minutes of grim Noise Ambient and darkened isolationist textures. Rich with subtlety and introspective horror. Slowvent supply 30 minutes of viscous Death Industrial. Thick, low end electronics, sluggish rhythmic distortions and subterranean atmospheres. This release is limited to 500 copies.- last few copies

COMING IN 2001

WILT - "Wither" CD - dark noise ambience

INSANGUINATE - "tba" CD - obsessive death industrial

NEVER PRESENCE FOREVER - "tba" CD - bleak soundscapes

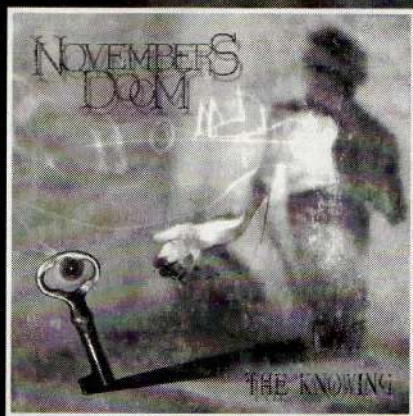
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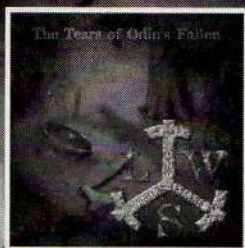
ARISE FROM THORNS BEFORE AN AUDIENCE OF STARS

Second brilliant album from Virginia's Arise From Thorns. Highly melodic, acoustic progressive music fronted by heavenly, powerful female vocals. Rhythmic percussive instrumentals and vocal excursions that develop with symphonic keyboards and multi-tracked vocal melodies during the choruses are just some of the many qualities which make Arise From Thorns stand out amidst all the stagnation in the music scene! Artwork and layout by Michael Riddick (*The Soil Bleeds Black*).



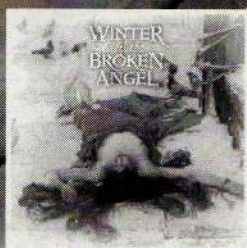
NOVEMBERS DOOM the KNOWING

A dark conceptual piece from start to finish, drawing diverse influences from such acts as Opeth, Moonspell, Katatonia, Anathema and My Dying Bride. Illustrated with artwork by Travis Smith (*NEVERMORE, KATATONIA, OPETH, and DEATH*). Prepare for one of the most miserable, depressing and aggressive dark offerings that the music scene has yet to experience. First 2000 copies come with full color, illustrated slipcase box and free poster.



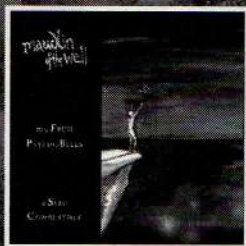
LONG WINTER'S STARE "THE TEARS OF ODIN'S FALLEN"

Symphonic dark metal with male tenor and Contrabass



AUTUMN TEARS "WINTER & the BROKEN ANGEL"

Orchestral, neoclassical music with heavenly vocals



MAUDLIN of the WELL "MY FRUIT PSYCOBELLS..."

Progressive, Astral Metal



RAIN fell WITHIN "BELIEVE"

Atmospheric metal with heavenly female vocals



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Der Blutharsch

Albin Julius

Give us a history of how Der Blutharsch came about and the current lineup.

I started with D.B. 3 years ago, when I still was doing the music for The Moon Lay Hidden Beneath A Cloud. At that time I wrote some stuff which didn't fit into the musical concept of TMLHBAC, so I decided to release it under the banner of "Der Blutharsch". This finally became the first D.B. pict.12" (ART 9), and since then D.B. is around...In the studio there is no lineup, as it is myself, sometimes aided by some friends. On stage the last line up was: John Mzrphy on drums, Wilhelm Herich/voc. and myself. For the future I don't know the line up...

You seem to be closely tied to World Serpent and Death in June. What came about with your leaving World Serpent for Tesco? Did the Death in June trouble help you decide to leave?

World Serpent took us from the beginning and supported us the best possible way, and TMLHBAC is still on WSD. I am not tied to D.I.J. - I simply collaborated on two albums, but Douglas is a very close friend of mine. Of course, when he and Boyd and Ian left, I had to question, what would be the best for Der Blutharsch, and as Klaus and Joachim from Tesco are very close friends of mine, and no band I like, except Coil stayed on WSD, I started feeling lonely...I simply had to decide, and I felt, that joining TESCO would bring me forwards, which they did.....

I've just recently got into your brilliant militaristic hymns. How do they come about; where do the ideas come from?

Daily life, friends, wine, cigars, love, books, films, music, travelling.....

Are there other projects with Der Blutharsch members currently creating musical outputs?

Wilhelm Herich is doing "Genocide Organ", John Murphy's project "Kraang" just released a LP via TESCO. Some people which will appear on my new album as guests as well do music, there is a small group of very active people around....

I've been told you're very visual as a live act. Will the US soil ever see you perform and if so what can we expect?

Yeah, I hope to come over to the states next year and to perform maybe 5 or 6 shows together with NON. See what happens... Don't know myself, what you or I can expect, I hope, only the best....

Would you call your style of thoughts fascist or extremist?

No. I think, I am very liberal in a way, but also very extreme in another. I don't follow any dogmas or political ideas, I simply choose what fits into my world. Left or right, both have good as well as very bad and stupid ideals... I am talking now about my personal opinion... I don't consider Der Blutharsch to be political....I simply keep it that much open as possible...simply not to build up any artistic walls.

If there was one artist or project living or dead you could perform with, who would it be and why?

Elvis. I love his music... or, Dean Martin. Unfortunately they both are dead.

What are your views on the internet as a promotional device for bands and independent thought. Are you for or against it. Especially, what are your thoughts on mp3's?

I don't like internet, and it took me years to buy a computer. I only use it for emailing, as it is simple, cheap and fast communication. But I nearly never surf the net - it is too boring and I prefer to read a book instead. I don't know what to think about Mp3's exactly. On one hand, I guess it helps bands to get promoted, especially small independent acts, on the other hand I am not sure if it will kill music. I live from music and have to pay my costs, i.e. production, manufacturing etc. and every CD I sell makes it easier for me as well...But, I think many people got to know about D.B. via the Net, and still enough people buy my CD's and Vinyl....

I've noticed a lot of metal fans (one being myself) getting into bands like Puissance, Raison d'Etre, Der Blutharsch, Death in June, Current 93, etc. Did you ever think the two musical scenes would intertwine in such a major way?

I as well noticed that many metal people get more and more attracted by this style of music. I don't know the reason, except that it simply is good music. Raison D'Etre for example is really great stuff. But I always thought it will happen, well I saw the signs...

Are there any projects or new sounds out there you would like to share with our readers?

The only two new projects I really think are unique and very good are "Novy Svet" and "Derniere Volonte" - not because they are released by myself, but because I find them really good. Besides, there are many bands I like - Death In June, NON, Deutsch Nepal, Genocide Organ...just to name a few....



The Dragon's Flight



I was wondering if Germany and Austria gave you any major problems releasing CD's there, as you do have a very over the top militaristic theme.

The Germans are legendary for crushing free speech. There is a nice quote:

In England everything which is not forbidden, is allowed.

In Germany, everything which isn't allowed is forbidden.

In Austria, everything which is forbidden is allowed.

Well, that's it. I had problems in Germany, but Germany is crap. The politicians and especially this f... new government are total paranoid about everything right from the middle.

Everything is banned, people get problems simply for having another opinion than the official ones or simply because they do not want to believe in all the lies..... Yeah, I had problems there, I got arrested, and had good times, believe me. On the other hand, many pure and faithful people live there, and..... times will change.

For someone just getting into Der Blutharsh's unique sounds, would you have them listen or explore anything else that made you what you are today, or just have them enjoy your art as they see fit!

They simply shall listen to it and enjoy. If they like it, good, if they hate it, even better....if they understand, they are ours, if not, pah!....

Thanks for the interview . If you have any last words please let them be said now.

No last words until I die.

Fleurety

Over the course of 3 CDs and 8 years, give a history of Fleurety and what is currently going on.

I'll give a very brief history:

1991: Band formed.

1995: First album (Min Tid Skal Komme)

1999: Mini Cd called "Last-minute Lies".

2000: Full length called "Department of Apocalyptic Affairs"

We're still making music, even though we reside in different countries. We've got something like five song sketches. Most of the music we make these days is made through computer manipulation of sound; at least that's what I do. My ambition for the next album is making something more aggressive than our last effort. A kind of electronic punk perhaps? And I don't mean that we are going to sound like the Prodigy.

You made the move from the Misanthropy to Supernal Music, is there a reason why?

Yes, there is. Misanthropy didn't want to release our album, simply because they didn't expect our music to be profitable. Too bad they don't exist anymore, because if they did, I would hope that I could have contributed to their losing credibility. Anyway, it doesn't matter. I actually think that Supernal Music was better for us than Misanthropy would have been, even though our album came out hysterically delayed.



Therefore we try to make the best music possible, regardless of genre. Personally I tend to like music that is made for the sake of music, not for the sake of selling records. I can't prove it, but I'm certain that it is evident from the sound of the music whether it is made out of love for music or love for money. If you want to understand music as an expression of something meaningful, it would perhaps be necessary to expand the model used to explain musical content to contain more than which genre it is supposed to fit into. I am a bit surprised why this is not more frequently exposed as the truism it indeed is.

FLEURETY

Your newer music is far less metal and much more experimental and jazzy. A surprise for some, a joy for me. Tell how this came about.

A lot of people seem to think that we are just trying to be weird, which actually makes me kind of frustrated. That is because I actually want us to be understood for what we are. I am even frustrated enough about this to make this my initial reaction to a question about why our music sounds like it does. I have been very fed up with metal for a long time, but now it seems that I can enjoy some of the less pretentious manifestations of metal as a means of being more easily able to swallow beer. Which is a step in the proper direction. Anyway, we both have a great love for music.

Are you happy with what Supernal is doing for you, and will they continue to be your label?

Actually we have just departed from Supernal Music. This is the best solution, since Supernal Music has no ambition of reaching beyond the metal audience. And it appears that the metal audience seems to view us with very suspicious eyes.

<CONTINUED>

FLEURETY <CONTINUED>

The Dept of Apocalyptic Affairs seems to be filled with other highly noted Norwegian artists such as Maniac (Mayhem), Carl (Ved Buens Ende/Arcturus), etc. How did this all come about?

The process of recording this album can almost be described as something similar to a social club. Most of the semi-famous people featured on the album are people that either I, Alexander or both of us hang out with in our spare time. I actually had coffee with Maniac today; he attends the same university as I do. Contrary to less illuminated belief, people involved with the Norwegian metal scene enjoy socializing.

Are there side projects either of you are currently working on?

I am still a member of DHG, which I have been a part of for three years now. But I can't really say I'm working on that project. There's simply no activity with that band at the moment. I have a lot of things on my mind anyway. Nordgaren is very busy with his studies at the moment, so I don't think he has much time to pursue that much musical activity in his spare time. That is, I'm not sure he has any spare time.

What's your view on the promotion of underground music over the internet with mp3's and such? Are you against this?

I am not against distribution of music via the internet, but I am worried about how one is to be able to make music professionally in the future. I do have a feeling that the people who buy music in the same way as they buy chocolate will prefer not having to pay for it. But that will primarily affect artists who appeal to that particular audience. Personally I use the internet to download music that I am only remotely interested in. In that way I am given the chance to hear stuff that I normally wouldn't. I do not buy fewer records now than I used to, but I hardly bother to buy CDs that come with a cover that doesn't appeal to me. That is, unless I want to support the recording artist by buying his record. If I really appreciate a record I buy the CD as a gesture of gratitude towards the artist who made that particular piece of music. The result of this is more or less the same as it was prior to the mp3 quasi-revolution, with one major difference: I end up with a CD collection that suits my taste better than it would have done if I didn't get the chance to listen to the music before buying it. I haven't bought any CD during the last year only for the sake of finding out what it's like. Hopefully most people are like me in this respect, although I seriously doubt that.

There was a long period between the 2 full length CD's. Will we be seeing a more frequent Fleurety release schedule or is this more just a hobby for you guys now?



It's not a way of making ends meet, but I don't want to reduce it to a hobby. The most appropriate word would be life style. I don't see any real reason why we shouldn't be able to release an album in 2001. We have the material for it. Having said that it's probably appropriate to point out that we've had the material for Department of Apocalyptic Affairs for almost three years now.

You recorded the new CD at Jester studios. Did Garm, aka "Trickster G" have a hand in it? How was the experience there?

Yes actually. He is credited as co-producer on the album, which means that he contributed with a valuable amount of input.

The packing on the Dept CD is so unusual. Where did the concept come from?

The final solution concerning what the cover should be was conceived by Alex Kurtagic, the label manager of Supernal Music, and he deserves a great amount of credit for his contribution.

If there was one artist living or dead that you could perform with, who would it be?

I don't really know. Most of the bands I adore would probably kick our ass if we were to be placed alongside them. In an ideal world (that is in a world where we could stand to be compared to any of the artists I am going to mention) I would have liked to perform with Autechre, Coil, Karlheinz Stockhausen or possibly Bjork.

I read back on the first Misanthropy release that you wanted to incorporate dancers and more of a stage show into your live playing. Are you still thinking of doing so?

No. That was then. Now is now. We are less silly now, although some people might find that statement worth debating.

Well thanks for the interview and please place any final words here.

This seems like a good opportunity to mention the following URL:
<http://www.uio.no/~sveineh/fleurety>
 Thanks to you as well. Ladies and gentlemen: Thanks for your attention.

LS-TTL

Brian Coffee



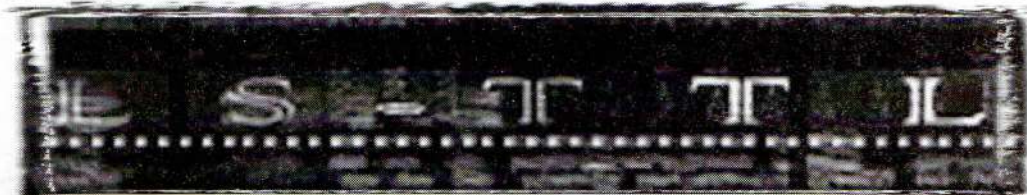
Ok give a history of the band and what the current lineup is.

I started making music sometime late 1996 not too long after I started schooling at Wright State University for Computer Engineering. It started as a desire to create anti-music because of the methodologies I learned from listening to SPK, Throbbing Gristle, and Einsturzende Neubauten. It was also a really good way to keep myself sane from all the mathematical courses I was forced to take. Slowly, it morphed into a way to implement some of my visions and dreams into a sound.

What the hell does LS-TTL mean?

LS-TTL stands for Low Power Schottkey Transistor-Transistor Logic. In layman's terms this is a family of integrated circuits who share a similar characteristic of voltages for true and false/0 and 1 values. It tends to be a common chip used for digital design lab courses in universities because of it's surplus and low power usage. In the context of my own music it deals with an experimental nature and relates to the digital realm that most of the sounds tend to embody. The name itself was picked mostly because it seems nonsensical and pointless. For those who don't know the abbreviation LS-TTL it simply appears to be a series of letters applied to a set of sounds forming atmospheres. This is the minimalism I try hard to cling to. LS-TTL intends to remove connotation and deal strictly in objectivity. The sound is what really matters here.

The Dragon's Flight



I don't have a lot of optimism when it comes to educating people who remain locked onto the pop world, so oftentimes I sell myself really short when asked this question by the average person. However, if I was forced to explain some small portion of the soul of LS-TTL or just dark ambient-esque sound as a whole I would probably explain it as the noises in the background of a truly horrific film —not necessarily the soundtrack itself because those generally have a clear song structure and deal largely in the composition of notes. Instead, I'd explain that it is the sound of the rusty ceiling fan, or the slow movement of a molten lava just below the crust waiting to burst from any crack it can find, or the drops of blood falling on the floor from a leg being dragged along while hanging from the mouth of a dire wolf. My co-workers like to call it "broken refrigerator music."

What side projects will LS-TTL unleash on us in the coming year?

If any of you have followed LS-TTL on mp3.com you'd know that I do occasionally release more rhythmic pieces. I've been asked and have personally contemplated developing this style further under a different name, however, no current titles for the music project have been decided upon. I don't generally like the side-project mentality of creating lots of band names for a single person simply because the sound is mildly different. As I tried explaining earlier, names mean much less than the sound itself for LS-TTL. I would look forward to doing some form of collaboration with colleagues of mine and some things have been brought up but absolutely nothing is official to this date.

What's the concept behind the strange artwork for the cover of (el es tee tee el)?

Again, the art of LS-TTL, visually and aurally, is a minimalistic depiction of digits forming ominous atmospheres. Most of it is random text and lines formed from grids. It has no recognizable images, merely odd esoteric smears.

How do you feel DFR is treating you so far? (Be very honest or I will drop you for sure...)

DFR has been pretty damn supportive. I love the willingness of Clint and Greg to promote an artist whose experience comes from curious tinkering with machines and songs published via a web company that'll distribute any songs via the internet no questions asked. I'd thought about creating a DIY label, but I'd be on the verge of suicide by now if I had to take care of all the costs and promotion required to get a few CDs sold. I bet Clint's a little loco en la cabeza by now (if he wasn't already).

Are there any trends out there that you currently hate?

Black Metal. I tried to listen to it but I just wound up going back to Meshuggah and The Locust or other hardcore.

Is there a religious/occult view that the band stands for?

LS-TTL tries to refrain from any religious connections, but personally I have put some study into Taoism, Zen and Upanishadism. However, none of them have been adopted fully and are used mostly in an effort to understand consciousness. I have also spent time thinking of the methodology and philosophy behind governmental beliefs like Marxism and anarchism. They may show up in my music unintentionally as a reflection of my own humble, pessimistic attitude. It's often depressing to me how most of the world sees through eyes given to them by an ancient set of morals and values engrained in them while still impressionable as a young child.

Would LS-TTL sign to a major label if given the chance, and why?

I highly doubt it. I'm honestly very opposed to turning LS-TTL into a vocation. When I was asked to do music for DFR I looked at it as a way to get music distributed to other people that listen to sound the way that I do. It was also a good way to avoid some of the corporate bullshit of mp3.com and other internet companies who advertise a free market but really invoke a lot of the same cut-throat methods used by some of the large labels whom they claim to be better than. The label has also turned into a nice family of personal friends releasing similar music. I couldn't be happier to be

releasing stuff with Vedisni and Veinke let alone Peter Andersson's Necrophorous or the unbelievable Lockweld.

If there was one composer or artist living you could perform with who would that be?

I'd say that one of the most influential artists for me in recent times has been Daniel Menche. Whether or not I could assume to "perform" anywhere near the caliber as him is another question. Menche has a certain style which turns noise into a very elaborate work plastered on large canvases.

What do you think 2001 will hold for LS-TTL?

2001 might end up seeing a few live performances by LS-TTL. Of course, there will be the 7" with Vedisni and Veinke and a 2nd album late in the year. A web domain of imagery and sound will be unleashed sometime in the near future. Other than that, it simply remains to be written.

I hear you're releasing a CD on Darkambient.net, tell us a bit about that.

This project was brought to me close to a year ago now by Bauke of darkambient.net. It was entitled Hz and it's focus is a 3" CD-R of sound created with a specific frequency in mind. For example, someone could take the standard wave cycle for a clock at 1 mhz and simply develop this in some form to create a sound from that frequency. This has been in the early stages for a long time, but will be made real sometime in the near future.

I just wanted to end it on 13 so place any last words here.

If you managed to read this far, I want to thank you for having the patience to peruse my often incoherent pseudo-intellectual ramblings. Some people tell me that I think too much, but I'd rather just believe that my head is permanently broken.

KOAN

Zahaah/ Spher

You're very new to the US scene. Give us a history and background of the project.

Spher : We started working with Zahaah after we met when I played with Himinbjorg for one concert in France. We first just recorded one track, « Underwaters » featuring on the cd, for a video game. We appreciated the result and decided to work on some more tracks.

You're also in Himinbjorg I see. Is that how the project was released on Redstream?

Zahaah : Yes, I think that having several projects on the same label helps to increase the scope of these projects.

like to observe as a means to find the personal meaning of my sound constructions. I don't always find it however!

Will Koan be an on going project or is this just a one time event?

Spher : We have talked about working on a second cd, but we will have to wait for some time before we have the occasion to do so, as we are both very busy with our own projects for the moment.

What's the major difference between Metal and Experimental Dark music scenes for you ?

Are there any other projects or ideas you are working on now that you would like to tell us about ?

Zahaah : A new Himinbjorg cd is coming out soon on Redstream. Then I would like to work on the second Koan cd, but for the moment I am essentially focused on an acoustic project, something more traditional, on which I started working 5 years ago and that I really intend to finish one day.

Spher : I'm currently working on several different projects of electronic music, linked with my solo project Spher : the first Spher cd « Unknown Continents » (Dark Electro heir to bands like Skinny Puppy or Klinik with

From the CD I received, you're a mixture of Dark Ambient, Electronic soundscapes and blackish haunting vocals. If you were forced, how would you explain the style and sounds Koan creates?

Spher : Your definition of Koan's style is rather good actually. Koan was precisely meant to be a confrontation of my own musical universe, which corresponds to the dark ambient electronic side of Koan, and of Zahaah's, which added the blackish ritual atmosphere. In fact we did not really work on the songs of the cd together. Zahaah gave me acoustic guitar tracks on which I added electronics, and he added vocals and lyrics on the electronic tracks I had made. Working apart from each other enabled us to let the one re-interpret the other's music with his own influences and musical background, and it was a great surprise when we listened together to what had come up !

What does Koan mean and does it have a special meaning to you?

Spher : The term koan comes from the Zen tradition. Briefly a koan is a kind of short allegorical story told by a Zen master to his disciple, who will meditate on it rather than think about it to discover its meaning. This is rather close to the way I apprehend my music. Electronic sounds are abstract and easily stimulate my imaginary, they provoke mental images and sensations, which I

Zahaah : I think that the Experimental Dark electronic scene is more opened to creativity, it always keeps exploring, and enjoys a certain artistic freedom. The Metal scene is to my mind too standardized, too much modeled on some stereotypes and always remains the same. Singularity is a dangerous thing in the Metal scene. These two scenes have a dark aspect in common, but have a different functioning.

Spher : I personally don't know the Metal scene and am not especially interested in it. But I spent some years going to Gothic and Industrial parties and concerts quite often, in France, Scotland, England and Germany, to eventually get fed up with them. Now I just listen to electronic things mostly and sometimes go to concerts, but I hardly ever try to get informed on how the scene is going.

If you could play with one artist or project (living or dead), who would that be and why?

Zahaah : At the moment I would say with Breda Mayok, an irish singer. I'm very sensitive to her voice, to its color.

Spher : Well, I'm currently working on different projects with people I appreciate working with. Yet, if I'm allowed to dream, I would love doing something with people like Klaus Schulze, David Bowie, or Depeche Mode for instance.

ambient sides close to Klaus Schulze) ; a collaboration of Spher with Elvan (ex-Himinbjorg), something rather ambient ; and a collaboration of Spher with Plasma (a french musician and dj), which I could define as Experimental Electro Techno. There is also a cd which should be released in autumn on Moloko+, a german label, of the music I recently made for a theatre play under the name of Arghyll (electronic music with a medieval celtic atmosphere).

Are you completely a studio creation or will Koan decide to play live?

Spher : I enjoy working in the studio, but I'm not used to play live. Yet it could be an interesting experience and we might try it some day.

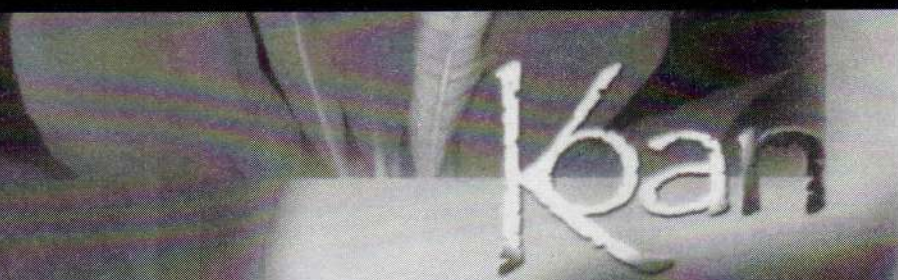
Zahaah : Personally, I love playing live. It's a strong and authentic experience. I hope we'll make concerts.

How is the music scene in the area of the world where you are?

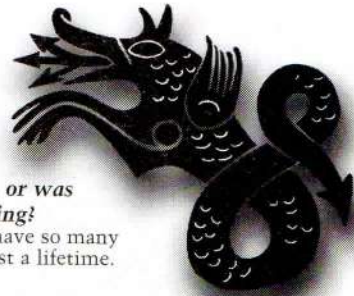
Zahaah : The Metal and Electronics scenes are very important in Germany, but only concern a minority of people in France.

Last words please place here...

Zahaah : I would just like to say that underground artistic movements must go on existing to oppose the standardization generated by our society, in order to preserve freedom in creativity.



Steve Von Till



Give us a brief history of your solo project and what got you to this point.

I was born. I was fed, I thrived. I thrive on music. Ten years ago I joined Neurosis and began to really feel the satisfaction of exploring the spirit through music. I have been blessed with inspiration and outlets for this inspiration. In 1995 we formed Tribes of Neurot and really began to explore and challenge ourselves to surrender to the spirit of our muse, to the spirit of sound. For a couple years around 1996 I also played with the neo-classical, ambient folk ensemble Amber Asylum. This helped me to understand the trance elements and potential of subtle beautiful melodic acoustic music. Tribes of Neurot has continued to perform and record sound experiments and soundscapes and Neurosis has continued to push the boundaries of our own unique style modern heavy rock music. In 1996 I began recording my own acoustic music, with no purpose other than putting my ideas on to tape because they were flowing out from within. After a couple years I realized that I had a lot of this material and it really needed to be heard so I finally admitted that I had to do a solo album and finished some of these songs to make this album.

Was Neurot Recording founded to release Neurosis and their side projects?

Primarily yes, however we have expanded the concept to include releasing other inspired artists that we feel a musical kinship with. We have an exciting release schedule for the coming year of excellent albums.

What got you into the dark acoustic sounds? I know you worked with Kris Force from Amber Asylum on their releases.

I have always liked folk music, since I was a kid, and I always seem to like melancholy music, it just seems to be so moving. Even in many of the punk and metal bands I listened to as a young man there always was a soft spot for the bands which could utilize dark subtle acoustic parts to diversify their sound and actually be more emotional with the heavy music. These days I listen mostly to acoustic music, whether it be European folk, traditional American music, whatever as long as it is raw and inspired.

Will you continue this project, or was the solo CD just a one time thing?

I will definitely continue, I have so many more songs. I think this will last a lifetime. The inspiration seems endless.

Give us info on what's in store for Neurot Recordings.

We are just now releasing "Sovereign" the new CD from Neurosis. A new Tribes of Neurot CD "60 degrees will be released at the same time as "Sovereign". It is a collection of rare vinyl releases and compilation tracks from the last couple years. We are also going to be releasing Adaptation and Survival - The Insect Project in the spring of 2001. We have also released my first solo release "As the Crow Flies" plus a CD from the Galloping Coroners (Rasende Leichenbeschauer). Here is some of the upcoming stuff from Neurot Recordings: TARENTEL from San Francisco play epic, emotional and cinematic instrumental music and are due to release a CD for NR early 2001. NR will also be releasing two ambient side projects from the guys of GODFLESH. VITRIOL is due to be released at the end of 2000, or early 2001 and features G.C. Green creating a beautiful, dark soul searching ambient CD. FINAL is Justin Broadrick sculpting rich texture into incredible moving pieces of sound. ISIS from Boston are the flag bearers for the future of emotional, epic intelligent heavy music. Their CD for NR will see the light of day in early 2001. ZENI GEVA from Japan are legends in their own right in the field of crushingly intense, psychedelic heavy music. They will be recording for NR in October 2000. SCOTT KELLY, guitarist / vocalist for Neurosis will be releasing his first solo album of dark psychedelic acoustic songs sometime in 2001. 2001 will also see the release of the first gritty swampy acoustic solo release from

K-Lloyd (a.k.a. Kirk Fischer of Buzzoven). Joe Preston (formerly of the Melvins and Earth) is an unbelievable one man wall of twisted throbbing sludge as THRONES. He will be recording for NR sometime in 2001. TRIBES OF NEUROT will finally be releasing the long awaited Insect Project "Adaptation and Survival" sometime in the next year. Please visit the Neurot Recordings web site neurotrecordings.com.

Just to clear up a rumor, I've heard that Neurosis has signed a major label deal and have left Relapse. Is this true?

No this is not true! We will be releasing our own CD in a week on Neurot Recordings, but after that we will do another album with Relapse which we are recording in December. We enjoy our relationship with Relapse, they work really hard and are friends. If we were to ever stop working with Relapse, we would simply release the albums ourselves.

Will we be seeing other projects you'll be recording with on Neurot?

Yes, I will continue the solo output, the Tribes output the Neurosis output and also collaborate on some other projects.

If there was one artist living or dead that you could play with who would that be?

That's an unfair question, it depends on what mood I'm in. It could be Jimi Hendrix, Willie Nelson or Johnny Cash, Nick Drake, Tangerine Dream or Richard Wagner. Hell as long as we're dreaming let's get em all together.

Do you feel the underground music scene is thriving or hurting due to mp3s and the internet?

I think the internet is a wonderful tool for artists and musicians to reach people.

What brought you to play music in the first place?

My father played guitar and sang around the house a lot while I was growing up, it was probably that, and then of course when I was in grade school, Rock and Roll captured my soul.

Out of all the styles you play what would be the most rewarding to you personally?

All of them.

The songs on as the crow flies seem very deep and personal with a dark edge. Where did they come from?

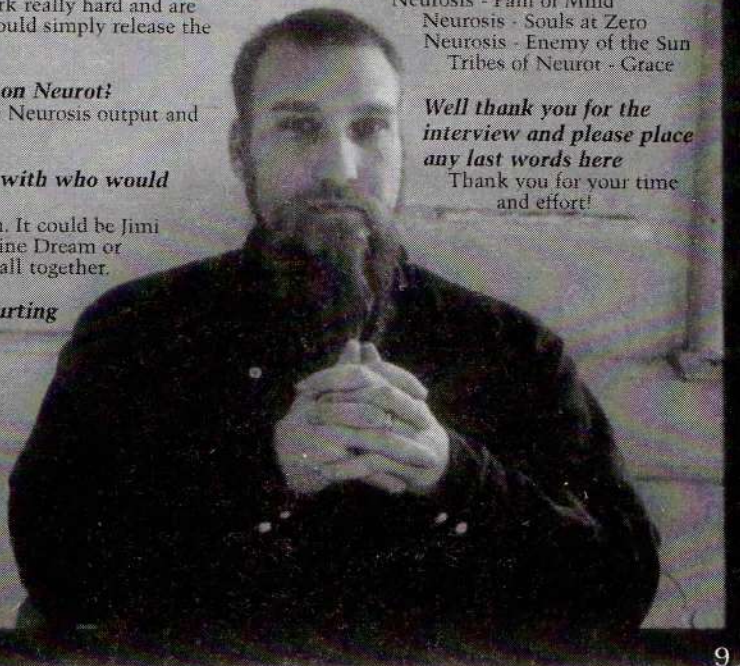
My mind, my body and my spirit. Where else?

I also see that this is Neurot 006, what was released or signed before this?

Neurosis - Pain of Mind
Neurosis - Souls at Zero
Neurosis - Enemy of the Sun
Tribes of Neurot - Grace

Well thank you for the interview and please place any last words here

Thank you for your time and effort!



Morgion

For those not in the know of the Atmospheric Doom sounds of Morgion Give us a History, line-up and background of the band.

Morgion was formed back in 1990 by Jeremy Peto, Dwayne Boardman and Rhett Davis. Like most bands back in the day, Morgion started in the vein of death metal, drawing from influences such as Autopsy and even Morbid Angel. The band's sound was (and still remains) primarily European, though we have shifted genres quite a bit. The early Swedish death sounds of Carnage, Dismember, Entombed and Nihilist still remain with us to this day, but the musical style has evolved into the slower, more morose style you hear today. We have certainly had our share of lineup changes through the years; Jeremy Peto (vocals) and Dwayne Boardman (guitars) are the remaining founding members; I myself joined the band back in 1995 to play guitar and keyboards, and our current search for a new drummer and suitable keyboardist continue.

You've currently released 2 CD's on the Relapse label. I know you aren't a founding member but tell us how you joined the Relapse Team.

Morgion signed to Relapse records the old fashioned way, via demo a demo tape. I know the earlier recordings ("Rabid Decay" 1999 Demo, "Travesty" 1993 EP) were shown to the label, but they remained uninterested. The recording known as "Among Majestic

Ruin" was recorded as a demo tape back in 1996, which was obviously more to their liking... Unfortunately we were stuck in negotiations for a quite a while to draft a suitable contract for both label and band, so the CD didn't see a release date until 1997. The recording was released exactly the same way Relapse received it as a demo, though I believe they mastered it before press.

Your music has grown a lot more epic and atmospheric from Among Majestic Ruin to Solinari. Tell me a bit about the progression from one CD to the next.

I think a lot of the musical advancements came with member changes and natural progression, actually. Two former members quit the band shortly after the "Among..." recording, Bob Thomas (guitar) and Ed Parker (keyboards). When I joined in 1995, the band had started writing two songs for the "Solinari" album ("The Serpentine Scrolls" and "Nightfall Infernal"). Little known to me at the time, my guitar/keyboard positions had usually been the main sources of the songwriting process. That was a bit stressful, covering both bases, haha. Still, we finished writing and recording the "Solianni" album as a four piece. Given the circumstances, I'd like to think I had a bit to do with the "expanded" difference between albums; I just introduced some of

If I had to narrow it down to one thing, I would have to say the love of the music. With all the shit that seems to happen on a weekly basis, the one thing that can't be taken away is our music. We are all quite fortunate to have found each other in this mess; it isn't easy to find people who think and relate musically the same as you do, and I believe that fact is in the back of all our minds all the time.

Are you happy with the direction Relapse has taken and promoted you as of this point?

Well, we aren't quite as high up on the "priority" list as we'd like, but that's life on a label. You can't ride high on promotion and attention forever, especially when your last release was



my strong points of dynamics, atmosphere and moods, which (thankfully) complimented the direction the band was taking. Of course, there are those out there who wish we didn't take the more atmospheric approach on "Solinari", but I can't apologize for that, haha. We are quite pleased with that release.

You've had a lot of tragedy in Morgion: a death of a member and now your drummer currently leaving to join a cover band of all things. What makes you keep on going?

two years ago... We are long overdue for a new album, but with recent member departures it is a bit difficult to get back on track. I think the promotional efforts for "Solinari" were quite good considering we are the "odd" band on the label, though I know a European tour would've helped us greatly.

Do you feel doom metal is a bad word in the American music scene? It seems like we're almost looked down on as sub par to the rest of the metal world.

The Dragon's Flight



I don't think we, as a genre, are the "bad" word of the scene, but we are certainly in the minority. There are times I actually appreciate that fact, to be honest. Unlike some horrible bands, who will remain nameless, no one is going to listen to a Morgion album just because we put a nude figure or dismembered children on the cover art. Typical death metal is all gimmicks these days. Who can play the fastest, who has the most brutal graphics, who has the goriest T-shirts to outdo each other... everyone forgets about the number one

factor: the music. For lack of a better word, I would have to say doom fans are much more "cultured" than the average metal listener. They've had their share of Cannibal Crap bands, they're tired of buying the same album over and over

again; they look to the actual music for something they can relate to. I think almost anyone can relate to most doom bands, because the subjects and themes adopted are more acceptable to human nature; fantasy or reality. Then you have to add the "American" factor in, haha. It is much more difficult for doom bands and fans alike to keep the flame going; good bands and distribution are quite minimal out here for the doom genre. In that respect, I would have to say that American doom fans are quite dedicated to the music.

Do you or any other members of Morgion have other projects your working on?

For the most part, we mainly keep to Morgion. Most of us don't have the time to invest into other projects after you factor in work and band schedules, haha. I believe we've all helped out or filled in for other bands at one time or another, but nothing too occupying. I think people who have multiple projects have a need to express themselves in more than one way, so they have a few outlets in which to do so. For us, we keep Morgion very open to new ideas and styles, so we can usually vent our personal experiments and new ideas within the band. Sometimes they work, sometimes not. I personally haven't had the need to express myself musically outside of the band often, but I do form some of my personal ideas into acoustic/soundtrack recordings I do at home and occasionally record music with my pre-Morgion band mates Nepenthe.



What will the next Morgion release bring to the music world? Will it be much different from the last?

It has become quite difficult to say for sure, we've been without a drummer for so long now. We have a lot of demo material, but I'm sure things will take better shape once we are able to rehearse in a normal fashion. The recording factor also remains; for instance, "Solinari" evolved quite a bit during the recording sessions. There were many ideas and arrangements "set in stone" for a long time, and changed at the last minute for the better. We did more experimenting in the studio than in rehearsal, haha. In the writing stages you work on a song-to-song basis, but in the studio we concentrated on the overall work. It was very refreshing to be able to stand back and look at the album as a whole.

We've also been throwing around some ideas for an acoustic/keyboard/soundtrack-esque EP release for quite some time now, even before "Solinari" was recorded. Since we've been without a drummer for half a year, now would be a great opportunity to see what we can do with

that, but there is always a feeling of despair when it is something you "have" to do, given our current situation.

Over all, how was the contamination tour you were on? Are you looking forward to touring again?

Touring was incredibly fun, especially being Morgion's first "official" tour. Unfortunately, being a Relapse sponsored tour, we were once again the "odd" band on the list, haha. There weren't any band conflicts or anything of that sort. The tensions, if any, came from the people and fans coming to see the shows. Primarily a "grind" tour, there weren't many people there willing to tolerate our slow style, haha. On the other hand, there were a good amount of people who showed up just for Morgion, and those people were incredible. Once again, the truly dedicated American doom fans, haha. We wouldn't change a thing if we were asked to do another Contamination Tour. Even though the crowds had very mixed feelings at times, we made some great friends with the members of Today is the Day, Soilent Green, Exhumed and Nauseum, and we'd be more than glad to support either of them on another tour (even if their fans don't agree, haha).

If there was one artist or project you could perform with (living or dead) who would it be and why?

That is indeed a good question, though I don't think I have a proper answer for it. I don't have a fantasy "dream band" per

se, but there are a few groups or individuals I would love to work with in one way or another.

Two bands I'd love to tour with would be Anathema and The Gathering, that much I know. Two very amazing bands and distinct styles I love and respect. On the "wishful thinking" side, I certainly wouldn't turn down an offer to play backing with David Bowie or Roger Waters, but somehow I don't think that will happen... I believe my collaboration with Danny Elfman is also on hold, haha.

What is your opinion, over all, on the underground music scene in the US? Is it growing or choking on itself?

If the rest of the country is like California, I'd have to say choked, dead and gone... unless you like the Suffocation/Cannibal Corpse clones. A generalization of course, but it has been a long time since I've been convinced differently by a new underground band.

If you had the option of signing to a major label, would you? Please tell me why you chose this answer.

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Nile

Chief Spires

For people who don't know about you, could you give us a brief history of Nile?

We started back in 1993 with the idea to do this Egyptian thing. Karl brought to me this idea of Egyptian mythology and we all started getting into it and doing a lot of research. One thing lead to another and we started writing more and more songs. It started catching on. So we put

out a record called Festivals of Atonement in 1995, that was a self-financed record and it was basically just in the underground, tape trading. In 1996 we went and recorded the three song demo "Ramsey's Bringer of War." A guy from Visceral Productions heard that and offered us a one record deal to do our first full length. So we went and recorded "Amongst the Catacombs of Nephren-Ka" for him. Unfortunately right about the time we were finished with recording he had so much going on with school and everything else that he decided that he was going to have to close his record

company. But, on the good side he let the guys at Relapse hear our stuff and they really liked it. So they gave us a call and offered us a record deal and we signed a deal with them for four records. Basically I guess the rest is history, we've just been working on that.

What would you say the differences are between the last record and "Black Seeds of Vengeance?" This one seems to be a lot more melodic and well thought out. There's more of a mixture of the Egyptian side and the brutal side.

MORGION <CONTINUED>

A difficult question to answer, actually.

I suppose I have to answer your question with another... How do you like to get fucked? There isn't a signed band on the planet that can give you a happy story about any label out there. Running a label is a business, business is politics, and politics could care less about artistic expression. I don't think most people realize the sacrifices made to sign to a label these days. For every great new album you buy at the store, there are band members out there who have basically sold their soul for the next few years of their life. If you sign to a small label, you run into the problems of inexperience and low distribution, hence you can find yourself out of a deal before anyone ever hears your music. If you sign to a big label, you deal with too much experience at the politics game, which is potentially worse, yet almost everyone can obtain a copy. The best solution is to try and find those labels somewhere in the middle, when they have a sense of what they're doing and still retain respect for the music.

Who does the really dark and majestic artwork for Morgion? I truly find it a thing of beauty.

Many thanks for the kind words! The Morgion art are my works, actually. Another one of my outlets for expression... Inspiration, Photoshop, Illustrator and a bit of weed are all I need, haha.

What are your views on stoner rock saying it's doom? I find it a travesty on epic levels.

For the most part, I must agree with you. How many times can you rewrite Black Sabbath and Kyuss riffs? There isn't a single band out there who can touch the originals of that genre in my opinion. There are a few exceptions of course, as I think a collection is sadly incomplete without Cathedral's debut album, but that's more along the doom lines than anything else. Still, it remains one of the most tasteful Sabbath-influenced albums. Don't even get me started on Orange Goblin and the like, haha.

Would you say that Europe or North America is where Morgion is most respected for the music they make?

Well, I think the slower style is more accepted overall out in Europe. Again, there are a lot of dedicated doom fans here in America, but if our own area is any indication of the overall doom scene in the States we might as well be dead, haha. I really think we'd do much better if we relocated to Europe, but that's just wishful thinking, haha.

Are Morgion of the digital or analog school of recording?

I believe there would be a conflict of interest on that one, haha. All our recordings, with the exception of a horrible tribute album experience, have been analog. Analog has such a warm sound to it. Still, being a computer fanatic myself, I also know the advantages of the digital realm, and I can get quite frustrated with the limitations of the analog method. Some of my demos here at home turn out better than most albums, and the freedom of digital is unsurpassed in every aspect. Still, we are quite pleased with the analog production of "Solinari"... it is a difficult choice. I will be taking care of a lot of pre-production at home this time around, but it will take some time before I opt to go completely digital with the next album.

Do you feel that MP3's and the Internet are friends or foes of metal/underground music?

A couple years ago I could've cared less about MP3's, now I have over a hundred CDR's burned of the damn things, haha. MP3 fanatics seem to be either one way or another, the first downloads everything never purchases, while the other uses them as a virtual listening booth. Then there are the few in the middle, such as myself, who use them a bit more to their advantage. For instance, I'll never hand a bootlegger a single penny for an unauthorized recording, but I'll certainly download it. I download albums that I'm curious about all the time now, and I end up buying more music than ever. I also save myself from some bad purchases, which is nice. To answer the question, I would have to say "friend" to all music in general, when used correctly. Unfortunately, when you get down to the very root of the "mp3 movement", the infringement on legal copyrights still remain. Sure, you can argue "I'm allowed to make a digital backup of my purchases." That may be true for the most part, but where does it say you can distribute it without permission? Nowhere. In fact, every legally pressed & distributed CD says the opposite in the documentation. It isn't illegal to download or make an mp3 (just yet, haha), but it is indeed illegal to distribute them. For every file you download, someone has broken a copyright law. Still, if it isn't mp3s, the music companies will find something else to complain about. I'm not on either side of the argument, as I could care less if someone downloads a Morgion song. Of course I'd love for them to buy the album and support us in some way if they like what they hear. The support of purchase is what helps us produce the next album.

Thanks for the interview. Please place any last words here.

Many thanks for the interview Clint! It is quite nice to break the Morgion silence for a while. Silent, but thankfully not forgotten! Cheers!

Web: www.morgion.com
Email: gary@morgion.com

The Dragon's Flight



You're exactly right, and that was the whole concept of our idea for this record. Nephren-Ka we were still experimenting with a lot of ideas, whereas on Black Seeds of Vengeance we incorporated the ideas a lot better. I think Black Seeds is a much better album. It was more thought out, and we put a lot more time into it. It took us almost 2 years to get the record out, but one reason for that was because we toured so much with Nephren-Ka. We did a lot of touring so that sort of slowed the process down. Also, we had Dallas (Toler-Wade, guitar/vocals) on this record, and that helped out a lot because Dallas

How did you get into the Egyptian themes? Is it something you had been into for a long time or is it something that one day somebody started talking about and got you interested in it? How did it come about?

Basically back in high school I was into different cultures, but never really the Egyptian culture. I was more into the Greek mythology, I thought that was really cool. When I hooked up with Karl (Sanders, guitar/vocals) back in 1992 we

amongst all the members and everybody does what we can to keep things rolling. Nobody has any side projects at all. I have some things that I want to do in the future, and I'm hoping that through this music I can meet the right people and set my self up where later on in the future I want to do some other things that I'm interested in. But right now Nile takes 100% of our time.



has got great vocals and he's a great contributor to the band. So I think everything's just more well thought out and we put a lot more time into it and it's two years later so we grew as musicians too.

Do you guys like playing live a lot, is that more your element? Would you rather be out playing live or do you prefer playing around with things in the studio?

I'd have to say we all love to play live. Every time we do a live show we try to play it like it's our last show. But the studio's fun too. We had a lot of fun with "Black Seeds of Vengeance" because we didn't really plan out any of the vocal patterns before we went into the studio, except on a couple of songs. So we just went in, recorded all the music, got it the way we wanted it, and then we said "Ok, let's have some fun with these lyrics, let's split them up and get this three-headed demon vocal attack going." And we had a lot of fun with it, it turned out good.

Have you started the new tour already?

We did a tour with Cannibal Corpse, and we're doing one with Incantation now. We leave on Friday (November 3). We've been home for about 3 weeks now, but a lot of rehearsing because this is the first time we're going to get to play for an hour or so since we're going to be headlining. So we had to come home and put together a longer set. It's going to be really cool because we're going to get to play a lot of the "Nephren-Ka" material and then we'll get to play a lot of the "Black Seeds..." stuff too. I think the fans are really going to like the songs that we get to do on tour.

were actually playing in another band together and then we started Nile. He got me into the whole Egyptian mythology thing. He would say "You've got to go read this..." or he would bring me a book and say "Read some of this, this is so cool..." and Karl, he's like the mastermind behind the Egyptian stuff in this band. He's put his time in, he's put a lot of work and a lot of hours in at the library reading books. When we're on tour we always try to go to book stores and see if we can find some new Egyptian books that we don't already have. So it's grown and we're all really interested in it now.

Is the metal scene better here in the US or overseas?

Well the shows here in the states are definitely getting better. Just over the last two years that we've been touring. We're going from doing a show in Massachusetts for 30 people to doing shows for 700 people so to me something's happening. I really think that metal's coming back and people are getting more interested in it. On the European side of it, the European metal scene never really died so when you go over there it's almost like stepping back in time when metal was big here. So they're both really good. I'm hoping that the US scene is going to become a lot stronger, and it looks like it is, but I also can't wait to get back to Europe and play some shows there too.

Are you guys working on any other projects or is Nile the only band for all of you?

Yeah, it pretty much takes all of our time. We try to split up the duties

Are there any bands that are underground or in your area that you think should get some exposure?

There's a band from North Carolina that I've really been talking up a lot lately. They're not really considered death metal, they're more of a really heavy thrash band. They're called Chronic Disorder, and they're really good friends of mine. We all started doing this back at the same time and they're just now starting to get a little bit of recognition, so I definitely want to mention them. But other than that in this area there's not a whole lot of heavy music. Most everybody's doing the hip hop/rock and roll thing. For a while it was the Hootie and the Blowfish thing and it's more turned into the Limp Bizkit type now. It's the flavor of the month.

If there was one artist that you could perform with, who would it be?

To be honest, it would just make my day to be able to play on the same stage as Ozzy Osbourne or Black Sabbath. Ozzy is one of my all time favorite heroes, I really consider Ozzy Osbourne to be one of the main reasons that I'm even playing metal music or even being into music, I mean I could have done a lot of other things. Just hearing those old Ozzy records changed my life and made me see that this is what I want to do with my life. So it would definitely be Black Sabbath or Ozzy.

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The Unquiet Void

Jason

Give us a history of The Unquiet Void, so those in the dark can understand.

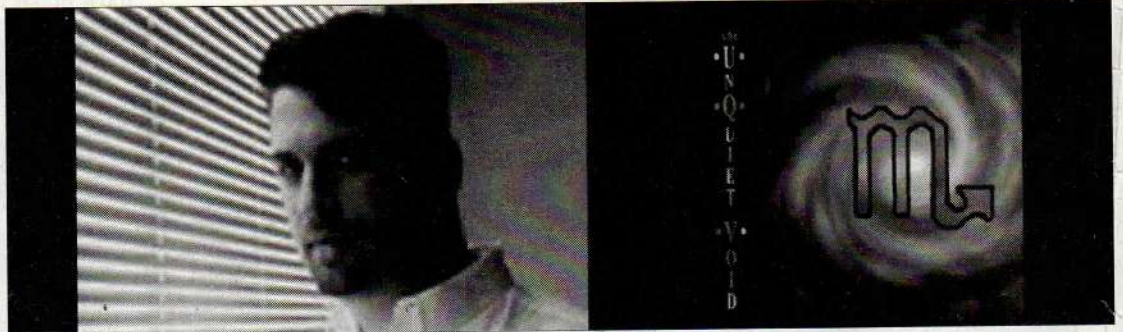
Well, I would say the meaning of the name is such that there's this void within me that I can never seem to fill or empty. It's an expression of everything in my life. I began TUQV in 1989 in New York as a teenager (15) and have really worked to progress it and evolve it, which I feel I have done successfully. However, there's always more to come. That's really the history of the thing.

I see you released a few things on other labels before Middle Pillar Presents. Do you like to work with many labels or is Middle Pillar your main home now?

Middle Pillar is the label I am signed to, my first release - Scorpio - was released on AlterCulture Records in 1999. Besides that the only releases I have had on other labels are compilation appearances which really help everyone involved I would think. I prefer to keep my musical habits exactly like I keep my relationships (no laughing please) - one on one.

Your music has a very dark and soothing effect on my soul - how do you create your art?

Thank you, I'm glad it effects you in that way. All I do in creating music is get in touch with what undercurrent emotions happen to be making me anxious at the time. Once I do it's like tapping a vein, it kind of juts out at me and somehow in a common thread or theme of whatever major 'thing' is going on in my life at the time. It just pours out of me and I spend lots of time fleshing it all out and writing and defining and whatnot. The latest CD, "Between The Twilights", took almost 2 years in the writing, recording and



conceptualizing stages and it is the project I am most happy with.

If there was one artist living or dead that you could perform with who would this be?

I would have to say Edward Kaspel of the Legendary Pink Dots. Here's a guy who picked up the ball and ran with it years



<CONTINUED>

Do you guys have any hobbies outside of the band, or when you're on the road?

There's really not a lot of time for it. I enjoy playing golf man, but you don't have to say anything about that. <laughs> People might think I'm cheesy or something. Just escaping everything and getting out and chasing a little white ball around. That's fun to me.

I saw you guys at the Milwaukee Metalfest last year and you had some serious technical problems with the computer and synth. Does that happen often?

We've been really lucky, it was really strange that it happened that day, because it was such an important show. What happened that day was that everything was working except the computer monitor, so we couldn't see to pull up the right loops. Everyone was working except for that, so we had people at the Metalfest running around trying to find us a monitor, everyone was running around like crazy. We just looked at each other and said "What are we going to do?" and I said "We've got to go play." So we just came out and did the best we could with what we had to work with. Luckily we've had really good success with everything working most of the time.

Is the stage show going to be something elaborate this time, or is it just going to be simple?

We'll have a backdrop but that's about it for this tour. Eventually we want to get into some bigger things. We seem

to be growing a lot now so hopefully we're going to start reaching a lot more people and doing a lot bigger shows. I'd love to have some fire on stage and Marshall cabinets shaped like pyramids, that would be great. We would definitely want to get into that one day, maybe even put some visuals up behind the stage with a big screen, I think that would be really cool. It's really a financial thing because when you start getting into that you've got to pay people to go on the road with you. Once the money starts coming in for it we definitely want to do some stuff like that.

What's your opinion of the whole mp3 controversy? Do you like your music being freely available on the internet or do you think it's an infringement ripping off the artists?

I'm kind of half and half on that, because I have to say I've been guilty of going and grabbing a couple of songs here and there myself. In a way that's a good thing because it's like a glorified tape trading process. I think most people will still want to go out and buy the record. People want to you what you're saying and in death metal for sure, to know what we're saying you've got to go buy the record. Some of the stuff is kind of hard to understand. I think it's got it's good and bad points, but as I said I've been guilty of grabbing songs here and there too so I can't really bitch about it too much.

That's about all, if you have anything else you want to say go ahead.

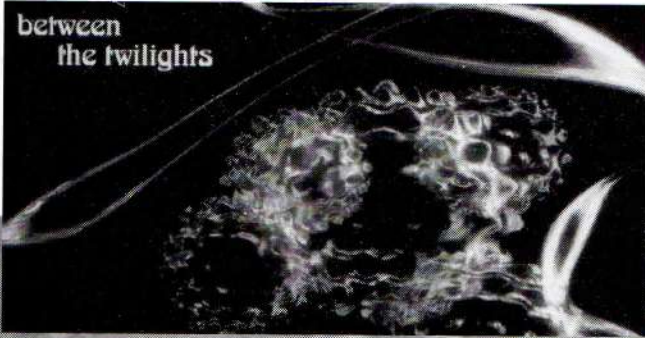
I just want to thank everybody for all the support that we've gotten over the past few records, and to visit the website:

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The Dragon's Flight



between
the twilights



before it was considered cool to do so. Even when experimental music became popular to some degree, you always knew the LPD's from the rest of them... Kaspel as a solo artist as well. The man has such a unique subconscious vision, I'd love to tap into that with him on a release. I would also have to say that I really want to collaborate with Bryin Dall, of Loretta's Doll as well as many other projects out there, he's simply on the level.

Are there any other projects you're currently working on?

Aside from the next Unquiet Void recording, no. I have no side projects in the works. I am itching to do some surreal and nightmarish soundscape work to the spoken word of writer John Shirley (co-author of THE CROW screenplay). But my work with John has yet to be done ...first things first.

As a smaller known artist, what's your opinion on the Internet and MP3s that support the underground - are you for or against it?

There are pros and cons to everything. Personally I think the Internet has truly helped The Unquiet Void grow in fan-base as well as in exposure to different types of people. This has been a great help to me whole MP3 thing is great too, I have been getting more airplay on MP3 stations as time goes on and it really helps expose the work. However, the Internet can have some negative effects on people and I think that I have fallen under that category... I'm just trying to balance everything out right now, moderation is really a very good thing.

What is your set up for recording like? Do you prefer analog, digital, or a mix of both?

Well, I used to be a mix of both, but I'm really pretty digital these days. "Between The Twilights" was recorded on both my 8-track digital recorder and 32-track computer set-up in Florida. I think it delivered much more of an appropriate and lucid quality to the release that its themes and concepts called for. I happen to really like working with digital.

Do you perform your music live or is it solely a studio creation?

Well, it all really began as just a studio creation but that's not where it's headed. The Unquiet Void will definitely become a more live oriented band, and soon. The new CD is easily playable live and some material from the first CD is as well. Compilation tracks will also be included along with some surprising covers. So it is being geared more towards the live scene.

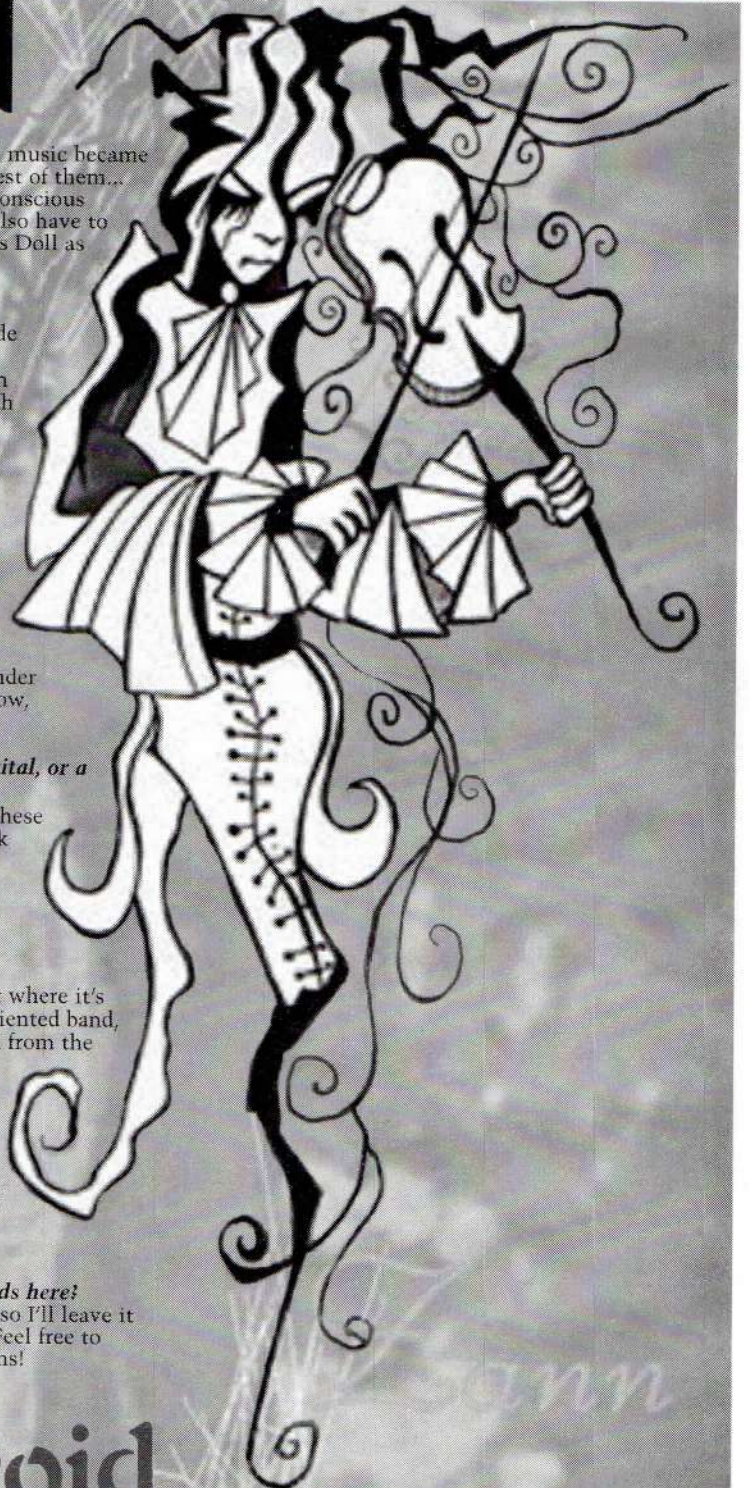
If the music were no more what else would interest you in this world?

Love... and if I didn't have that (the unconditional love shared between my daughter and I) I simply wouldn't live to be quite honest.

Well, thank you for the interview and please place any final words here!

You are welcome... I can't think of anything incredible to say so I'll leave it at I hope anyone who hears "Between the Twilights" enjoys it. Feel free to contact Middle Pillar or myself. Now... the dreaming really begins!

VOID@MIDDLEPILLAR.COM



the unquiet void

VEDISNI

Cordell/Doug/Alex/Jeff

Ok give a history of the band and what the current lineup is.

Cordell : Found out Doug and Jeff were doing a project and politely asked if I could be a part of it. Currently it's Doug, Alex, Jeff, and myself.

Doug : Well, me and Jeff had been listening to a "little" noise and experimental stuff and a shitload of black metal. Jeff told Cordell (who was also into all this stuff and had been for a lot longer than any of us) about it and Cordell was all for it. I had known Cordell and Alex previous to this from high school, so it worked out really well.

Jeff : We owe it all to Matt Loathing's "My Grandmother Spins Gabber" T-Shirt.

Doug: hahah yeah that shirt rules.

Alex: Well, I didn't really get involved until after these three had played their first show. While we were there, they asked me if I'd like to come to one of the practices and play along. So I came, grabbed an SK-5 and the rest is history....



What the hell does Vedisni mean?

Cordell : Originally the name was "violent edisni", not by my choice "chuckling" and we all decided to shorten it to its present form "vedisni", which I enjoy much more because its more individualistic and something I can be proud of when I'm 40 (or so) years old.

Doug : Yeah.. I'm the one to blame for that first name. Me and Jeff needed a name for our straight noise project, before Cordell and Alex were involved, so I'm thinking we need something stupid..well, I think I found that! Violent Inside was the original name and I thought that was pretty lame so I reversed the last word, which apparently made it even more lame. (Cordell laughing in the background). Yeah, so to get to the point, like Cordell said we just needed to shorten it. It looks a lot better I think and represents us well.

Jeff : see above, blame Doug.

Alex: Actually, if you take the letters in Vedisni, then count the number of times these letters appear in our names and divide this sum by Pi....

How would you describe your sound to someone that has never heard this music before?

Cordell : God, I don't know.. "thinking" ..maybe, cliché old rehashed dark brooding power ambient I

guess... "shrug" That's a really hard question. I sing a lot about 'speculative freemasonry and Rabaelian thelemism so, it's really hard not to see Vedisni as anything more then the usual scientific/occultist nonsense. The Whole scientific/magick thang, if you get my drift. We do change a lot in our songs which gets us very mixed reviews. Especially concerning my vocals and the way in which I use my voice. (Because of such reviews we have been linked to the old dead & buried black METAL scene, ... I just wish critics would stop trying to pigeon hole us, I can assure you that we are more complex then we have gotten credit for, and at the same time we aren't as pretence oriented as people like to

different. Of course, that's one of the things I like about it. It never seems forced or contrived, it just is.

What side projects will Vedisni unleash on us in the coming year?

Cordell : Oh my god "laughing" um that's a BAD question for me to answer. The major ones that people in the scene need to be concerned about are: Of - Becoming wave, leaving particle, which is a evp/idm project I am doing with a friend. Monstrare - Isfet, which is coming out on DFR records soon..its dirty dark ambient. Two Helaxqom albums..one featuring the more grim symphonic industrial metal and the other being damn near an inch away

from funeral doom, with gigantic sounding drums and heavy keyboards. There's a bunch more shit coming out on my label, but I'll digress.

Doug : Ha, man..

think I but, don't let the whole occult thing fool ya... we are all goofs most of the time. We are human beings. We are able to be more than one thing at any given moment. Perception does play a key role in listening to our music. I guess just buy the CD and decide for yourself - see what you want to see. I don't know?? "shrug"

Doug : Well since I really know hardly anything about this 'speculative freemasonry' (which I am learning in time) I would have to say that we have elements of dark ambient, power electronics, and some Japanese style noise moments thrown in.

Jeff : Power Ambient primarily, with a big mix-up of dark ambient, noise, power electronics and so forth. Music that starts in one spot, then after transitioning to different dimensions if you will, ends up somewhere completely different by the end of each piece. I'd say that's the most redeeming quality of what we're doing, the fact that our songs don't ever sit in one place, but the transitions also seem very natural to me. it doesn't feel like we're just trying to 'mix things up' so much as naturally morphing all the time.

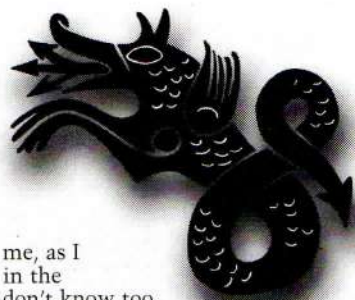
Alex: I have to agree a lot with the last thing Jeff said. The style we start out playing depends on however we seem to be feeling at the time: sometimes glitchy and weird, sometimes noisy and aggressive. But as it progresses, it can often change into some thing entirely

enough projects Cordell? I on the other hand only have a few, um.. besides Vedisni, I am putting most of my time into completing my brooding dark ambient project : Söulcrush which I "hopefully" will be putting out a 7inch on DFR. And the other one is my noise project aptly titled "my little noise project" or "mlnp" which will be featuring on LP split with my good friend of mine called Valence on Cordell and my label. Me and Cordell just finished a sloppy grim punk project called "Gurdjeff", which will be out on vinyl on DI someday, which is a cross between Abyssic Hate, Taake, and Ildjarn with some grindcore-esque humor thrown in (3 second songs, at times).

Jeff : With any luck the second Carrier Flux album should come out sometime this year. It'll be sort of experimental blackmetal/deathmetal/goth/industrial or something. I have no idea, just fast and melodic.

Alex: Well, Cordell and I have worked together on a few projects in the past: No Human Day, Under Crushing Wings, The Act of Principal, and Helaxqom. I'd really like to put together some more No Human Day and Under Crushing Wings songs, but unfortunately our schedules don't quite mesh as well as I'd like these days, so we can't get together as much.

The Dragon's Flight



What's up with the grim artwork for the cover of Architects e3 Murderers?

Cordell : The original cover consisted of a lot of parasites and other "occult" personalities *tee hee*, like Madame Blavitsky, Kerner, and John/Jack Parsons, etc.. but I decided to just go with a straight Masonic approach. Actually its not really grim if you look at it in the right context. The blind girl has to do with the "staring into the sun" concept. Look on the inside and you will notice the two pillars representing Tsedeq and Mishpat, which stands for "in strength we will establish" and/or priest-king exalting the arch of the heavens held together by the keystone Shalom, and if you look really hard you can see a triple tau on the cover.

Doug : I have no clue what he just said, but I think the girl on the cover is kinda cute *wink* (Cordell bursts out laughing)

Jeff : Doug likes 'em young.

Alex: ...and blind...

(Everybody gives Doug a concerned look)

Everyone but Doug; (laughter)

How do you feel DFR is treating you so far? (Be very honest or I will drop you for sure...)

Cordell and Doug : (Burst out laughing)

Cordell : That's a bad ass question. Your a fuckin' dick Clint, I hate you, you Gambient fuck, and I think you treat us like Nerf Herders...only joking. Well, considering that the other labels that were supposed to put out our stuff seemed to be a bit tied down with "more important" releases, I have to say that DFR is treating us quite well.

Doug : I am very happy with DFR, especially with the Vedisni release..it looks bad ass. I still think you are "Gambient", but nobody is perfect lol. I am excited for the triple 7inch release with our especially gambient friends LS-TTL and Veinke. Rock on.

Alex: I haven't got anything to complain about...but then again, I'm a sock puppet. *grin*

Cordell: ...made out of aluminum siding, and you're not a sock puppet. You're a muppet.

Alex: Oh right. Sorry.

Are there any trends out there that you currently hate?

Cordell : At the risk of sounding like a egocentric/pessimistic jerk, I have been in the scene for a long..long time and I have seen some stuff that just crawls up the back of my spine and makes me want to get the hell out of this scene, but then I think to myself that the music is more important than the "idiots" who are making the music. I guess it goes along with my whole philosophy that the most fucked up people in the world make the greatest music. It's a rarity to find someone creating good music in this scene that isn't a total sociopath, but "To each their own", I guess... *pause* I feel that the music that we play is pretty cliché and trendy, not to mention that I'm the biggest *trendie* around. So maybe this scene.

Doug : I'm not fan of the "nu-metal" scene, but whatever..I guess they are rich and I am not..haha so yeah. I can't really answer this question too well, because I think we all tend to jump on the band-wagon sometimes.

Cordell : You are the bandwagon Doug, you are the bandwagon..and I'm jumping on ya

Jeff : I don't like the "I want to be gay because Doug is gay" trend that Cordell appears to be buying into there. And one of my least favorite trends is the "fuck trends" trend which seems ridiculously contradictory to me. Everything is a trend, even the idea of avoiding trends, so people who are doing so intentionally are just buying into another mode of thinking - meme - trend.

Is there a religious/ occult view that the band stands for?

Cordell : "Ma at" (at least for me anyway), which, I believe to be, the respect for things larger and smaller than myself..especially when it comes down to having to deal with basic everyday society at large. There is a tendency for me to immediately want to turn and run, or pull out a gun and start shooting. I'm really dis-encharnted by the level of complacency many of the people in my life seem to maintain. In my opinion there are just too many short-sighted people out there, who without knowing, tend to make my life more difficult than it needs to be. I know my Will will "prevail" when it needs to and I know it will "fall", if it needs to. ...As a leaving quote for this question : "I am 100% against the crucifixion Cult Of Paul". This may seem contrary to what I mentioned before, but the more history/alternative history I encounter, the more I see a reason to stay away from the organized portion religion/politics/science/art altogether. Nothing else really needs to be said as far as I am concerned. The other guys in the band might have a completely different outlook than me.

Doug : Well for me, as I mentioned earlier in the interview, I really don't know too much about occultism and stuff, but I dabbled in "wiccan" stuff and crap like that when I was younger. For me Vedisni stands for something that I have been wanting to get accomplished in my life for a long time, which I supposed you could relate that to a "religious" aspect. *shrug* I guess we all look at it differently.

Jeff : To be honest, I don't take a great deal of interest in the lyrical content or subject matter of what we're doing, I'm concerned really just with making the music, which is why I'm with this band. My philosophy has come to a halt with the idea that the existence of god cannot disprove the truth in science, and the proof of science cannot disprove the existence of god, so my desire to study or practice any religion or belief system is nullified. My possibly fabricated logic system does what it needs to, which is make music, and to do that I don't need any mystical inspiration.

Cordell : Jeff's got the right idea.

Alex: I've always been interested in the occult, ghosts, magick, spiritualism (I mean in general, not just the movement of the 1900s), etc., but I don't really think it's had much impact on the band's direction as far as I can tell, except for maybe the mood I'm trying to convey with my choice of sampling material.

Would Vedisni sign to major label if given the chance, and why?

Cordell : What's a major label? ...if I could still be me, make a lot of money, quit my petty day job, but never have an ounce of fame or deal with the paparazzi/press, or MTV, or VH-1 and never have a radio hit; but maybe 100 years after I am dead, show up on E : True Hollywood Stories I might consider it. So.. No. Reason being, I spent alot of time under the label of being an incredulous and unscrupulous person. Which to some degree everyone is and I probably was as well. Even still, that was then this is now and the less TRULY incredulous people I have to deal with the better I will feel.

Doug : Ok fuck this question, this is MY band so NO. I would never sign with a major label, because I have seen what happens when someone does this and it is not a pretty thing. So yes I would rather stay with a less known label that treats me like a god, than sign to some bigger horseshit label and be treated like, well.. horseshit!

Cordell : Yeah tell it like it is brutha.

Jeff : Well, since it's MY band and I started it, I'd say we'd sign to a major label if our identities weren't made known, since I really despise the idea of pop praise, so we'd be in it for the money. Ask this question another day and I guarantee at least two of us have completely different answers.

Alex: I wouldn't want that ever. When that happens, usually you get people outside the group trying to influence the direction the group will take, for whatever reason, and I've always had a hard time abiding by that sort of thing.

<VEDISNI CONTINUED>

Tell us about this CDR label members of Vedisni run call DI!

Cordell : Essentially, Doctrine Insectvas is MY label, which Doug from Vedisni and Steve from the project Dr 33 are currently helping me run. We have currently 50 some releases so far. It consists of what I consider to be, "truly" unique bands consisting of everything from Intelligent dance music "IDM", to grim metal, to experimental electronics, etc. You get the point. The history of it should not really be of any concern to the general public, but if anyone truly did care to know, it has an origin with an old friend of mine named Oren Reltih, but enough said. The label is searching for more unique groups of people to establish a stronger roster, so please send me your demo. You would be surprised what I like; most people are. Doug has been an extremely big help for the last year now. We are discussing the possibility of going professional sometime in the next few months. ...and I guess there is the possibility of being exclusively distributed through our friends at DFR records. We will see what the future holds..

Doug : Well, when I first started talking with Cordell about six years ago, he was already working on starting up a label back then. And let me just say even now, I am pretty skeptical about these types of things; like a lot of people are. After I saw how determined Cordell really was with this, I could definitely see his label getting off the ground and I became more aware that this could actually work. So, I have been putting time in helping him make this label a success.

Jeff : When Cordell starts raking in millions, I'll be at his doorstep "remember me!" <grunt grunt>

What do you think 2001 will hold for Vedisni?

Cordell : Hopefully more labels to release the gazillion hours of material we have, but personally I would just be happy doing more releases with DFR. I can only hope that Doctrine Insectvas takes off so I can release material out on my label

as well.

Doug : Over my dead body you are gonna release that stuff on DI! Just joking. Well, I think for Vedisni things are looking pretty cool for this year. We have a triple 7-inch with LS-TTL and Veinke coming out sometime in 2001 and we should have a tape/LP release coming out on either LSDO (if they come through or DI will be putting it out sometime maybe this year).

The next CD release of Vedisni is called Intelligences and will be out soon on Doctrine Insectvas. I think that's all. Yep... that's it.

Jeff : I like the idea of getting as much material out as possible, just in case we all die or something, then those damned minidisks will NEVER get mixed down!

Alex: But think of all the albums we could sell, then! We could market it as EVP recordings from beyond the grave. Actually though, I'd like to see as much of our music put out as possible, either independently or through record labels. It's all good. Another thing I'd like for us to do would be more live performances this year.

I hear you're releasing an LP on LSDO. Tell us a bit about that.

Cordell : To preface, I personally think Jonathon is a really nice guy and does some of the absolutely greatest graphic artwork I have ever seen in my life and I would like nothing else than to have him release our stuff; but we have been waiting a very long time and he contacts us very infrequently. I just am afraid that he may be a little skeptical about putting our music out on his label, but he did confirm it recently, so I will have to go on his word and I don't think he will let me down. He doesn't seem like that kind of a guy.

Doug : Oh yeah. I remember sending out that stuff a while back to LSDO. I really hope he puts it out. The LP, I think has some of the better material that we have done and we would love to see it on vinyl. Jonathon is a great guy. I just think that maybe a few too many commitments were made to people, but like Cordell said: "he sent us a confirmation on the release of the LP", so I am going to have to go on his word as well. On a side note :So yeah Jonathon, if you are reading this...we will not wear corpse paint, but that doesn't mean we don't want you to put out our stuff!! "grin"

Jeff : we'll see

I just wanted to end it on 13 so place any last words here.

Cordell : Two things.

Doug : Here he goes again with his banter

Cordell : A lot of people have been describing us as having some sort of affiliation to the black metal scene. And where as I am in a few metal bands (most of which may even be "classified" in the black metal genre), in actuality I find the concept of most metal bands and their philosophies to be tragic, horrible, and displeasing to my sensibilities. Thus, we are not and never will be affiliated (at least as far as I'm concerned) with BLACK metal. End of story. For one, we are an electronic group, and from what I know of the black metal scene, electronic music is for Jews half breeds and mongrels (to quote a CD I just got in the mail yesterday). Am I right? Hate me if you want to, but seriously, where as black metal is a step up from the rest of all metal in my opinion, it's still a step behind mentality wise.

Two, hating an entire group/race of people, based on hear-say and mythical fear to me is one of the most preposterous concepts ever entertained, by a so called intellectual community and I want nothing to do with that mentality. ... and on a lighter note my two favorite labels are Mille Plateau & 2k which could never be labeled as black.

Doug : We won't wear corpse paint, we aren't black metal. We are a dark noise band. Even though I like metal and black metal a lot, this project will have nothing to do with that. Actually I like a lot of different types of music, some of which have nothing to do with metal or even this scene, and I plan to keep it that way.

Jeff : We've been encoding aurally transferred neurological virus's into our recordings, so if you've already heard us, you're doomed. Could it be a commercial Trojan horse? Or a bit of our consciousness working it's way through your paradigm, making you think new things? hnnnnnn

Alex: Well, I don't have much to say, really. Just keep an open mind and see the world with open eyes...

Vedisni: Thanks for the interview DFR! We had a lot of fun doing it!



ARCHITECTS AND MURDERERS

ACTIVITIES

CROWD CONTROL



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DARK TRANQUILLITY

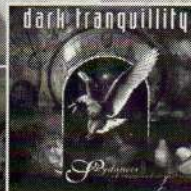


Haven

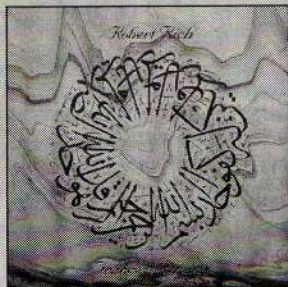
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Perhaps the Swedish outfit's most blackened death metal effort, the album also features the vocal talents of original screamer (and current In Flames' frontman) Anders Friden and unrivaled, epic melodies making it an acclaimed, landmark release by all accounts. This re-issue includes the band's Of Chaos... EP along with all new artwork and layout.



ECLECTIC ATMOSPHERES



ROBERT RICH
trances/drones

ROBERT RICH

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...Thoughts From Clint

Lustmord

- Purify Fire
Soleilmoon

This is a collection of tracks from 1995-1998. The whole release have a very similar feeling to his heresy CD. It comes from a darker element and more a flowing feeling rather than the more ambient moments Lustmord can have. It's nice to have the pieces that previously were only on compilations and singles. If you're a Lustmord fan, this is a must to fill the collection with more of what has made him one of the greats in the experimental /ambient world.

Foreign Terrain

- LP1
Soleilmoon

This was far to electro /drum and base for me to even get into. I'd rather just say if you're in to the dancey side of what Soleilmoon release, check this out on your own time.

Steve Von Till

- As the Crow Flies
Neurot

A Dark minimal journey from the mind of one of the guitars/vocalist of the great Neurosis. It has a very Amber Asylum meets Death in June feel to it. Steve doesn't let a lot go on this CD. Mostly acoustic guitars, a few strings and piano in this stunning debut solo CD. The fragile feeling of every song is what gives it the magic it has. Mr. Von Till's vocals almost cause my heart to break in his deep spoken/sung style. One of the most delicate CD's I've grown to love this year. A must own.

Veinke

- Collection III (The Black Summer)
Triumvirate

Where to begin... the CD starts with much of the feeling that Raison d'tre or Lustmord have by creating dark minimal collages with the very neoclassic backdrop peeking through. Just when you expect Veinke to keep a fluid style through out the CD here comes bombastic noise and electro tinkering. A constant throughout the whole album are the haunting vocals of Daniel Marvin. Given this is his first true full length release I can see nothing but one of the greatest and brightest hopes for a scene that is struggling for an identity. I would not wait too long to find this gem, for you don't want to be the last one in the inner circle when someone says "Hey, have you gotten that brilliant Veinke CD yet..."

Brighter Death Now

- May All be Dead
Cold Meat Industry

I know I'm new to this amazing noise legend that founded the Cold Meat label. Here we have Roger making some earth shattering drones, noise and feed back all in a very rhythmic sense. It's all packaged in a very unusual and very creative poster-like way. What more is needed? To me this is as good as experimental harsh sounds get.

Mediaeval Baebes

- Undrentide
Netzwerk/BMG

Over a dozen female vocalists creating some very stellar celtic/mediaeval folk with a neoclassic/new age slant. The purity on this recording, mostly vocals with occasional strings, minimal percussion and moments on synths, makes you look back to a simpler time. Anyone looking for something a bit more daring in the classical realm, this is for you. The vocal layering and sweet harmonies alone are worth the price of admission.

Hagalaz Runedance

- Volven
Well of Urd

Since the last release, Andrea has had her label Elfenbult close and has now moved to a label created for her by Hammerheart called Well of Urd. This new release is no less stunning an example of Wodanist/Pagan ritual folk with classical and celtic moments. Hagalaz Runedance Still fill this world with beauty like not many others can boast. Though she is most remembered for the bleaker Aghast release Andrea did years ago, she finally has come into her own with this release and shows the vocal and playing talent I knew was in her.

Asche

- Non Apocalypse
Functional/Tesco

Waves of Droning, Horrific loops of guns, machines, primitive vocals and torment all overlaid by Tribal rhythmic moments and a neoclassical backdrop. As the CD builds a much stronger dark industrial feeling sets in. At times this release feels like what the world would sound like after the downfall of the modern world and the chaos and new dark ages have begun. Tesco/Functional are one of the few labels out there that continue to intrigue me into getting every release they create.

Kenotaph

- Promise
Functional/Tesco

The darkness and cold feelings of loneliness this CD creates is almost impossible to put into words. Imagine you are trapped on a world of endless night, eternally winter and you're being hunted by something but you don't know what? This is only the beginning of the feelings Kenotaph brings to mind. The madness is created in a lovely minimal almost sedative way with rumbles, swirling electro effects and ghost like / growling whispers. Yet another reason to submit to the altar of Tesco.

Dagda Mor

- The Border of the Light
Functional/Tesco

Some of this was recorded in studio while others of this were taking from a live show that Dagda Mor assaulted on the world in France in 1995. The best way to explain this is if Blood Axis, Puissance and Mz412 decided to merge and create one terrifying unit. Millaristic, hard drones, epic moments and the harshest of power electronics are here with over the top tyrannical vocal manipulations. There is nothing like this out there and with only one full CD release I find this the ultimate in crimes to humanity. Dagda Mor is one of the new pioneers of the experimental noise movements with Mz412, Brighter Death Now and Aube.

The Dragon's Flight

FolkStorm

- Information Blietzkrieg
Old Europa Cafe
- Victory or Death
Cold Spring

As I hope most of you know Folkstorm is a side creation of Mz412. I'm not sure which members but that's not important. The releases themselves are full of WWII war time imagines and Germanic speeches and spoken word passages. The sounds are created by nightmarish shrieks, drones, tanks, aircraft and other machine and wartime sounds with some minimal percussion to fill it all in. What I fear are weak minded fools calling bands like Folkstorm, Blood Axis, Turnbund Sturmwerk neo nazi's. Is being proud of your Germanic history wrong? I think not! Regardless of the viewpoint FolkStorm force the listener on a violent journey to assault the senses. The production on these 2 releases is so thick that it almost suffocates the listener, which I think they are truly going for here. On one last cool note the Old Europa Cafe Release is limited to 500 so get it before you get left out!

Apoptose

- Nordland
Tesco

A very orchestrated neoclassical feeling with some ritualistic drumming, almost marching like. This is much closer to what I would see Cold Meat or Dark Vinyl releasing. The digipak is very well designed with breathtaking textures and an over all Nordic/ runes filled artistic edge. Apoptose are more akin to the sounds of Sephiroth and Protagonist then other Tesco release to my newly opened ear. If you're a fan of oddly orchestral dark ambient with a very Nordic attitude don't miss this CD. Simply a shining star on the scene!

Asmorod

- Derelict
Tesco

Sounds from another world are what comes from this release and a commanding German female spoken word artist. The whole release has this hauntingly other side of reality kind of vibe. I feel myself drifting off to new uncharted realms and exploring the more dreamlike side of human thinking. We've got something very original happening here. Lets see what form it will take shape in on future releases.

Amber Asylum -

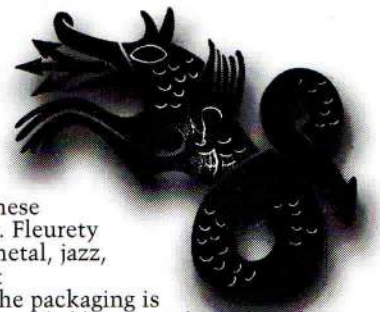
TheSupernaturalParlourCollection
Release Entertainment

This time of Kris Force and her band of minstrels (acoustic guitar, cello, bass, minimal drums and haunting female vocals) are creating a much more rock based albums. Not as ethereal and dreamlike/minimal as the Songs CD. This almost has a slight mellow prog-rock feel to it. They also decided to cover Black Sabbath. In their fully acoustic but just as dark version this has almost a 70's area rock production to it. Amber Asylum that keep the listener guessing from release to release on what will come next from them and it's a pleasant surprise each and every time. I hope to hear from this project for years to come.

Fleurety

- Department of Apocalyptic Affairs
Supernal Music

After 5 years of silence, Fleurety return with one of the more original CD's of the last 10 years. I would file this with the new Mayhem, Ved Buen Ende, Ulver and Arcturus. Oddly



enough members of all these projects guest on the CD. Fleurety are a mix of electronic, metal, jazz, prog-rock and down right experimentalist views. The packaging is also set up as a file folder with files on each track and members (truly brilliant). It's impossible to describe what this CD sounds like as it goes from female jazzy moments to full on industrial metal in the same tracks. If you like musicians unafraid to create anything they feel then you need this as I hope Fleurety will never stop the voices in the heads creating this majestic and yes oddly wonderful sounds

Nile

- Black Seeds of Vengeance
Relapse

Nile are back with a CD that only Nile could create. Mixed the Epytians themes with aggressive death metal. Only this time out it flows so much more and there are moments of melody and very technical death metal playing. They are no longer just blasting death metal, which is a vastly better idea. Nile are finally finding their own sound and ideal in the metal scene and with lyrics that are thought provoking and down right intriguing to read. Do not pass on one of the few death metal gems of this year!

Usurper

- Necronemesis
Necropolis

Why in this day and age are there bands as fucking boring as Usurper? Playing riffs that Slayer and Carcass threw out 8 years ago and Usuper are trying to add a modern black/thrash feeling to them. Now on to the vocals which are so very flat and unfeeling. This band so want to be DRI with Slayer's guitars. One more step back for the metal cause. Usuper are just plain fucking silly...

Nevermore

- Dead Heart in a Dead World
Century Media

NEVERMORE ARE BACK! Epic melodic power/traditional metal with the vocals of a giant are here. Nevermore grow by leaps and bounds on every CD they release. There isn't much to be said about Warrell and the gang that hasn't already been said. With Iced Earth and Blind Gaurdian, Nevermore are part of the triple crown of the power metal elite! Dead Heart is the melody mixed with heaviness that Nevermore has pulled off live but never on CD before. Making this even more of a feat, it was done with only one guitar this time, as former Forbidden Guitarist Tim Calvert left the unit before recording. Raise your horns high as this gem plays and as always scream for "Battle Angels" live, Warrell loves that!

EyeHateGod

- Confederacy of Ruined Lives
Century Media

Another 5 year disappearance from EHG and we get this release which crushes Dopesick in track 1. The anger, slow painful riffs and Mike's glass eating vocals are all back in stellar form. This is equal to the feelings that "Take as Needed for Pain" gave me. EHG are truly the creators, molder's and kings of the sludge/crust scene. I hope we don't have to wait another 5 years for EHG to show us how it's done once more. Welcome back boys!

The Gathering

- if_then_else

Century Media

A mixing of old and new is where the Gathering are taking us this time. They have brought back the guitars of Mandylion period meshing with all the electronic ideals that the fantastic How to measure a planet brought us. Anneke's vocals are top notch as always here. I just feel the more metal side of their past isn't a good thing to dwell on. How to Measure a Planet was a stronger release and it almost feels like they did this mix because the label and fans demanded it, not out of how they feel musically at this time. Over all it's a very good CD. It's just lost some of the more experimental feeling that I so loved on the last CD.

Dark Tranquillity

- Haven

Century Media

I'll start this off as such... After the horrible Projector CD, DT is seeing the light and back to the Gallery vibe of there music again. The main problem with last DT is that the clean vocals were just terrible and off. Mikael is back with the throat raping grunts and growls he should be doing (minus one very poor clean vocal attempt). DT have the Gallery/ Minds I brilliance back and we here at DFR are very pleased. For one of the more stellar melodic Gothenburg DM bands look no further than Haven.

Angel Dust

- Enlighten the Darkness

Century Media

Who the hell is this and why have I never heard them before? This is another epic power metal masterpiece. Where the hell do Century Media keep finding them? Angel Dust is a bit more symphonic and regal then other power metal I've heard and the vocals are so strong and fluid I can't imagine a much stronger release. Well I've started hunting for their previous releases as it looks this band took a 10 year break from 1988 to 1998 well it was what was needed as CM have another power house metal artist on there hands. Find this CD if you are a Nevermore or Iced Earth fan you will never be disappointed.

Orphanage

- Inside

Nuclear Blast

Inside is the first Orphanage CD I love. Catchy, dark, powerful and stunning vocals. The whole CD starts with the grunts of a madman then the majestic sounds of doom, death, atmospheric and gothic metal all merge. The grunts, growls and sung male vocals intertwined with angelic/Gaelic female vocals in all things excellent. I will admit to thinking previous Orphanage were high on the annoying cheese factor but all this is now stripped away and only the talent shows through. I see why Nuclear Blast took this.

Judus Iscariot

- Dethroned Conquered and Forgotten

Red Stream

Andy and his 4-track are at it again. I really think that he gets bored in the middle of the night and in 35 minutes we have the next JI CD. This project has lived on 2 guitar chords and one vocal style for far too long. Just because you have a 4-track and spooky ideas doesn't mean it's worth releasing. Black metal has just become a joke on itself lately. What happened to the creative bands like Graveland, Krieg, Marduk and old Burzum? The flame is about to go out and this isn't helping.

Novembers Doom

- The Knowing

Dark Symphonies

Once again its time to review a close friend and label mate. Well Paul and the team have very much improved on the last CD for me. Paul's growls have never sounded better and when they're playing doom on such tracks as Shadows of Light and The Last God, oh my, this is pure beauty. My biggest complaint with the release is they go to the rock realm a bit too much and lose the dark vibe that I love ND for. I will admit though the songs Searching for Betrayal and The Day I Return are mellow but all out wonderful. I wasn't expecting piano or the acoustic guitar moments either, which are a great improvement on the overall style. Just for me there are a few to many mellow moments for me and ND should remember they are doom brothers at the source and don't ever let that go, there are to few of us!

Rotten Sound

- Still Psycho

Death Vomit Recordings

More of the the same uncreative grind/gore crap we are all so tired of. How many bands are going to just vomit into a microphone with blast beats behind them? Isn't there enough of this crap out infecting the world already? Exhumed, Embalmer, Anal Blast, AC, Impaled... Jesus these guys all need to stop being pissed off about working in fast food world and get an original idea.

Novatron

- New Rising Sun

Cold Spring

Dark harmonic white washing noise with almost a very calming effect to the style that is created here. At other times Novatron becomes more rhythmic and droning almost in a marching like vibe. The very analog synth sounds that are incorporated give this CD an almost tribal /primitive texture to it. From hypnotic to almost unearthly is where this release is trying to take you. One of the more original noise/ ambient projects to hit my ears in a long time. Definitely check this one out.

The Unquiet Void

- Between the Twilights

Middle Pillar Presents

This is more about the feeling and texture that sounds create then the over all style of the music. Haunting and minimal with tribal percussion and neoclassic almost dreamlike synth and string arrangements. Quiet and yielding while at the same time hopefully and reassuring to the listener that the out come with not be as bleak as you at first listen assumed. There are moments here that I would almost want to call nature like and organic with a slight hint of a gothic background. if you like Nightmare Lodge or Necrophorus I would check this little taste of uniqueness out.

BlackMouth

- S/T

Crowd Control Activities

Stark, mind numbing jazz like neo-industrial brilliance is what we have here. The pained, sorrowful voice of the goddess Jarboe. Sonically minimal drones and strings in the darkest and most unnerving manner. The banging of a madman on metallic objects and other very unusual pieces of percussion and techno like devices. With a very electro backdrop on the whole recording. I would say this is the best thing Jarboe has done since the Swan early

The Dragon's Flight

days. But the true genius behind this project is John Bergin as with everything I've heard him create this would be his brightest moment.

Neurosis

- Sovereign
Neurot

The masters of industrial experimental metal are back with a mini CD with a ton of amazing short video and artistic interactive CD-rom moments. Sovereign is a natural progression of where Times of Grace left off. This is where Post rock sounds meet the more experimental metal vein. Neurosis are just one of the bands that fully create the sights, sounds and emotions of their music fully and now with a new upstart label they created they can finally reach for the stars!

Yen Pox

- New Dark Age
Malignant

Bleak journey into the heart of black ambient perfection. This release causes my heart to ache at the beauty that is presented on this . Flowing streams of haunting dark soundscape all packaged with otherworldly feelings and a frightening real concept of that death is very close for all of us. I've never heard Yen Pox before this and I will tell the listener's one word of warning if you aren't ready to be scared and have the feeling that the dead truly do watch over us then stay away from this majestic disc of blackness.

Sleeping With the Earth/ Combat Astronomy

- Split CD
Tronik

Two minimal noise experimentations are what was released by the underground and formerly cassette only label. Both projects have that very similar droning and static-like noise feeling that most of the movement is using today. I really have a hard time differing between the two artists. If your going to do a split in my view you should have opposing textures and styles its just makes it a bit more interesting. This isn't a bad release just a bit on the boring side of things.

In Flames

- Clayman
Nuclear Blast

One of my favorite melodic death metal bands ever and this time around In Flames adds some more clean vocal talents and a bit of an industrial element to challenge the listener. Clayman is not as brilliant as Colony but far better than Whoracle for my money. In Flames are one of these bands that can mix catchy riffs with aggressive vocals and make a wonderful songs, don't miss out on one of the best metal bands to ever come out of Europe.

ISIS

- Celestial
Escape Artist

Holy shit here is the second coming of Neurosis. Isis meshes experimental hardcore, noise and metal in the same way that Neurosis does but the add a bleaker more stripped down feel to it. If you can imagine Godspeed You Black Emperor and Today is the Day in a blender this is what Isis makes me feel. Minimal and power, calm and biting with an overall scientific sense about their music but not really math rock. Isis will be an underground legend soon, so get on the wagon now before we all told you so.



Robert Rich

- Trances and Drones

Release Entertainment

This is a two disc collection of rich textures and tribal ambience. Robert Rich is a genius when it comes to creating relaxing almost chilling ambient music. All his work has a very natural feel and brings to your most basic element. Both CD's are over 70 minutes in length and are broken into 3 epic tracks. Take a trip with Mr. Rich as he helps you find the origin of the human spirit. I just can not rave enough about this CD to put it into words of how ahead of his time Robert will always be, he creates and all others try to mimic what he has already done better. If you ever get to see Robert perform then you will be forever changed as I was last year. I bow in homage Mr. Rich and thank you Release for have the forethought to give us this gem.

Maze of Torment

- Death Strikes
Necropolis

More like boring shit strikes! Another in a long line of 3rd rate black/thrash bands that worship Slayer, Bathory and Sodom but never even come close to their originals in any way shape or form. At least this has good production unlike that horrible Usuper CD I was forced to listen to.

Godspeed You Black Emperor

- "lift yr. skinny fists like antennas to heaven"
Kranky 2CD

GSYBE is the greatest musical project I have ever put my ears on so far. I'm very new to this post rock musical world only having heard of Slint, Mogwai and Polvo beforehand. Godspeed are experimental rock with very little if any vocal moments minus the movie samples and the recordings of talking to people on the street. Their music is minimal but so very emotional and epic the guitars, pianos, strings and spare drumming all make me weak. the best way to explain what GSYBE sound like would be mix Jazzy, Metal, Blues, Experimental Noise and Straight rock then pull and twist it into almost a radio drama of years gone by. This multi piece unit from Canada always has 2 other CD's out on Kranky called "slowriotfornewzerokanada" and " fxxx f#a#ooxxx". I would suggest going to your favorite distro and getting everything this band has recorded as nothing in my life musically has been this perfect. www.brainwashed.com/godspeed/ for those with internet capabilities.

People Like Us

- Lassic house/Jumble Massive
Caciocavallo/Soleilmoon

The most annoying CD I have ever received, it's like a bad campy 60's British sitcom that even the UK would fucking hate. I just don't get this for one second, I would rather be disemboweled then have to go through this CD again. Terrible mod music with spoken word pieces. I can't believe someone would even waste their time and money with this. I've lost over 30 minutes of my life for this and I want it back!

The Fossil Dungeon -

Compilation CD

Dark Vinyl/ Dark Age Productions

A compilation of Artists that once recorded Cassette releases for the US group known as Dark Age Production. DAP is now over but the Riddick brothers, Bard Algol Eriboas and Prosciptor the founder of the 3 towers of DAP give us 11 track of neoclassic, death industrial, folk and ritualistic sounds from such artists as Cernunnos Woods, Arkhkaru, Profane Grace, Equitant, Nythra, Valor, Prosciptor, Akrahu. I find this to be a brilliant compilation and sad to see such a creative label to be no more.

Mysterium

- The Glowering Facades of Night

Prophecy Productions

Epic Metal almost like In the Woods meets Embraced. This is melodic symphonic metal with a black vocal approach. At times this CD almost has a Dark Tranquillity feeling to it. I'm very impressed a new band on the scene can create such epic and memorable songs. There are many lush and sweeping piano passage and good mix of vocal styles happening here. Another band on the Prophecy roster to keep you eyes on.

In Blackest Velvet

- S/t

Sturmerflugel/Prophecy Productions

Oh my god I got through 2 songs of this At the Gates wannabe band and said never again. The Ggothenburg sound is dead people, we don't need 5th rate bands making me remember a once great scene in this way. Don't quit your day jobs with the paper hats boys.

Bethlehem

- Profane Fetmilch lenzt krank

Prophecy Productions

This must be a joke I'm not getting. The once brilliant Bethlehem are releasing nothing more than left over tracks here or crap they never wanted out in the first place. This was originally a 7" only and now a 2 song CD. The band is brand new minus Bartsch. The first track is boring and the second track is pop music. Man I can see why Marco left and did the amazing new Deinonychus CD. I pray to the Gods above and below that Bethlehem wake up and make masterpieces such as the last 4 releases.

Nasopharyngeal

- S/T

Crowd Control Activities

This is one 74 minute track of bad drum machine loops and weird 80's electro/synth. I think it fits the stranger side of Soleilmoon or Staalpaat more than CCA. I find it a bit annoying but at times it gets creepy and almost enjoyable. Yes this is the project that Brendan from Metropolis records is a part of but let me state: working for that label has influenced him none at all. Underlying the 4 track feelings of this release there are dark moments that one can get into if you give it time. It's just being one track is a tad too much.

House of Low Culture

Crowd Control Activities

This is one of the darkest, most doom releases of the year. 1000% godlike status should be put on this release. Droning, tortured guitar loops, riffs and effects. Bizarre samples of sign-on's to AOL and 1930's/ 40's speak easy music and that just touches the surface. This would almost be doom metal if it had percussion of any kind. Were it stands now its just the heaviest and darkest experimental guitar recordings ever!
KILL FOR THIS!

Anekdoten

- From Within

Virta

This is a band I got into by accident and now can't stop listening to. In a trade I got Anekdoten's debut CD "Nucleus" and found that I have a love for complex prog rock. While the guys in the band sent me their new CD and wow its better then the last one I have. They have gotten more textured and the vocalist is being more daring in the styles he choose from high and low ranges. This time I feel a heavier almost metal guitar sound going on at times. Search this amazing prog rock unit which is a cross between old Yes and new Fleurety, I would say. You won't be disappointed.

Crowbar

- Equilibrium

Spitfire

The masters of slow New Orleans sludge doom are back. What more can you say about these legends of the style and scene. Eyehategod, Cavity, Buzzoven, Grief, Soilent Green even Pantera owe a large part of their sound to this icon. Don't be stupid if you even remotely like slow molasses riffs and dark painful metal in any way, get every CD that Crowbar has ever made!

Black Label Society

- Stronger Than Death

Spitfire

Yes this is Zak Wilde of Ozzy fame doing some goddamn rocking doom/southern heavy metal here. This is fucking heavy and very good! The guitar riffs are so thick they hurt and who knew that Zak could sing this well. Don't let it fool you for a second, Black Label Society is an amazing CD with some damn fine songs on it for the metal fan that knows Korn and POD aren't fucking metal.

Dio

- Magica

Spitfire

The mastermind behind Rainbow and Black Sabbath's best songs is BACK! After a weak Angry Machines CD this is Magica! Dio in true metal form with one of his heaviest releases ever. Anyone that loves the Strange Highways, Mob Rules or Heaven and Hell needs to get this new Dio release. The man has been rocking the world for over 40 years now! What are you waiting for, the powerful if not perfect vocals of Ronnie James Dio should make you fall to your knees and thank the metal gods that we still have talents like this.

Von Thronstahl

- Imperium Interenum

Cold Spring

Militaristic industrial with a very gothic overtone is what I feel here. There are almost times where a black metal feeling comes over this release. Von Thronstahl is very rigid and epic in nature. The vocals go from spoken word to deep almost growls by both male and female vocalists. The synth arrangements, marching snare and orchestral percussion just add the perfect back drop to this release. Cold Spring is a label that just keeps amazing me with every release I hear from Justin and the crew. Support this truly creative and innovative soul for years to come.

The Dragon's Flight



Butoh

- Various artist compilation
exploring the dance of darkness

Middle Pillar

More of the side of Middle pillar I enjoy again. The less synth and more dark experimental vision. Most of the artists on this (Murder of Angels, The Mirror Reveals, Machine in the Garden and The Unquiet Void) are on MP presents already. Others on this include Mors Syphilitica, Kobe, Sumerland, Thread and Zoar. I have amazing releases by Zoar and Mor Syphilitica. The CD cover all has a very Asian vibe about in artwork and the way the music is arranged. There are a lot of chilling and ethereal sounds here to sink your teeth into. Take your time and see where it takes you to me the stand outs on this release are A Murder of Angels and Zoar. Now it's time to find yours.

...Thoughts From JOHN

Antaeus

- Cut Your Flesh and Worship Satan

HAHAHAHAHAH<snort>AHAHAHAHA.... Cut Your Flesh and Worship Satan! Oh that is too much. And look, the CD has a straight razor depicted on the disc! Man, I love these raw True Black Metal bands, they're so entertaining! Oh, the music? It's not worth reviewing.

Cryptopsy

- And Then You'll Beg
Century Media

I think by now most fans know exactly what to expect from Cryptopsy. Brutal, grinding, blasting death metal. Not much changes in this one, like past albums it's typical in every way. The hoarse, almost rapped growls don't do much to add to this one either. Technical death metal fans already know this band well, this new album is more of the same.

Opera IX

- The Black Opera:
Symphoniae Mysteriorum in Laudem Tenebrarum
Avantgarde Music

I had enjoyed their previous release "Sacro Culto" quite a bit, so when the new Opera IX arrived I was quite happy, expecting more of their unique musical style. However, my expectations were a bit off the mark: this CD is absolutely not more of the same, and all I can say is WOW have Opera IX improved. Even having enjoyed "Sacro Culto," in every way this is a superior album, by far. Cadaveria's vocals, both growled and sung, have improved tremendously and are very strong. The guitar riffs are heavier, more complex, and combine with extremely well-done keyboard work which adds lots of atmosphere which is at times symphonic, at other times creepy, depending on the mood of the song. As has become typical for Avantgarde releases in recent times, the production on this CD is top-notch, which just gives everything a "big" sound, and each layer and instrument/voice can be heard clearly and distinctly. Opera IX have truly impressed me with this, HIGHLY recommended!

Soulless

- The Darkening of Days

Fairly typical black death. Musically it consists of thrashy/death guitar riffs mixed with high pitched growls. It's not particularly brutal but it isn't overly melodic either. At times the music is typical death metal, at others they are trying for a sort of At the Gates-ish Gothenburg sound. Most of this sounds like uninspired copying of other styles, and there is very little originality in any of this aside from the momentary catchy riff here and there. Not terrible, but I don't think it's anything that any metal fan hasn't heard many times over.

Stille Volk

- Hantaoma

Holy Records

How best to describe this.... I really don't know. Horrid comes to mind, but that's not strong enough. Pathetic fits the bill too, but not exactly what I'm looking for either. I'll let you judge for yourself: This album is painful. I don't mean painful in the emotional sense such as sad and melancholic, I mean what we have here is a collection of people singing so far out of key it causes my ears physical pain. It amazes me that it doesn't crack the windows in the room as I listen to it. The aforementioned vocals are combined with folky acoustic guitars and the occasional flute or synth thrown in. This is all folk music, but I find it to be quite poorly executed, thinly recorded, uncoordinated, and just plain cheesy. The unfortunate thing is there are actually some moments here that sound as if they could have been good if presented properly, but they just as quickly disappear in this jumbled quagmire of unpleasant sounds. Not one to add to your want list, by any means.

To Die For

- All Eternity

Nuclear Blast

Musically, this could have some potential. The guitars have a good heaviness to them, and they write some decent riffs. The music is a sort of gothic-metal hybrid with a touch of Darkseed or older Paradise Lost flavour, however there's a bit too much of that gothrock sound in here too, which I don't like. There's a little synth used also, though it's mostly in the background only. There is one downside, and unfortunately it's a doozy: the vocals. He's not out of tune, but man this guy's voice just does not sound good to me. He sort of reminds me of that old 80's band Tears For Fears, and his voice never changes. A very mediocre release by my reckoning, though if you're more into gothrock (i.e. newer Paradise Lost) it might be worth hearing for you.

Snub

- Memories in Richter

Copro Records

Yo yo yo, it's time to get down on the dance floor with some rap metal! <PUKE!> This must have been sent to me by mistake, it was obviously meant for some commercial magazine to be reviewed right alongside the likes of the Deftones and Limp Bizkit. NEXT!

Dark Tranquillity - Haven Century Media

Considering how disappointed I was with last year's "Projector" release from Dark Tranquillity, I wasn't expecting much from this latest release. I couldn't have been more wrong, as Dark Tranquillity have come back with what is undoubtedly their strongest release in years, possibly their best release ever! "Haven" features excellent production, typically brilliant guitar work, keyboards which compliment the music perfectly, and most importantly a huge improvement in the vocals. Gone are the (positively godawful) clean sung goth vocals, and in their place are powerful, harsh growls. This album doesn't slow down for a second, as strong songwriting is evident from the first note to the last. Dark Tranquillity have come back strong, to be sure.

Raise Hell - Not Dead Yet Nuclear Blast

Raise Hell could best be described as a combination of Carcass, At the Gates, Overkill, and Deceased. They have a mix of thrashy elements, grind, and melodic death. Vocally they very much remind me of Deceased. Some catchy riffs and a decent production are a plus as well. This is not a band that is going for atmosphere. This sounds like it would be good to pit to, though I can't say it's something I'd put on very often. Fans of melodic thrash/death will love this one though.

Rorschach Test - Peace Minus One E-Magine

This is a strange mix of styles. Imagine a hardcore act such as Skinlab, Pro-Pain, or Machine Head, but add in synths and electronic effects. The only description that comes to mind would be "atmospheric hardcore" which almost sounds like an oxymoron to me. I am not a hardcore fan at all, so this wasn't my cup of tea, but it certainly was original. I can't say I ever heard anything like this before. If you listen to a bit of hardcore you may want to check this out.

Blood Storm - Pestilence From the Dragonstar Soul Sold Music

Well, they certainly play their riff with gusto. What exactly is the point of music like this? I can barely distinguish one song from the next, the production is shit, the guitars are static, and the vocals are a monotonous drone of high pitched yapping. The drummer appears to have one beat, with lots of ridiculous and mistimed fills in between. Black Boredom at it's worst.

Angel Dust - Enlighten the Darkness Century Media

Definitely not your typical German power metal, Angel Dust have released one hell of an album this year with "Enlighten the Darkness." The guitars have a heaviness and depth to them, not to mention some very well written riffs. The singer shows a good range without sounding whiny or trying to imitate the likes of Iron Maiden or Helloween. Over it all, usually in the background, is a bit of symphonic keyboard work which manages to provide a bit of feeling and the occasional experimental edge without becoming gaudy or over the top. The music is definitely darker and heavier than most power metal I've heard, and the overall mood has a bit of a Nevermore-ish quality to it. A very strong power metal release.

GF93 - G.Oetia F.Etish 19.93 Copro Records

More Korn/Deftones worship. Go put this on commercial radio and stop wasting my time with this (c)rap metal! There's nothing more to say, people who buy this kind of album don't read this magazine.

Orphanage - Inside Nuclear Blast

I've been listening to Orphanage for a while now, and I always enjoyed their riff-writing skills and the touch of atmosphere they used. The female vocals were never the best but they were always in key and never too far in the front. On this latest CD they have grown tremendously! The classic elements of fantastic guitar harmonies and colossal heavy riffs are still there, plus some strong gritty growls. What has changed is that over this they have added a lot of atmosphere, and the singing is fantastic! There are two different singers here, and both are spot-on and fit perfectly into the music without being too far up front or in the background. Songwise, Orphanage have tended to write similar-sounding songs on their albums, but on Inside they have managed to produce an album that is quite varied in sound from classic heavy moments, faster songs, ballad-like moments, and epic/fantastic songs such as the standout track "Behold" (track 7). This is by far the best release Orphanage have produced.

Sinergy - To Hell and Back Nuclear Blast

Powermetal, semi-thrashy, with female singing. This reminds me a touch of Nightwish but there is very little atmosphere and what little synth there is just isn't nearly as well played. It's also a bit more thrashy, and with an occasional Iron Maiden influence as well. The biggest downside, other than the music, is the singing. Kim Goss should have stuck with keyboards, because her singing really isn't up to par, especially with bands like Nightwish out there pulling it off far better. Certainly not an album I would recommend.

Jag Panzer - Thane to the Throne Century Media

Power metal in the Blind Guardian vein of things, with lots of melody and atmosphere. This style of power metal has been around for ages and certainly isn't going anywhere. Good technical guitar work along with the typical Helloween-meets-Bruce Dickinson powermetal vocals. There are some very good moments on this CD, varying from the hyper-melodic to some good heavy moments (ala Iced Earth). Not a bad effort at all, worth hearing if you like power metal for sure.

Hypocrisy - Into the Abyss Nuclear Blast

After growing progressively more melodic and atmospheric with each album since "The Fourth Dimension," I would have expected the progression to continue. However, as I began to read reports of Hypocrisy going back to an older and more brutal style I started to wonder what I would hear with this new album. Well at last here it is, and I must say the reports were accurate: Hypocrisy are young again. The old

The Dragon's Flight

punishing brutality is back in a big way. However, there are a lot of differences between this new album and older releases such as *Osculum Obscenum* or *The Fourth Dimension*. One key element is the production that Peter Tagtgren has become famous for over the years, and this album is no exception. Each instrument, indeed every note and beat is clearly heard despite the brutal heaviness and raw power of the music. This is also in no way a remake of older songs, as each song provides something new and original. Not to worry for the fans of the melodic side ("Abducted" forward) as there are still plenty of atmospheric moments here as well. I will admit I was a bigger fan of the more atmospheric side of *Hypocrisy*, and the sudden switch back to the brutal side took me by surprise, especially after last year's phenomenal release (the self-titled *Hypocrisy* album). However, after several listens I can definitely say that everything I liked about *Hypocrisy* is still there, it's just presented in a way not seen before. I think most *Hypocrisy* fans will be very pleased with this fresh new beginning for the band.

Witch Hunt

- Souls Enshrouded Fire
X Rated Records

Melodic black metal with a great deal of Gothenburg-style (*Dark Tranquillity/In Flames* influence abounds). Musically this is not bad, the guitar work is tight and the growled vocals fit the music well. A tad of atmosphere is used here and there, with moments of fairly mediocre female singing utilized as well. The album culminates in the lone standout track on this album, a song entitled "Enshrouded" which sounds like it belongs on an album by *Embraced* or *Serenades* (the *Serenades* from Italy, that is). On the downside this really isn't the most original project I have heard, this style has been done many times over by different bands, however this band at least manages to avoid the remarkable "borrowed" sound that other Gothenburg-metal bands tend to have. The album also loses a few points for less than stellar production, though it's far from the mud-like production of so called "True" black metal. Overall if you like very melodic black metal with a touch of atmosphere this would be an album worth checking out.

Heidenreich

- Trance of an Unholy Union
Napalm Records

This album begins with an instrumental that sounds as if it came straight off a *Puissance* album. It then proceeds into the rest of the album, which tends to vary between majestic, slow paced, keyboard laden black metal sections and faster, more traditional black metal passages. The production is somewhat muddy but is made up for by the mood set by the music. The blast-beat black metal sections did not impress me, however there is enough good music here to warrant listening to this one a few times, and it has an experimental edge that I like.

In Aeternum

- The Pestilent Plague
Necropolis

Fairly standard brutal black/death pretty much covers this one. Some interesting riffs and a decent heaviness (courtesy of Tommy Tagtgren and the Abyss studios no doubt), but overall this album is a constant barrage of brutal black death that doesn't change a great deal from song to song. But overall the guitars are tight and heavy, and the production is good. Fans of heavy black metal will most likely enjoy this.



Nocturnal Rites

- Afterlife

Century Media

The cover makes this one look more like a death metal album, but what we have here is powermetal. Typical, rehashed, cliché powermetal at it's *Helloween/Iron Maiden* worshiping best. The album does benefit from decent production and some surprisingly heavy guitars considering the style they are playing. However, the vocalist is so shrill and whining most of the time that his voice becomes physically irritating after the first few minutes. There is certainly nothing new here, this style of powermetal has been done to death a thousand times over by more talented acts.

Dreams of Damnation

- Let the Violence Begin
Necropolis

Hmm, where do I begin with this? Shall I start with the boring guitar lines? Perhaps the muddy, thin production that makes this sound like it was recorded in a garage? Or maybe I'll pick on the way they apparently use the same drum beat in every song? No, dear readers, I think what takes the cake here is the godawful vocals. They are akin to that annoying neighbor's dog that won't stop barking all day, all night, until it drives you positively mad. If you like being bored to tears, go ahead and buy this one.

Carnal Forge

- Firedemon

Century Media

I heard a couple of songs by this band on the *Wardance* comp from a few years ago. This album is pretty much more of the same. This is metal intended for the pit: no frills, nothing fancy. The music has decent production and the guitars have a nice punch to them. Musically it's fairly standard death metal with some catchy riffs thrown in. The vocalist was a bit too reminiscent of *Phil Anselmo* for my taste, but if you don't mind a bit of that in your death metal give this a try.

Nile

- Black Seeds of Vengeance
Relapse

Their debut, "Amongst the Catacombs of Nephren-Ka" is legendary. I did not think Nile would be able to top that album. And now we have *Black Seeds of Vengeance* and believe me when I say that somehow, some way, they HAVE topped the debut. *Black Seeds of Vengeance* is everything that was good about the last album brought to the next level! Deep, harsh growls are vomited forth from every angle, over brutally heavy and punishing guitar and bass work. This music is somehow both more angry and more melodic at the same time. The amazing moments of synth have been worked in even more seamlessly than before, adding a lot to the music without taking away from the remarkable heaviness and brutality. This is death metal the way it was meant to be, and no one does it better than Nile.

In the Woods

- Three Times Seven on a Pilgrimage
Prophecy Productions

Once again, In the Woods have produced a wonderfully strange masterpiece. Lots of trippy guitars, strings, and keyboards not to mention plenty of operatic male and female singing. Utilizing the classic doomy elements mixed with lots of experimental elements and some really fantastic singing, "Three Times Seven on a Pilgrimage" is a great ending to the long line of great albums by this band. Unfortunately, this is to be the final In the Woods release. Word is they will assemble for one final show, with all musicians who have appeared on In the Woods albums since the beginning for a live recording, which should at least be a nice capstone for them. They will definitely be missed.

Beefcake

- Coincidentia Oppositorum
Hymen

It sounded so promising from the first track. It begins with a wonderfully crafted neoclassical/ambient introduction, which leads into a bit of spoken word on the second track, and even then the second track wasn't bad either except for a bit of chaotic electronics over the music. From there, I'm sorry to say, this is bad dance-floor techno music. It never returns to the brilliance exhibited on the first track for more than a minute, but stays with this awful repetitive electro/drum-machine garbage or simplistic cheesy keyboard passages with a touch of instrumentation here and there. I see two names in here, I think whoever wrote the first track on this CD should dump the techno guy and go off on his own, and name his goddamn project something better than BEEFCAKE while he's at it! Sure it's probably written by the same guy but hey, I can hope can't I?

Deinonychus

Ars Metallii

<http://www.doom-metal.com/deinonychus/>

First his outstanding release "Ark of Thought" and then his work with Bethlehem on S.U.I.Z.I.D. which impressed me to no end. Now we have the self titled "Deinonychus" and I have to say that Marco Kehren has completely surpassed even my highest expectations. This new Deinonychus album is easily his best work ever. The first striking thing about this CD is that the guitars are so heavy and powerful, though not way up in the forefront of the music they lay a nice foundation for the rest of the music. Then layered on top of them are the keyboards, which have a huge sound but remain eerie and brooding, and add a ton of atmosphere to the music. Of course we still have Marco's incomparable screams of anguish, which are what really puts the album over the top. He manages such a range from tortured screams to deep growls, and yet seems to generate such power, his larynx must be made of steel! If he was good before, he is great now. Sandwiched in between this onslaught are slower, quieter moments of clean guitar and vocals, with a bit of ambience in the background, which then crescendo with Marco's rising screams - true brilliance. This is the darkest, most hopeless, depressing, suicidal music I have ever heard. Bethlehem will have great difficulty topping their last album without this man. Easily one of the best releases this year.

Desolate

- Eventide of the
Orb and Heavens
X Rated Records

Thin guitars, cheap keyboard sounds, and vocals that sound a whole lot like old Dark Tranquillity. They really want to be Dark Tranquillity circa "The Gallery" in a big way, but lack the talent. Nothing about this CD is original or even listenable really. I think this tidbit from their bio says it all: "First CD release ever by one of Bulgaria's biggest metal bands." What, they sold out on tapes?

Opprobrium

- Discerning Forces
Nuclear Blast

The artists formerly known as Incubus have returned. Why? This rehashed death metal with a Pantera-like edge isn't anything new, nor does it have much to offer unless you missed the last ten years of metal. Aside from an occasional catchy riff, this album has few redeeming qualities. Fuzz-guitars, over-simplistic fast drumming, and the Anselmo-like vocals that always put me off. Nothing much to hear in this one.

Hair of the Dog

- Rise
Spitfire

Hair... of the Dog. I think there is a mistake somewhere in this band name. "Hair of the Dog's Ass" might come closer to describing it. Then again, maybe there is some merit in the name, perhaps "Hair-Band of the Dog" would be more appropriate. Holy Firehouse! Holy Kip Winger! I thought this garbage was over and done with in the 80's for crying out loud. Damn Yankees would be proud I'm sure.

Medulla Nocte

- Dying From the Inside
Copro Records

Hardcore death metal, but with a touch of crazy jazz elements that are interesting. It definitely has a fusion jazz element to the writing and gives it a semi-chaotic and dissonant quality. Overall though, it's a bit too hardcore for my taste. Definitely original though.

Sirius

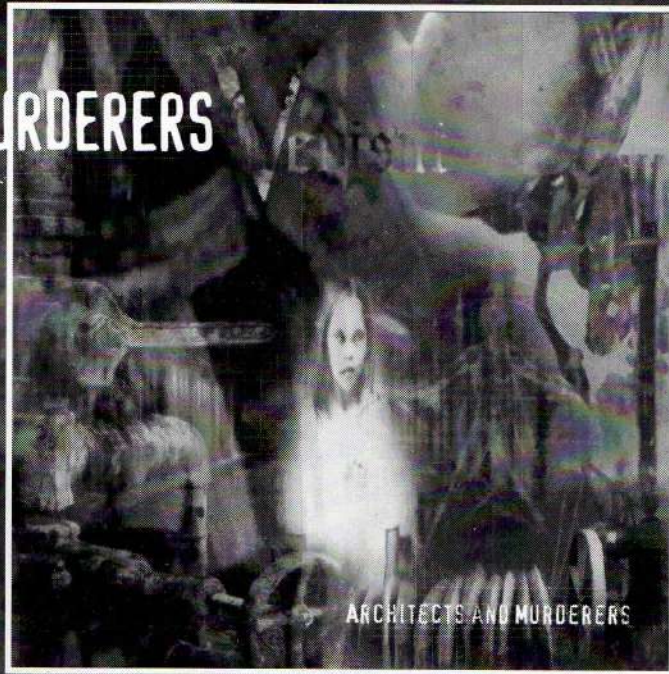
- Aeons of Magick
Nocturnal Art Productions

The label of Samoth (Emperor) has found yet another gem in the underground realm. Sirius plays masterfully crafted dark symphonic orchestral metal band. Each song is a work of art, composed of a perfect balance between the metal side and the orchestral side. Sometimes aggressive, fast and powerful, other times somber, brooding and dark, but always stunning. This is a must own album if you like orchestral black metal.

ARCHITECTS AND MURDERERS

Vedisni

Dark Ritualistic Industrial
Soundtrack with
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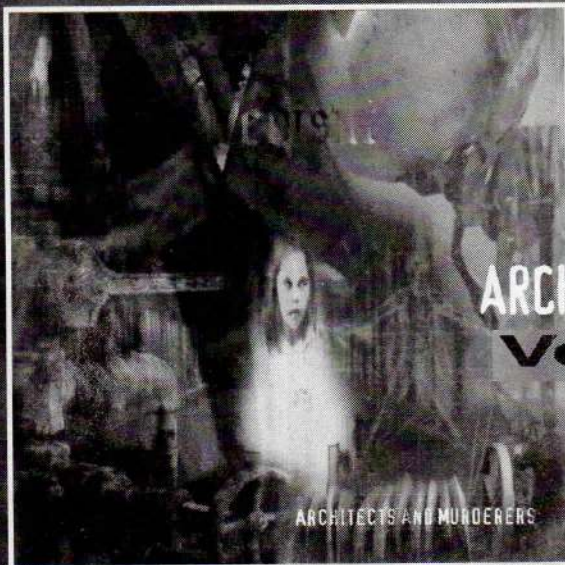
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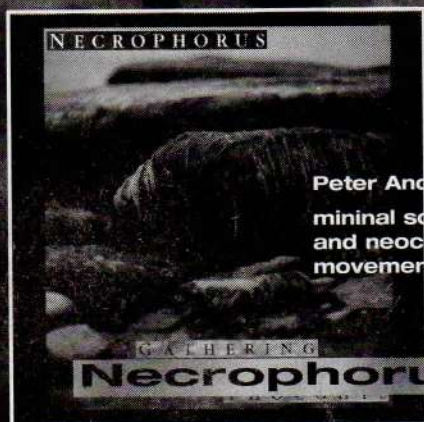
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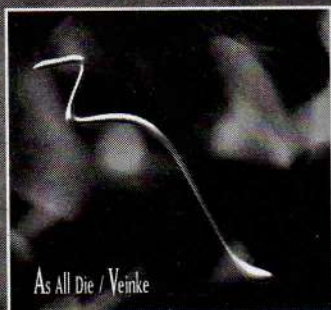
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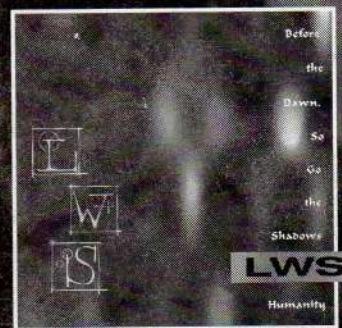


the As All Die / Veinke split

- Neoclassical folk
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DRAGON FLIGHT
RECORDINGS LLC
info@dragonflightrec.org
www.dragonflightrec.org

780 Reservoir Ave.
PMB 294
Cranston, RI 02910
FAX: 401-724-9449