

PUBLISHED BY THRASH 'EM ALL/LOUD

HARD STUFF

ISSUE NO.1

SEPTEMBER 1994

\$ 1,95



SENTENCED
CANNIBAL CORPSE
MORBID ANGEL
ABSU

ALBUMS, DEMOS, REPORTS

GOREFEST III MASSIVE METAL



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August, Sept. '94

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HARD STUFF

EDITORIAL

Welcome to Hard Stuff, a new publication brought to you by Thrash'em All Magazine and in America helped out by Loud Magazine. We have finally managed to put out an English version - a great relief after it was postponed so many times due to various, most often objective, problems. Hard Stuff is going to appear semi-monthly, but mark one thing for the beginning - it is not English Thrash'em All! The latter will debut in January 1995 with the same volume and quality as the Polish version which you have (or have not) been receiving. In a lot of ways, Hard Stuff is a warm-up before a full-colour, 48-page effort the regular magazine is going to be. Simultaneously, however, it is an independent publication, no less serious than anything monikered with the Thrash'em All name.

As you can see the issue contains a handful of interviews, quite a few album and demo reviews (even though we cannot rival with some strictly underground zines that feature hundreds of them), plus other odd stuff. We hope that you will find the content interesting, the ability to read about your bands in a language somewhat more popular than Polish (which you so often asked for in the past) being an initial invitation. Naturally, all suggestions, reactions, and wishes to be written about are more than welcome - you'll find all contact addresses elsewhere on this page. Welcome is also everybody who desires to put an advertisement in our columns - the rate card should be enclosed in the package. Please, make sure you direct mail to the proper address depending whether you are based in Europe or America.

As a promotion we are making Hard Stuff available free-of-charge to everybody in business - record companies, distribution agencies, bands, other magazines. If you aren't on our mailing list yet, please, feel free to contact us about it. We are also looking for distributors in Europe - if you're in position to help us out, please write or fax at once. Meanwhile, you can subscribe to or buy Hard Stuff at the given addresses. So ... just enjoy and see you soon.

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© THRASH'EM ALL MAGAZINE

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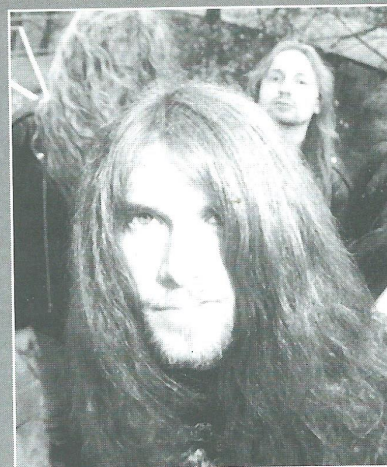
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HOT FAXES HOT FAXES

Nuclear Blast announces a good handful of releases for the upcoming months: MACABRE - "Behind the Walls of Sleep," CONVULSE - "Reflections," HYPOCRISY - "The Fourth Dimension," DISRUPT - "Unrest," EXIT-13 - "Eithos Musik," PYOGENESIS - "Sweet X-rated Nothings," KATAKLYSM - "Sorcery," MORTIFICATION - "Bloodworld," BRUTALITY - "When the Sky Turns Black," and long awaited INCANTATION - "Upon the Throne of Nazareth."

Unisound International Records, previously known as Decapitated Records, also keeps pace with a good slab of black metal. Among the released there are such titles as a split NECROMANTIA/VARATHRON "Black Arts Lead to Everlasting Sins" and ABSU-based EQUIMANTHORN - "Nindinugga Nimshimshargal Enlillara." Available are also deathy UNCANNY with "Splenium for Nyktophobia" and MALICIOUS ONSLAUGHT with "Brutal Gore." As if these were not enough, watch out for upcoming albums from OCCULT, MORTUARY DRAPE and THOU ART LORD.

As probably everybody knows by now, BURZUM's leader was sentenced to 21 years of imprisonment, the fact that probably boosted up the sales of his latest album "Hvis Lyset Tar Oss" released through the British Misanthropy Records. The distribution is handled by Cymophane Records.

Also Britain-based fortress Earache Records is catching up with a number of releases including two EP's from GODFLESH - "Merciless" and CATHEDRAL - "Statik Majick" and full-length releases from SCORN - "Evanesence," BRUTAL TRUTH - "Need To Control," ULTRAVIOLENCE - "Life of Destructor," and another GODFLESH - "Selfless."

From the same label BOLT THROWER are announcing their fifth album entitled "... For Victory" whose release has been scheduled for October.

DESULTORY's second effort "Bitterness" has been recently released through the American Metal Blade.

Shiver Records, after the label's debut with RENAISSANCE's "The Death of Art," markets the second full-length album "Shadows of the Unknown" from MYSTIC CHARM.

Some news from the Polish scene. Loud Out Records enters the market with HAZAEL's "Thor" (death metal) and GHOST's "The Last of Mercy" (death thrash). The legendary "The Time Before Time" by IMPERATOR is scheduled as the next release.

Massive Records' first full-length album include MORDOR - "Prayer to ..." (symphonic doom heavy). The same label will shortly release two hot titles from VADER(I), a live album "The Darkest Age - Live '93" and a 4-track mini-CD "Sothis" featuring 3 new cuts and BLACK SABBATH's cover "Black Sabbath."

From Century Media comes the latest offering from CRO-MAGS entitled "Hard Time in an Age of Quarrel." Meanwhile ONLY LIVING WITNESS promote their "Prone Mortal Form."

After having been dropped from the Nuclear Blast roster, German ATROCITY recorded their latest album "Blut" for Massacre Records. Other items from the label's catalogue include CREMATORY - "... Just Dreaming," WARGASM - "Fireball," FORTE - "Division," and SOUL CAGES - "Soul Cages."

Still in Germany. M.M.I. Records which so far has indulged in EP's came up with as much as 4 CD's: CASTLE's self-titled debut, ETHERIAL WINDS - "Saved," SOULGRIND - "La Matanza, El Himno Pagano," and long-awaited PHLEBOTOMIZED - "Preach Eternal Gospels."

Morbid Records, which recently released Polish DEAD INFECTION's first CD, is offering another debut, "Drawings of the Dead" from MANGLED TORSOS.

Sweden in turn is spawning more and more black metal acts which seem to have no problem in recording albums not exceeding 30 minutes' length. Such is DARK FUNERAL's "Open the Gates" released through Hellspawn Records and containing just 4 tracks of "pure evil." Or so they say....

AT THE GATES, in turn, did manage to fill in full 45 minutes of music on their third "Terminal Spirit Disease" which is a serious candidate for "The Best Death Metal Album of the Year."

Peaceville is also promoting ANATHEMA's "Pentecost 3" EP reportedly combining 4 or 5 tracks. A new album entitled "Rise Pantheon Dreams" is still in the works and will see the light of day in January '95.



DESULTORY

DARKTHRONE are riding on the tidal wave of the black metal boom and announce the release of the series of 4 (!!) new albums. The first is entitled "Transilvanian Hunger", the follow-ups are to be "Panzerfaust" and "Caravans To The Empire Algol." The title of the fourth is not known yet, as well as whether the label will market all the four within a short time span.

It is raining cats and dogs with new small independent and ambitious labels. Italian Flying Records/Godhead Recordings is one of them and its first release is the Italian metal guru's, Paul Chain's, debut which features such guests as Lee Dorian (!!!) is supposed to conquer all doomsters. The next in row are a full-length offering from the Swedish death pioneers EXPULSION and "Hymn To The Stone" from ACRIMONY known for their Shiver Records 7". Flying Records' catalogue announces also upcoming album from Finnish grinders MIND RIOT and Italian veterans RAW POWER who boast no less than 7 LP's released in Italy.

American magazine Sounds of Death in co-operation with Earache Records released a special compilation with bands from the British label. The album is available only with the latest issue of SOD and features 15 bands, ENTOMBED, CARCASS, MEATHOOK SEED, CATHEDRAL to mention a few.

HARD PAGES 3

Cannibal Corpse belong to the bands which you either hate or love. In Poland those subscribing to the latter feeling seem to be in majority (especially after last April's one-off gig over here), the fact that made me phone up the Metal Blade headquarters and arrange an interview with Chris Barnes. The Cannibal mainman was not perhaps the most talkative person in the galaxy, but I still managed to wrench from him a lot of news concerning the band's whereabouts and their latest effort "The Bleeding."

- Err... before "The Bleeding" saw the light of day in April, you released an EP last year. Was it supposed to be a "filler" between "Womb of the Mutilated" and the latest album or a regular release?

- I would rather call it a sign of respect for the bands whose tracks we covered on this EP. We grew up with this music and to some extent they all had some influence on ours. So when it turned out that the material we were rehearsing came out okay, we decided to put it on a disk. No, it definitely was not one of those titles that only drain cash from the fans. We wanted it ourselves.

- Without any strong encouragement from Metal Blade?

- No, not at all! It was us who suggested putting out this material and the label agreed almost immediately. They booked the studio and that's how it happened. I know what you meant with this question, but Metal Blade is not a label that would try to manipulate the artists into releasing some unwanted stuff. We really wanted this EP.

dled by Scott and that's probably why the album came out exactly as we wanted it to.

- Morrisound again. Have you ever thought about changing the place? I mean, Scott and Morrisound are already a kind of institution where you go when you want to have an album people would talk about. It becomes kind of boring and some experimentation never harmed anyone..

- We can experiment in Morrisound. And that's what we are actually doing. We try out new sounds, new approaches, new solutions. I believe that Scott knows us so well that using any other producer would be just a waste of time and money. Anyway, it's not so easy to get used to our style. In a sense he's the sixth member of the band and the best producer I have met in my life. I am not mentioning the fact that he's also really easy-going - you can rarely meet a person easier to communicate with. Maybe he and Morrisound are an institution, but if he does that better than anyone else, why should we use other engineers? That would be just stupid. As is saying that he means stagnation and repeating the same sound on each album he does.

- So how would you characterise the new

- Hold on, would you be another one suffering from the Alex Newport syndrome?

- Why Alex? Oh, yeah, I know now. That he does not care for fans..... I guess this attitude is quite common among bands and does not have to be automatically connected with Fudge Tunnel. Let me put it this way. The basic reason behind Cannibal Corpse's existence is our pleasure, and if some other people also like what we do -

- You keep on stressing the point that you play just for your own pleasure. It's easy to say so when you have four albums out and an established position in the market...

- Maybe, but we have adhered to this philosophy since the beginning of the band. Even when we did not have the contract with Metal Blade. And that's going to stay this way, no matter how many albums we record.

Profuse bleeding



CANNIBAL CORPSE

- Anything new in the band lately? I heard about some line-up...

- Yeah, we have a new guitarman, Rob Barrett. So far he's been turning out great and I think he's going to stay with us for longer.

- The reason for the departure of the old one being obviously musical disagreements...

- Ha, ha... Well, as a matter of fact, his involvement in the band and a kind of music we play was not strong enough. His musical skills started to lag behind ours considerably, which in turn was a drag for the development of the whole band, so his leaving was the best, and the only - for that matter, solution.

- Yes, the musical development. Maybe a couple of words about how this new music came about?

- We recorded "The Bleeding" last year, in November in Morrisound Studios in Florida. Altogether the session lasted for about four, five weeks. The production was naturally han-

album to somebody who hasn't heard it yet, even though I doubt there are such people...

- First of all, it is going to be much easier to actually remember songs from it. I know that for example on "Eaten Back To Life" some tracks were so similar to one another, at least for many listeners, that it was hard to distinguish them, even after a few listens. In that respect "The Bleeding" shows a big progress. There are also more tempo and time changes and as much as this phrase is so common that it hardly means anything, people will understand it better after they hear the album.

- Do you think then that you're going to win new fans?

- Actually, we are not that interested in it. The most important thing is whether we like the music or not, and whether it fulfils our ambitions. Yes, we have some ambitions, quite contrary to what many people are saying. And then if the fans like it - that's fine, if they don't - I think we can live through that. Ha, ha... but seriously..

that's great. And this is the whole story without any syndromes.

- Coming back to the album - I suppose you haven't quit your nice lyrics?

- No. They are still stories about death, blood and fear - the same stuff as before. On the other hand, however, the approach to them is rather different than on the earlier albums. I would say this time I treat them as more real, closer to life.

- Is then your graphic concept close to life, too? I mean life of ordinary people, not morticians or mercenaries from the African jungle. For me it seems somewhat doubtful...

- I still believe that our covers or T-shirts are closely related to all the violence going on in our lives. It's just that some people cannot see it. And they are definitely a great match to our music after all. If somebody doesn't like them, they can just put our albums away. Listening to Cannibal Corpse as well as looking at our artwork is not compulsory. We're doing that for ourselves anyway.

- Since we have to be finishing, you know the question ...

- Does it happen to be connected with our plans? Ha, ha... First of all, we want to promote "The Bleeding" and play live as much as possible. We have already toured the US and Canada and played some odd festivals with Morbid Angel and Unleashed. I am not sure what's coming up now - not the rest, though. Once touring draws to an end, we'll go home and probably start writing new stuff. And the whole story will repeat.

A good man is hard to find they say, but it looks like Chris is one. And even though I'm not a die-hard Cannibal fan, I must admit that their attitude is pretty healthy as for such a highly dangerous and contagious environment as show business. But even when you get stuck in the mud too deep (Cannibals didn't), there's still some blood to spill. Which they do all the time.

Pavel Frelik

When "North From Here" saw the light of day in the first half of 1993, it caught almost everyone unawares. After their, delicately saying, insignificant debut, Finnish Sentenced recorded the album that sent the ripples all over the world and once again confirmed that Scandinavia does not mean only Sweden. The album's success was so big that Century Media hastily licensed it from Spinefarm for Europe, the first such case in the history of the label. I think it's about time to learn something about the roots of the "North From Here" and other facts from the world of Sentenced. The man to enlighten us is no one else but a bassman Taneli Jarva, acting also as a session musician for Impaled Nazarene, about which - to some reader's despair - not a word today.



... TO THE NORTH! SENTENCED

- You are not newcomers in the death metal scene. How did it all start? And how come you have such a grimly sounding name?

I think it was 1988 when Muka Tenkula formed the band. It did not even have the name back then. Next came line-up problems and other shit that usually happens with young bands. Now the line-up has been finally stable for more than two years with Muka and Sami Lapokka on guitars, Vesa Renta on drums and me as bassist and vocal. Coming back to the history - the name came up along with the first demo tape in 1990. Then in 1991 we recorded our first album "Shadows of the Past" for Thrash Records from France. The name... well, when we were choosing it, Sentenced was only one of the suggestions. We took it and even though we do not connect any more profound meaning with it, we still like it. I think we'll stick to it.

- The first thing that draws the attention in "North From Here" is the cover - it's a very mysterious, moody picture. Is that a sign of interest in art in broader sense?

Yes, the cover. We are really satisfied with it, in a way it expresses the feelings we wanted to convey on this album. The Spinefarm Records version is very clear and sharp, which cannot be said about the one released on Century Media. Their picture seems blurred and the colours are not that distinct. Personally I like it when art is somewhat mysterious, dark, bizarre, or just sick. I also like the ancient art, it is

so simple, that's probably why I love tattoos so much. Very often I like something because it is different from everything else around. Salvador Dali and Pablo Picasso are my favourite painters, but most of all I adore H.R. Giger - he's the master of insanity!

- The lyrics on the album are equally emotional - "My sky is darker than yours, my star is brighter than yours.." It sounds a bit pessimistic, doesn't it?

Yeah, but that's because the lyrics are really important to us and we want them to be true. For me they are the medium through which I can express myself and the forum in which my schizophrenia [Are you really schizophrenic, Taneli? - Editor] can find its outlet. When something bad happens to me, when I have dark thoughts on my mind, when a bad attitude is all over - I want to put it all on paper at once.

- I understand that you are writing most of the lyrics. What about the musical input?

On the first two albums about half of all lyrics is actually mine and the rest - Sami's. For the next one I am going to write most of them. As far as the music goes, Muka is the main composer, but obviously Sami and I contribute as well. We have written a couple of tracks ourselves.

- You mentioned a new album? When can we expect it?

Yeah, we're currently working on a

new material. I think the album should be out some time in autumn if there are no delays on the label's side of things. You can find a sample of what it might sound on the ep "The Trooper" featuring also the Iron Maiden cover song.

- Speaking of the music. The ideas can't be coming from nowhere. Is there anyone in particular that influenced Sentenced's style?

Hm, let me think. I wasn't even a member of the band when it started out. I suppose that in the beginning old heavy metal was pretty much influential and the thrash/death thing later on. At least on both demo tapes. Maybe a bit of Death, I can't think of any other band. Nowadays, I would not like to think about us as being influenced by anyone in particular. We all listen to different sorts of music and have different tastes. In a way these fascinations mix in Sentenced. That's what makes us so diverse. Personally, I listen to a lot of metal music, but also to some rock, techno wave or even classical stuff. Actually anything that I can enjoy. Nowadays it's Type O Negative, Fields of Nephilim, Nick Cave and some quality metal like Iron Maiden, Motorhead and Slayer. Thank dog [?! - Editor] there's so much good music in the world.

- And what do you think about the whole industrial branch with Scorn, Godflesh or Pitch Shifter? What about the latest Pestilence's and Cynic's efforts?

Well, actually, I am not listening to such

bands too much. I occasionally like Ministry and similar stuff, but most of it is too cold for me, too little attractive. As for Pestilence, I think it is good to incorporate elements from other kinds of music. It definitely brings in some fresh air. I think you'll be able to recognise a couple of new ideas on our new album, but they are still going to be different from the bands you mentioned.

- And who's going to release this album?

Spinefarm Rec. is an excellent label and so far our co-operation has been going along perfectly. It is possible that the third album will have their moniker, too.

- To round things up, what's up in the Finnish scene?

I actually haven't been following it for some time so I don't know what's going on too well. I am sure there are a lot of bands, but I'm not really interested. Underground has changed so much during the last few years that it lost all attraction for me.

- Something for the end...

Sex, drugs and rock'n roll, women, leather and hell! One more - heal the world - drop the bomb! A rather radical closure, but apart from that, Sentenced is definitely a band which you should not lose from your eyes, or shall I say - ears? Unless somebody decides to heal the world. Then we wouldn't care that much anyway.

Barbara Mikula

ABSU

THE NEW CULT ARRIVES!

When I was writing a short feature on hailing from Plano, Texas Absu more than a year ago, I did not even suspect that their debut album entitled simply (?) "Barathrum: Visita Interiora Terrae Rectificando Indenies Occultum Lapidem" would mark the arrival of a new cult band onto the American scene. Now that the album is out, I decided to use my prior acquaintance with the band's leader, Russ (below appearing under a slightly different name), and make an interview. Russ must have also felt some obligation towards me since he readily agreed to explain his new name (as well as other band members'), Absu's links with The Beatles, the album title and other things, normally obscure for a bread-eater. That his language is rather idiosyncratic is another matter. Nevertheless, I hope that these words will enlighten you at least a bit. Thus spoke Russ...



- Luckily, we can skip the band's history - most interviewers' first gave question - as we presented it already. However, what I am interested in from the past is your deal with Gothic Records. How did you get it and what are the terms?

In 1991, before I was even a part of the cult, the demo tape "Temples of Offal" appeared. It caught interest of Rafael, a friend of mine who was then running Baphomet Records. It was also him who passed it down to Gothic Records and they pressed it as a seven-inch ep. Afterwards in abyss (?), he just asked us if we wanted to do a full-length album and we automatically said yes. There was originally going to be ten hymns on it, but three of the songs were dissatisfying, so we decided to do seven tracks instead. We were also going to record a four-hymn promotional tape, but the album was ready, so we laid off on that.

- What can you say about Gothic Records? I also understand that in Europe the album is to be distributed through Osmose....

Well, we're the first band on the label and "B.V.I.T.R.I.O.L." is their first full-length album, too, so that's about it. They released a few small vinyls before, but nowadays everybody can do it. We'll see how our co-operation works out. Yes, Osmose is taking the rest of the control in Europe, so it helps enormously. We have had and still have many problems with the release of the album, but I can't be bothered to go into them right now. It's like every time I turned around, there would be a problem - with the

cover, production, mastering tape, etc. But the outcome is fairly good, so all in all I am pleased.

- The obvious fact about Absu is that you are heavily into Black side of things. Is it a philosophy for you or just a stage image, as good as any other?

Absu is an occult rock band with a viewpoint concerning the lyrical magick being in a mythological fashion. It's not just sentences, but more of the tales and stories. I write most of the poetry, along with our rhythm guitarist and bassist Equitant. Our main interests include cabalistic rune magick, the 13th to 18th century thaumaturgic wizardry, Tarot (the dominion belief), Mesopotamian mythology, Necronomicon and making passionate love to certain Queens and mistresses (?). No, definitely all that is not a stage image - we treat it quite seriously, not mentioning the fact that we haven't played live for a while due to the line-up problems so we don't need an outdoor image.

- One more thing before we pass to the music - you all have those weird pseudonyms... Do they have any particular significance for the band members or are they just a suitable part of the whole concept?

OK, here's how I look at it. Our pseudonyms characterize the music better than the regular names would. For example, my full name is Emperor Proscriptor Magikus, who is the King of All Magical Proscriptions. And that is valid only in Absu. I am not saying that I am the Black Metal King, because I'm not. Euronymous, Cronos, Warrior, Angel Ripper and Lemmy are kings. I'm still the prince. Normally you can call me Russ, but not in the band. Actually, you can call me

whatever you want. Lord Equitant Infernain is the praised and immoral spirit of all upcoming equinoxes in the Celtic/Gaelic tribes mythology. Shafiel is the lord of shadows according to the Mesopotamian occultism. These names were not picked to look and sound black. We have done historical research in order for them to be suitable. If I were to pick a name just to be "black", then I might as well be in a band called Upside-Down Cross or something like that. He, he.

- OK, let's talk about music a bit. Some technicalities of the album?

"Barathrum: Visita Interiora Terrae Rectificando Indenies Occultum Lapidem" was recorded more than a year ago, in March and April 1993. Technically speaking we recorded the album in a professional studio which, however, was located in a converted garage! Naturally due to the limited budget. The recording was done on an analog tape. We handled the production ourselves and all engineering stuff was executed by Danny Brown. He is fairly well known for his past work of mastering of "Wings Over America." Yes, I am talking about Paul McCartney's album! His other contributions include Divine Eve, Solitude Aeternus and Rigor Mortis. He is absolutely the best to work with as far as the recording goes. He understands our beliefs very well and that's why it is so easy to communicate with him, not only musically.

- OK, I'm going to be provocative now. At times your sound resembles Samael from their first album. Intended or coincidence?

What? Samael's "Worship Him" is, of course, a landmark in black metal, but we've

never been compared to them before. Naturally, I take it as a kind of compliment. We've been compared to Mayhem, Celtic Frost, Immolation (?), older Dismember, Gorgon, and Decide. People have varied tastes, so we've been called everything, but I call it Absu.

- You mentioned all those lyrical influences you have and the track titles like "An Equinox of Fathomless Disheartenment" or "Fantasizing to the Third of the Pagan Vision" do seem to reflect them. If they are stories, like you said, what are they about then? Are they the element that makes you different from other bands?

Yeah, our lyrics are stories, even though it would be hard to find in them a plot or action. They are basically about occult topics, including the Moon, sex with queens [Russ seems to have this thing about queens - PF], thaumaturgy, rune magick, tarot, Babylonian mythology. For example, the album title "Barathrum: V.I.T.R.I.O.L." is an analogy to the Latin "The abyss: the universal solvent." Sort of a comparison. As far as the differences from other bands go, it would take forever to explain them. But a good instance of how diverse music we can produce is the album of our project-band, Equimanthorn. It's entitled "Ninidinuugga Nimshimshargal Enlilra" and, I think, shows our originality very well.

- The eternal question about the plans....

First of all, ensuring a stable line-up. We've had troubles with it lately, but now things start to be working out. That would allow us to play live, which we did not do for a long time. The Equimanthorn album should be already out on the Greek label called Unisound International - it's the same as Decapitated Records. In a couple of months we will also start writing the second album for Absu. And the spells will be cast upon Heximeth (?). Eko, eko, Cernunnos! Enalf Tneicna Eht Nrub!

Although not all the utterances of Russ vel Proscriptor are fully understandable for me, Absu seems to be something more permanent than many of the bands around. And their debut album, the title of which I am not going to quote once more due to the paper shortage, definitely deserves at least a couple of good listens, being a new cult music as it is. I swear on the queens!

Pawel Frelik



SICK RECORDS

PRESENTS

"The Land Of Crucified Insanity"

SK-CD 7001

COMING SOON ...

ROTTINGHEAD

tba

Ultra speedy techno grind
of the highest quality

VIOLENTDIRGE

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THE REAL UNDERGROUND

"Ya blast" - that seems to be the shortest characterisation of the band's music as well as the atmosphere they are able to evoke during their concerts. It is not my task, however, to review their gigs. Instead, I wonder in what direction the music of Morbid Angel can develop if we assume that they guys have done practically everything that was to be done in death metal. When I tried to ask David Vincent about that, his response was short - "No time." Luckily, the band's lead guitar man, Trey, was not under time constraints and answered all my questions while preparing the strings, in which activity he could not be disturbed even by the vanishing light. The latter was only welcomed with the economical "What the fuck?" The two remaining members of the band also did not mind one of the wretched journalist breed either - Pete practised on ...a chair and Eric kept on smiling in a rather serene way. Looks like a death metal idyll.

We are the best!

- Having a great responsibility that all bands called "great" carry, it is not enough to keep on recording good albums. Every now and then you have to surprise fans, make them think and change their attitudes. Definitely the news Trey is breaking to me belongs to the category of such moves.

We have just released a new EP, even though you should not treat it as some-

Personally I have always liked the band, especially their older stuff, like "Baptism." Vader are also using them as an intro. So I often thought what it would be like to merge both bands. And here we go, we did it and the new music is really weird and acidy. I am also under the impression of David's voice, it is even heavier than normally.

- Most of the Morbid

otherwise would have to leave. On "Covenant" David did sing on one track, but I don't think it is going to repeat in future. This is death metal! Vocals should be a knocking-out growl and music - totally extreme. Nobody can say that we are monotonous, we often have fast parts mixed with slow ones. Just check out "Abominations", "Angel of Disease" or "Ancient Ones." I can tell you, you will never catch

MORBID A

thing completely new. It's more of a rarity for Morbid Angel fans. You know Laibach? They (!) play, or rather remix, two of our tracks: "God of Emptiness" and "Sworn to the Black." The new versions sound really weird and not really similar to the originals. In a way they resemble Laibach more than Morbid Angel.

Angel fans are probably shivering - another death metal star sick'n'tired of playing their music?

By no means - Trey flares up. It's a one-time, EP project. Morbid Angel have always been a death metal band and I can't imagine any other line of development for us. Anybody who would think

us playing the same thing over and over again.

- Considering the fact that the band still gives the impression of being "young and angry," is there a place for the notion of the commercial success? In other words, is "Covenant" an album which brings some money both to the label and the band?

Well, that's stupid what you're saying. Morbid Angel is faster than any other band at this festival. We are even more brutal than Vader (?!), so how can you ask about the





commercial success? Let me put this way, we are the best! We have three songs with the lowest, heaviest and deepest guitar tuning, nobody has got a faster drummer, nobody

can play faster riffs either, we are simply the best band in the world. We are also pretty popular, that's why we earn money playing. You can't expect us to work for MacDonald to

make our living. I don't work, I am a musician and I'm brutal. I know I am the best. Anyway, no band can play any of our tracks properly - I'm positive about it.

- So what can you say about the recent tour with Black Sabbath? Let's face it - Tommy Iommi and the gang are also aware of their importance. And if you consider all their albums and fans... Morbid Angel and Sabbs seem to be the titular "heaven and hell"....

The tour with them was really good, personally I love their older stuff. I don't think there were any real points of dissent between us. The only problem were fans. Many of them could not comprehend our music because of its speed, but we enjoyed it anyway. The album sales were also fair and that says something. One thing that drives me crazy is that people cannot understand that we are faster than any other band on earth, the band with drums that really play! Pete is not cheating as others do. Notice that most drummers pretends fast drumming on bass-drums and cymbals. Pete prefers pure blasting and that's why he is the best. The same goes for guitars. Morbid Angel plays on all strings, whereas most bands use just two of them and think they play great music - this is ripping off the fans! Death metal should be death metal and only we can play it so hard.

- Eric, who is sitting opposite me, hasn't moved for ten minutes and only smiles. Trey does not have much to say about him.

He used to play in Ripping Corpse. He's still young and has to learn a lot.

He's playing with us on this tour, but we are not sure yet whether he is going to be a permanent member of Morbid Angel.

- If the new project with Laibach is not the indication of the band's development, what can you say about the follow-up to "Covenant"?

The next album is going to be much heavier. As soon as this tour closes, we go home to write some new songs. I can assure you that the sound is going to be as fast and heavy as before. I realize that "Covenant" goes almost as far with speed as you can go, so now we want to produce a really heavy stuff. We are a great band, I know that as musicians we are geniuses [Mr. Azagthoth, chill out a bit! - Editor]. We have great ideas, so we definitely won't put out anything weak. The new material is going to destroy everyone around.

- Somebody said that the American death metal is chasing only speed for the speed's sake into oblivion, whereas the European death is returning to the melodic hard rock roots...

I am not interested in that. There is none American or European music for Morbid Angel. There is no other band like us on both continents, maybe Terrorizer was the only good one worth mentioning and more brutal than Napalm Death, but they are not around any longer. We are THE band, we play death metal, not some pussy melodic stuff. People should finally look around and realise that all other bands sound the same. Only Morbid Angel is original!

- No comments....

Dariusz Puch

ALBUM REVIEWS

Beaufort's skale 0-12

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AMORPHIS

Tales from the Thousand Lakes
(Relapse/Nuclear Blast)
11

Line-up:

Tomi Kivisaari (voc. g); Esa Holopainen (g); Olli-Pekka Laine (bg); Jan Rechberger (dr); Kasper Martenson (keyb);

Tracks:

Thousand Lakes; Into Hiding; The Castaway; First Doom; Black Winter Day; Drowned Maid; In the Beginning; Forgo the Silence; To Father's Cabin; Magic and Mayhem;

Since the release of "The Karelian Isthmus" Amorphis have been considered a new hope in death metal. Whether the long-awaited follow-up comes up to the expectations of fans and press is not so easy to say, though. By all means "Tales from the Thousand Lakes" is a great album, featuring all highlights of the debut and many more. There is bigger diversification of vocals, not through the usual female ones, but rather the male chants as in "Into Hiding", "Black Winter Day" or "In the Beginning". Lots of keyboard parts, and even some instrumental experimentation as in "To Father's Cabin" and "Magic and Mayhem". On top of that you have the lyrics that were all of them taken from the Finnish folklore and adapted to the music. A brave move by any standards and definitely characteristic of Amorphis who seem to have found a nice niche of their country's cultural tradition already on their debut and now explore it both lyrically and musically, as there are also many parts that must be renderings of some traditional melodies. Overall new Amorphis is less brutal and more melodic than on their first album, but Outstanding and entertaining as this material is, it is also somewhat unconvincing. Not boring, not at all. It's just that having listened the album out, you know it lacks something but cannot really locate what the flow is. Personally, I don't like the presence of so many keyboard parts in the tracks, in itself not a bad idea but in abundance a bit subversive for the music. For example, the Moog organ parts at the end of "In the Beginning" are rather unnecessary, so is the lengthy introduction to "The Castaway". Don't get me wrong, these are not faults, and for many listeners they only enrich the whole. For me, however, they water it down and weaken the musical impact the band boasted on "The Karelian Isthmus". Which still leaves "Tale from the Thousand Lakes" a mandatory addition to your collection.

Pavel Frelík

ANCIENT RITES

The Diabolic Serenades
(After Dark)
10

Line-up:

Günther Thers (voc. bg); Bort Banderercken (g); Walter Van Cortenberg (dr);

Tracks:

[Intro] Sacrifices of Balberith; Crucifixion Justified; Satanic Rejoice; Obscurity Reigns (Fields of Flanders); Death Messiah; Land of Frost and Despair; Assyrian Empire; Longing for the Ancient Kingdom; Morbid Glory (Gilles de Rais 1404-1440); Ritual Slaying (Goat Worship Pure); Evil Prevails; Last Rites ... Echoes of Melancholy (Outro);

The album should be a surprise for those who knew the band from earlier recordings. Tentatively named, the Ancient Rites have been around for so long that I am astonished that their debut appears only now and on such a little-known label. Considerations aside, let's concentrate on "The Diabolic Serenades." I said "surprise" because its content are not beautiful and dark, almost heavy metal songs the band used to be known for. The album is a pure death metal meaning a more precise affinity to gody Belial. This is exactly what Ancient Rites A.D. 1994 sound like - the wall of sound, well-harmonised vocals, and short merciless cuts. There are very few black metal elements here, the musicians' image being probably the major, but it does not matter when you listen to the music. Somebody else described "The Diabolic Serenades" as regular death metal without novelties. That's correct, but the album is still fairly interesting and entertaining. You don't need originality to make a knock-out.

Dariusz Puch

AT THE GATES

Terminal Spirit Disease
(Peaceville)
12

Line-up:

Anders Björler (g); Martin Larsson (g); Tomas Lindberg (voc); Adrian Erlandsson (dr); Jonas Björler (bg);

Tracks:

The Swarm; Terminal Spirit Disease; And the World Returned; Forever Blind; The Fevered Circle; The Beautiful Wound; All Life Ends (live); The Burning Darkness (live); Kingdom Gone (live);

There are very few bands that have managed to maintain a steady musical development while still retaining their own, unique style. At The Gates is one of them. Now they are back with the brand new album and whether you like or not - it's a killer! To appreciate the band's progress fully, it is better to start at the end of the release and listen to "All Life Ends" from their ep "Gardens of Grief", the last "Kingdom Gone" from the debut and "The Burning Darkness" from the second effort, and only then pass to the new material - first seven tracks of "Terminal Spirit Disease." And all of them are masterpieces. The live cuts show how efficient the band is on stage, the ability that many current outfits lack: excelling only in a studio with heaps of hi-tech stuff. In the new songs At The Gates are tighter and more aggressive than ever before, with still despaired vocals of Tomas, stampeding sections, as usual lots of melody without a pinch of keyboards, and less dissonant than on previous releases, but instead grinding guitars. From the opening characteristic frail violins of "The Swarm" that later on builds up to a storm, through the manic title track, instrumental "And the World Returned", the absolutely gody in vocals "Forever Blind", to initially slower "The Fevered Circle" and driving "The Beautiful Wound" (How I love their titles!) At The Gates are impossible to copy and unsurpassed in their own league. They have never followed a trend or jumped the bandwagon, the tenacity that nowadays ensures them a special position within the scene. And most important of all, their music is just brimming over with emotion and feeling - if the singer

were to actually experience the moods he plunges into in the lyrics, Tomas would have bled his heart away and torn himself in despair to pieces long ago. The kingdom is gone, the great music is come. Get it.

Pavel Frelík

BURZUM

Hvis Lyset Tar Oss
(Misanthropy)
10

Line-up:

Griff Grinnack (all instruments and vocals);

Tracks:

Det Som En Gang Var; Hvis Lyset Tar Oss; Inn I Skattet Fra Draemmen; Tomhet;

There are two ways of listening to and judging music. You can analyse it, paying attention to particular parts of a song or the way different instruments sound and trying to break it down into most basic elements and find them perfect or faulty. You can also take it as it comes to you in a whole and search for the overall mood and climate. Very rarely do you get an album that would pass the test of both methods of listening. "Hvis Lyset Tar Oss," the fourth effort by an alleged notorious arsonist and murderer in musical circles known as Count Grinnack, definitely belongs to the music which poses the latter with a roaring success and would probably fall the former when taken under a magnifying glass. "Det Som En Gang Var" starts with a small melody, but shortly transforms into a hypnotic rhythm which at different paces holds on for the first three songs clocking in almost forty minutes. The last track, "Tomhet" is a longer instrumental acoustic variation, but still in the vein of the whole album. Burzum's black metal does not bring any new elements into the genre and heavily draws on the early Bathory, but no matter what you say about it technically-wise, one thing cannot be denied. It attracts, enchants and puts you in a trance-like state in which separate phrases do not mean as much as the general mood of gloom and hatred towards two thousand years of this. And letting the music float and carry you is the only way to enjoy Count's creations. Once you start to get into details, it may turn out that he's not such a skilled musician and composer after all. Luckily we're not talking a musical conservatory. We're talking the music of people who are at war. And there is not time for thought at such a time. Does it carry you?

Pavel Frelík

CRADLE OF FILTH

The Principle of Evil Made Flesh
(Caphoonous)
10

Line-up:

Paul A.; Benjamin; Nicholas; Robin; Paul R.; Doni;

Tracks:

Darkest Our Bride (Jugular Wedding); The Principle of Evil Made Flesh; The Forest Whispers My Name; Icarus; The Black Goddess Rises; One Final Grown Kiss; A Crescendo of Passion Bleeding; To Eve the Art of Witchcraft; Of Mist and Midnight Siles; In Secret Love We Drown; A Dream of Wolves in Snow...; Summer Dying Fast;

Rather little known Cradle of Filth recorded the album that can easily pretend to the title "Surprise of the year." The devilish invocations six members of the band do not spare on the listener might automatically classify them as strictly black metal, but, surprisingly again, that would be only a one-hundredth part of the truth. Admittedly, Cradle of Filth do have a heinous, cult singer (?) who doesn't have mercy for his throat, by this token joining the club. However, there is music, too and this could be instead called poetry. The tracks spark with variety of ideas and melodic arrangements which at times come near the death symphony-mystery. There is a number of styles on this album; anyway, what band would include the quotes from Beethoven if not one with the undeniable class? Cradle of Filth seem to be one to such an extent that my silent fave, Sadist, with their splendid keyboards are going down my personal list like a rocket. Which is unavoidable if you have a band that switches smoothly and spectacularly from the drop-ear melancholy to the intense grinding a la At The Gates. However, if somebody still insists that Cradle of Filth are black metal, they have to admit that "The Principle of Evil Made Flesh" is a groundbreaking album of the genre. Having said that, wherever you pigeon-hole their debut slab, it is unalterably a huge and magnificent effort whose charm you just can't resist.

Dariusz Puch

DESULTORY

Bitterness
(Metal Blade)
11

Line-up:

Klas Morberg (voc. g); Stefan Page (g); Thomas Johnson (dr); Hakan Morberg (bg);

Tracks:

Bleeding; Winter; Life Shelters; Taste of Tragedy; Enslaved Left Behind; Cold Bitterness; Among Mortals; A Closing Eye;

Some bands take time to develop. Desultory's first "Into Eternity" being a fair effort was far from perfection, partly due to the fact that it contained a lot of demo material. "Bitterness" is the quartet's second effort and it does show a very strong progress. More death thrash than pure death, the band come back with the material whose main advantage over the debut is stylistic coherence. Kicking off with guitar-wailing "Bleeding" Desultory go through a some 40-minute album with impressive efficiency, changing paces, and dropping in a lot of melody into more than decent blasting. Tracks usually built around recurring riff are accordingly clear and easy to follow, but still preserve an appropriate dose of rough energy AND complexity (many bands find it somehow difficult to combine both) backed up by the one-toned, yet not generic vocals of Klas Morberg who apart from growling knows that you can actually put some melody and tone into a brutal throat exploitation. Two guitar men, in turn, resisted the temptation of tuning their instruments down to the threshold of being rather felt through the vibration of a floor you stand on than heard aurally. All that adds up to the album, which being no breaker in the genre, is still very much listenable and pleasant to the ear of a music lover. Some say that after all these big bands, Sweden will never spawn one more good act. They are wrong. Desultory are one and they are damn well promising, too!

Pavel Frelík

DISHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

Pleasurezone
(SPV)
12

Line-up:
Patrick Klopf (g, voc); Hervig Zamernik (bg); Martin Messner (dr);
Tracks:
I Hyperact; Recommended Suicide; The Silence I Observe; Feel Like Fever Now; The Sick Deepunder; Getting Me Nowhere; Pleasurezone; Stuck In Something; Fall Colour Fall; Overwhelming Tranquility; Where Can I Park My Horse; Off The Ground; Sunday Mood;

Beautiful, powerful, original and better than ever - these few words suffice to describe the latest effort from the Austrian trio. The album is so down-to-earth, so mature that only true experts who spent half of their lives discussing musical technicalities could possibly talk about its faults and shortcomings. If there are any, "Pleasurezone" is much rougher than its predecessor "not to be unidimensional conscious" which, despite undeniable progressiveness, seemed a bit snobbish to some fans. I don't have those doubts any longer. Disharmonic Orchestra have chosen a right direction and their new style has solidified into brave, rough if not more attractive than before, music. As a matter of fact, Patrick does not sing, he recites his lyrics harshly, which contrasts artfully with melodic wallings of his guitar. Also Hervig's bass is more than significant on this album. The exposition of the instrument combined with the skills of the person handling it is something that makes the release memorable. Disharmonic Orchestra denies the hypothesis that the older the band, the softer they play. "Pleasurezone" is an album difficult to listen, rough as grunge, heavy and non-commercial as cult death metal, and extravagant as hard rock of the 70's. I especially recommend "Where Can I Park My Horse," just listen to the lyric.

Dariusz Puch

EQUIMANTHORN

Nindinugga Nimshimshargal Enillora
(Unisound)
10

Line-up:
The Black Mass Prayer (keyb); Shafiel Nuctumeron (voc); Emperor Proscriptor Magius (voc, dr); Lord Equitant Illemin (g, bg); Emperor Vorkash Necroslaughter (lyrics); Michael A. (narrations); Lady Zethar Adramalek (voc); Vordir Dzokkik (conjunctions);
Tracks:
Reflections of the First Rays of the Moon (Possess Me); The Cold Mystic Winds of Nankansurra (Dwelling Soul in the Crimson Desert: Robt El Khalyeh); Part I - Prelude: Penetrate Thy Sword in Hands of Athane; Part II - Abyeance: Commanding Empires of Hidden Light; Part III - Epilogue: Paradoxical Thoughts of Our Goddess Reborn; Augmin: Father to All; The King of the Southern Throne, Opera I - Who Am I to Face the Frost and Winter?; Opera II - The Grove Under a Purple Sun; Thy Queen Ereshkigal (Truth of the Sword Shall Be Known To All); Reflections of the First Rays of the Moon (In Search of the Shores of Rays) Part II;

Anybody who assumes such pseudonyms and gives such titles to the tracks is either a megalomaniac or an artist. Given the fact that the core of Equimanthorn is constituted by the musicians from Absu, the band which released a cult debut album, I am more disposed to pigeon-hole the creators of "Nindinugga Nimshimshargal Enillora" as artists. Nevertheless, those who from the titles expect full-fledged black metal artistry will be grossly disappointed. Glad should be those who appreciate original and unconventional music. Actually, is this music at all? Equimanthorn's debut is rather a collection of sounds, echoes, chants, distortions. Not random, however, since the album is a concept entity with lyrics weaving a story told in quasi-theatrical dialogues, declamations, and threats of a dozen of different voices and relating to the Mesopotamian mythology and forgotten rituals. "Nindinugga..." is a perfect soundtrack to a bizarre occult film whose colours never range into light ones. Or the musical background to the reading of some twisted horror. Or a wet dream for a cult music freak. Whichever category it belongs to, this album does evoke the feeling of uneasiness and dread when listened to in the dark. In addition to that, Equimanthorn did not fall in love with their own creation and left it short enough to be actually enjoyed. Having not blown it up to a one-hour-or-so opus, the band made "Nindinugga..." so well balanced that at the end of it I still want to push "Play" once again. Which should always be the case with music, but unfortunately isn't.

Pavel Frelík

GHOST

The Lost of Mercy
(Lead Out)
8

Line-up:
Krzysztof Bartik (voc); Dariusz Engler (g); Roman Pegzo (g); Mieczysław Klimk (bg); Krzysztof Jankowski (dr);
Tracks:
Alien; Cross of Stone; Extreme Reality; Hag of Shadow Master; Morbid Game; King of Darkness; Anthem of Vengeance; The Day After; Fight For Your World; Bestial Rites;

It may seem strange that "The Lost of Mercy" [what exactly is the title supposed to mean - Editor] is Ghost's debut album, even though the band have been playing around since time immemorial. But the situation appears to be the general tendency in the Polish scene, and that's probably why before the band boasted only a few demos and a 1993 official cassette released through Carnage Records which featured three tracks from the album - "Morbid game", "King of Darkness" and "Fight For Your World." What's the music like then? The album kicks off with a quiet intro - "the calm before the storm." Keyboards, bells, wind enveloping an old forgotten church.

Suddenly there are thousands of guitar riffs and drums, all of them so fast that you have no doubt - this is Ghost. These guys will never forget about speed and head-over-heels chasers. Slowing down, thy solo, more riffing and they return to the race! And if you add really heavy drums with one of the better skin-smashers in Poland and grim growling of vocals... The lyrics are not exactly understandable, but you can bet they're not too optimistic - world after a nuclear war, genocide, everything dripping blood and misery. That's not a trifle. If you enjoy Napalm Death likes, I think it is safe to say [haven't I heard it somewhere? - Editor] that Ghost is just for you. Not too generic, not too original - a slab of monstrous, though not particularly highly entertaining, death.

Barbara Mikula

GOREFEST

Erase
(Nuclear Blast/Relapse)
11

Line-up:
Jan-Chris De Koege (voc, bg); Frank Haarthorn (g); Boudevyn Bonebakker (g); Ed Warby (dr);
Tracks:
Low; Erase; I Walk My Way; Fear; Seeds of Hate; Peace of Paper; Goddess in Black; To Hell and Back;

There is a theory that the third album is always the best taken whether the band actually represents something or not. Everybody can record a good debut and the follow-up often rides on the wave of the first's popularity. So it comes down to the third effort to determine whether any future production is going to be a replica of an earlier success or a piece of art in its own right. Somehow, for a long time I could not place Gorefest's "Erase" within the frames of the above theory. The highly-acclaimed "False" was obviously hard to top and in some ways "Erase" does not manage to do that. In a lot of others, however, it appears as an album much finer than its predecessor. Admittedly, it is not as melodic and catchy as "False" and that's what makes listening harder and recognition delayed. "Erase" also loses some of speed when compared to the second effort, but the lovers of racing will still find here more than enough of their fave double bass drumming in the title track or "Seeds of Hate." Not mentioning that the unrelenting speed does not necessarily creates a good album. And that would be it as far as supposed shortcomings (are they really shortcomings?) go. Otherwise, "Erase" is a very solid death metal slab with lots of brutal vocals, decent blasting and pace changes. Which can be said about many albums. What differs this one is excellent musicianship which the Gorefest boys developed over the years and which, although present on "False," only now shines through. And I am not talking about technical side exclusively. It's easy to maulate over some labyrinthine riff and it's not such a trifle to make it listenable for people, not other musicians. Gorefest do the latter more than successfully steering free of boredom, the pest of many current, in other respects impeccable, productions. The Dutch foursome have also managed to record the album entirely different musically from the previous offer, thus showing that they have more than a handful of ideas. Everything's new here - arrangements, song structure, solos, again not a common thing in the age of self-duplication. So what about the theory? Looks like Gorefest passed it by.

Pavel Frelík

HAZAEŁ

Thor
(Lead Out)
8

Line-up:
Tomasz Dobrzeński (voc, bg); Jacek Kania (g); Tomasz Sulkowski (g); Mariusz Denst (dr);
Tracks:
Frozen Majesty; Clairvoyance; Seven Winds; Kingdom of Mist; Legate of Goat Tyrant; Thor; Elimination...; Wyrd;

"Thor" is a debut LP/CD of Polish Hazael, the band which has been around for more than four years. The wait was then long, but now that the album is out I must say that it's one of the finest Polish titles of 1994. The musicians themselves admit being inspired by the Swedish wave of death metal and indeed their music betrays the inspiration. The closest comparison would be probably Entombed, which does not mean that the material is generic. It's not, but the Swedish quality is there - the sound, the title - Thor was a Viking god, the cover portraying Thor's hammer, and the lyrics that wander loosely through the Norse mythology. What about music then... The album opens with an intro of delicate female voices fluttering in the air when suddenly sharp, although melodic, riffs, fast drums and the growl rip the serenity... Good blast for the beginning, down to mid pace, break, fast pace. That's "Frozen Majesty." They change the pace again, some melo-declaration in the background, double-bass and from inside flows out a solo. Some more riffing, good vocals, shouts, you can even understand the words. "Clairvoyance" is the next track - lots of rhythmic guitar parts underscored by the drums, more synths in this one. Resembles "Wolverine Blues" a bit. For a change "Seven Winds" kicks off with a man's chant, but obviously not for long. Some fine grinding here, pace down and up, you can hear the battle cries somewhere. Yes, "... Thor master come with arms." The dude is putting on end to the dissent, on which occasion we get a solo and the track closes with a chant. The rest of "Thor" remains in the same vein - lots of melody, good solos, pace changes and some female vocals to sweeten the noise. I would recommend "Legate of Goat Tyrant" and "Wyrd" - they leave nice memories.

Barbara Mikula

ISENGARD

Vinterskugge
(Peaceville)
8

Line-up:
Fenriz (all instruments and vocals);

Tracks:
Vinterskugge; Bjinnom skogen til blaaflaene; Ut i vannet dyp hvor mørket ligger; Damnedagsside; In the hall and chambers of stardust the crystallic heavens open; Fanden lokker til race! (nytradi); Naglar; Thy Guesome Death; Deathcall; Rise From Below; Dark Lord of Gargorath; Trollwandering (outro); The Fog; Storm of Evil; Bergtrollers Grausheit; Our Lord Will Come;

The current hype for black metal from notorious Norway spreading, Peaceville must have wanted to use it and make some money on the solo project album by Fenriz of Darkthrone. The idea in itself is economically viable, but only if the product you want to sell poses as something more than a mere collector's item. "Vinterskugge" belongs unfortunately to the latter category. The whole opus falls into three parts of which only the first seven tracks gathered as "Vandren" were recorded in 1993. Isengard's demo "Spectres Over Gargorath" from 1989 constitutes the second part, while the third includes four odd songs from different periods which nowadays would not even qualify for a demo tape. Altogether 16 songs and more than 60 minutes of listening, which is always a nice query for a music-lover assuming the product is actually listenable. Surprisingly, the demo part deserves this adjective most owing to the garage sound of early black metal and some raw energy which seems to be escaping rapidly from the "Vandren" section. Fenriz's latest solo productions sound embarrassingly thin and poor, coming out as some Bathory wash-out meets Darkthrone. To clear the point - the dulness does not have anything to do with the technical quality and results from the basic shortage of ideas that unables Darkthrone frontman to write a few decent cuts. Moaning and howling by turns backed by a droning guitar is far from the cult music Peaceville probably envisioned on the album. I keep "Vinterskugge" in my collection for its documentary value, but as an album it is a sad failure.

Pavel Frelík

MALICIOUS ONSLAUGHT

Brutal Gore
(Unisound)
5

Line-up:
Ted Hanauer (voc, g); Ovie Rodriguez (dr); Robert Hanauer (g, voc);
Tracks:
The Morgue; Corpseifer; Blade Mare; Submerged in Silence; Carcass; Brutal Gore; Internal Decay; Productive Destruction;

Unisound International, in the past bearing the name of Disincarnated Records, has always been known as a label which, although small, targeted its bands with true intuition for great music and accordingly managed to put out only several but simultaneously really original underground acts such as Rotting Christ, Order From Chaos, or Equimanthorn. The bigger was then my surprise when I noticed Unisound's name on a debut album of a band called Malicious Onslaught. Not many readers may remember this American trio which in the late 80's and early 90's churned out a few immensely boring demos filled with unoriginal thrash. On "Brutal Gore" the band seems to have jumped on the bandwagon of black and death metal, the act that resulted in a revoltingly generic album. The first thing that draws the attention is the garage sound quality which for some bands works well, but with Malicious Onslaught is just irritating. To render their roughness even more stronger, the threesome have filled the tracks with abrupt tempo changes, dissonant chords, intrus from gore-and-platter horrors and other effects that should supposedly increase the cult value of the release. Unfortunately for the band all these implements made the album extremely boring and almost unlistenable. To do justice to Malicious Onslaught, there are moments on "Brutal Gore" that sound interesting and more complex than the rest, but they are so few that the number of times I listened to it is limited to as many as I needed to review this miscarriage. Luckily, you review a release only once.

Pavel Frelík

NAPALM DEATH

Fear, Empitness, Despair
(Earache/Columbia)
10

Line-up:
Barney Greenway (voc); Shona Embury (bg); Jesse Pintado (g); Mitch Harris (g); Danny Herrera (dr);
Tracks:
Twist the Knife (Slowly); Hung; Remain Nameless; Plague Rages; More Than Meets the Eye; Primed Time; State of Mind; Armageddon Times Seven; Retching on the Dirt; Fastening on Deception; Throwaway;

What can you say about the n-th (I lost the count) album from the legends of grinding and noise? Apart from the obvious thing that it is perfectly written and executed? First of all, I love the title. Napalm Death have never lost their social edge to the lyrics, most of which on this album have been surprisingly written by Shona, not Barney. Even a quick glance at the titles can tell you that the English-based quintet are not about death or torture. At least not a physical one. With time the band have also developed a delicate but well pronounced industrial touch to their sound, which magnifies even more the noise they spread. As a result, the musical content of "Fear, Empitness, Despair" shows a strong coherence with the lyrical part. All that is really fine. Too fine. Having listened to the album a couple of times, I do feel the titular emptiness. As a whole it kicks you straight in your balls with its energy, but the pain passes too quickly. Napalm Death are losing their impetus and even though all eleven cuts blast like hell and Barney's raw growls are still unequalled, there seems to be something missing here. Once you would tell their tracks from one another, now it's rather impossible, not only because with each album their number grows. It's hard to say whether it is routine or professionalism (which they definitely present) or yet something else that kills spontaneity. Napalm Death A.D. 1994 sounds clinically brutal and perfect, but not fresh. Once the news of their

new album would move the masses. Nowadays people are not that much bored. The decline of the legend? Judge for yourself. In itself "Fear, Empitness, Despair" is a twelve-pointer. As an album by Napalm Death deserves just 10. You know what I mean?

Pavel Frelík

PANDEMONIUM

The Ancient Catacombs
(Baron)
8

Line-up:
Paul (voc, g); Gack (g); Jack (g); Peter (dr);
Tracks:
The Majesty; Memories; Different Part; The Black Arts; Winter; Garden of Twilight; Might is Right;

Not more than a year ago Pandemonium along Vader, Violent Jirge or Sparganous were counted among the top bands of the Polish underground. Their excellent second demo "Devil," active promotion and high sales presaged a last career for the band. Unfortunately, except for Polish Baron Records no foreign label was interested in taking Pandemonium on its roster. It seems, however, that no one but the band are going to fret about this situation since their debut album "The Ancient Catacombs" is a rather mediocre and boring material. Once a heavily black metal band, nowadays Pandemonium play slow death metal with elements of doom tapping it here and there with violin parts. Seven tracks being all in all pretty coherent - slow, heavy and without special effects, they are executed properly, but for me without any feeling and emotion, which would allow the listener to comprehend Pandemonium's genuineness. "Winter" is the only cut that stands out among all others due to the structuring of acoustic guitars, violin, cries of seagulls and sounds of a sea, which, combined, evoke a special, melancholic atmosphere. If the whole album had the same class, the review would definitely be much better. For the time being, however, it is only 8 points with hopes that the next offer will bring something more than just the "Devil" reminiscences.

Michał Wądzala

PRONG

Cleansing
(Epic)
12

Tracks:
Another Worldly Device; Whose Fist Is This Anyway?; Snap Your Fingers; Snap Your Neck; Cutrate; Broken Peace; One Outnumber; Out of This Misery; No Question; Not of This Earth; Home Rule; Sublime; Test;

I like albums on which you can find at least one excellent hit which sticks in your mind even if the rest is just mediocre. With the latest Prong effort the situation is just opposite. I wish to God there were at least one weak cut on "Cleansing" so that I could finally quit listening to it! There aren't any, so I keep on doing that again and again wondering where I was in 1987 when Prong were releasing their debut. Anyway, "Cleansing" features 12 sensational hits of the kind that you should be very careful before counting in among glam rock ballads or other stuff normally described with that name. Prong still means incredible technocratic blast for which any attempt at categorisation would be an insult. I have heard many albums in my life that, even though giving a good overall impression, upon closer listening appeared to have identical tracks. "Cleansing" contains 12 sensational and totally different masterpieces with no two even vaguely similar. You do not achieve that overnight. You have to play and be talented - just like Prong. That is also why I can't sleep at night since my friend Adam brought me this album. Frayed rhythms, industrially "sliding" guitars, catchy choruses... this is a killer! Prong is a musical dictator impossible to pigeon-hole, whether they want it or not. Prong is Prong and they are No. 1!

Dariusz Puch

PUNGENT STENCH

Club Mondo Bizzare
(Nuclear Blast/Relapse)
9

Line-up:
Martin Schirenc (voc, g); Alex Wank (dr); Jacek Perkowski (bg);
Tracks:
True Life; Klyster Boogie; Choked Just For A Joke; Hydrocephalus; I'm A Family Man; Treatments of Pain; In Search of the Perfect Torture; Practice Suicide; Fuck Bizzare; Rape - Pagar Conla Mismo Moreado;

Well, it happened. The worst that could happen to a group of people playing music. After more than promising "Dirty Rhymes and Psychotronic Beats" and Nuclear Blast only know how long waiting, PUNGENT STENCH came out with a material that ties back directly to "Been Caught Battering." Actually, tying back would not be that bad in itself. Practically, "Club..." and "Been..." could easily constitute parts of a double album. To cut it short - two Austrians and one Pole came musically to an abrupt halt, in which they were successfully supported by their own label proclaiming the band a star before they became one. So "Club Mondo Bizzare" contains of good slab of death metal. So they have some BLACK SABBATH influences and more than good musicianship. So what? We have heard it all, if not many times, then at least on their second album. Instead of thinking about music, the threesome indulged in the self-creation of an image based on sado-maso sex accessories and motorcycle boots. That obviously does not mean that 10 new tracks off the new PUNGENT STENCH release are boring or something. Quite contrary, I do enjoy some of them because of interesting riffing and blasting sound, but you can expect something more than just proper pounding from the band which was nearly hailed 'gods of European death metal', can't you?

Pavel Frelík

QUORTHON

Album
(Black Mark/Cargo)
11

Line-up:
Quorthon

Tracks:
No More and Never Again; Oh, no, no; Boy; Major Snooze;
Too Little Much Too Late; Crack In My Mirror; Rain; Feather;
Relief; Head Over Heels;

Yes! It is finally out, a long-awaited album from Quorthon (the mainman behind BATHORY, for those not too well-informed). Eponymously entitled "Album", it is undoubtedly a release of many hits, but ... I don't know exactly what to think about it. The music is a mixture - of heavy, hard rock'n' roll, of high-quality grunge, and of old, good metal. All tracks are well played and masterfully arranged. The leaden, throbbing sound is trance-inductive, the state in which one can be disturbed by a bell, whistles or a breaking mirror. Quorthon's voice is no longer vicious as it used to be on BATHORY albums, there's more of serenity, almost tenderness to it, although it still remains definite. From the first riffs on "No More..." one knows that the rhythm will stick to the ear. Then it is really heavy, even though at times a bit reflexive as in "Boy," and then the best tracks come - "Major Snooze" and "Too Little...". Finally, it returns to the original stance and I should be crying out in admiration and joy, but... I can't. There should be something more to this music. In the interview for ROCK HARD Quorthon-loner said that he had worked on the album for five years. Five years, only five years if you remember that every single riff, every drum beat, every arrangement are his own and exclusive contributions. Five years, too long a period, because it is really a music that spent that much time in the making?

Barbara Mikula

RENAISSANCE

The Death of Art
(Shiver)
12

Line-up:

Chris Ons (everything) plus guests;

Tracks:

The Death of Art (part 1); The Death of Art (part 2); Archway;

Long announced and awaited - at least by some - debut album from Renaissance is finally out. Knowing their previous efforts, I was waiting for this most important. But "The Death of Art" has outgrown my greatest expectations so much, that I feel a bit uneasy as its reviewer. Genius, avant-garde, timelessness... These were my immediate impressions after I listened out this nearly 70-minute material whose categorisation seems to be utterly impossible. Naturally, you may spend your time trying to find elements from metal, rock, death, goth, symphonic music, but such a description would only give a false picture of what Renaissance's music is like. Taking only these features into consideration you might think that the band is just another specimen of artistry mixing different genres just for the mixing's sake. Definitely this is not the case here. The mentioned genres merge and mould into one another creating a new musical quality. It is also worthwhile pointing out that the production is excellent, and the musicianship and arrangements are flawless and admirable. However, I do not think that all the music from the album will ever flow from the stage - symphonic parts demanding a big ensemble or a frolicking conversation of a piano and a guitar would be way too hard to perform live. The CD version features also 3 bonus tracks from the debut demo "Archway," altogether constituting one of the best and most avant-garde albums of the 90's. Don't miss it!

Michal Wardzala

SOULGRIND

La Matanza, El Himno Pagano
(MMI)
10

Line-up:

Jussi Heikkinen (all instruments);

Tracks:

Summoning; Kauta; Santa Sangre; La Matanza El Himno Pagano; Black Abyss, Deep Enternum; Dark Misty Trail; Inner Chain of Perversions; The Pit; Virginity; A Sanctum of the Red; Gninomus;

Jussi Heikkinen, the mastermind, creator and sole executor of a project named Soulgrind, must be one of the most disconsolate and acheronian persons our mother earth has ever borne on its face. It seems incredible how many different and disparate feelings can be conveyed by means of a few - relatively simple, it would seem - instruments. "La Matanza, El Himno Pagano" is completely dominated by the down-tuned, heavy guitars, drum machine, occasional flute, violin or keyboard parts. Naturally, there are some female vocals, as in the title track and "Dark Misty Trail." Speaking of the latter, it seems strange that Jussi considers them beautiful. For me they are decidedly more depressing and abrasive than most of female voices I have heard in my life. The track-listing includes 10 middle-paced cuts which at times kick into a higher gear. From the industrial-doomy mood Soulgrind becomes then wildly black metal-ish spreading havoc on a par with the Norwegian league. That probably does not sound really inventive, but only until the moment you actually hear it. Jussi knows his trade way too well to put out something rough or generic, which may be a sign of his musical genius as well as of his responsibility. However, if you are still not moved, I can only conquer the ritual, shamanistic lyrics which just have to conquer your soul.

Michal Wardzala

TENEBRAE

Dysanchelium
(Spinefarm)
10

Line-up:

Henka Laine (g); Juke Erakongas (dr); Hannu Ojanpera (bg); Jussi Heikkinen (voc.g);

Tracks:

Welcome Death; Dimension Depression; Everlasting Freeze; Scatulous Intelligence; Waves; Bloodsucking Freak; Dance for the Decadence; Salvation; Human Factory (Odor Part II);

Finland can boast yet another new, very interesting and simultaneously rather solemn and gloomy debut album, "Dysanchelium" by Tenebrae. It contains a lot of exceedingly heavy, slow and furiously downing music which seems to be a reflection of the most nightmarish visions of its creators. The very music, however, pales in comparison to vocal of the band's leader, Jussi. Monotonous, guttural (but not screechy) voice gives the album an entirely new dimension. I don't think you have heard anything like that before. Being a rather original element, it naturally gives you the choice - take it or leave it and I would definitely suggest the former option as the subsequent development of the album is intriguing to say the least. So how does it all come out? You might want to know that first of all the album content does not have much in common with death metal. Closer associations involve industrial-like sound, slowness of doom and melody of heavy metal... with a huge dose of psychedelic. The only exception is the last track "Human Factory (Odor Part II)" whose dark and suicidal mood with a backing female vocal (not girl-like at all, rather resembling Kim of Sonic Youth) makes you ponder grimly on ... some facts of life. Altogether, the material worth more than just one listen - just check it out!

Michal Wardzala

UNCANNY

Splenium For Nyktophobia
(Unisound)
9

Line-up:

Jens Tomroos (voc); Fredrick Norman (g); Mats Forsell (g); Kennet Englund (dr); Christoffer Harborg (bg);

Tracks:

Elohim; Tales from the Tomb; Brain Access; Timeless; Screaming in Phobia; Enkelbiljetten; Indication Vitalis; Soul Incest; Sprang Kitten; Towards the Endless Throne; Leprosy; The Final Conflict; Splenium for Nyktophobia;

What can you say about another band from Sweden? They tell me Uncanny had one demo out, but I never heard it and as a result cannot evaluate their progress. However, Unisound Records has been known for choosing their roster rather carefully, so there must be a catch in Uncanny, too. One, two, three listens. What can it be? Now, I know! They are brutal! You remember that word? Not very often these days does one encounter a band that is really brutal. The music

gods are experimenting, dozens of bands buy heavily into keyboard-enhanced stuff, others return to the thrash roots or start playing doom-something. That's what's happening and a band which does not follow any of the above (not that they are misconducts, quite opposite) is a rarity indeed. Uncanny seems to be one. Thirteen tracks off their debut album entitled a bit nebulously "Splenium for Nyktophobia" blast all the way through leaving no time to analyse the music. Even if they happen to have a melodic solo as in "Brain Access", they quickly redeem it with a grind-core-ish "Screaming in Phobia", in the best Terrorizer and Necrosacra tradition. Vocals and guitar tuning resembling Bob Throter, they still retain an honest percentage of their own style not to be considered a rip-off. Similarly to the fellow countrymen from Desultery, Uncanny do not break a new ground, but at least they are one of more terrifying outfits around. Which is a fair reason for being picked up by Unisound.

Pavel Frelík

VISCERAL EVISCERATION

Incessant Desire For Palatable Flesh
(Napalm)
10

Line-up:

Stephan Ströad (dr); Dominik Lirsch (g); Jürgen Hajek (g); Hansen Wuggenig (voc, bg);

Tracks:

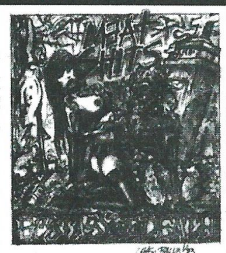
Enamoured of Dead Bodies; At the Epicurean Gynaecologist; Muse Perverse; Knead Deep in Blood I Wode; Cheiving Female Genital Parts; Tender Flesh ... On the Bier; Gangling Menstrual Blood Broth for Supper;

I wonder whether the guys who formed VISCERAL EVISCERATION and recorded otherwise a very beautiful and lyrical album did not simultaneously choose a very questionable direction of looking for strong aesthetic experience. Why? Let's start from comparisons which should be easiest to back up my suspicions. I look at the album and the first of them is whether I am dealing here with some emanation of Fungent Stench, not only because both bands hail from Austria (even though the fact does give some food for thought). Like their fellows, Visceral Evisceration want to be insulting, brutal and perverse. The Stench do it through the musical slaughter, whereas V.E.'s idea is to sing out all the regular pleasures to the rhythm of beautiful, almost solemnly amorous melodies. How should I approach such an absurd merge (credo quod absurdum est)? One hypothesis is that the band have taken the measures to ensure originality which is a rather scarce product in this day and age. Frankly speaking, however, V.E. are not that original musically since the climate from Paradise Lost's "Gothic" pervades this album starting from the guitar sound and ending with the song structure. Naturally, everything sounds fine, because the source is great and V.E.'s musicians are good artisans. There is also a singing woman (yes!), which in itself is not a novelty. The latter lies in the fact that she is not one of those background singers employed to churn out some rubbish, but competes with Hansen as an equal. On the other hand, her vocal feats often hurt my ear... but I still like her. That would be it for the album whose best description can be "incomprehensible lyrically but fashionable and simply fine."

Dariusz Puch

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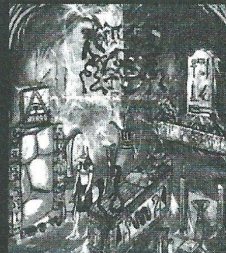
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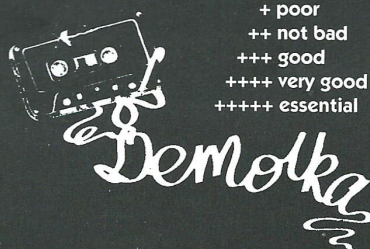
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\$7 World (Air Mail)



+ poor
++ not bad
+++ good
++++ very good
+++++ essential

DECREPIT

+++

Even though the very tape and a handful of stickers were everything I ever got from the band, the content of the former is so stimulating that I have decided to write a blurb on DECREPIT. The line-up comprises Rob Molzan (voc), Chris Dora (dr), Gino Lambert (g) and Duane Morris (bg) who in the letter announced his plans to switch to the second guitar as soon as the band finds a suitable bassman. "Hymns of Grief" demo was recorded last year in March in a 16-track studio which undoubtedly contributed to the tape's brutal impact. "The Gate to Misery", "Spirits of Infirmary", "Withered", "Mausoleum", "The Creation of Sin" and "Rotted Congregation" are six cuts of monster death metal which mutilates with the totally dark, yet quite selective sound. Musically DECREPIT are probably no innovators, but the mere butchering wall of sound would justify any album offers. Anyway, not everyone has to contribute new ideas to the genre. This band definitely doesn't, but the way they churn out old ones is way more than impressive. Believe me, quite a few Florida slashers can only dream of such blast!

DECREPIT, c/o Chris Dora, 6110 Bradley Avenue, Parma OH 44129, USA.

Pawel Freluk

DEW-SCENTED

++++



If you look closer at the death metal scene, you can see a sharp regression, sort of a short breath, primarily brought about by the plastic Swedish wave of bands. Every now and then, however, there are combos that do deserve some serious attention and give the genre chances to survive another couple of years. Germany has never been a death metal force, maybe with the MORGOOTH exception, but surprisingly this part of Europe has been spawning more and more interesting offers. To these belongs DEW-SCENTED - very solid, heavy, blasting, with good musicianship and a fairly successful tape "Symbolization."

Undoubtedly classical, pure death metal is the name of the game here. A very capable vocal, mature and melodic solo parts remind me a bit of DEATH, although it may be just an illusion. Whatever they play, I do recommend these six well-engineered and -produced cuts. If not anything more, DEW-SCENTED and "Symbolization" can be a good antidote for those tired by the current black metal hype. The line-up: Tarek Stinhoff (voc), Patrick Heims (bg), Ralf Klein (g), Jorg Sztitnick (g), and Leif Jensen (dr). DEW-SCENTED, c/o Leif Jensen, AM Bahnhof 6, 29664, Walsrode, Germany.

Mariusz Kmielek

GODS TOWER

+++

The demise of "the colossus on clay legs" as the Soviet Union used to be called and the emergence of new states brought a lot more of attention to music scenes in these new countries. The first were naturally the Baltic states and we

indeed know a handful of bands from Lithuania and Estonia. Now the time has come for another Polish neighbour - Belarus. The bands like Dismal Insanity, Molestation or Coronation are certainly not known in the West as yet since they mostly released only one demo tape each, the quality of the products being also questionable. One band that seems to be more likely to rise, at least locally, is Gods Tower. The quintet featuring a woman keyboard-player was formed in 1991 and so far they have recorded two tapes - "Demolition Tape" and "The Eerie." The latter and the latest, "The Eerie", contains no less than 45 minutes of Gothic Doom squeezed in only 5 cuts and it does not take high math to draw some conclusions. "Reign of Silence", "When Life Ends", "Inis Afalon", "Till Death Do Us Part" and "The Eerie" are way too long and monotonous, dragging on and on endlessly. The third and fourth tracks are relatively better than the rest and if the band decide to pursue the direction marked by these two, something good may come out of it. On the negative side you can put vocals apparently performed by a person who doesn't have much idea about them. In plus Gods Tower score for a relatively good (shall I say - relatively not bad?) musicianship and the introduction of violins, acoustic guitars, cello, and viola, the additional instruments injecting some fresh air into a rather schematic sound. Recently the band have signed a deal with the Russia-based Final Holocaust Records for an EP "Beyond Praying" and a subsequent debut album. Looks like they still haven't got completely free from the central domination.

Gods Tower; c/o Victor Lapitski; Lazurnaya 14/29; 246012 Homiel; Belarus.

Waldemar Flik

HATE SQUAD

++++



We have not got anything interesting from Germany for quite a time. As it turns out, however, the scene in this country is still alive and the best example is set by HATE SQUAD. Their tape "Theater of Hate" is a year old now, but it still brings a fresh breeze of music in the vein of NAPALM DEATH and FEAR FACTORY. In the first titular track one can also hear some CORONER influence, but it's only an intro to a charge of energy, industrial sound and death metal. HATE SQUAD is scheduled to release their debut album soon and I hope it is going to be a fair representation for those who have not heard the band yet. Good musicianship, interesting vocal in the person of Burkhard Schmitt and a bit of originality give the band a good chance for success. Numerous rave reviews in the musical press, a lot of concerts and flexible management certainly help the band which maybe be serving a nice surprise to the fans at the end of this year. I do recommend their material and look forward to a debut, hopefully full-time, effort. The line-up: Burkhard Schmitt (voc), Tim Bauermeister (g), Helge Dalgner (dr), Bryan Thias (bg), Mark Kuennemann (g).

HATE SQUAD, c/o Burkhard Schmitt, Schuetzenstrasse 19, 31275 Lehrte, Germany.

Mariusz Kmielek

IMPRECATION

++++

IMPRECATION was founded in November 1991 on the ashes of two other Houston, TX bands, UNDERTAKER and DARK REIGN. The originators, Phil Westmoreland (g) and Ruben Elizondo (dr) recruited Mark Beecher (bg), Dave Herrera (voc) and Victor Fernandez (g) and this line-up recorded in April '92 the debut demo "Ceremony of the Nine Angles." At this point Fernandez was substituted by Wes Weaver who played on a 2-track ep "Sigil of Baphomet" released a year later through the Spanish Drowned Productions. The new release marked a new change in the line-up as the band dropped Herrera, currently replaced in the screaming duties by Mark Beecher. As you can see the bio does not highlight IMPRECATION more than hundreds of other bands. The thrill begins when we get to know the music. "Ceremony of the Nine Angles" is one of the best death metal demos I have EVER listened to! All four tracks drip sheer brutality and power, with "Of the Underworld" being the epitome of the whole genre! Seven Spanish inches maintain the same quality whereas I have

only one question. Why the hell nobody signed this band? Never before were 6 bucks more worth spending than for this tape.

IMPRECATION, c/o Wes Weaver, 1703 Patricia Lane, Missouri City, TX 77489, USA.

Pawel Freluk

INTERNAL BLEEDING

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Florida is not the only place spoken about in radical musical circles. More and more people seem to be focusing on New York area and actually there have been a fair number of bands emerging from the Big Apple and displaying unalterable devotion to brutality and indifference to experimentation. INTERNAL BLEEDING can be easily counted among those, not only due to the self-acclaimed genre they play - "barbaric mosh metal." The band was founded in summer 1992 by a guitar man Chris Pervelis who was originally un/known from doomy AUTUMN REIGN. During the first year the fluctuation of musicians was so heavy that there is no point in listing them all. One interesting thing is that some of them came from or later on ended up in PYREXIA, also from New York. Nowadays the line-up is constituted by Bill Tolley (dr), Brian Hobbie (bg), Anthony Miola (g), Wallace Milton (voc) and the mentioned founder. On top of that, at the recording session for the debut demo "Invocation of Evil" the band was backed by Darryl Wagner from ... PYREXIA. Five tracks off the tape clock in slightly more than 15 minutes, which should give you the idea of the pace INTERNAL BLEEDING utilise. However, the speed is not the band's only virtue and behind crude brutality there is also a good pinch of musical talent. This can be confirmed by the release of the demo material on CD labelled by Wild Rags Records which, no matter what people say about its owner and business ethics, does not seem to be particularly interested in investing in musical failures. The carefully designed demo cover of "Invocation of Evil" is also worthwhile noticing, everything resulting in a tape you can pay 5 USD for. INTERNAL BLEEDING, 18 Sunnyside Drive, Huntington Station, NY 11746, USA.

Pawel Freluk

TIMEGHOUL

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The band formed in 1987, which makes it a peer of many giants of the genre. On the other hand, anything more substantial than planning started to happen around 1991 when the founding members Mike Stevens (g) and Jeff Hayden (voc, g) were joined by Chad McNeely (bg) and Tony Holman (dr). The tape "Tumultuous Travelings" was recorded in 1992 and though a bit old at the moment, it certainly deserves some attention. "Rain Wound", "The Siege", "Gutspaw" and "Infinity Coda" combine elements of death metal, doom, a lot of melody and absolutely original, at least for me, vocal, which altogether launches TIMEGHOUL as one of the most promising bands in the American scene. Surprising, isn't it? Unfortunately, on the eve of the session for a new demo tape Mike Stevens left the band, the decision which naturally delayed the work on the material, but also gave the remaining musicians more time to ponder on their future. As a result of this time excess the concept of employing three guitars was born, which currently leaves Jeff and the rest of the company facing the necessity of finding not one, but two axemen. Their names have not been yet announced, so before the new tape sees the light of day and reaches my partial to the band ears, I would recommend one more listen of "Tumultuous Travelings."

TIMEGHOUL, P.O. Box 32, Foristell, MO 63348-0032, USA.

Pawel Freluk

Label report

Pavel Frelik

"We're not looking to have a hit record right out of the box with a new artist. I want to develop acts on a long-term basis. I like to think of my label as A&R-driven, and being a major-affiliated indie gives me the freedom to take chances on bands I believe in," said Mark Navarra. And still beyond what he mentioned he's got the option of using both independent and major chains to market his products. With them, the future looks quite bright, if not luminous. This point is also probably the best to end the article about the pavement whose couple of first yards is tiled with marble - heavy and of good quality.

Where
the pavement goes.

to be out in the US when "you're reading this," "Erase," "Always" from the European sensation The Gathering, featuring a cover artwork different from the Foundation 2000 version, Carbonized's highly surprising "Disarmonization," Skeletal Earth's "Eulogy For A Dying Foetus," and Theora's fourth amazing album "Symphony Masses: Ho Drakon Ho Megalos." This last offer has been licensed out by Active Records. Another part of the foreign relations is the deal with Necropolis Records which, however American itself, releases a lot of albums from the Swedish No Fashion Records. Out are already two titles acquired through such an intermediary deal - "Nespihede" from Finnish Demitich and "In Dead" from Swedish Unanimated. Some readers may be surprised that a number of these releases are already considered rather old in Europe, but they have to keep in mind that in America until very recently they were known to but a few who could afford paying 25 bucks for an import instead of regular 15 for a domestic version.

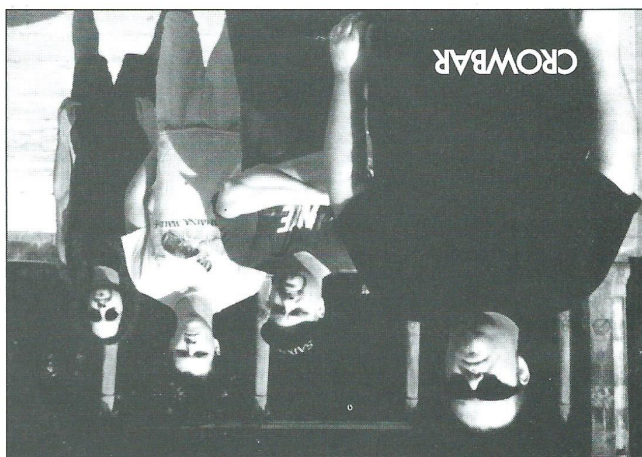
The pavement
across the Atlantic.

Apart from its own standing, Pavement Music is also the exclusive American manufacturer and distributor of the Dutch label Foundation 2000, whose licences are marketed in the United States through the same channels as Mark Navarra's titles. The first fruit of this co-operation is Gorefest's "Mindloss" put out just in time to match the rising popularity of the band after their last year's American tour with Death. In this way, Gorefest's whole discography has been made available to American fans after Relapse's release of "False" and "The Endhoven Insanity" and, likely

members.
Crowbar and Eyehategod the project featuring Pantera, Down and both Legs Broken - as Exhorder, Eyehategod, Pantera, but also such outfits only the two, Crowbar and new scene encompassing not only spanning these days a New Orleans, the city apparently later bands hail from two latter bands hail from interestingly enough, the and Tungsten worth checking will certainly find Stressball offers in the Pantera vein, who Ted is a must to power metal bangers for whom Demented music, ranging from extreme offers can satisfy all lovers of dufer. Genre-wise, these titles acquired through such an intermediary deal - "Nespihede" from Finnish Demitich and "In Dead" from Swedish Unanimated. Some readers may be surprised that a number of these releases are already considered rather old in Europe, but they have to keep in mind that in America until very recently they were known to but a few who could afford paying 25 bucks for an import instead of regular 15 for a domestic version.

through Grind Core) was Pavement's first release in October 1993, being simultaneously a great opener for a company dealing in hard music. The quartet, consisting of Kirk Windstein (voc, g), Todd Strange (bg), Craig Nunemacher (dr) and Matt Thomas (g), seems to be the apple of Mark Navarra's eye. The clues confirming that include recruiting Phil Anselmo of Pantera fame as the album producer, support-acting for Music and subsequently he became its president choosing the recent tour with Paradise Lost. The band's video-clip "All I Had (I Gave)" made also only three people, which gives the label even more credit for working so actively with such a

The beginning
of a structure.



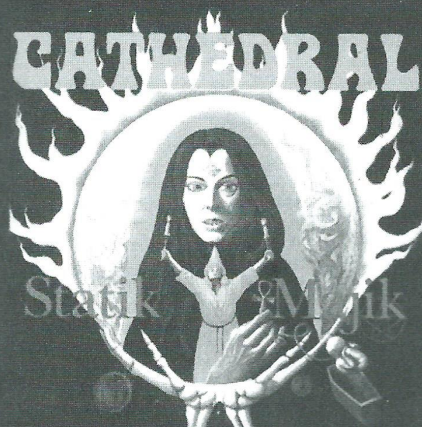
The first slabs
of the pavement.

small human resource. Another important fact is the distribution links Pavement has with Zoo Entertainment/BMG and Relativity Entertainment Distribution, the companies which guarantee the presence of the label's releases in practically all of America, whereas in Europe Pavement Music is represented by German Intercore Record Service.

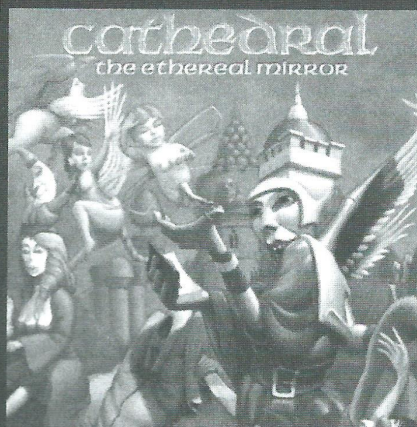
As some readers have probably noticed, a label report is one of my favourite article forms. Why it is so - I cannot explain myself. Maybe because I tend to get a lot of promotional stuff upon the completion ... he... Or maybe I just enjoy writing about all those new (and old) record companies which we can rely on in showering us with tons of new shining disks (occasionally also other formats.) And as most of the labels also express their interest in being featured in the columns, good and full of love of music as I am (he, he), I just cannot refuse.

After Crowbar's slab followed a self-titled debut from Stressball. Tungsten's mysterious named "183.85," Demented Ted's "Promises Impure" and "Shadows" from the Dutch Creeptime, whose frankly speaking, sole claim to be the presence of Patrick Mameli (Pestilence) as the producer. Genre-wise, these titles acquired through such an intermediary deal - "Nespihede" from Finnish Demitich and "In Dead" from Swedish Unanimated. Some readers may be surprised that a number of these releases are already considered rather old in Europe, but they have to keep in mind that in America until very recently they were known to but a few who could afford paying 25 bucks for an import instead of regular 15 for a domestic version.

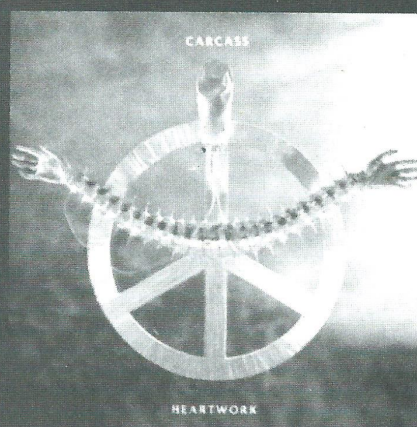
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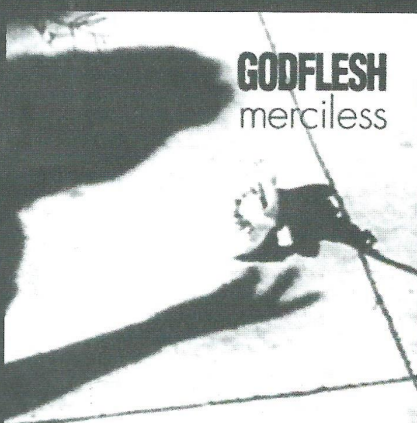
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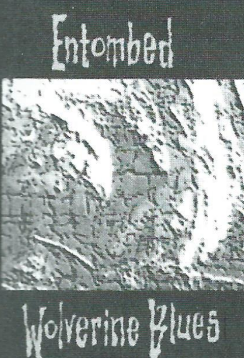
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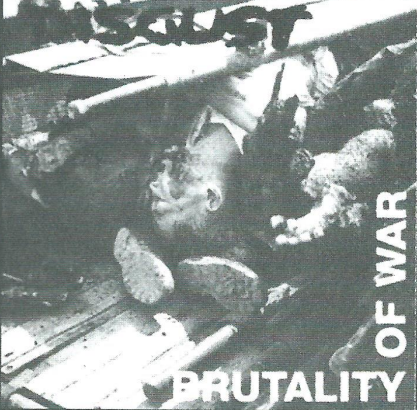
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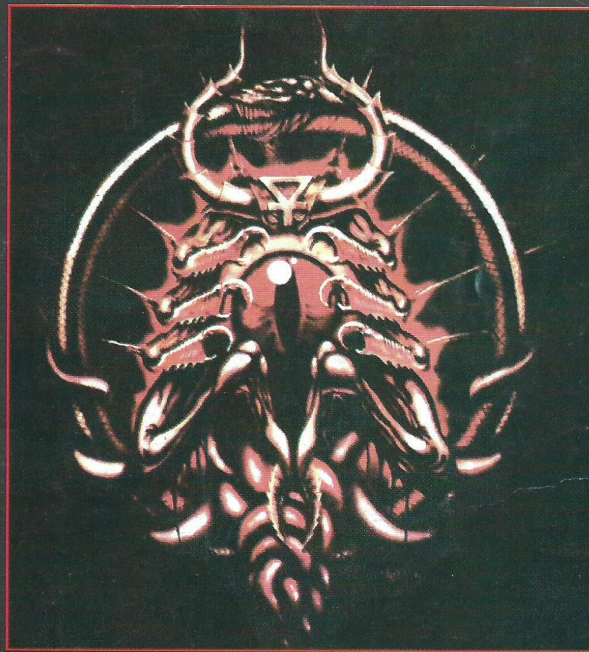
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