

EXTREMUM

Extreme Underground 'zine

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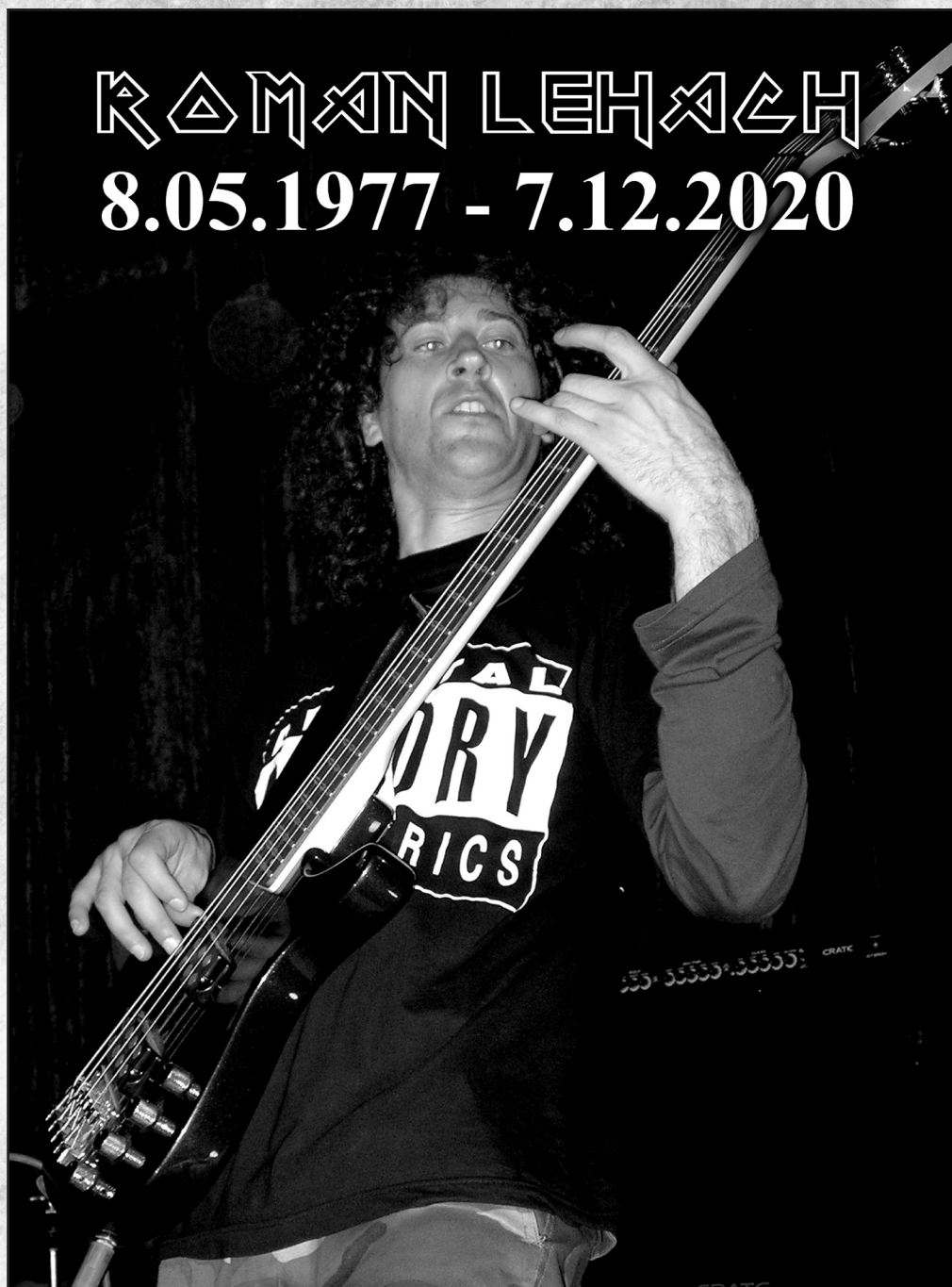


AKURION, AURORA BOREALIS, BLEEDSKIN, DERKÉTA,
DESCEND INTO DESPAIR, INCANTATION, NYGMALION,
SCOUR, SINISTER DOWNFALL, STRAIGHT HATE,
THE MALICE, WITCHER

Introduction

This year was a very tough one for everyone, but life goes on, as they used to say... So this or that way I am happy to present you the 7th issue of Encomium 'zine. It consists of twelve interviews and a bigger amount of reviews as usual. Hereby, I am very thankful to all the interviewed persons/bands and the way they've answered my questions. You are awesome!!! Also to all the bands/labels/distros/promoters/supporters for sending me their stuff to be reviewed. This is the only way it is about to work these days and I am pretty sure, you know it very well... So enjoy the reading and expect the next issue to be out in 2021!!!

In memory of Roman Lehach. May you rest in peace.



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The Malice is the moniker of the Swedish death machine you have to remember from now on and forever. They've just released their mind-blowing debut record "Legions of the Dawn", which I can only recommend to the dedicated fans of the genre. I've asked main man Hubbe to reveal to us all the details regarding their masterpiece and plans for the near future. He has firmly spoken, so the malice is already upon you...

Hi Hubbe! How are you doing these days? The Malice was formed as a two-piece band in 2015, but recently its line-up was completed with other members. So please introduce us the current lineup and tell us a bit about the beginnings too.

- Hey! Well, I'm so fine you can be these days due to this pandemic times we are living in, lol. Yes, we started off as a project in 2015, but after we released our debut album we got a lot of response from fans, and Ibrahim Stråhlman (the drummer) contacted us if we needed a drummer, and we said hell yes, of course we need a drummer!

We tried him out and he made an audition with our track "Paimon" and it turned out really good! And after that he introduced his friend Adam Ramis for us as a guitar player since our tracks are based on 2 guitars. We also made an audition on the track "Paimon" for him too, and also met Adam personally.

We played together and the sync was total in our play with tone and phrasing, and that is quite tricky to find someone who has the same style of playing! And later on I asked my friend from my hometown Claes Holm if he wanted to play the bass guitar, and I already knew his skills so it was an easy choice. We met up together with all the members, but not Claudio since he lives in Germany, because the rest of us live here in Sweden. The magic was total and we were all quite overwhelmed that things turned out so good ☺. We have unleashed a beast from the depths of hell here, it was our first thought to this constellation.

"Legions of the Dawn" is your long-anticipated debut album, which to be honest turned out simply killer. How's the response to it so far from both the fans and the media?

- Very good response in total I must say, from both fans and media. We are very humbled and grateful for that response, since I put so much effort writing and arranging the songs.

It was released in a cooperation of two underground labels, both from Russia, namely Satanath Records and More Hate Productions. How did you hook up with them? Will the upcoming full-length album be released by them as well?

- It was actually more labels that contacted us, when we released the album first as a demo on Bandcamp, but the one that turned out to be the best for us in a release was from Aleksey and Satanath Records. We haven't really talked about it, about our new

release, but I think these talks will come at hand when we have more songs ready.

I know you are in writing mode now. Nevertheless, please tell us a bit about the musical and lyrical directions of the new songs. Do you plan any drastic changes compared to the song-structures of "Legions of the Dawn" or continue to cling to them?

- Musically the tracks will be in the classic bay area death metal with a mix of Scandinavian death and black metal. We are all big fans of Morbid Angel, especially the albums "Gateways to Annihilation" and "Formulas Fatal to the Flesh", so we are trying to give more groove to the songs in that typical direction and also have the dark touch in our lyrics, both fictional and philosophical.

From the beginnings you were solely responsible for creating and arranging all the songs. How it looks now with a full lineup? How many times a week you rehearse and where the headquarter of The Malice is located?

- I will arrange the songs as I have done since The Malice begun, but the other musicians will do their thing to it, the foundation will be written by me, the arrangements and the final touch will be a collaboration of everyone in the band.

You are from Jönköping. How's the life over there? What do you like (or dislike) the most about it? How its underground scene looks like? What bands would you recommend to us from those areas?

- I was born and raised here, but lived most of the time in different places around Sweden, like Stockholm for instance. It's like any other town here in Sweden, you have your shops you go to and your bars and metal scene places. We have a club here in our town called Klubb Dissonans that are only based on death, black and thrash metal, so it's really nice to have a place like this, but since the pandemic there are no more shows, but hopefully it will go away one day and the scene will flourish again! Well, there were quite some bands here that were active in the 90s, early 2000, and then I would recommend bands like Nominon that are quite legendary to the Swedish death metal scene, that are still active to this day and that's quite cool! But most bands that played from this town aren't active anymore, but we had bands like Legion that made great black metal back in the days and Xymonhra that played

technical death metal. Great band!

Can't neglect the fact that your music is mainly influenced by the US brutal death metal hordes. Why is it so? Would you please mention ten of your all-time favorite records here?

- Because it sounds so fucking awesome and I like the heaviness and the groove to it! The punch in your face death metal and the depths and technicality within the style!

I will mention 5 of them if that's ok ☺: Death – Symbolic, Brutal Truth – Extreme Conditions Demand Extreme Responses, Origin – Echoes of Decimation, Morbid Angel – Gateways to Annihilation, Dying Fetus – Reign Supreme.

Prior to "Legions of the Dawn" there were released 2 EPs, namely "Malevolent Creature of Kings" (2016) and "Lamashtu" (2018), a single called "Enlil" (2016) and "The Unholy Communion" (2019) demo. The latter one in fact includes the debut album's repertory just with other mastering and artwork. Why did you change the album title? By the way, is there a plan to re-release all these past materials on some kind of compilation CD?

- Because the title was already taken, so it was changed to "Legions of the Dawn" instead.

We haven't any plans about that for now, but maybe in the future, who knows.

Once upon a time you've been a member of Crimson Moonlight, Oblivion, Pantokrator and Sanctifica. How do you remember those times? Which of the aforementioned bands you liked the most to play with and why?

- It was more than 20 years ago, and I played in Crimson Moonlight and Sanctifica. I was a stand in bass player in Oblivion and helped Pantokrator as a producer on one of their records.

I had another view in life back then, so it was a natural step later on to not continue since I didn't share the same goals, beliefs and philosophy, but we are still great friends to this day, even if I decided to walk another path more based on esotericism and pagan humanism.

We had a great time back then, and it's always fun to play great death and black metal.

At the end, please send your greetings to The Malice legions. The space is yours...

- Thank you so much for supporting our work, and hopefully you guys will see us live on a stage in the near future. Cheers, Hubbe.





It was a real honor for me to conduct an interview with Sharon Bascovsky (vocals/guitar) of Derkéta. She was super kind and talked about the upcoming album, her lyrical inspirations and memories from the past amongst others. So dive in and discover all the hidden gems yourself!!!

Hi Sharon! How are you and what are you up to with Derkéta lately? Am I right to suppose there's some new material in preparation? What should we know about it and when should we expect it to be released? Is it going to be your second full-length album?

- Hello! I'm doing well thanks for asking. Hope all is well on your side. Yes, we're working on our second full length album. I think we have about 6 or 7 songs in the works right now, hard to say when we will get around to recording them. 2020 has been a tough year for me personally starting with the death of my mother, a bad accident with my father, and then of course Covid. Other band members also had some twists in life that they too needed to tend to. We're now into October and I'm at a point where I'm able to get my focus back onto writing. Escape out of reality for a bit. I'm expecting to have a 2021 release, so fingers crossed life doesn't have any more bad surprises for us. It was supposed to be released in 2020.

Your highly appreciated debut long play "In Death We Meet" was first released independently back in 2012 and then re-released in 2015 by Ibox Moon Records with the songs of "Darkness Fades Life" 7" (2014) as a bonus. How do you feel about it from an 8-year perspective? Will the new songs continue the musical path of "In Death We Meet"?

- Thank you. Funny you mention that. Every once in a while I'll listen to a couple tracks off of "In Death We Meet" to see if I have any regrets and for the most part I'm satisfied with the songs and production. Especially with the 2015 remix that Ola Lindgren engineered. There are some vocals parts that I think I could have done better, but as a whole

I think it's a good representation of us. We're pretty basic, a no thrills kind of band. I don't feel the band will ever change musically as far as writing goes. I'm still the same person, my writing thoughts still fall down that same path.

Could you please talk a little about the recent reissue of your very first 7" EP called "Premature Burial", originally released in 1990 by Seraphic Decay Records? How did you hook up with Seven Metal Inches Records from Germany? Any plans from their side to reissue more stuff from your back catalogue in the near future?

- Andreas from Seven Metal Inches Records contacted me on Facebook about the 7" series he was doing. It's a follow up to a book that he had released about those early 7 inches. But yeah, the Seraphic Decay releases became a collector thing. I personally think that is one of our worst recordings. I can't make it through 30 seconds of listening to it, literally makes me cringe, but the artwork is fantastic and it's a cool looking release. Yes, I do have plans of releasing "The Unholy Ground" 1990 demo on vinyl. I'm still happy with that recording, sentimental to me as well.

How the current line-up of Derkéta looks like? What kind of jobs you do besides the band? How often do you rehearse together?

- When life is "normal", we rehearse every Wednesday, which we named "Wicked Wednesdays". Current lineup is me on vocals/guitar; my day job I work in the IT department of a large financial corporation. Trish Bill is on second guitar; she is a stay at home mom of 2 adorable little girls. Robin Mazen is on bass; she is touring full time with a lot of the well-known great acts, either selling merch or tour managing. Mike Laughlin is on drums; he works

application technical support with speech software for the disabled. This is a slight change to our lineup as Mary Bielich has stepped down as our guitarist to pursue a business venture that we're all excited about. She was concerned about her availability for live shows and thought it was best. It was sad news, but we understand. Trish was already a part of the band as Robin's back up for live shows and switched over to guitar.

Let's go back to late 1988 when you've established Derkéta along with Terri Heggen (drums). What (or who) motivated/impacted you to form your own band and to start playing doom influenced death metal? By the way, you've been known as the first all-female death metal band at the time. How do you felt about that fact? What was the Pittsburgh underground scene back then? Did you play live a lot?

- Shortly after I started playing guitar I stumbled into song writing. It was actually 'cause I struggled to play cover songs of my idols, like Randy Rhoads. I still struggle with that and take lessons now, but it was a rude awakening at age 15. They make it look and sound so easy, but very frustrating when you realize there's years of work to get anywhere near that kind of level. The first original that I ever wrote was the ending of the song "Time of Awakening", I felt that it sounded like a funeral march and was intrigued to continue on writing. "Time of Awakening" was the first song that I ever wrote and when I would pick up my guitar I got more satisfaction out of writing versus trying to play somebody else's stuff. Looking back, I wish I still tried to play cover songs as I'm finding out now that it is really great playing practice. Then again, I'm always chasing song ideas and my guitar is

more of a tool to piece together these mental puzzles. When you start down that song writing path, it's only natural to want to hear it fully with other instruments. That is how Derkéta came about. I was fortunate to meet Terri at a party and we had common musical interests. We didn't set out to be a "female band", it just happened that we were females that had a band. I'm a very shy and insecure person and I think I felt more comfortable working out a band with her, because we had become best friends. We were both new to our instruments and developed it all together. When we were looking for additional members to complete the lineup to perform live, our friends would recommend other girls that they knew played instruments. The all-female thing was somewhat guided to us. Ross from Immolation introduced us to Kim August, Vincent Crowley from Acheron introduced us to Heidi, Don from NunSlaughter introduced us to Mary Bielich, Paul Masvidal from Death/Cynic introduced us to Robin Mazen. It was like our friends were having light bulbs that we should keep the band all-female as that was something different. Terri and I were cool with it, as we just wanted to complete the lineup to play live. Unfortunately, we never played live back then. As soon as we had a full lineup, Terri and I weren't getting along. She wanted to rush playing live, but I felt we needed a lot more practice before any of us set foot on stage. I knew we would be critiqued more, because we were females and our rehearsals were still very sloppy. There were also other circumstances going on and Terri and I weren't communicating very well with each other. That is one of my regrets in life that her and I let our friendship get to that point. The Pittsburgh underground scene was great back then. We had a lot of great local bands, Dream Death/Penance, DoomWatch, Nun Slaughter, Eviction, Bird of Prey, Rottrevore, Chaotic Plague, Half Life, just to name a few. We were all friends, lots of local and touring shows, and it was such a cool time in life.

Your music sounds pretty much like a well-balanced mix between the early records of Immolation, Incantation, Asphyx and Death. How do you see it? What kind of music do you listen to with pleasure these days? Please list us your Top-10 albums of all time.

- Oh wow, thank you. I personally can't compare myself to other bands. I feel the bands you mentioned are on a much higher level than us. Between being friends and also a fan of them, I see them as "real bands" and Derkéta is just a weird mental puzzle of non-sense ideas. Maybe, because we're in the same age group, molded musically in a similar fashion from growing up listening to rock and metal that we share a writing connection? We all progressed to death metal from the same musical background really. I'm quite flattered by your comment though.

I primarily listen to the music I grew up with, 70s rock and 80s heavy metal, as well as early death metal releases. I'm really a fan of music in general and not trapped into only listening to extreme music. Recently I've been listening to Pink Floyd, Aerosmith, Jethro Tull, Gerry Rafferty, Van Halen to give you an idea. Top 10 albums of all time will be hard, that list can change based on my mood, so here would be my picks for today. I'll keep it mostly on the heavier side.

Bathory – Blood Fire Death
Morbid Angel – Altars of Madness
Bolt Thrower – The IVth Crusade (and the rest of their catalogue)
Candlemass – Epicus Doomicus Metallicus
Entombed – Left Hand Path
Carnage – Dark Recollections
Argus – Boldly Stride the Doomed
Rush – Exit...Stage Left
Ozzy Osbourne – Diary of a Madman
Pink Floyd – Animals

You've been familiar with Chuck Schuldiner and Death from the early stages. When and where did you met Chuck for the first time? I bet you have a lot of special stories from that era, haven't you? Could you please pick one of your beloved occasion and share it with the readers? By the way, when did you see Death playing live for the very first time? Tell your impressions from that particular show, please.

- I met Chuck and the other guys in Death at an In-Store appearance at our local record store Eide's. They would tour a lot back then and played Pittsburgh often, so we just got to be acquainted with each other. We never dated or anything on those lines. I think some might suspect that we had a fling or something from all of the old photos together. I was just a huge fan and it became regular hang out. I don't think I ever told this memory before in an interview. One time they were in town and needed to do laundry. Terri and I took Chuck, Terry Butler and Bill Andrews to the Oakdale laundromat. Oakdale is where I grew up and I knew there was a laundromat so that is where we went. The laundromat had these laundry buggies and we were physically in them pushing each other around racing. Just being goofy. They're comical people, always a blast to hang out with. One of my most fond and treasured memories of Chuck was at that laundromat. He used to wink when he was about to pull a joke on someone. I remember hearing Chuck quietly saying "Hey, Sharon" and I looked over and he's winking his eye to alert me he was up to something. Then he went on to say something off the wall to Butler, but the winking was so endearing it made me melt. I can't explain it, but it wasn't common for young people to wink. It was like an old man thing, and when Chuck did it, it was absolutely adorable. Chuck was an attractive guy and I remember privately saying something to Terri like holy fucking shit, Chuck's winking! It would get me every time, even though I knew there was no meaning "like that" behind it. It's just what he did. I have so many great memories with them, got to go to some Death rehearsals in Chuck's parents garage. I mean, that was an incredible experience for me with being such a huge fan. I truly am sad that I will never run into him to reminisce. And I regret not writing or calling him when I heard that he was sick. I never thought he was really going to die, and didn't want to bother him. I figured everybody else was contacting him and I'd catch

up with him once he was feeling better. I'm proud that he left such a fantastic legacy 'cause I really thought he was the bee's knees. The very first time I attempted death metal vocals, which I guess was my try out to my own band, was to Death's song "Pull the Plug". He was a major influence to me. The first show I saw of them was at a local club The Electric Banana, a small dive bar that was here in Pittsburgh. I have pictures from that show, it was packed, crowd went nuts, and they were fucking awesome.

Regarding the lyrics of "In Death We Meet", they are fully dedicated to the dark sides of life, i.e. death, darkness and suffering. What inspires you to write about such obscure themes? Would you please list some of the books you've read out not long ago?

- I guess it's a combination of getting a chill from horror stories and also having trouble dealing with death and losing people. So many close to me have died and I feel like I'm dying inside from the sadness of losing them. Maybe it's 'cause those thoughts/fears are always looming in my mind; death is such a harsh reality. It sneaks up on ya and the feeling just gets worse as time goes on. I'm a real life of the party, eh. I don't think it's possible for me to write about any other topic. I never get lyrical thoughts on other things. I don't have the concentration to read books, my mind roams too much. Ironically, the last book I started to read was about brain cognitive health. My bookmark shows I made it to page 21 so there ya go. Lyrical lines pop in my head as I'm writing riffs, and that determines that song topic. From there I'm just completing the story with phrases that seem to fit. That's why it takes me a while to write songs, it's hard to zone in on one song at a time. Although, the song "Premature Burial" was first drafted by Terri, then I spun it after a TV show episode I saw. I think that's the only song inspired like that. Mostly the lyrics are just random phrases put together to resemble a story to fit over riffs.

You've managed to record a pretty rad cover of Sepultura's "Troops of Doom" for the "Darkness Fades Life" 7" vinyl. I would say it became even darker than the original one. Did you play it live as well? Do you plan to record some other covers for any of your future releases? If so, which ones would be the right option for you?

- Thank you again, I appreciate that comment. I'm not a fan of covers, the originals are always the best, but it was a requirement for that "Darkness Fades Life" 7". One side had to be an original, other side a cover. Sepultura "Morbid Visions" album didn't have the best production so it seemed like we had a good shot of doing it justice. We haven't played it live, but we've discussed it. I have to really practice it to be honest. The picking is complicated for me in that middle section, ha, and figuring out Max's broken English/lyrical phrasing will take some time to memorize. I'm a stickler with keeping it as organic as they had it. I don't recognize "Troops of Doom" off of "Schizophrenia", by the way. Strictly worship of the "Morbid Visions" version here. There is a cover that Robin wants to record; it's a song that she and I love. I don't want to say what it is just yet. We'll see how it works out and if we do it well.

Many thanks for answering my questions. At the end, please unveil the most intriguing news from the Derkéta camp.

- Thank you for thinking of us and interviewing me. There isn't much intriguing news going on, but we are focused on song writing, and I'm happy with how it's all developing. Like I mentioned above, we're aiming for a 2021 release for a full length. We have an online store on our website www.Derketa.com if anyone is interested. I do need to restock some merch though. Thank you again, and I hope everyone is keeping well and safe.



Photo by Dave Burke

Aurora Borealis is a sophisticated blackened death metal trio from the US, which has been operating since 1994 and is already working on their 8th full-length album. I've asked Ron Vento (vocals/guitars), the founding member of the horde, to transfer us all the latest news and happenings around his band, studio and personal life. Scroll down for all the details and support this killer formation!!!



Hi Ron! The follower to your well-received “Apokalupsis” album is already in progress. All I know, it is planned for release in 2021. Could you please mention us a few details in advance, like possible or temporary working title for it, number of songs to be featured there and its musical direction?

- Yes currently as of Dec 2020 I am drum editing. Time aligning actually, so it's still in the early stages. I have a ton of work to do still. Next I will do some drum triggering then get the material to the bass player and start guitars. I only have a few lyrics written so far, but the entire album concept is already done. Then I will do vocals and build some intros/interludes. Then mix and master. It's going to be a long process for sure. As far as musical direction we are still the same band we have always been, fast aggressive and heavy. This album may be a little more technical than the others. The title may end up being “Prophesy is the mold in which history is poured”. There will be 10 or 11 tracks. 9 actual songs.

The recordings of the drum parts have successfully been finished by Mark Green, who is with the band since 2011, while the bass parts for the new album will be recorded/provided by the extraordinary Michael Poggione. How did you recruit him for the new record? What's up with Jason Ian-Vaughn Eckert?

- Yes Mark is back again, he is the longest running drummer I have ever had. He is superb on drums and reliable and easy to get along with. He knows how I like to work and his attention to detail is amazing. As far as Jay goes. I have known him forever. He has played on most of the records. It's either been myself or him. Without getting into the details of things. I had some other stuff scheduled and unrelated to Aurora with Jay that he didn't make good on, because of covid

virus and since covid isn't going anywhere anytime soon I made the decision to move forward. I still talk with him periodically, but regardless I decided to get a different player. I made a post and Mike was one of the guys that got in touch. We had a few messages back and forth and he finally decided he wanted to do it and we wanted him to do it. He is an amazing player and I cannot wait to get his tracks in the mix. It will be a new element to the band.

“Apokalupsis” was released by Casus Belli Musica, a label from Russia. How do they treat the band? Are you going to stick with them for your next release or gonna search for another label?

- I have been working so hard in my studio with my projects as well as many other peoples projects I haven't actually sat down and thought about it. They are a smaller label, which is cool for us, because they definitely printed some cool versions of the album. Splatter vinyl, regular vinyl, and digipaks. I am pretty pleased with what they did. It would be cool if they had better distribution, but overall it was excellent. I will probably talk to them and see if they are interested again. Or I may shop the new album first. I haven't really decided.

Since the beginnings your lyrics are dealing with the topics of sci-fi, mythology and esotericism. Would you please talk in brief about the lyrical content of “Apokalupsis” and where will you go lyrics-wise for the next release?

- The lyrical concept in “Apokalupsis” is a concept album in which we venture through the beginning of all creation until the inevitable apocalyptic war. Its primary focus brings to light alien existence and their purpose among humans. The album describes what they are, where they came from and how they manipulated mankind. It also elaborates on those victimized by abduction and why it occurs.

“Apokalupsis” commences with God casting rebellious angels out of heaven. Unlike traditional stories. God sends them through space to stars created to keep them captive. One star for every fallen angel, countless stars for countless demons. At the heart of every star, there is a demon trying to break free and find its way to God's greatest creation, mankind. In consequence, those that escape create massive solar flares and star quakes. By manipulating space time through wormholes, their search for human life begins. Some never escape and after billions of years collapse with the stars, forever forsaken in eternal solitude. Those who reach earth begin their deceit. Throughout history they have taken on many forms with the intent of building a foundation of deception; beginning with Eve and the serpent in the Garden of Eden. In modern time they disguise themselves as aliens, guiding the lives of great rulers (from pharaohs, to kings and presidents) with the intent of destruction. In time they reveal what they are and inspire Armageddon. “Apokalupsis”, once withdrawn, now visible to all, see. As far as the new album I don't want to get too deep in it, but it will deal with Nimrod the hunter and his declaration of war against his creator. It will deal with the true reason of the construction of the Tower of Babel. Then moving on to Nimrod's death and his resurrection as the antichrist being brought back to life by groups such as the freemasons and ending with his second declaration of war on God. There will be space elements and sci-fi mixed throughout the songs as well.

It is almost 20 years by now that Aurora Borealis albums are produced at your own Nightsky Studios. I assume it should be pretty comfy and relaxed to work and record them there, correct me if I am wrong?

- You are correct at this point I have no plans to record anywhere else. I can work at my own pace

without worrying about the clock or deadlines. My studio is a commercial facility, so it's not in a house or some bed room. It is a legit studio that has been featured in all the major recording magazines. So I have everything I need any time I need it.

I am sure you could speak for hours regarding the gears found in your studio. So let's focus on the Aurora Borealis guitar sound in particular here. How do you create it? I mean, starting with your choice of guitars and strings, through the amps and cabinets, to the mics and DAW. By the way, in what tune you play lately?

- For my guitar tones they vary from album to album, but I always use real tube heads and real cabs. I do not like simulators, to me they sound different. On the newest album I will use a combination of my ENGL and one of my Bogners. I have quite a few very nice guitar heads. I typically will record a left and right side with both amps for a total of four main rhythm tracks then I go back and do all my harmonies and leads, etc. I typically don't spend too long trying to craft the perfect tone. Over the years I have learned it's more about the playing. Of course a good sound is important, but all my heads are amazing. You turn them on and they just sound good. So it doesn't take too long to get a sound I like. You can spend way too long messing with sounds and being indecisive and get nothing done. The average person isn't spending time studying your guitar tone. I focus on good songs. As far as my guitar I have used the same guitar on every album I have ever recorded. It is a custom shop one of a kind Jackson Dinky reverse. I had it built for me so it's perfect. I have no need to use anything else. Don't get me wrong I have tons of guitars, many many super nice expensive guitars. That I use in other projects and recording, but for Aurora I use my custom shop. I use 10 gauge strings typically D'Addario or Ernie Ball. Whichever I have at the time. I tune to D standard. Any lower I find I lose clarity and note articulation. My cab is typically a Mesa slant cab. I use one simple SM57. I know what I like and it's simple and to the point. Over the last 30 years I have tried every possible mic and mic combination possible and I always come back

to simple. People over complicate things too much. I have also used Pro Tools since before it was even called Pro Tools. It's the only DAW I can see myself ever using. I have what's called an HDX Rig.

Speaking of Nightsky Studios. Which bands/artists are going to visit you in the near future? Which are those recordings that make you the most proud of? Does a lot of extreme metal bands use your services?

- Well my studio is a commercial studio, so we are open to the general public every day. We do all styles. Extreme metal is few and far between. We mostly do normal music, but we also do audio books or commercials or whatever requires audio. I try to make every recording I do be the best recording. My most proud recordings are my own obviously, haha.

Away from the studio duties, what things do you like to do the most? Family entertainment, sports, reading or simply to relax?

- I try to spend time with my son when I can. I work a lot, so I am always in the studio. When I am not recording other people I am generally writing Aurora stuff. Or even writing other genres of music. Other than that I go to the gym a lot. I also do mixed martial arts. Anything to stay in shape. I rarely do things like watch TV or things like that. I don't have a lot of free time, so when I do I try to make it productive.

Between 1994-2006 three super influential death metal drummers took part in your releases, namely Tony Laureano, Derek Roddy and Tim Yeung. How did you manage to hook up with them? How was it to work with these extraordinary drummers? Do you keep in contact with any of them nowadays?

- Yes every single one of those drummers made me a better player. They are all amazing in their own way. They all pushed me to be better. I am privileged to have worked with them all. They all took part willingly and were not paid, they just enjoyed the music and I am thankful for that. I first discovered Tony when I was in Florida rehearsing with the drummer from Brutality, Jim. Myself and Jim were rehearsing for the "Mansions of Eternity" mini CD and I heard another drummer rehearsing in the Cannibal Corpse rehearsal space. I asked Jim who that was and he told me it was Tony. He

sounded amazing to me. Myself and Jim just couldn't seem to click. So later I called Lee from Monstrosity and asked him if he knew Tony and low and behold he was actually hanging out with him. So I asked him if he may be interested in doing something and we got together and everything clicked. He learned the entire CD in a week. We went into Morrisound with Scott Burns and recorded the mini CD. Tony wasn't a big name drummer like he is now, but he quickly was snatched by some prominent bands and was busy touring so I needed a new drummer for the first full length. I knew Derek through a guy in Atlanta named Joe Bates. We used to play in the same band called Gothic Outcasts. So we decided to do the "Praise the Archaic Lights Embrace" album. Derek is the most technically proficient drummer I have ever worked with. He is incredible. We then recorded the "Praise" CD and the "Northern Lights" CD. After that he was also taken by some much bigger bands. So I was in need again. By that time a lot of good drummers knew who I was and my band, so I was able to recruit Tim Yeung for the next album "Time Unveiled". We only did the one CD together and he was taken by a bigger band. I never really wanted to tour, so all these drummers wanted to play with touring bigger bands which is definitely understandable. After that CD I called up Tony again and took a chance to see if he was available and we decided to make the "Relinquish" CD. He really played some original and amazing things on that CD. After that he was so busy with bands like Dimmu Borgir, there was no way we could do another CD. I then put out a post online looking for a new drummer. And of all the people none really were good enough to be honest. At the last second from the recommendation of Derek Roddy. Mark Green sent me a video and I knew he was the guy. He has then been the drummer ever since. He is now on his fourth record and the longest running drummer in our history. I have no plans to change. We work perfectly together.

Well, I guess that's all, Ron. Last world shaping thoughts are yours?

- Let me just thank you for doing this interview. I greatly appreciate it. I encourage all your readers to get in touch. Look for the new album late 2021.



Hi there! First of all, congratulations on your recently released debut album "Blood Reign". I think there is a lot of progress compared to "The Rotten One" EP. How do you see this? What is the feedback like so far?

Julien: Hi! Thanks. New line up, new influences, new way to work, more experience, improved skills... "Blood Reign" is a mix of influences from old and new members (lyrics from Logan and Anouk). We are aware that there are some imperfections in some songs, but we didn't want to go too far with editing... in such a way to keep the human side of our music. Feedbacks are generally good!

It was recorded, mixed and mastered by Benoît Polomé at Noise Factory Studio/SoundWave Studio. I am sure you're all happy with the end result, right? How was it to work with him? By the way, how long did it take you to finish the recordings for "Blood Reign"?

Julien: Very happy! It was very great to work with Benoît! He was really implicated in the project... skilled, good advisor, good gear...

Anouk: We recorded the album from February to March (only the weekends, we have jobs during the week). The album was scheduled for release in June, but due to the health crisis we had to postpone it until October. We took this as an opportunity so we gave ourselves time to do things right the way we wanted.

I know, it is a bit too early to talk about it yet, nevertheless do you have any songs written for your next material? Will it be a full-length record or another EP? Musically, in what direction will it be?

Céline: Yes, we are writing new stuff! I think it will be a full-length album and the next songs will be more technical and brutal.

Julien: With the Covid crisis we have time to work on new stuff, not just work on shows.

After the recording sessions of "Blood Reign", your lead guitarist, namely Benjamin Lefèvre, has parted ways with BleedSkin and you've become a quartet. Please introduce us the current band members as well as what kind of daylight jobs you're doing to survive these days. Would you please also mention your favorite hobbies beside

playing death metal in BleedSkin?

Rémy: Yes, Benjamin left the band after the recording for personal reasons. He still remains a good friend! We don't want to replace him, so we need to re-work our songs and sound.

Anouk: We are 4 musicians now: Céline Mazay – guitars (2016-...), Julien Vanhees – drums (2018-...), Rémy Adam – bass (2016-...), Anouk Debecq – vocals (2019-...).

Julien: My hobbies... Euuuuh... Sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll??? 😊

Your debut album has lyrics written by both Anouk and Logan (ex-member of BleedSkin). While Logan's lyrics were mainly dealing with killers, blood and gore (kind of cliché stuff, I would say), then Anouk's part of the lyrics were about personal experiences, violence, sci-fi, chaos theory, psychological dysfunctions and distortions of the humans, etc. I found her lyrics pretty actual and witty. So, my question is what kind of topics she's going to dissect in the future? What motivates her to write lyrics in such directions?

Anouk: For future compositions, I will focus the lyrics on science fiction, psychology and horror. I love films and series like Alien, Sunshine, Split, Life, Gravity, Interstellar, The Expenses. These are subjects that inspire me a lot to write the lyrics.

I've been told that you are currently working on some new videos. Please share with us some details on them as well as which songs did you pick up for these video clips?

Julien: We'll be part of the Argentina Online Metal Fest 1 in January 2021. And also, another quarantine live (+/- 30 minutes) in Belgium in December. It's a pretty good exercise to play without an audience in live conditions!

Céline: We're preparing some playthroughs from "Blood Reign" and maybe new songs! You'll have to wait and see!

How's the death metal life in Belgium, particularly I am interested in the places where you actually dwell? Would you please recommend some bands from your area? Do you have a lot of metal shops, pubs, clubs or places where you often meet up with

other metal friends & fans? Of course, prior to the lockdown times.

Rémy: Belgium has over 1200 metal bands. There are a lot of small independent places, but also a few big festivals in the summer. We can count a lot of small amateur bands, but also renowned bands such as Aborted or Channel Zero.

I can advise you to listen to the friends of Storm Upon the Masses, Poseydon and Demenzia Mortis.

Apropos, do you keep rehearsing with a full-band line-up nowadays? How many times a week do you rehearse? What kind of gear do you use for your live performances and at your rehearsal place? Does it differ a lot?

Céline: I use the same gear for the live performances and for the rehearsals. I'm endorsed by Invaders Amps (great amps, go check their facebook page!). I play on Ibanez and I'm using some pedals. Boss and Amptweaker.

Rémy: I play exactly on the same gear live and at the rehearsal. A Markbass amp, a Spector bass and a Darkglass distortion.

Anouk: We rehearse one or two times a week, sometimes less. It depends a lot on the schedule in our respective private lives.

How does the sale for both of your records go? What kind of merchandise do you have besides the physical CDs? Do you plan any new merch to add shortly?

Céline: It goes well! We also sell t-shirts, patches, beers. You can check our facebook and store. We will maybe add new t-shirts in spring.

Rémy: A lot of metalheads play the songs online and buy CDs on Bandcamp. But we must recognize that it is complicated to promote an album without shows. We are nevertheless very happy with the feedback of the album!

Last blood-soaked words are yours. Please finish the interview the BleedSkin way.

BleedSkin: Thank you for the interview! Don't forget to follow our social networks, you will soon find quarantine shows, playthroughs and new songs! Keep death metal alive!

Facebook: facebook.com/OfficialBleedSkin



Photo by Djinn Photography

Let me present you a quick interview with the ultra-promising quartet called BleedSkin. The Belgian female fronted death metal squad just released its new stuff "Blood Reign". Needless to say, it impressed me immediately, so I felt the time is right to ask them a few questions. My questions were answered by the whole band. Enjoy the read!!!

It's no exaggeration to say that Scour's new EP exploded into the black metal scene like an unexpected comet. The US black metal supergroup featuring Philip H. Anselmo, John Jarvis, Derek Engemann, Adam Jarvis and Mark Kloeppel returned with a frenzied vengeance to conquer the throne. I've asked Mark regarding the success of their latest EP and Scour's future perspectives.

Hello Mark! Scour's new 6-song EP called "Black" has just been unleashed upon the underground masses. What are your feelings towards the accomplished material and the feedback from the fans & media so far?

- It's the most scathing and refined material the band has released, and probably the most extreme music I've ever heard Philip do... which is saying a lot all things considered. From what I'm seeing, an overwhelming majority are giving positive responses. Of course, you have some folks out there yearning for the big guy to recreate 1990 Pantera, but I'd say those folk kinda missed the point... which was to keep getting heavier and heavier. Pantera did write "Cemetery Gates", etc., but also wrote songs like "Strength Beyond Strength", "Slaughtered", "Suicide Note Pt. II", and other songs pushing the envelope of what could be heavy in the mainstream metal world. Scour is just taking that approach a step further.

It was actually premiered by two labels, namely Housecore Records and Nuclear Blast Records. I know that the first one was in charge of releasing your materials from the very beginning, but how the second label came into the picture?

- They simply approached us about signing the band in total when we were making decisions on worldwide distribution. Since Housecore is already pretty established in North America, a collaborative effort was established for this EP and future releases.

In support of the EP, you've managed to release a few video clips. Especially I liked the one done for "Doom" featuring the LTD Black Metal Series guitars. You've been using the M-Black Metal model there. How it feels to play on it? Tell us your impressions, please. I've also noticed that for Misery Index you've selected LTD's Phoenix Black Metal model. I suppose you use different tunes for both guitars, right? Can you please go into details what kind of strings, amps and cabs you use for Scour and Misery Index respectively?

- Sure. I've got a full arsenal of Black Metal series guitars thanks to ESP and also the ESP guitars I already have. I've used ESP from day one, and have no intention of switching. I use Ernie Ball

Not Even Slinky's for both bands. M.I. is in C# standard, and Scour is a step up in D#/Eb standard tuning. When I can, I use an EVH 5150 III with my Mooer GE200 in the loop for effects for main gigs and studio. For fly-in gigs, where my idea amp isn't available, I just bring my Mooer GE200 and use a preset with my chose preamp on it to jack into what's available. That's true for both bands. Also, the Mooer is great. It has high quality effects and amp tones to choose from in a compact simple platform that runs about \$300USD. So it's pretty cost effective to have a back-up unit and/or replace the equipment should it break due to road-wear.

The EP has some really famous guests involved in, like Pat O'Brien from Cannibal Corpse, Erik Rutan from Hate Eternal and actor Jason Momoa (Aquaman, Braven, Game of Thrones, Justice League and so on). While the appearance of the first two musicians was kind of evident for me, how the hell did you hook up with Jason? What's the story behind it?

- He came out to the final Slayer tour when Philip H. Anselmo & the Illegals played in L.A. Derek Engemann, the main guy for Scour, also plays bass in the Illegals. So, they met and became fast friends. Jason is a Pantera fan, obviously, and jumped at the chance to be on the Scour record. We really appreciate our Scourboy Momoa, and his help spreading the good word.

You've joined Scour in 2017 and your first recording with them was accomplished for the cover version of Bathory's classic "Massacre" in 2019. Have you ever thought before that once you would play with Philip H. Anselmo in a band? How is it, by the way?

- I was just barely 13 years old when I saw Pantera live for the first time, and it was my first metal show. What an introduction! I saw them everytime they came through, and they are responsible for me getting deeper into this stuff. So, when I was invited by my friends to come jam in Scour, it was very much a 'full circle' event for me. He's the best frontman metal has ever seen, and also a super cool and humble person in general. Whenever we

jam, it's like a week-long sleepover at your coolest friend's house.

Before joining Scour you've been playing exclusively death metal and grindcore. How was it for you to cope with the black metal riffs and the Nordic vibe in general? Would you please name us some of your favorite black metal albums here?

- Well first, I don't think Scour has a Nordic vibe per se. The relentless trem-picking was definitely something my body had to get used to, and it took a minute to get that muscle memory. One thing you don't want to do is fake-strum what should be very fast picking on those chords. You should be keeping up with the blast. And to do that correctly is very strenuous... especially playing an hour set. As for favorite BM, I appreciate the various waves. So if I were to trace through one album from each, it would start with Bathory: "Under the Sign of the Black Mark" through Emperor: "In the Nightside Eclipse" to Dark Funeral: "The Secrets of the Black Arts" to maybe some USBM like Panopticon.

Scour plays live pretty rarely and the actual situation doesn't look good at all for asking you about any plans to play live in the near future. However, a live stream would be a cool thing to schedule. Any thoughts regarding this possible option?

- I'm not really at liberty to say at the moment. But you can probably guess...

Since 2002 you and Derek are playing together in Cast the Stone. What news can you tell us from that camp? Are you going to release some new stuff soon? Oh, and I see there's also a new Misery Index album on its way as well. So please enlighten us as many details as possible about that release too.

- Yeah, both those albums are in the works. We hope to be complete and releasing late next year, but we shall see how things progress.

Thank you so much for taking the time to answer my questionnaire. The last propaganda is yours.

- New Scour is the best Scour. Pick it up: https://linktr.ee/scour_official



Photo by Joseph P. Dorignac IV

Well, I always wanted to have an interview done with John McEntee, the mastermind of Incantation. Now that dream has been finally fulfilled and I am very happy about it. This band means a lot to all the true death metal fans worldwide. John was super kind and told in details some things about the past, the present and the future of Incantation. Behold the arrival of the diabolical conquest!!!



Hi John! There was a UK/Europe tour last year called “Eclipses time... Transcends death”? How was it? Please tell the readers your impressions plus which places caught your attention the most?

- Yeah, the “Eclipses time... Transcends death” tour was a total blast. I remember the Boston house (Boston Music Room) in the UK was really good. You know, all the shows were really killer, but that one really stands out as being a crazy one. I guess the UK is always pretty cool. Also the Metal Mean’s fest in Belgium was really good. We played a whole bunch of really good ones in that run. There was Brutal Assault. We played on that one, which, of course, is amazing. Always hell of a killer time. Really all the shows were really good. It’s just nice to get such a great response for the band after so long. Something we never really expected. But, yeah, we really had a great time on tour. Everything was really good. What else can I really say. Nothing really sucked about it at all.

That tour was completed with a session drummer. Does it mean Kyle Severn is no longer part of the Incantation family? By the way, how do you like Shed the Skin’s latest material “We of Scorn” and what’s your opinion about the reunion of Estuary. Kyle involved in both?

- Yeah, that tour was great. Frank, I don’t remember how to pronounce his last name properly, but it’s Schilperoort or something like that, it’s a Dutch name, really difficult to pronounce not knowing Dutch at all. Anyway, Frank has been helping us out quite a while now. He has been doing a great job, he’s a great guy and he’s a great friend. So it’s always really cool to work with somebody like that. As far as that, it does not mean that Kyle is no longer a part of Incantation. Kyle just can’t tour that much anymore, because of his work. But, I mean, he has a huge part in a lot of the band decisions, he still does a lot of songwriting and a lot of behind the scene kind of stuff. You know, he owns his own construction company, so it’s difficult for him to get out of work and not having things totally fall apart on his end. Yeah, as far as Shed the Skin. I love them. It has a bunch of my friends in the band, the guys from Ringworm and Ash Thomas from Estuary and obviously Kyle. I like what they do. I like that style of death/thrash kind of thing. So, yeah, Shed the Skin’s really great. Kyle is also been working with Estuary lately, which is another band I really like too. So it’s really awesome. It’s not like Kyle

isn’t playing anymore, it’s just he can’t tour, especially with our ridiculously long busy touring schedule he just can’t do it. He spending his time working on other bands and other projects, when he’s not working with us, which totally make sense. You know, we wouldn’t expect him to sit at home and do nothing, waiting for us to come around. Yeah, I’m always looking forward to working with him, because Kyle and I really have a good musical connection. So usually what he does with Incantation or without Incantation it’s something I really enjoy. So, yeah, it’s awesome!

With your latest record “Profane Nexus” you’ve returned to Relapse Records. Why did you leave them back in the time and what was wrong with Listenable Records?

- Yeah, we decided to go back with Relapse after a long time. I think they did a great job with the “Profane Nexus” album. Basically, it just seemed like the right decision to make. I mean, they’ve been doing a great job with everything as far as our back catalogue and stuff. So there’s no reason to try to find somebody new for this current album.

As far as Listenable. We had a couple of disagreements with them, but really the biggest issue was that they just didn’t have the distribution that we needed in the US for us being a US band. When we were first working with him it went very well, and we re-signed with them around “Vanquish in Vengeance” time. He said that he’s working on some really good distribution for the US and stuff, but it ended up never really coming together in a way that was good for us. Maybe it’s fine for other bands, you know, like European bands, maybe it’s not a problem, but us being a US band we wanted to definitely have our material easily available at a reasonable price in the record stores. We just didn’t get it with Listenable. So we wish Laurent all the best with the label. It just wasn’t the right place for us.

Sonny debuted on “Profane Nexus” (2017) as a full-time member of Incantation, but he played live with you as a session musician earlier and did some guest solos for the songs of “Dirges of Elysium” (2014). So how did he become a full-time member? Is there any interesting story behind it?

- As far as Sonny’s involvement with the band. It started off with us just being at the right place, we were recording the basic drum tracks for “Dirges of Elysium” at his home studio that he has. So when the situation

came up that we needed a guitar player he was right there and seemed really hungry and interested in doing it. So it seemed like the answer is right in front of us as far as who to get to finish up some of the solos that we needed for “Dirges...” and some rhythm stuff. Yeah, basically he kind of filled in the gap. And he did all the touring for “Dirges of Elysium” and it just seemed right to work with him on “Profane Nexus”. And it worked out really good, it seemed like the chemistry was going really well, but unfortunately while we were recording the new album that we have coming up Sonny did not have as much interest in doing things in a way that worked well with the band and I think it’s just a situation where he’s just too good of a guitar player and wants to expand our sound more, which totally make sense, you know, it’s sad, but Incantation just isn’t the place for him to express himself the way he feels he needs to. You know, of course, we’re very sorry to see him go. We actually really like him and wish him the very best. It’s just sometimes things don’t work out in a long term. So look out for some really killer stuff by Sonny Lombardozzi. I don’t know if he’s going to do solo stuff or work with another band, but I am sure whatever he does it’s gonna be really kick ass and super talented. We really appreciate all the time we got to work with him and touring with him was an absolute pleasure. He’s an amazing musician and a hard worker, and very nice guy. I totally understand his side of things. He’s extremely way too talented to play in this band. I mean, we’re more of like caveman just hitting on rocks.

The music Incantation stands for almost 30 years now is the obscurest of all the death metal forms I would say. How do you manage to write such dark and apocalyptic riffs all the way? What motivates you when composing, is there any trick or secret behind it?

- Yeah, we’ve been doing this for a super long time and basically I just really wanted to create music with a really dark aura to push the limits of darkness, heaviness, brutality. I mean I was really influenced by bands like Possessed, early Necrophagia, Necrovore, early Morbid Angel, you know, stuff like that, early Death, everything. And I just really wanted to push the limits further, you know, go to the next step. We wanted that blasphemous feeling, kind of like on “Seven Churches” from Possessed. It was a big influence on us, early on especially with riff writing. The dark stuff just

really came natural to me. It's become a form of expression. So it's something I have to do. If I didn't do it, it just wouldn't feel right and I wouldn't feel comfortable. So I would still be doing music either way, if it was where we are with Incantation or if Incantation never took off I would still be writing music, because it's just part of one of my senses. There's no real secret to it. It's kinda just like I use my imagination to express my inner feelings. It's just very organic, very pure and natural. It's just I really like the dark side of life, it's intriguing. So I kind of express myself that way with the riffing and ideas that I have musically. Yeah, it's kind of crazy, 'cause sometimes I just get very inspired and I kinda feel like I have to write something and express myself musically. I guess it's a cool thing, because I have a place like Incantation to express the stuff and it's really great that I am able to find other musicians that are able to work with me and feel the same way about the kind of music I feel is very important for me to do.

What tunes are you playing currently? What should we know about your gear (guitars, amps, cabs, pickups, strings, pedals, cables, etc.)? Which are your beloved guitar models and why?

- Well, as far as what tunes are we playing currently? We always mix it up. We don't wanna do all the same songs every tour. I mean, there's a few songs that ended up becoming like crowd favorites when we play live that we like to try to add each tour, but really we try to mix it up really good. Every time we give people some surprise songs that they wouldn't expect of different albums. On the "Eclipses time... Transcends death" tour we added a few more older songs to celebrate the beginnings of the band. But it's not something we do all the time. We mix everything up from all eras of the band and they work really good altogether. I think the vibe is really awesome. We mix up our set in a proper way. As far as gear goes for myself. I've been playing on B.C. Rich guitars for quite a while. I am getting a SP Custom guitar made. It's a handmade guitar. And it's basically based off the stuff that I like, which is, you know, kind of B.C. Rich Mockingbirdish. Besides that, I use Powered by Omega cabinets. I use Revolt amplifiers. Both companies are really great quality. I mean, the sound and the power that comes out is totally killer. I just got a killer new Enki case. They're a really cool brand. As far as strings, I use Curt Mangan strings. Also I got a killer, a new cabinet case for my Powered by Omega cabs from Calzone cases. It's a company out of the US, really killer. Besides that, I use InTune guitar picks and, of course, I always use Kahler tremolos. For me they are the best.

You've been running your own label Ibex Moon Records for 12 years. Why did you put it on rest?

- Okay, as far as Ibex Moon is concerned. Yes, it's dead as far as the label goes. It just was getting to be way too much work and I wasn't able to make enough money to kinda keep it going. At that time, there was issues in my personal life that caused me to focus on other aspects of my life then spending twenty hours of my day working on Ibex Moon Records. It was an interesting, great experience to do the label, but it was really difficult to also do the band at full force. Playing in a band is way more fun than running a record label. But I mean I was able to do some amazing stuff with some great bands. Obviously, Asphyx "Death... The Brutal Way" was a great release and I also did Master's "Slaves to Society", is another amazing album by Master. It's actually one of my favorite Master albums that I was fortunate to put out. We did Denial Fiend, two of their albums, which are great. One with the legendary Kam Lee on vocals, the first one, on the second they had Blaine from The Accused on vocals. I mean, it was great to work with such amazing musicians like that. Also they had Terry Butler on bass, Sam Williams on guitar, Curt from Nasty Savage on drums and then they had Rob from D.R.I. on drums for a while. It was just a phenomenal line-up for the Denial Fiend stuff. You know, a lot of great stuff like Headhunter D.C., Thornafire from Chile and the 2 albums from Funerous. There were so many more great releases we did, I can't even remember at the moment, but I just know that it was very much an honor. Oh yeah, we did Fatalist, which is a really good one.

Gravehill, which is also really great band and Cardiac Arrest, how can I forget them. They are like one of my favorites. I also did 2 albums for Estuary. It was really a killer lineup of bands I was working with. It's sad that at the time when doing the label legal downloading was getting super rabid. I just wasn't able to make the money to keep things going. I was making like one dollar an hour from the label or something like that. But it was cool, I've had a great time and I thank everybody for working with me and believing in me. It's been an absolute honor to work with all the bands.

What are the latest news from the Funerous camp? When can we expect the continuation to the "The Black Death" EP? How did you hook up with Alwin Zuur of Asphyx for that occasion?

- I'm not exactly sure, I think around 2015 I stopped playing for Funerous. I just couldn't continue doing it with all the work I was doing with Incantation and I wasn't gonna do something half ass band-wise, it's not fair to anyone. I know they wanted to continue and do a lot of stuff and I totally understand they gotta do what they gotta do, which is totally cool. Yeah, the band's getting some great opportunities. They're playing Maryland Deathfest this year and, I know, they've played a show in New York city recently with Mortician and stuff. So it's good to see the band up and going. I mean, the band obviously means a lot to me, you know, musically and what not. I always had a great time playing in Funerous. So once it wasn't fun for me to do anymore, I knew it was time for me to go, because that's the kind of association I have with the band. As far as new material goes I really don't know what they're planning on doing as far as that. "The Black Death" EP was the last thing I've recorded with them. Alwin, he's actually always been a big fan of Funerous. So when we decided to work with Frank Schilperoord (he also does session work for Incantation) it just seemed right, you know, why not let Alwin contribute too to it. Jill, Sam and I wrote the songs, but we had Alwin kinda add his flavor to it, which was a lot of fun for us. Alwin's a great guy and it was awesome to work with him.

Three years ago there was a special release called "Rotting Spiritual Embodiment", a live material from 1991, treated by Necroharmonic Productions. Whose idea was to excavate this historical gem?

- Yes, the "Rotting Spiritual Embodiment" live album I think was the idea of Roy Fox. I mean, Roy Fox at that time used to help us out at a lot of shows and stuff like that. So he would also records the shows live on a portable cassette recorder or make sure there was soundboard recordings at the shows and stuff like that. So a couple years back he brought up to me that he was gonna release the "Rotting Spiritual Embodiment" live and I was totally down with it. I just wanted to make sure that the quality was gonna be something that I felt comfortable releasing, so I wanted to be a part of it. The era of the band on 1991 was great and a special time in the band history. I think everybody involved in the band would appreciate that. I mean, we were working really hard and we just had a good vibe in the band, the vision of the band was really starting to come together, which was really nice. You know, for me it's fun to listen to some of that older stuff that we did. What else? I think it's cool. I understand that it's a good historical piece to listen to for fans of the band. I know, any band that I am a fan of, I love hearing their older stuff live and hearing how they became what they were. So yeah, it's cool. I'm down with it.

Have to admit the Incantation clothing was always something special and of supreme quality. Who is in charge for the graphics and who designs your merchandise nowadays?

- Oh, it's awesome that you really enjoy the designs and quality of our shirts. We take a lot of pride in trying to make sure the shirts are of the best quality. Also print-wise, as far as the quality of the material and all that kind of stuff. You wanna make sure that it's gonna last. But yeah, we've been very fortunate, we had some really great artists work with us throughout the years. You know, Chris Moyon and Dahmer Art and a few others. Also Kristoff Bates did a lot of the designs for a bunch of years. Now, the guys from Hells Headbangers been helping us out with layout stuff too

and, you know, everything Hells Headbangers touches is amazing so they're doing a great job and actually helping us out a lot with that kind of stuff. Some of the art layout I do myself, I am not really great at doing layouts and graphic art stuff, but I do the best that I can. At least I know the ballpark vision we are looking for, but my stuff is not as good as somebody who is more professional at it. And we also have JSR do some of our designs too. They did some great designs for the last tour. If you guys are interested in any merch, you can always go to incantation.com that's our personal webstore and also at JSR music they have some touring stock and stuff like that. You can also buy our merch at our bandcamp site, those are the main sites if you wanna support the band directly. With these sites you can get the original and not bootlegs, 'cause like most other old-school death metal bands we have been bootlegged like crazy by a lot of different people across the world. People for some reason think that they have the right to make and sell our stuff without even being kind enough to contact us and try to work out some kind of deal.

What kind of music do you listen to lately with pleasure? Please name us some of your all-time favorites and the last 5 bought records of yours.

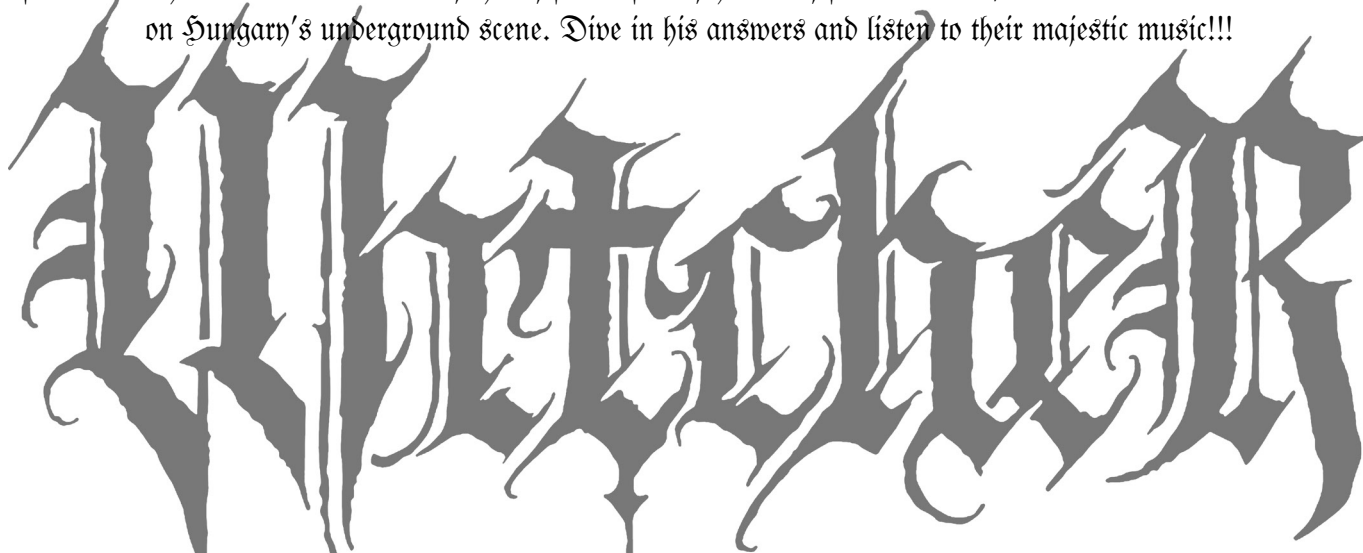
- OK, as far the stuff I've been listening to lately. One off-hand is the brand new Kurnugia. The last recording they did is totally badass. It should be released by the time this interview is posted. Definitely worth checking it out. Totally killer stuff. Also the band Mortiferum. Really great. I don't know a lot about the band, but the last album caught my ear and is really killer stuff. I really enjoyed the overall vibe of the album. It's great to see that there is some real death metal out there and it's really awesome. Also a band called Malefic Levitation and Witch Vomit. Some really good stuff, some really great atmosphere in the music. Also, like you mentioned earlier, Shed the Skin is also another one. The new album by them is really killer. Also Ascended Dead. They have a great old-school dark death vibe.

As far as the last few albums I've bought. Let me think. Well, I've bought the Possessed album "Revelations of Oblivion". A really great album. I'm so happy that Possessed is back in killer form. Even seen them live a couple of times recently. They are totally awesome! Also the Candlemass album "The Door to Doom". That was really a great album too. I'm really happy to see they have their old vocalist back. Totally classic! Actually, I seen them live recently too and they were totally killer! Heavy as fuck! Also the Mortiferum "Disgorged from Psychotic Depths". Actually, I did pick that one up too recently after hearing it from Kyle, 'cause I've thought it was so good. That's pretty much all I can think of at the moment. Yeah, I just can't really think of anything else, but those three are really good choices anyway.

At the end, please send your written incantations to the readers and unfold your future plans.

- Obviously, thanks to everybody for the support. Thank you for the interview. I'm really looking forward to a killer next run. We have a new album coming out and will have a release date real soon. We're really happy with it. It came out great. I think it's quality death metal and Incantation fans are gonna enjoy it. I also did vocals for a project with A.J. Temple and Bob Bagchus called Beast of Revelation. A really great, total death doom band. Totally proud to be a part of that. Also Tribe of Pazuzu is another band that I did some guitar work for, great death metal stuff. So definitely check them out as well. And check out incantation.com for band info and look out for a new album coming out soon. As far as all you Ukraine fucks out there. Man, we never got to play in Ukraine. We've been wanting to. Every time there is always some excuse why we can't. So hopefully somebody in Ukraine will help make this happen, because we really wanna play for all you guys. Anyway, see you guys out on the road. Hail the goat! And thank you so much for the support. It's been thirty years for us doing death metal and without you guys it wouldn't be able to happen. So thank you so much! Hell yeah, motherfuckers!

Recently I was fortunate to conduct an interview with Roland Neubauer (vocals, guitars, drums) of WitcheR. He spoke about the band's latest releases, lyrics, future plans, his label, favorite music/literature and last but not least on Hungary's underground scene. Dive in his answers and listen to their majestic music!!!



Hails Roland! You've just re-released the material of the "Néma gyász" EP (2012) along with a bonus track called "Keresztúton" taken from the split with Velm via your own label Filosofem Records. I assume this CD release was issued to celebrate the band's 10th anniversary, right? Please go into details regarding this special reissue and the merchandise you've printed alongside.

- Hello Kornél! Greetings to the readers! That's right, in 2020 was 10 years since WitcheR was officially formed, and we wanted to celebrate that with something. Initially, we only planned one t-shirt, but we have been talking with Karola for years that our forgotten "Néma gyász" EP, which received very little attention at the time, should be released in an appropriate form, on a factory CD. The ideas followed one another, so

I remixed the 2012 recording, got a new guitar sound, a new drum track and a new master, we made a new cover for it so we could celebrate with a complete package. More importantly, this CD could not have been created without the fans! Our previous album ("A gyertyák csonkig égnek") was so well received that it covered the release of this album. Thanks to everyone who contributed to this!

What should we know about the activity of Filosofem Records? List us your roster as well as the plans of the label for the 2021 year.

- Filosofem Records is our own label, created specifically to have a name behind WitcheR and related projects. If you're standing there with an author's edition in front of a magazine or another publisher for a trade, no one takes it seriously. Unfortunately, I say this from experience,

but there are many more opportunities before us. However, external bands are not accepted by Filosofem Records, no matter what I say everywhere, there are weekly inquiries. The plans for 2021? In the first half of the year, Frozen Wreath's debut album "Memento Mori" will be released on CD and cassette. This is a joint project of WitcheR and De Profundis. Then, in the fall of 2021, I plan to release the third Vrag album, which may also be released on CD and cassette under the title "Harcom". And in 2022, we are planning a new WitcheR record, we are already working on it.

Your latest full-length album "A gyertyák csonkig égnek" (2019) turned out to be simply fantastic. How the reactions to it were so far? How would you estimate its success from your own point of view?



Witcher



A GYERTYÁK CSOKKIG ÉGNEK

- Thank you for your appreciation. In fact, we were also surprised at how good the feedback came on the record, we got an amazing amount of support from the scene and the fans as well, as I mentioned, thanks to this, our "Néma gyász" EP was now able to release. We've invested a lot of money and work in getting the record to get everywhere, and so from a perspective of more than a year, I have to say that everything that happened after the release has exceeded all our expectations.

The cover artworks, "A gyertyák csokkig égnek" and "Néma gyász" (2020 version), were created by the one and only Anvil Kylv. And to be honest, they fit and support Witcher's musical soundscapes very much. Was he imagined/created the end results on his own or you've submitted precise and strict ideas to him?

- We are very satisfied with the work of Anvil Kylv! With "A gyertyák csokkig égnek" were very precise instructions, I had a very definite idea of what I wanted to see on the cover, in the case of "Néma gyász" we used an earlier painting on the front cover, and the drawing on the back cover was purposeful and personal. I think I like it better, it has a deeper say than the main cover, but the two together have meaning.

Since the beginnings you're working exclusively with Karola Gere (keyboards). So Witcher was always meant to stay a duo? What does the overall process of songwriting look like? When do the keyboard arrangements enter into the picture?

- Yes, Witcher is Karola's and my work, it was so, so it is and will be so. Only two of us are capable of what you hear on our records. The process of songwriting usually happens with Karola dreaming of some tunes, maybe I'll bring one, and then we sit down and see what we can get out of it. The goal is to create catchy and atmospheric melodies, if a theme comes up that we don't feel strong enough to do, we tend to discard it.

Let's talk a little bit about the lyrical content of Witcher. What kind of topics do they embrace? Where do you get the inspiration for them? What literature is in use when it comes to write your ideas down? When and what was the last book you've bought? Name us five of your favorite books, please.

- Most of our lyrics are about total opposition to the modern world, modern values, grief, the transience of human life, and so on. Inspiration is most often given by my own life, I walk with my eyes and my ears open, wherever an idea or a random sentence can inspire me, unfortunately we live in a world where I don't have to look for inspiration, I find it on my own. Five favorite books? You ask for the impossible. Although I don't read as much as I would like, I still couldn't name just five books that are my absolute favorite. The greatest influence was and is made on me by Hungarian literary works, the works of Jókai Mór, Móricz Zsigmond, Márai Sándor, Wass Albert, but also the works of Dostoevsky, Evola or Sapkowski are also on the list. There's everything here, from fiction to philosophy to fantasy novels, and the list would change pretty much, it depends on my daily mood.

Am I right to suppose that Hungary's underground scene these days is looking healthier and stronger than ever? First of all, I mean the unity between the fans, bands, labels, distros, mags and zines. What's your personal opinion on that? Second of all, would you be so kind as to recommend a few recent releases out of Hungary?

- Recently, a lot of bands have formed in the Hungarian underground, interesting formations are appearing in a row, but most of them are either in one place, waiting for a miracle, or just trying to climb on the other's back. Of course, great respect for a handful of exceptions! Of course, I wouldn't call the situation bad, but I've been part of the Hungarian underground for more than 20 years, I also made fanzine at that time, and honestly there were better times at home, but nostalgia may speak only of me. I'm not complaining, we're friends with a lot of bands, we're good with more labels and newspapers too, we're trying not to stir up contradictions, but to increase unity. He who asks for help from us in one way or another, but we help, and whoever approaches us with good intentions, we also receive, ignoring everyone else from our vicinity. Recommend some fresh looks? The last Aetherius Obscuritas was definitely an outstanding work at home, but the last Vvilderness and the last Ygfan – especially their split with Svoid – are absolutely at the forefront, for example, then Humugur, who created a surprisingly quality thing in death

metal, but the list is running out now for me here.

I see you are very much into the music of some black metal hordes from Ukraine. Which bands/records are your most favored ones? Have you ever been to Ukraine?

- Since there is a lot of Slavic blood (also) flowing in me, perhaps instinctively, but I really like the work of Polish, Ukrainian and Russian black metal bands, I think amazing things are going on in these arenas. I like a lot of genius bands from Ukraine, Moloth and Nokturnal Mortum are absolutely at the forefront, but there I don't forget to Hate Forest, Drudkh, Kroda, Castrum and of course Severoth, Morok and Endless Battle related to its creator projects. Unfortunately, I have not been to Ukraine yet, but of course there are plans. Kárpátalja is most interested in, because of the Hungarians there!

What do you know about the Transcarpathian region (Kárpátalja)? I mean here the bigger cities like Ungvár, Munkács, Beregszász, Técső and Huszt among others.

- Unfortunately, not as much as I would like. Obviously I know the bigger cities, the situation and trials of the Hungarians in Kárpátalja, the historical sights, the castles of Munkács, Ungvár, Szerednye. One day I definitely want to see the Székely Gate in Szelmenc, the Tatar Pass or the beautiful Hoverla. Yours is a wonderful country, I can't wait to discover it in person one day!

Finally, please reveal the future plans of Witcher. What should the fans expect from you in 2021?

- The year 2021 promises to be especially quiet for Witcher. There will definitely be no new release, but recordings for the new album will begin, we want to devote as much time as possible to releasing it by the end of 2022. We don't want to rush it because it doesn't make sense, we want to release a mature material that is also mature in production. Of course, we may still have a little surprise in 2021, but for now, everything is variable, so let's stay that way!

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ABIGORUM

"Exaltatus Mechanism" CD 2019

(Satanath Records/Death Portal Studio)

Abigorum was formerly known as a one-man project, incited by Aleksey "Satanath" Korolyov in April of 2012. For the early materials he managed to record all the instruments on his own, but since 26th of January, 2019 he was joined by two musicians from Germany, namely Tino "Fluch" Thiele on guitar/vocals and Sandra "Pesthese" Batsch on bass. As a fruit of this international cooperation the band's debut full-length album "Exaltatus Mechanism" sees the dark of the day on 14th of June, 2019.



Satanath's role on this record has changed a bit too, since here he plays exclusively on drums and responsible for the keyboard parts. The over 45 minutes long CD consists of nine ambient-like black/doom metal pieces, where the slowly crawling tempos are decisive. The lyrics are written and sung in German language, except the song called "Über Dich", where an English verse is also presented. The whole material radiates some kind of fairly evil yet dark mood that has a lot to do, in my opinion, with the bloodthirsty screams and spooky voices of Tino. As you might have understood, the biggest emphasis in this material was put on getting the obscurest vibes possible, which the trio achieved at the highest level. So welcome to the post-apocalyptic nightmare of Abigorum!!!

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ABISME

"As Fear Falls In" CD-R 2020

(Self-released)

Abisme is a four-piece death/black metal cohort out of Spain. It was formed in Barcelona in 2017 and "As Fear Falls in" is their 6-song debut release. On this record Abisme was combined by the creative forces of Anna (guitar/vocals), Joan (guitar/vocals), Uri (bass) and Víctor Gato (Drums).



Their songs were strongly influenced by the Scandinavian melodic death metal & black metal movement, thus get ready to sink into a rather spooky mixture of the given genres including hints to such magnificent hordes as At The Gates, Dissection, Necrophobic, Carnage or Arch Enemy. We have plenty of remarkable yet well-known elements there, which were cleverly twisted by the modern vibe of the 21st century. To me it would be pretty reasonable to add the "post" prefix to their style, because how they sound, how they structure their riffs and compositions, how the drummer plays and how the vocal parts were arranged are all about a "post" kind of attitude and approach in general. Don't get me wrong, the material featured

there is simply outstanding, it just breathes with modern patterns. Besides the 5 ordinary tracks one would also find a special one called "The Struggle" there. This is the last song of the CD, which was solely played on piano. A deep and expressive instrumental piece that led me to draw a parallel to Dissection's "No Dreams Breed in Breathless Sleep", not music-wise rather because the atmosphere it gives as a whole to the album as a closing track. Well, eagerly looking forward to the next Abisme stuff, until then feel free to order this circa 40 minutes long debut album at the links below!!!

E-mail: abisme.band@gmail.com

Bandcamp: abisme.bandcamp.com

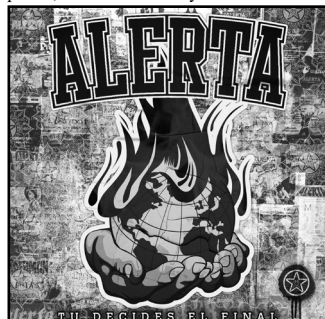
Facebook: facebook.com/Abisme.Band

ALERTA

"Tú Decides El Final" CD-R 2019

(Blood Fire Death)

Alerta is a diehard hardcore quintet hailing from the Durangaldea region that is located in the Basque Country, Spain. The band was formed in 1997 and "Tú Decides El Final" is their 5th full-length album to date. The fresh CD embraces 7 songs with circa 29 minutes playing time. Most of them captures some sort of relentless dynamism plus the mandatory dose of guitar melodies and singalongs. It has the groove, it has the punch, the kind of into your face attitude.



So I believe their songs live will definitely move the masses. The sound production is also killer. It is massive, but still comes in a crystal clear manner, if you understand what I mean. All in all, have to admit I really enjoyed their kind of hardcore meets punk and metal music. It's electrifying and thus pretty good for charging up the energetic levels of the listener. The only track, which differs somehow from the rest is the closing cut, named as "Ene Lagun Galduak". It appeared to be very soft for me. Nevertheless, it features guest vocals by their friend, Iban Gorriti, who's also responsible for writing the song called "Do It Yourself!". By the way, the line-up of Alerta on this recording is as follows: Jabi (voice), Sesi (guitar), Beny (guitar), Txitxi (bass) and Kantero (drums). The info sheet recommends Alerta for fans of Habeas Corpus, Soziedad Alkoholika, Hatebreed, Earth Crisis, Walls of Jericho & Madball. Well, so be it!!!

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ANMASKER

"How Much Is Your Mask?" CD 2019

(Alone Records)

"How Much Is Your Mask?" is the debut full-length album by the Zaporizhia-based thrash metal trio called Anmasker. Its career started in 2016, though prior to that it was functioning as Unmasker, at least for four years. The album consists of eight well-written and -arranged thrash metal hymns that are about to shake your body and mind respectively. The three-piece unit – Andrii Kachanov (lead vocals/bass), Serhii Bielikov (guitars/backing vocals) & Olexandr Hubko (drums/backing vocals) – is fully aware of how to make their tunes memorable and crushing at once. They've managed to combine a lot of killer grooves, dynamics, solos and vocal parts in their stuff. Their lyrics

are meaningful as well, which is a cool thing. Musically there is a rather balanced twist between the European and the US bands of the 80s. To me it's a flawless debut CD that comes with the beloved old school bang your head feeling plus a great sound production provided by Anton Vorozhtsov. The nearly 39 minutes long album is definitely a good start, so I am already in wait for their next material. The CD pairs with an awesome 16-page booklet, which was tastefully designed. Enough said. Thrash till death!!!



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APPALLING TESTIMONY

"Feed To Survive" CD 2019

(Pathologically Explicit Recordings)

Appalling Testimony is the freshest division of the ultra-brutal death metal community of Ukraine. It was founded in Kyiv in March of 2018 by current and past members of such well- and at some point unfortunately less-known bands as Zoofagus, Ideologies Embodied, Intoxicated, Ezophagothomia, Repulsive Dissection, Zombies Eat My Neighbours, Necropsy Defecation, Metastasis, etc. "Feed to Survive" is their first demo that consists of 5 tracks in total and lasts nearly 13 minutes. It was recorded in the following lineup: Vitaly Drozdov (vocals), Yura Kowalchuk (guitars), Stanislav Shkatov (bass) and Alexey Rudkovskiy (drums). Let me tell you at once that the achieved sound production is totally sick, kind of bulldozer-like and as a whole it reminded me very much Ezophagothomia. If I skip the horror film-based intro and outro, which by the way were aptly chosen, we have 3 songs of their own. These cuts were conceived in the best traditions of the US slam/brutal death metal scene. So, you'll get a creepy mix of the sickest possible guitar hooks, drum chops, bass lines and death grunts over there. Moreover, each of them features a guest vocalist too, so you can hear the utmost growls of Evgeniy "Corvus" (Encephalotomy)



in "Overthrow to Decapitate", John Lecher (Splattered Cadaver) in "Embalmed in the Name of Science" and Alex (Voracity) in "Sequestered and Rotten Alive". This killer piece of CD comes with an awesome looking 6-panel booklet and the maximally fitting front cover by Rudi Yanto of Gorgingsuicide Art. Nice start sickos!!!

Facebook: facebook.com/AppallingTestimony

ARALLU

"En Olam" CD 2019

(Satanath Records/Exhumed Records)

Oh my gosh, this band was formed in 1997, but seemingly stuck in the deepest depths of the underworld, as to my surprise I've just discovered them and their really

exciting music. The quintet is from Israel and it propagates Mesopotamian black/thrash metal. "En Olam" is their 7th long play and it includes 10 spells to be spread over the chosen ones. While listening to their particular musical alloy, which is maximally enjoyable, I could draw for myself a few stylistic similarities with such pioneers of the above mentioned sub-genre as Absu, Melechesh, Orphaned Land and Salem. In my opinion, Arallu is about to join this prestigious list of famous bands in very short time, because their over 38 minutes long repertory deserves it and has to be espied by others as well.



Ultra catchy guitar melodies, harsh vocals, sophisticated drum parts added by the special Mesopotamian atmosphere and lyrical content are the magical ingredients you can surely expect to perceive during an Arallu ritual. This fantastic album was released in three different physical formats: CD, digipak CD and 12" vinyl. Now it is your turn to choose! Myself after listening multiple times to this stuff have to definitely unearth their previous materials too!!! Preferred songs are: "The Center of the Unknown", "Devil's Child", "Prophet's Path" and "Trial by Slaves".

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AUTOMB

"Chaosophy" CD 2020

(Witching Hour Productions)

Let me gladly report you that Pittsburgh's souls of black are back and ready to infest your subconsciousness with their second aural disaster, the ably titled "Chaosophy".



The proud successor to the band's highly acclaimed debut album "Esoterica" has been divided to 9 chapters and likewise its predecessor it is exceptionally about the unfolding of the most eerie forms of death, chaos and destruction. The unchanged triumvirate, i.e. Danielle Evans (lead vocals, bass, keys), Serge Streltsov (guitars, keys, backing vocals) and Scott Fuller (session drums), has proven once again their capability of creating top notch black metal songs. They combine the speed, the melodies and the aggression with miraculous songwriting skills, similarly as we used to hear and explore on the records of Dissection, Marduk, Belphegor and Behemoth. The new material is definitely much gloomier and more mature plus less death metal influenced in comparison to the songs of "Esoterica". What else? Well, the over 41 minutes long stuff sounds great and proportional, so production-wise you're going to be pleased and that's for sure! And now as they are bond with the legendary Polish label Witching Hour Productions, I foresee a huge breakthrough and a mandatory European tour as well! The astounding front

cover was designed by Nestor Avalos and besides the regular CD version (8-panel digipak) you can also get "Chaosophy" on vinyl (limited 12" in two colors). My fave tracks are: "Transmigration Omega", "Chaosophy", "Selbstgott" and "Trishula".
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BAD VICTIM

"Sira A Chlad" CD 2019

(Self-released)

This is my first acquaintance with Bad Victim, but let me tell you at once it is a long time functioning combo. It was established in 2000 and prior to this recent stuff they've managed to release three more materials, namely "Blindness 254/506" (2005), "Střepina" (2007) and "Epocentrum" (2014). They are from the Czech Republic and play some sort of groovy thrash/death metal with a sinister touch. "Sira A Chlad" is their fourth release. It has 10 pieces and lasts 36 minutes. The recording line-up was as follows: Miland (vocals), Eda (guitar), Laca (bass & backing vocals) and Tympán (drums). The quartet masterfully mixes the sounds of the 90s together with the elements of the 21st century. Personally to me their songs most of the time sounded like a well-balanced mixture between Slayer, Behemoth and Machine Head. Moreover, you can find there tons of intriguing ingredients, like tribal drum patterns, modern riff-structures,



ominous intros/samples, catchy guitar melodies, hammer blasts, variegated vocal parts, etc. All this pairs with a crystal clear sound production and a "Reign in Blood" alike cover art. The self-released digipak CD comes with a 16-page booklet and a flawless design. Tasty release so to say. Thus let's keep our eyes and ears wide open for their next album!!!

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BARBARIAN SWORDS

"Totemic Anal Turbofucker" CD-R 2019

(Third-I-Rex/Fair Warning/Blood Fire Death)

The Catalan black/doom metal hooligans (although the "doom" prefix not so appropriate anymore I assume) strike back with their 3rd album, which musically is definitely faster, more evil and scornful than for example their 2 songs found on the



"Tetrarchia Ex Bestia" split CD. The new release radiates from pure blasphemous attitude and gathers 8 songs in total. The nearly 25 minutes long material has been maximally filled with misanthropy, hatred and crushing black metal attacks. It storms hellishly well in the vein of such majestic blackened satanic hordes as Impaled Nazarene, Marduk, Urgehal, Carpathian Forest, Bestial Warlust, Funeral Mist, Craft or Bestial

Mockery for instance. By the way, their song titles simply speak for themselves and for the lyrical content you're gonna find there, so I am going to list them here and leave them for your consideration: "Dios Te Salve", "How to Destroy Christianity", "Fleshy Battering Ram", "Be the War", "Jesus the Pederast", "Pig Crap Shitty Christ", "Cerebros Destruídos (Eskorbuto)" and "Totemic Anal Turbofucker". Very sick stuff that has to be heard again and again. The line-up of Barbarian Swords on this record is: Von Páx (vocals), Steamroller (guitar), Voice of Noise (guitar), Panzer (bass) and Joe Beltza (drums). To cut it short, order this sacrilegious piece of nihilistic art right now!!!

E-mail: barbarianswords@gmail.com

Bandcamp: barbarianswords.bandcamp.com

Facebook: facebook.com/BarbarianSwordsMetal

БАТЮШКА

"Раскол" CD 2020

(Witching Hour Productions)

"Раскол" is the newest 5-song EP of Батюшка led by vocalist Барфоломей aka Bartłomiej Krysiuk. In the recordings all the 8 members participated. Music-wise we get an upgraded formula of the previous materials,



though with a different perspective. During the over 30 minutes long EP you can expect a pretty atmospheric, almost meditation-like black metal alloy that lyrically was inspired by the eastern orthodox cultures. By the way, the title of the EP itself in an allegoric way also refers to the split that took place in 2018, while its lyrical part is based on personal interpretations of the texts found in the "Sticherion" book that is still used by the old believers of all confessions. The five "Ирмос" liturgies connect rather well into each other displaying a somber, monastic sounding coherent monolith. I am sure this kind of monolithic vibe would sound even more effective at a live performance, especially if it will be paired with the appropriate visuals. Maciej Szupica was in charge for the graphic concepts as well as the cover art. Needless to mention, he did an astonishing yet meticulously detailed work on all the illustrations. This release is available to purchase in digital form, classic jewel case CD, limited digipak CD and cassette versions plus will be available on limited vinyl versions shortly too. A must for all the diehard Батюшка fans worldwide!!!

E-mail: batushka@batushkaofficial.com

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BESTIAL INVASION

"Monomania" CD 2019

(Nocturnus Records)

"Monomania" is the third long play album and also the best what Bestial Invasion released so far. I clearly remember my first acquaintance with the band was around the release of their debut 2-song demo called "Silent Wonders". At the time, I felt they aren't ready to impress a single metal soul, because of their supersonic copycat attitude. Fortunately, since that time a few new members joined the fold and their music became more mature, more technical and even more professional, plus finally really great ideas started to appear in their repertoire. Still we are far from talking about the uniqueness or originality of Bestial Invasion's music, however what they did

on "Monomania" and how they did it has to be treated positively. This release is a very good example of their progression and will to play and create some sort of extraordinary musical alloy with the vibe of 90s heavy, thrash and death metal classics. Needless to say, the album's 8 tracks are full of catchy riff orgies, marvelous solos, sophisticated bass patterns and juicy drumming. The conception behind their compositions is rather weird, but it works and quite enjoyable. If I had to mention, which band names popped up during the 36 and a half minutes long album, I would definitely list you these names: Forbidden, King Diamond, Agent Steel, Watchtower, Nevermore and last but not least Atheist. From the latter one the quintet performs the "Retribution" song in a slightly modified and updated version. Impressive job! My absolute favorite track is "The Angel of the West Window", it has been so well influenced by King Diamond & Forbidden,



especially vocals-wise. The album features a few special musicians as well, like Kelly Shaefer (Atheist) and Doug Piercy (Blind Illusion) with guest solos in "Memories. The Architect of the Universe" and the drummer of hundreds of bands, no other than Andrey Ischenko. Enough said, listen to it and buy the physical copy!!!

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Bandcamp: bestialinvasion.bandcamp.com

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BESTIALORD

"Black Mass Wedding" CD 2019

(GrimmDistribution)

Here comes the second full-length CD by Wichita-located necromancers – Bestialord. Their line-up didn't change since their debut record "Law of the Burning", so you can hear the sounds of horror and occult transferred by the same evil souls, namely Mark Anderson (guitar/vocals), Rob Harris (bass) and Chris Johnson (drums).



The ominous trio continues to spread their special kind of sonic nightmare upon the masses. The eight album tracks are full of very exciting spells converted into the most hideous chants, groovy yet twisted riffs, tricky bass lines, unmerciful beats of doom and last but not least unearthly solos. It is sounding magnificent, heavy, twisted, deadly and it is definitely old-school like. If you ask me, the music found on "Black Mass Wedding" can be described as a doom metal version of Morbid Angel's first classics. During the circa 41-minute long stuff you are going to headbang in a non-stop mode. It is a very well-written album that first and foremost I would like to advise for fans of Morbid Angel, Acheron, Incantation, Evil Incarnate, Obituary and Nocturnus. Get it, death/doom metal at its best!!! My fave cuts are: "Coven of the Dead", "Magna Mater"

and "Writhe with Serpents".

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BLACK CULT

"Nekropola" CD 2020

(GrimmDistribution/InsArt Records)

The third and most mature album of Croatia's Black Cult is finally here. "Nekropola" consists of eight avant-garde-like black metal songs with over forty minutes of playing time. Its members are Morbid (vocals), Insanus (drums, guitars in studio), Lesovik (bass) and Azaghal (guitars live). The recording trio did an awesome job with all the cuts of "Nekropola". On the one hand, there's a definite Scandinavian touch almost everywhere, which on the other hand was masterfully mixed-up by the elements of abstract and progressive. I would roughly say that in most of the cases it sounds like a cross between Emperor and Coroner, except for the Hibernum cover.



Their lyrics were written in both English and Croatian languages. By the way, the use of the latter one adds some extra vibe to the already ice-cold repertoire. "Nekropola" is very technical, profound and unique. So the ones who are constantly in search of new and weird solutions to be applied to the black metal genre will maximally enjoy this album and that's damn sure!!!

E-mail: band@blackcult.info

Website: blackcult.info

Bandcamp: blackcult.bandcamp.com

Facebook: facebook.com/BlackCult

BLEEDSKIN

"Blood Reign" CD 2020

(Self-released)

BleedSkin is an up-and-coming death metal horde from Belgium. It was established in 2016. Their first stuff "The Rotten One" was a 5-song EP released in 2018. Now they've returned with their forceful debut full-length record called "Blood Reign".



It consists of eleven pieces and lasts circa 39 minutes. The quintet – Anouk Debecq (vocals), Céline Mazay (rhythm guitars), Benjamin Lefèvre (lead guitars), Rémy Adam (bass) & Julien Vanhees (drums) – delivers a destroying alloy between the old-school and the modern interpretations of death metal. Have to admit they're handling their instruments on a rather good level. Their compositions are really well-crafted and technically fair as well. This kind of music should truly rip the face off of the listener, especially during a live performance. I found there a lot of intriguing ideas, even if musically the band is heavily influenced by Cannibal Corpse and Dying Fetus. Nevertheless, I think it's a decent debut album, which the majority of the death metal fans will praise

from the first listen. Oh, and let me tell you in addition that the bloodthirsty growls of Anouk will make some of the male grumblers become flushed. In a word, keep checking back for BleedSkin from time to time as they might surprise you even more!!! Preferred songs are: "Eternal Hatred", "Perversion of Mankind" and "Chaos Theory".
E-mail: bleedskin@gmail.com
Bandcamp: bleedskin.bandcamp.com
Facebook: facebook.com/OfficialBleedSkin

CONCEIVED BY HATE

"Putrid Realms Of The Occult" CD 2020
 (Satanath Records/Morbid Skull Records)

Every four years they return to contaminate the humankind with the aural plague known as old-school death metal. This new record, their third full-length already, has a way more Swedish guitar sound and darker vibe as its predecessors. Moreover, it was also strongly influenced by doom metal bands of the most obscure origins.



Somehow inevitably – Asphyx, Hypocrisy, Dissection, Grave, Cancer, Autopsy – these names popped up in my mind during the over forty minutes stuff. Let me tell you in short, "Putrid Realms of the Occult" is another great album by Conceived by Hate, which should not be treated as something unique or innovative at all, it's just a record that has definitely good and listenable music and was created in respect to the pioneers of the doom & death metal genres. There are nine crushing songs in total, which were recorded by the duo: Morbid (guitars, bass, vocals) & I.N. (drums), except for the acoustic piece "Cipreses Fúnebres" (it was recorded by C.A.). Killer back to the 90s death metal savagery!!! My preferred tracks are: "Drowned in Tomb Mold", "Into Cemetery Fog" and "Cabalistic Utter Obscurity".

E-mail: morbidskullsv@gmail.com
Bandcamp: conceivedbyhate.bandcamp.com
Facebook: facebook.com/conceivedbyhate

DEEMTEE

"Flawed Synchronization With Reality" CD 2019
 (GrimmDistribution/Suprachaotic Records)

Deemtee (DMT) is an intense naturally-occurring psychedelic that's also found endogenously in the human body) is a Spanish avant-garde one-man project initiated by Oscar Martín Díez-Canseco aka NHT (vocals,



guitars, bass, drums & synths) in 2015 and "Flawed Synchronization with Reality" is the debut material of this super weird musical oneness. The seven songs of the CD were conceived under the effects of THC, thus don't expect the resulting ideas to be typical at all. Furthermore, NHT defines his music as psychedelic freeform black metal, which is a very apt definition taking into account

the large presence of elements coming from depressive suicidal black metal, psychedelic rock, doom metal, progressive death metal and even mathcore. The variety of musical patterns is simply vast there. By the words of NHT it is a music, which explores the unreal, parallel worlds, the psyche, dreams and the limits of universe and time. Indeed, his arrangements sound deeply abstract, futuristic and unique. Moreover, I could easily imagine one or another fragment from the current album as a soundtrack for an alien-motivated sci-fi movie, e.g. the track called "Mirror of Confusion" would be the perfect choice, in my honest opinion. To cut it short, it's rather innovative and experimental, something you should listen to first!!! To cut it short, it's rather innovative and way experimental, if you ask me, it's something you have to listen to a couple of times to understand and get the real idea of its creator!!!

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DEHYDRATED

"...And Death Shall Have No Dominion" CD 2019
 (Immortal Souls Productions)

My first encounter with this cult Slovakian death metal band was around the release of their debut album "Ideas" (1997). At that time, it was issued on cassettes by Metal Age Productions. Since the foundation of the band in 1991 only Braňo Jurák (guitar) left there. In 2015 he managed to add three new musicians, namely Janek Bezový (bass), Pepe Benčík (guitar), Drahos "Dragon" Gabriš (vocals) and a year later Roman "Elevo" Laššo (drums) joined in to complete the band. In this lineup they've recorded their comeback album "Resurrection" (2017) and the actual 2-song EP. The EP starts with the title track "...And Death Shall Have No Dominion".



It was built upon a few plain, but really groove-oriented riffs, which do their thing and return us back to the golden 90s. Yeah, we have a deal with true old-school death metal here and that's for sure! The second song is "Cold and Bleeding". It begins with a super catchy riff that slowly transforms into even more melody-filled guitar patterns. The overall effect is a little bit Swedish-like, despite the here and there added bulldozing blasts of Elevo and killer guest vocals of Kam Lee. However, what I liked the most about it definitely goes for its dynamic consistency. Pure awesomeness in a word! It's a pity that the EP is just eleven and half minutes long, but is damn good as a teaser before the next Dehydrated album's release!!!

Website: www.dehydrated.sk
Bandcamp: dehydrated-isp.bandcamp.com
Facebook: facebook.com/dehydratedsk

DEMENTOR

"Blasphemy Madness" CD 2019
 (Self-released)

Finally, the number one Slovak death metal machine known as Dementor brings out some new stuff! It's actually a 3-song EP and kind of teaser before the band's upcoming 8th full-length album. Musically, the eleven minutes long CD continues the well-established path of the "Damned" material. However, there's a definite growth of melodies and grooves in the repertoire of "Blasphemy Madness". It is still about brutal death metal in general, but the trio – Rasto

(vocals/guitar), Ondrej (bass) & Lorenzo (drums) – seems to open new doors for the next album to come. The CD starts with "Magic of Death", a pure Dementor hymn. It includes all the beloved ingredients, like the deep sullen vocals, the twisted guitar riffs, the concreting bass parts and last but not least the fast and furious drum patterns.



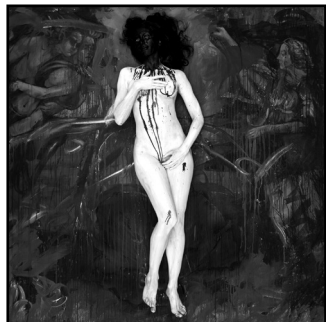
It follows the title track, which is another brutal piece of art. It storms pretty well until the middle of the composition, where the atmospheric guitar harmonies take over the sheer brutality for a couple of seconds (very good and diverse addition if you ask me) to end it afterwards the same way as it was started. "In Guild with Deamon" closes the CD. It is the grooviest and most melodic song of the EP. The booklet features all the lyrics plus an awesome mega satanic cover artwork too! Let me also remind you that this release was strictly limited to 100 copies, so better hurry up to get your copy in time! A must for all the Dementor fans worldwide!!!

E-mail: dementor@post.sk
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DESCEND INTO DESPAIR

"Opium" CD 2020
 (Funere)

"Opium" is the third long play by Descend into Despair from Romania. The introspective doom metal septet is currently residing in Cluj-Napoca. Their new stuff consists of three ultra-lengthy songs, i.e. "ensh[r]ine", "antumbra" and "dis[re]member". The almost hour long album has become quite ethereal, on my opinion this kind of vibe was mainly dictated by the use of the keyboard instruments. On the other hand, musically it has a relaxing radiation with a positive tone, unlike the majority of funeral doom dealers, whose music is exclusively about darkness, loneliness and desperation. Don't get me wrong, there's a lot of sad moments there and the lyrics aren't about the bright sides of life as well, but their kind of doom metal not too funeral-like if you ask me. Nevertheless, the members of Descend into Despair are knowing very well how to compose ecstatic soundscapes with the incorporation of deep emotions. They fuse together pretty much everything, thus with each new listen one can find out more and more details there,



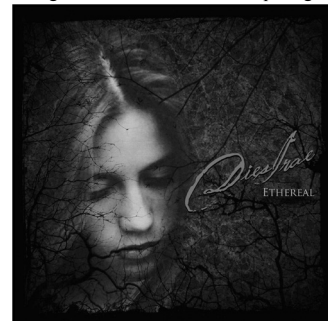
which make their music great, artistic and indefatigable. The overall sound production comes in a well-balanced monumental way that's a pleasure to listen to!!! The CD itself is accompanied by a cozy 6-panel digipak that was limited to 300 copies. So order this doom classic before it will be too late!!!

E-mail: xander.coza@gmail.com
Bandcamp: descendintodespairstudio.bandcamp.com
Facebook: facebook.com/descendintodespairstudio

DIES IRAE

"Ethereal" CD 2019
 (GrimmDistribution/Exhumed Records)

The following is a re-release of Dies Irae's first full-length album "Ethereal" (1998). The Mexican post metal band was formed in 1994 and it disbanded in 2002, but since 2009 it is active again. On their first album the quartet – Dah (vocals/guitar), Eduardo Gómez (lead guitar), Carlos Orozco (bass) and Luis Martínez (drums) – tried to combine the Gothenburg-style melodic death metal along with experimental, fusion and jazz-like patterns. The resulting alloy is truly variegated and full of emotional passages.



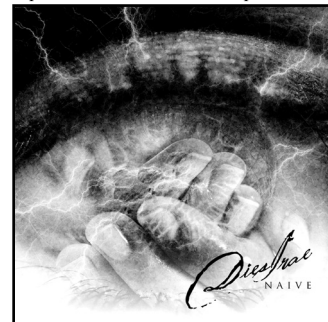
Maybe due to the latter one their music is too soft to be called extreme at all, its base is definitely death metal, but there are so many elements coming from classic music, gothic rock, doom metal as well as from the above listed styles that those stylistic borders get really blurred there. It's even technical at some point, so in my opinion the 10 album tracks plus the 2 additional bonuses (all songs were fully remastered, by the way) will give you a good reflection about the band's past work. Not sure, if the new generation of metal heads will be interested by this material, but for diehard fans of Dies Irae it's a must to have this re-release in their collection!!!

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Facebook: facebook.com/diesiraeonline

DIES IRAE

"Naive" CD 2019
 (GrimmDistribution/Exhumed Records)

Thanks to the joint work of GrimmDistribution and Exhumed Records the second full-length album of the Mexican four-piece band known as Dies Irae has been recently re-released as well. "Naive" includes 9 tracks, which dig even deeper into the spheres of the Swedish melodic death metal. Back then the Mexicans were heavily influenced by the early materials of Dark Tranquillity and In Flames. As a fact, "Naive" originally was released in 2001 via Oz Productions. This material is more straightforward and has less experimental solutions than its predecessor.



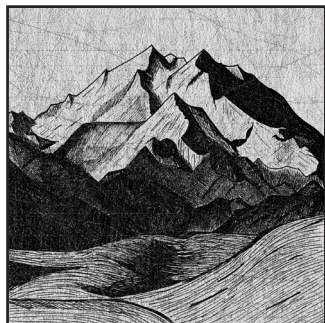
Apropos, it was recorded at Fredman Studio in Gothenburg (Sweden) and was produced/mixed by Fredrik Nordström. The recording line-up was the same as for "Ethereal", but me personally, like the songs of "Naive" better. The only thing I still couldn't figure out regarding Dies Irae's music, why the quartet choose to play the Swedish kind of melodic death metal, if it is something the Swedes do better! Despite this little thing, "Naive" is a very good album with great tunes and good sound. This re-release features a live bonus on the song called "Parallel Universe 1" that displays the technical abilities of the band

members at a live show. Very good example, so to say, it even includes a tasty drum solo in the middle of it. The CD lasts over 70 minutes and comes with a fully redesigned artwork!

DONARHALL “Helvegr” CD 2019

(Symbol Of Domination/Black Metal Propaganda Deutschland)

Donarhall is a fully instrumental black metal one-man project from Lower Saxony (Germany). It was invoked to life by mastermind Eugen Kohl aka Gnev in 2016. Besides the current project he is also involved in Crypt Witch, Death Carrier, Hexengrab, Necrochaos, Nihilistic, Sinister Downfall and Urschmerz. Busy as hell musician, as you can see! “Helvegr” is the fifth long play of Donarhall. It counts 8 songs in total with a 47-minute playing time. Musically, it is very atmospheric, kind of relaxed black metal that has elements of funeral doom metal as well.



Really enjoyable stuff that to my mind was assumed to have the effect of background music, because while listening to it you can freely do whatever you want, it definitely won't interfere with any of your tasks. In short, what you are going to perceive and feel during the songs of “Helvegr” can be described as pure meditation and freedom of senses! The vibes are very deep there! It is something like when the nature comes to you in different beautiful forms or let's say soundscapes, while you are sitting in the chair and let the sounds of “Helvegr” penetrate your mind. I wholeheartedly recommend to listen to this marvelous masterpiece for fans of any kind of metal music!!!

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DRIFT OF GENES “Frozen Soil” CD 2018

(Pathologically Explicit Recordings)

Drift of Genes was brought to life by Viacheslav “Spasm” Platonov in the year of 2008. It is formerly from Debal'tseve (Donetsk region), but recently Viacheslav dwells in Kharkov. He is the sole creator of both the music and the lyrics too. Moreover,



he recorded all the guitar, bass and vocal parts for “Frozen Soil”. By the way, it is his fourth full-length CD already. Drum parts were recorded by the talented Dmitry Kim, who's active in a huge number of bands & projects as well, let me mention for you just a few ones here: Balance Interruption, Goatpsalm, Hexenmeister, Human Nihilism, Morton, Posthumous Blasphemer, Unholyath. “Frozen Soil” consists of 10 compositions and lasts 32 minutes. To be honest, the music itself isn't too captivat-

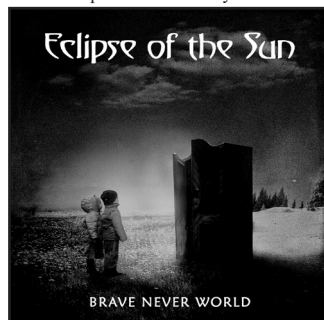
ing. It is played and performed on a professional level, but somehow the album lacks of “real” songs. Most of the time it is about brutal death metal with slam-like elements, but one can find a couple of really tricky guitar melodies there too. The growls are rather monotonous to me. I mean Viacheslav did a way better job on the Human Nihilism records. It's a good material and I am also sure that most of the brutal death metal fans will like the songs of “Frozen Soil”. I've listened to this CD a few times, I've tried to memorize it, but I can't really come up with any favorite tunes. It seems this stuff is definitely not my cup of tea. Anyway, feel free to check the musical arsenal of Drift of Genes at bandcamp. Oh, wait a second, there's still a thing I liked a lot and it goes to the fabulous cover artwork of Pedro Sena (Lordigan). Total awesomeness so to say!!!

E-mail: driftofgenes@gmail.com
Bandcamp: driftofgenes.bandcamp.com
Facebook: facebook.com/driftofgenes

ECLIPSE OF THE SUN “Brave Never World” CD 2020

(Satanath Records/More Hate Productions)

Hungary's Eclipse of the Sun returns with its second full-length titled as “Brave Never World”. The eight compositions the quartet is about to present us there are all about the usual motifs of gothic doom and melodic death metal with a slight addition of keyboards. Really nothing special if you ask me. Of course, atmosphere-wise it's sad and even funeral-like at times, but despite the well-balanced sound production I found their music very much lacking of good ideas and melodies. Unfortunately, the over 49 minutes long album went pretty boring for me. Their musical approach is definitely not my cup of tea. So let's pass it exclusively to the fans of the band and also let's hope they can come up with more variety in the future.



This album was crafted by the following members: Dániel Szöllösi (vocals, guitar, synth programming), Gergő Kovács (guitar), György Kantár (bass), Dávid Antal (drums) and the tracklist is as follows: “Pillars of Creation”, “Things Called Life”, “Brave Never World”, “Not a Symbol”, “Home”, “World Without Words”, “Death of Pan”, “Era of Sun”.

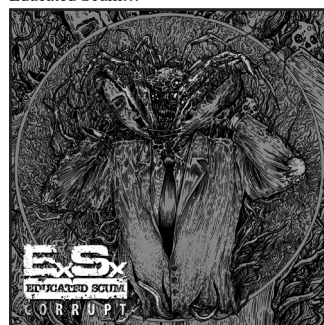
E-mail: ecofthesun@gmail.com
Bandcamp: eclipseofthesun.bandcamp.com
Facebook: facebook.com/eclipseofthesunband

EDUCATED SCUM “Corrupt” CD 2019

(GrimmDistribution/More Hate Productions)

Educated Scum is a Moscow-located extreme metal combo initiated in the year of 2000. “Corrupt” is their second full-length album up to now. It consists of 10 pieces, which blend different styles altogether. Despite the often used blasting drum parts, this band isn't about the pure form of grindcore or death metal, because there's a lot of influences coming from hardcore, groove metal and especially thrash metal. So it's not strange that the name of Sepultura many times appeared in my mind during their half an hour long CD. Elements of modern, like deathcore and metalcore are also widely presented there. Generally speaking, the tracks found on “Corrupt” are not about uniqueness and that's for sure. However, it was arranged in professional

way. The sound is OK too. Well, if someone would ask what impressed me the most there? I would definitely say the masterfully executed solos. Those ones are really worth to listen to! Other than that there was nothing else found of my interest. I believe this stuff was exclusively done for the diehard fans of Educated Scum!!!

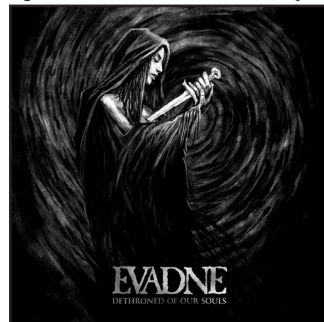


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EVADNE “Dethroned Of Our Souls” CD 2019

(Funere)

“Dethroned Of Our Souls” is a wondrous 8-track compilation CD by the Spanish melodic doom/death brigade: Evadne. The over an hour long disc starts with the three remixed and remastered songs of “Dethroned of Light” EP (2014), though in a reverse order: “Bleak Remembrance”, “Awaiting”, “The Wanderer”. The newly captured sound production is way juicier and empyrean. The fourth track is a cover version on Officium Triste's “Like Atlas”. Absolutely flawless reinterpretation and that's for sure! It is followed by “Colossal” that was re-recorded live at PKO Studios in 2018. This newer version became very epic as a whole, kind of astonishing piece full of deep emotional passages. The last three tracks – “At the Edge of the Cliff”, “The Autumn of the Withered Roses” and “Bleak Remembrance” – are taken from the band's debut demo “In the Bitterness of Our Souls” (2004). They come the original untouched way, thus one can reconnect with the past and enjoy their raw sounds. The vinyl-style CD and the 12-page booklet have been placed in a fantastic digibook, which was limited to 300 copies.



Oh and yes, this release also got a killer cover art by Vladimir Prokofiev. Simply a must to have for all the diehard fans of Evadne!!!

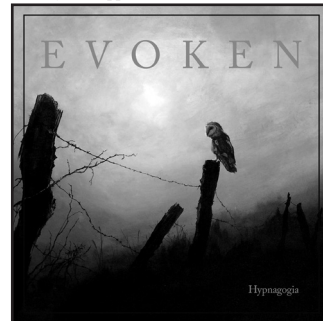
E-mail: evadnemail@gmail.com
Website: www.evadne.es
Bandcamp: evadneofficial.bandcamp.com
Facebook: facebook.com/EvadneOfficial

EVOKEN “Hypnagogia” CD 2019

(Funere/Katran Records)

My first encounter with Evoken's music was in the year of their “Embrace the Emptiness” debut album. That record has been my big favorite ever since. And if I may say so, fortunately their music hasn't changed much over the years, which I think in a completely positive sense here. They remained equally loyal to their music and style. Evoken's sixth full-length album “Hypnagogia” was officially out in 2018 through Canada's Profound Lore Records. The current digipak CD is the re-release of

that monstrous masterpiece by the covenant of two labels: Funere and Katran Records. It was limited to 400 copies and is for sale in CIS countries only. The eight-track album faithfully to its predecessors accompanies the listeners onto another enchanting and hypnotic journey, this time for over an hour. The musical landscapes are reasonably relaxed and as usual they've been fairly overthought, interwoven with deep emotions, while the pace remains as slow as possible. Their type of funeral doom/death metal is definitely soaked by the euphoria of death itself. The literally true approach, otherwise it cannot be!



The burial assembly of “Hypnagogia” was as follows: John Paradiso (vocals/guitars), Chris Molinari (guitars), David Wagner (bass), Don Zaros (keyboards) and Vince Verkey (drums). From the masters of doom & death to the rest!!!

E-mail: quietus666@gmail.com
Facebook: facebook.com/evokenhell

GOLDEN BLOOD “Cum, Coke & Blasphemy” CD 2020

(Witching Hour Productions)

Golden Blood is the freshest incarnation out of the blackened underground mass of the 21st century. It is solely led by Erech Leleth, who's currently residing in Austria. His debut EP “Cum, Coke & Blasphemy” embraces 4 songs with 16 minutes playing time. Let me tell you that all those songs are stylistically different, only the dirty punk-like sound unites them as one. The EP starts in the manner of Dissection, with a short but really somber introduction that is followed by powerful thrash metal chugs and the catchy refrains of “Cum, Coke & Blasphemy”. The second track is “Nightfall”, which is about to mix classic heavy metal with some kind of black'n'roll fun and in addition there's also a killer oriental riff at the middle of it. It's almost sounds like Mercyful Fate meets Motörhead. The next one is “We Will Ride”. It storms pretty well in the true Nordic black metal spirit. This song is definitely about grimmess and coldness, though for a few parts (you'll find them in the middle) it enters again to the dominion of thrash metal.



The fourth and last track is called “Empress of the Unholy Reich”. Well, it reminded me pretty much the early records of Arch Enemy, both melodies- and vocals-wise, even if the resulting admixture is about the twists of black & heavy metal. It is already known that by the end of 2020 we'll face the first Golden Blood full-length album too, so listen to this EP a lot and prepare yourself for the continuation!!!

E-mail: biuro@witchinghour.pl
Webstore: store.witchinghour.pl
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GOLGATA
"Skam" CD 2019
 (Satanath Records)

Golgata is a Swedish black metal duo that I was completely unaware of until now, it was formed in 2014 and its debut album was recently released by the Russian record label Satanath Records. The eight tracks of "Skam" are highly atmospheric, epic and induced by Scandinavian folk music. The two spokesmen as they call themselves created an enchanting cavalcade of Nordic melodies that was firmly put into the prebend of the black metal style. Their lyrics touch the themes of dark philosophy, nature and history. The 36-minute long repertoire mostly has a calming effect and the tempos are marching, but of course this idyll often breaks under the storming blast beats parts of the drums. Unfortunately, the programmed drum patterns sound totally horrible, too synthetic and ear irritating, if you ask me. This type of music has to be recorded with live sounding drums exclusively! Despite



this minor, but still annoying fact, which I deeply recommend to correct for the second album, I found the songs of Golgata very good. No doubt, "Skam" is a decent black metal release! Let me finish this review with words from the creators themselves: "Who we are, are not relevant. But what we are is. What are we? We are the sound of our origin!"

GÖR MÖRGÛL
"Elohim" CD 2019
 (Satanath Records/Death Portal Studio)

This is already the third full-length album of the Italian blackened death metal horde. With this new record the Sardinian occultists are going to punch in your ear canals so hard and with such a terrible accuracy that you must be a prepared metalhead to survive their circa 34-minute long aural annihilation! The drummer, Simone "ArcOnDa" Piras, mainly dictates a lightning speed tempo, thus the eight chapters of "Elohim" storm in a tornado-like manner and leave absolutely no mercy for the listener. The quartet skillfully spreads some of the darkest and eeriest musical moods with a sort of ritualistic approach, the way we used to hear it for example from Behemoth. Moreover, the same goes to the lyrical context found there as their topics are very close to the ones heard in Behemoth before. As you've noticed from my words, this band not really cares about originality, their main objective is to create good and quality extreme music, which I have to admit they've maximally achieved.



The current CD, like its predecessor, was released in cooperation of two labels, i.e. Satanath Records and Death Portal Studio. Let's hope for a fair dose of uniqueness on their upcoming stuff!!!

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HADOPELAGIAL
"Hadopelagial" CD 2020
 (Satanath Records)

Hadopelagial is a 2-piece harsh black metal coalition from Leipzig. It was established in 2017. Its members are C.C. (all instruments) and Ghoul (vocals/lyrics). Their 8-song debut record was issued by Satanath Records on 18th of March, 2020. Music-wise it is fast, intense, merciless and evil, while lyrics-wise it is most likely satanic. Beginning from the first notes it destroys like a hellish tsunami. But of course,



there are moments when they slow down enough for example in the second half of "The Cosmic Ocean" or in the first half of "For the New Path". By the way, the latter one sounds pretty experimental with a slight mechanical touch as for its distorted vocal parts and marching tempos. The over forty-minutes album was fully written in Scandinavian manner, I mean it has ties with the music of Dark Funeral, Marduk and Satyricon, but in the case of the track called "Amunre" there's that specific Beherit feeling one won't mix up with anything else. To cut it short, great start is it. Let's hope for the blasphemous second coming in the upcoming years. But until then, enjoy the return of the black death!!!

Facebook: facebook.com/Hadopelagialgate

HATEVÖMIT/NUNSLAUGHTER
"Split" CD 2019
 (GrimmDistribution/Metal Ör Die Records)

The split CD is kicking off with an extremely morose and melancholic track by the Turkish/German trio - Hatevömit. It is called "Possessed Nightmares". This song emits a monotonous, immersive and somewhat ominous tone. The second track "Necro Future" is a bit more energetic and varied, however the vocal themes remain in the well-established sinister formula. The dedicated fanatics of the obscure black/death metal movement will praise their cuts with ease!!! The other two songs on the split are hailing from the cultic American Nunslaughter. These four hellboys know exactly how to create the best mix out of their blasphemous thrash-incited death metal. Both of their anthems, "Fuck the Bastard" and "Satanic Slut", are about



pure fucking awesomeness. Their music is enough dynamic, ripping the old-school way, filled with great hooks and, of course, is here to blaspheme all that is holy!!! Needless to say, the cover perfectly captured the current religious situation around the world. Kind of collector's item is this, even if it was limited to 500 copies, so if you're claiming to be a diehard maniac of any of these bands, then don't waste your time, rather order it!!!

HUMAN NIHILITY
"Last Stage Of Abuse" CD 2015
 (Lord Of The Sick Recordings)

Are you into slamming brutal death metal? Hopefully yes, because Human Nihilism from Luhansk is about to give you a good lesson how it should sound the Ukrainian way. Their debut 5-song EP storms like an unrestrained tornado, leaving no mercy for the listener and smashing everything on its way! The stuff was mixed & mastered at Beasts Studio, so it sounds excellent and spreads the grooves in the right proportions! It's fairly technical and sophisticated, but still leaving enough space for the raw energy to materialize. The four-piece death squad consists of Viacheslav Platonov (grunts & screams), Dmitry Yemets (guitar), Sergey Kuznetsov (bass) and Dmitry Kim (drums). There are 4 songs of their own plus a cover version of Dying Fetus' "Schematics". Needless to say, the band maximally nailed it! Apropos, I don't think that the Dying Fetus cover coincidentally appeared on this record as the band pretty much plays the same kind of music, having the same vibe and using the same kind of riffing techniques so to speak.



On the contrary, their admiration towards them has been shown this way! As a whole, it's a perfect debut material, which I would advise to all the groove-oriented slamming brutal death metal freaks worldwide!

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HUMAN NIHILITY
"Biomass Adaptation" CD 2017
 (Pathologically Explicit Recordings)

The second sonic onslaught by Human Nihilism comes in a form of a full-length album. It gathers 10 well-constructed brutal death metal pieces. The music itself got more mature and the riffs more overthought.

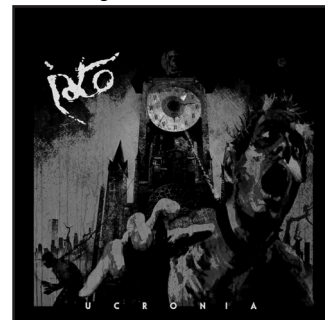


The strong influence of Dying Fetus is still there, but here and there I felt the impact of Psycroptic as well. This time the quartet decided to mix and master their stuff at TsunTsun Productions. And what a great choice it was. The result is impressive and speaks for itself. If you like the drum patterns to be executed at mind blowing speeds and spiced up with ripping yet extremely catchy guitar parts, throbbing bass lines and growls coming from the lowest frequencies, then "Biomass Adaptation" is the material you have to listen to and order immediately! Bulldozing brutality at its best! Be sure to check out these Ukrainians and keep your eyes on their forthcoming releases! The cover art was designed by Pedro Sena (Lordigan). Quite sick and rather detailed work, master of his job and that's for sure! Enough said, get this blasting disc of sheer

brutality!!! Preferred tracks are: "Price of Purity", "Lords of Creation" and "Sentenced to Life".

IATO
"Ucronia" CD 2019
 (GrimmDistribution/The Triad Rec)

Iato hails from Sardinia (Italy) and plays an ultra-melodic yet blasting form of death metal. It was established in 2011 from the ashes of their previous band Ejaculazione HC. The quartet, which builds from the unrestrained forces of Francesco Nano (guitar/vocals), Federico Pisano (guitar/vocals), Andrea Manis (bass) & Lorenzo Balia (drums), put a really strong debut album together. It storms from the beginning to the end. The eight cuts last circa 34 minutes,



however they contain so many interesting riffs, drum patterns and crazy vocalizing that one has to listen to it first to believe! On the one hand, I found their music heavily influenced by the Polish scene (Behemoth, Hate, Decapitated, Vader), while on the other hand, when it comes to the modern elements the name of Aborted has to be mentioned for sure. The work of the two vocalists is simply remarkable, they easily shift from the low growls to pig squeals and high-pitched screams, thus adding a hurricane-like vocal appearance to their songs. The tempos are also insane and the sound is very tough, so you can expect no mercy during the material of "Ucronia" and that's for sure! It blasts properly by having the right mood and the right attitude of the musicians! All is left to say, I am eagerly looking forward to Iato's second long play!!!

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IN TENEBRIZ
"Bitter Wine Of Summer" CD 2020
 (GrimmDistribution)

Wolfir (all music, lyrics and arts) who runs In Tenebriz on his own since 2005, but maybe lately known better as Vladimir Prokofiev from Paint-It-Black Design, is a very productive artist and that's pretty sure, because "Bitter Wine of Summer" is the twelfth full-length album of In Tenebriz.



The new album contains eight compositions created in the style of melodic doom metal. The songs are decent as well as their sound. But an interesting fact is that the vocal parts were executed in a black metalish way. There are some flaws here and there, but not too annoying ones, thus the material is quite well enjoyable. It lasts over 41 minutes and comes with a colorful yet tasteful 6-page booklet and pit-art graphics on the playing side of the CD. Six songs out of the eight have lyrics too, which were written in Russian language.

I won't say Wolfir's songs are extraordinary, as they aren't at all, but the soundscapes he managed to produce on his own I've found deeply sincere. Nice job there, both musically and visually!!!

Bandcamp: intenebriz.bandcamp.com
Facebook: facebook.com/intenebriz.black

INHIBITIONS

"With The Fullmoon Above My Head" CD 2019

(Satanath Records/More Hate Productions)

The Hellenic black metal duo strikes back with their 3rd full-length album, which fortunately became a little bit more variegated as its predecessor "La Danse Macabre" was.



The membership is the same, that is Pain (vocals, guitars, lyrics) and Dimon's Night (guitars, bass, drums, keys). They literally blast their asses off on this record. It is less oriented on symphonic parts, which is definitely a good thing, therefore the speed and the crudity seem to get a bigger role there. Still I found very unanimous the major part of their new album too. It has a few highlights for sure, but those aren't really enough to me. Primitive black metal riffing, typical song-structures and the usual medium-pitched shrills are the ingredients of "With the Fullmoon Above My Head". Despite it has a very good and tasteful sound production I don't really know and can't imagine who are going to listen to them and invest money in buying their records, except, of course, the ones who has to write a review about their stuff, ha-ha... Too many grey albums have been spread over the masses lately, so my suggestion to the duo is still unchanged, please try to create and compose more interesting or simply unique music!!!

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INHUMAN

"Unseen Dead" CD 2020

(GrimmDistribution/Sevared Records)

Inhuman from Costa Rica has been around for eight years, but I've got in close acquaintance with them only now as their third album the "Unseen Dead" has been released.



Well, the eight tracks they perform there were pretty much influenced by the Swedish death metal elite, even their guitar sound is alike, but song-structure-wise there's a very big difference as most of the time their patterns are modern. To me they sound like the last few albums of Kataklysm, just with Swedish guitar sound. Plus, the vocalizing manner of Sergio Muñoz (R.I.P.) is also way close to the vocals of Maurizio Iacono. The other members on this recording were Jonathan Sanchéz (guitar), Kevin Moran (bass) and David Salazar (drums). The quartet did a decent release and that's for sure, but as I

stressed it before, they lack of good, really memorable and original ideas. Let's hope they're going to fix this small, but really important factor on their next release. Still I can recommend the material of "Unseen Dead" for fans of Kataklysm, Dismember and Grave!!!

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INPROBUS

"Retribution" CD 2020

(Slovak Metal Army)

Inprobus is a newborn yet very promising thrash/death metal corps hailing from Slovakia. "Retribution" is the first demo of the quartet, which consists of six well-composed and -arranged songs. The band members – Roman Macalák (vocals & bass), Vojtech Némec (rhythm & lead guitars), Richard Némec (rhythm guitar) and Szilárd Kurdi (drums) – do a big emphasis on catchy riffs, dynamic grooves and powerful performance.



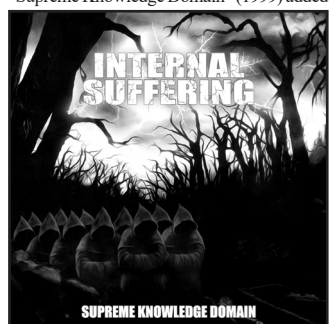
All of their tracks are over four minutes, so it enables them to repeat the punchiest and most memorable patterns to reinforce the overall effect. The vocal parts are varied enough and the refrains are good as well. The demo sounds decently, so I've enjoyed its 31 minutes in entirety. In their repertory you can hear an admixture of thrash & death metal bands of both the past and present, which they've managed to balance in a rather clever way, if you ask me. During multiple listens the names of Testament and Opprobrium popped up in my mind, mainly because of the riffing techniques of the guitarists, though there's a lot more going on in their songs. Thanks to Slovak Metal Army this superb demo was pressed onto CDs, which got packed in the old-school way into slim cases including a two-sided fold out booklet with cover artwork, band photo, lyrics, thanks list and gear descriptions. Dream release of any beginner band, right? Well, let's keep our eyes on Inprobus as I foresee the arrival of a massive debut record!!!

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INTERNAL SUFFERING

"Supreme Knowledge Domain" CD 2020

(Satanath Records/Rotten Roll Rex)



with four extra tracks taken from the "Promo 2000". Believe or not, but both of these early records are still pretty ass-kicking to these days, despite the rawness of the sound pro-

ductions. Let me also remind you that for underground bands it worked usually this way in the past. However, two decades later these materials have deservedly become classics. One more thing, whenever I listen to "Supreme Knowledge Domain", I always run into analogies with the northern hyperblast dealers from Canada, namely Kataklysm. Of course, you have to mean here their very early records or trilogies exclusively. Even all the crazy growls and screams of Fabio Marin are so reminiscent of Sylvain Houde's ones. Coincidence or not, I don't mind it at all, because the quartet has put the standards of brutality to another level. In a word, this is pure slamming death metal savagery, which strikes hard with its bulldozing dynamism, while the lyrical aspects are fully focused on the ancient ones. A must for all the slamming brutal death metal freaks out there!!!

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INTERNAL SUFFERING

"Unmerciful Extermination" CD 2020

(Satanath Records/Rotten Roll Rex)

Well, with this latest compilation CD all the early materials of Internal Suffering have been successfully wrapped in a new shape. The disc starts with the six songs of the "Unmerciful Extermination" EP (2001).



It is a very well-structured EP, which has been supported by a rather sick sounding production. The over 18 minutes long EP is filled with ultra-deep guttural patterns, ripping guitar parts, low end bass lines and pretty chaotic drum fills. It is followed by four songs taken from the 2005 split release with Inducing Terror. And it means, you are going to be treated by eleven more minutes of sophisticated brutality. For the end of the CD there has been two special live tracks reserved off the famous "Brutal Domination" DVD (2005). The compact disc itself comes with a superb pit-art graphic, while the booklet has 8 pages, where you can find all the lyrics to the "Unmerciful Extermination" EP, two band photos from 2003 and all the details about the aforementioned recordings. The whole material was remastered in 2020 by Digivision Records from Belarus. So feel free to enjoy the brutal sonic extermination!!!

KALT VINDUR

"...And Nothing Is Endless" CD 2020

(Witching Hour Productions)

Spectral black metal mongers from Kalt Vindur are ready to strike you down again. Herewith the Polish quintet – Celsus (vocals), Svart (electric & acoustic guitars, additional voices), Ver (electric guitars), S (bass) and Xakhariash (drums) – collected 9 well-thought-out pieces, needless to say all of them turned out to be simply awesome and rather mesmerizing. To capture the spiritual darkness correctly and to spread it through the wave functions are the dominating aspects of Kalt Vindur. Hats off to the musicians. They skillfully inject the dark superlunary vibe almost everywhere, therefore their quest to implement the gloomiest possible musical ingredients seems to be accomplished in the finest form. "...And Nothing is Endless" is indeed a proud follower to the band's well-received debut full-length album "Delusions" (2017). The five-piece also cleverly incorporates the

elements of oriental, which reminded me a cross-breeding between the musical arsenals of Absu and Melechesh. Of course, they do that tastefully and with respect in a diverse Kalt Vindur way. The sound production is top notch, alike to the Nordic bands, but



with a ghostly "from beyond" touch. That special atmosphere is extremely well and appropriately supported by the cover art and the flawless 8-panel digipak design. Perfect stuff in a word!!!

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LAUXNOS

"Crushed By Waves" CD 2019

(Symbol Of Domination/The Ritual Productions)

Russian post-metallers finally strike back with their third full-length release, which they aptly titled as "Crushed by Waves". The musicians behind that ultra-atmospheric record are as follows: Katharos (vocals/bass), Shoggoth (guitar/backing vocals), Amdusias (guitar) and Andy (drums).



The quartet masterfully combines the elements of black metal and prog rock in the 9 songs of "Crushed by Waves". During the circa 46-minute long album the listener will be guided through different soundscapes that mostly tell stories about the ocean, loneliness and ancient worlds. Their lyrics were written in Russian language, but you can find all the translations into English inside the booklet. By the way, the word "lauxnos" takes its origin from the ancient Prussians and means dawn, stars and moon. The music itself is pretty soft, relaxing and meditative, something you can listen on repeat. Plus, it pairs with a very balanced sound production that was built up the proper way! I have to point out the beautifully illustrated booklet too. It was designed by Vladimir Prokofiev (Paint-it-black design, In Tenebriz), who did a flawless job again. Well, all is left to say, let's unravel the mysteries of the deepest and darkest waters and find your peace amongst them!!!

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MAD-ERA

"Electricmegablack" CD-R 2019

(Self-released)

This musically weird shaped metal band from Madrid was founded in 2014. Their line-up consists of Robert Navajas (guitar/vocals), Alejandro Jorge Álvarez (bass) and Luis Aguirre (drums). "Electricmegablack" is already the second album of Mad-Era, both of which were released on their own. The 10 new songs display a rather mature material

that mostly combines of Pantera-like heavy riffs and vocal parts really reminiscent to Layne Staley from Alice in Chains. So it has the groove and the heaviness of the metal bands, but also features the soft yet profound elements of alternative rock, grunge and even fusion. If I say there's a huge number of interesting musical solutions going on there, better believe me and give a try to such great compositions as "Facebreaker", "Addiction", "Melt" or the epic "The Power of Healing".



The emotional cohesive force plus the sheer will to create something outstanding and memorable incited each member of Mad-Era to focus on the most intelligent and futuristic vibe of their inner selves. These Spanish musicians feel their instruments correctly and play on a fantastic level. I'm not used to listen to such type of music, but have to admit I've enjoyed a lot their kind of musical ride!

MANIPULATION

"Mind Control Ultra" CD 2019

(Symbol Of Domination)

This is the fourth full-length record of the Polish death brigade, where the five-piece antichristian unit sets the bar even higher. They present twelve songs forged into the most destructive cavalcade of focused hatred for humanity. Their accuracy is outstanding in every aspect, they have full control over their instruments and are aware of everything they do. They artistically mix the brutal guitar riffs with ethereal melodies, devastating blast beats, bloodthirsty vocal parts and, of course, give the diabolical outcome to us in terms of speed for 46 and a half minutes. From a musical point of view, I would compare the repertoire of "Mind Control Ultra" to their Polish buddies: Behemoth, Hate, Thy Disease and Decapitated. Of course, there is much else going on there that is remarkable and ensures respect towards Manipulation.



This is high-tech death metal that hits the right vibe from start to end. There is no complaint about the sound production, as it is very punchy, meaty and demanding as far as speed allows. Elements of modern, let's say djent or deathcore, and black metal are kindly presented there as well. Thus don't be surprised if you'll bump into a few passages reminiscent to Dimmu Borgir or Meshuggah. This is a very diverse musical frenzy that you should listen to right away on the bandcamp page of Manipulation!!!

MARADANDÓ KÁROSODÁS

"Húsdaráló" CD 2015

(Metal Ör Die Records)

The story of this Mezőkövesd-located thrash metal band starts in the year of 2006. After two demos and an EP their debut album "Húsdaráló" finally arrives in 2015.

The line-up on this record is: István Hajdu (vocals/guitar), István Marton (bass) and Zoltán Pap (drums). It builds up from eight songs and lasts 29 minutes. The music of the Hungarian trio is pretty nostalgic or at least I felt it so. I mean, it will definitely guide you back to the 80s & 90s, when this genre bloomed the best albums ever. If I had to compare their compositions to bands of those times I would most likely pick the following names for sure: Moby Dick, Sepultura, D.R.I. and Kreator. And due to their really meaningful lyrics in Hungarian and the vocalizing manner the similes to Moby Dick are just evident.



The album comes with a great crushing sound production, which is proportional and edgy. I do also believe these musicians are maximally dedicated towards the given style and hopefully they will shortly return with their second full-length release! By the way, the last track "Eye for an Eye" is the English version of the third song called "Eltaposnak". Good try, but I really hope they will stick to their native language, because they sound better that way!!!

MAZIKEEN

"The Solace Of Death" CD 2020

(Satanath Records/Iron, Blood And Death Corporation)

Mazikeen is an Australian blackened death metal horde grounded in the year of 2013. The band is strangely named, one would say, as Mazikeen is a fictional character taken from a comic book that stands for hostile night spirit (invisible demon), which can create minor annoyances or greater dangers to men. Okay, let's analyze their debut full-length album "The Solace Of Death" in details. It has 12 songs (8 songs of their own plus 4 cover versions) with over 77 minutes playing time. Music-wise, the band is particularly influenced by the Scandinavian black & death metal elite, like Dimmu Borgir, Emperor, Arcturus, Covenant, Dark Funeral or Dissection, but in my opinion the sonic arsenal of Cradle of Filth did the biggest impact on their repertoire. The recording members were: James Edmeades (vocals/lyrics), Andrew Shiells (guitars/synths),



Kris Marchant (guitar solos), Aretstikapha (piano/synths), Marco Pitruzzella (drums) plus three guest vocalists: Josh Young, Ian McLean and Ashahalasin. Their own cuts sound rather well-structured and maximally polished, which speak about the skillfulness of the musicians. What's more, I found all the symphonic elements come in a perfect balance with the rest of the instruments there. Unfortunately, can't say the same regarding their cover versions. The four covers are as follows: "Freezing Moon" from Mayhem, "Night's Blood" from Dissection, "The

Mourning Palace" from Dimmu Borgir and "Transilvanian Hunger" from Darkthrone. They've managed to add plenty of ineffectual guitar harmonies, drum parts, keyboards and vocal parts there. I mean, it is not a good idea to change the original guitar riffs to some unpleasant ones or to add fast blast beats and double bass rolls, where they are not practicable at all. With no cover songs this CD would be definitely more impressive to me as a whole!!!

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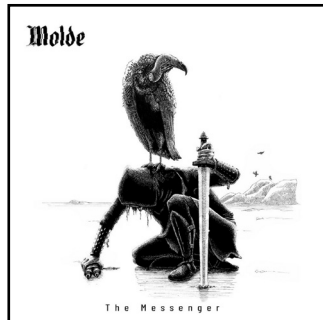
Facebook: facebook.com/mazikeenblackmetal

MOLDE

"The Messenger" CD 2019

(Satanath Records/The Ritual Productions)

Molde is an Irish/Polish black metal unit that follows the dark paths of the Norwegian hordes of the 90s. The music the duo displays on their debut album "The Messenger" is very primitive and monotonous, but with that special freezing atmosphere of the Norwegians. Ollie Ver (all instruments) and Lord Darkstorm (vocals & lyrics) kept their compositions true to the times where all has begun. It's about the source, the straightforward fury and dedication towards the initial idea of the black metal genre itself. The 39-minute CD has been divided into seven tracks. All of them links to the past and triumphantly gathers its precious moments. The entire album sounds raw and old-timer like.



Indeed, it was executed in the true spirits of the underground. The conception of the booklet is simple too. It comes with a nice graphic front cover of Peter Hitz, two member photos and a minimal information regarding its recording. Apropos, the band's name has the following meaning: "the dust to which human flesh returns after death". Well, black metal diharders should get their hands on this CD release right away!!! Preferred tracks are: "Into the Winter Moon" and "Call of the Ancient".

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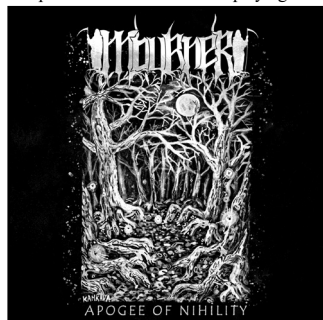
Facebook: facebook.com/MoldeIreland

MOURNER

"Apogee Of Nihilty" CD 2019

(Satanath Records/More Hate Productions/The End Of Time Records)

Mourner is a fairly young Russian doom/death metal band grounded in the year of 2018 by Gor (vocals, bass), Saw (guitar) and A.D. (guitar, drums, samples). Their debut release "Apogee of Nihilty" encompasses seven compositions with a 45-minute playing time.



It was built from the well-known canons of the above mentioned styles forging the most lethal sonic alloy of doom and death. The proportions between those two genres

were balanced in an appropriate way and thus the outcome can be described only as honest and real doom/death metal. Most of the time, the riff structures reminded me very much Hypocrisy's pioneering "The Fourth Dimension" album, but you can easily find there influences of My Dying Bride, Anathema, Paradise Lost, Asphyx and Bolt Thrower too. The trio did a good job both songs- and sound-wise. Their material displays a mature level. It has lots of attracting moments, which the expert listeners will discover right at first hearing. The grunts of Gor are deep and deathly indeed. He delivers them in Russian language. If you are eager to know how doom/death metal made in Rostov-on-Don sounds like, then definitely check the debut album of Mourner!!!

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MYSTHICON

"Silva - Oculis - Corvi" CD 2020

(Witching Hour Productions)

Mysthicon was initiated in the year of 2015 by members of Vader, Lux Occulta, Hate and Batushka. In 2019 the band releases "Into the Dark", a 2-song EP, on their own, to tease the underground masses about the kind of keyboard-oriented death/black/doom metal hybrid they stand for. And more than a year later, exactly on the 23rd of September, 2020 their long-awaited debut album "Silva - Oculis - Corvi" was finally aired. The album features 6 tracks of their own plus a cover version on Lux Occulta's "Passing Away" taken from their demo "The Forgotten Arts" (1995). Let me tell you at once with the music of Mysthicon you will most likely catapult back to the glorious 90s, when such great bands emerged and ruled the scene as Arcturus, Covenant, Cradle of Filth, Dimmu Borgir, Hypocrisy and Old Man's Child, just to name a few.



The sextet approached us with a brilliant sound production and a repertoire that deserves respect. Polish musicians can't fail, you know. So I deeply advice you to check out Mysthicon and their symphonic compound!!! The beautifully arranged 8-panel digipak CD comes with a 12-page booklet in a form of a poster. To cut it short, it's a very attractive debut release, so keep your eyes on Mysthicon!!!

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NERVOUSIMPULSE/TREPAN'DEAD/ S.I.R./MOREGORE

"Grind Your Way" CD 2019

(More Hate Productions)

Here's another awesome 4-way split release initiated by Yan Chamberland of Nervous Impulse and Alexander Kantemirov of More Hate Productions. As it should be, the CD starts off with an ultra-brutal mix of new, old and cover songs by the crazy Canadian deathgrinders from Montréal. The back lists 6 tracks of Nervous Impulse, but in fact we will hear 10 cuts in total there. As usual, their mind blasting repertoire is about sonic speed, catchy riff slaughters and inhuman voice orgies. And all this you have to place in the tightest and cutting edge sound production possible. The circa 11-minute bash party continues to raise the bar in terms of creativity, so I am surely in for the thrill and looking forward to the quintet's next step! Thenceforward comes 5 songs submitted by the French grindcore unit

known as Trepan'Dead. After the release of their 2nd full-length album "Instinct" (2012) the band didn't put out any stuff, so I bet these split tracks will make happy the grindcore society. Their first track "Fanatic" mainly displays an orthodox structuring, which reminded me so much Napalm Death. However, the five-piece combo didn't stick exclusively to the past, as they bravely use modern groove-like elements as well, just let's listen to the songs "Vermiration" and "The Shape of Humanity" as examples. The over 9 minutes long material has a juicy sound, so I guess fans of grindcore will be maximally pleased with it! Third position on the split is given to S.I.R. (deciphered as "set it raw"), a grindcore quartet from Moscow (Russia). They perform 5 short compositions in the best traditions of the genre, which are surely going to tear your soul apart. At first sight I could conclude, it is all about non-stop blasting at the highest speeds possible!



Massive aural attacks within 9 minutes that's what the fellas from S.I.R. can guarantee for you this time! Oops, we almost reached the end of the CD, less than 10 minutes left, but MoreGore guys from Ukraine will make sure to close it the right way. Well, the four sickos unleash upon us 7 pieces from their fungrind arsenal. To get you an idea what's going on there, you have to imagine the dirtiest punk rock music mixed up by a huge dose of black humor and blast beats, of course. This giant disc comes with a killer 6-panel booklet and a meaningful quotation of Ralph Waldo Emerson: "Do not go where the path may lead, go instead where there is no path and leave a trail"!!!

E-mail: more_hate@mail.ru
Website: www.morehate.com

NIHLRAGE "Eternal" CD-R 2020 (Self-released)

If you are looking for a modern death metal band with lots of breakdowns and melodies reminiscent to Amon Amarth, Gojira, Hypocrisy or Bloodbath, then you probably have to check out the first EP of the Tudela-located five men group called Nihilrage!



It consists of five tracks and lasts almost 18 minutes. A calm intro starts the EP to prepare the listener for the aural storm that is ahead. "Merciless War" follows it with some really groovy breakdowns, short blast beat attacks and melodic yet ethereal guitar passages. "Born of Weakness" is sort of an even slower and groovier composition. Then we have "Human Waste", which is a killer double bass oriented song with awesome vocal parts. "Eternal Condemnation" ends the stuff. It is a maximally mid paced track with a few hammer blasts, the usual portion of breakdowns and abstract guitar melodies on the background. The EP has a fantastic

sound production, but it also has a big deficiency of good ideas and memorable parts, if you ask me. Nevertheless, I see potential in the songs of "Eternal", so hope-fully the band will come up with better songs for their first full-length record, which is already in progress. Time shall tell us...

E-mail: nihilragemetalband@gmail.com
Bandcamp: nihilrage.bandcamp.com
Facebook: facebook.com/Nihilrage

NOMAD "Transmogrification (Partus)" CD 2020 (Witching Hour Productions)

After a long hiatus the Polish masters of sophisticated death/black metal chaos are returning in the most triumphant way possible to present you their best material to date.



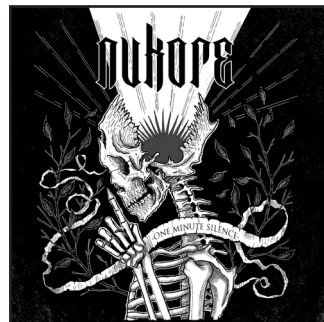
Nomad's 6th full-length album lasts over 33 minutes and shows 7 distinct ways to enter the realms of the abstract. The entire material has some kind of special cosmic touch and sinister vibration that craftily pervades through the layers of the background, thus wittingly putting one's mind into a trance. The seven vicious pieces were recorded, mixed & mastered at different studios between 2014-2018, while for the resulting sound production Malta and the Wieslawski brothers were in charge. Needless to say, they've managed to provide a crushing sonority and an unbelievable diversity for all the tracks of "Transmogrification (Partus)". The booklet says Nomad actually is: Bleyzabel Balberith (vocals), Patrick "Seth" Bilmorgh (guitar), Nameless Immenus (guitar), Rothep Patel (bass) and Gaap Zariel (drums). However, on this album the bass lines were recorded by Orion and the drum parts by Inferno, both from Behemoth. The fabulous cover art, the mystic sigil and the domineering layout were all designed by Michal "Xaay" Loranc. Quite impressive works once again! Besides the standard jewel case CD there's also available a limited 2CD digipak version that includes the 4-song "Tetramorph II" EP with a completely new mix, significantly different from the 2015 release. Oh, and the vinyl freaks can get their hands on two 180 gram heavy black types of vinyl, also containing the "Tetramorph II" EP in 45 rpm quality, all wrapped in gatefold. If you are asking for a fresh yet avant-garde-like formula within the black and death metal genres, then Nomad's new release is the right answer!!! Highly recommended stuff!!!

E-mail: nomadichell03@wp.pl
Bandcamp: nomad333.bandcamp.com
Facebook: facebook.com/NomadNomadichell

NUKORE "One Minute Silence" CD 2020 (Blood Fire Death)

Nukore is a low-tuned hardcore/rap metal quartet hailing from Vitoria-Gasteiz (Spain). Its members are: Aitor Asso (vocals), Ander Martinez-Olaskoaga (guitar/backing vocals), Unai Perales (bass/vocals) and Rafael Battaglia (drums). "One Minute Silence" is actually their 4th full-length album that represents 8 massive groove-oriented short tracks in 23 minutes. It blends really well the late 80s/early 90s rap-influenced metal and hardcore vibe (Suicidal Tendencies, Anthrax, Body Count, Agnostic Front) together with the nu metal movement (Korn, Limp Bizkit, Deftones). Moreover, it is full of mind-blowing breakdowns, catchy singalongs, explicit yet angry lyrical content that were all firmly placed into the modern soundscape

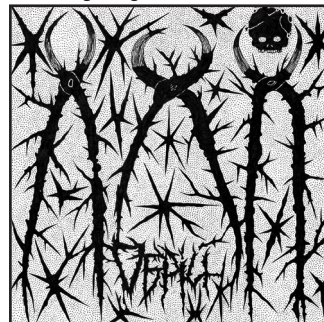
of the 21st century. I am sure this kind of music will shake the bones, give the punch and move the masses the right way at a live show. The booklet has all the lyrics included plus the thoughtful cover artwork of Paul Urkijo Alijo. So if you are searching for the ultimate mix between the above mentioned bands and musical genres, then have a listen to Nukore's latest stuff!!!



E-mail: nukoreband@hotmail.com
Bandcamp: nukore.bandcamp.com
Facebook: facebook.com/Nukore

ОБРИЙ "У Залізних Обіймах Лещат" CD-R 2019 (Trismus Records)

Three years passed since the release of Obrii's debut 4-track material and with slight changes to their line-up the quintet puts out another EP consisting of five songs. Have to admit these newer tracks sound more mature and finally to the point concerning the band's predefined style. Therefore, the previously announced Bolt Thrower effect is now beginning to unfold in their music.



Just listen to the songs "Дволикий", "Ad Civitas Solis" and "За Небокрай" and you'll agree without a word with me. On the other hand, the doom metal vibe is still strongly represented there, very good examples to that are the opening track called "Лещата" and the middle part of "Ad Civitas Solis". These 2 tracks have been massively influenced by Paradise Lost. But there's a tight connection to the forefathers of the doom metal genre itself (I mean the musicians of Black Sabbath here), which you can lightly witness by listening to the starting and ending riffs of "Кополівство Зачинених Брам". In overall terms it's a very enjoyable admixture of styles that I want to recommend for the fans of old-school death metal, doom metal and even to the devotees of groove metal! All in all, keep following this band in the future as their next material can easily turn into something special!!!

E-mail: trismusrecords@gmail.com
Bandcamp: obrii.bandcamp.com
Facebook: facebook.com/obriymetaluzh

OBSECRATION "Onwards The Mystic Paths Of The Dead" CD 2020 (Witching Hour Productions)

Obsecration's recent creation is the 7th long play in the row. This time the Greek trio dug deep into their past and returned with an exceptional blend of thrash & death metal. Their obscure yet maximally old-school sounding masterpiece has been divided to 11 sections. The music itself is also about praising the good old times, hence the resulting ideas and riff-combinations are kind of really enjoyable and nostalgic, which can easily hit the listener at the very first

listen. I would even risk to say, this album will be going to please anyone who is into the above genres. During my first listen I've found these pioneers to be influential on Obsecration's repertory: Slayer, Sepultura, Sarcófago, Death, Possessed, Massacre and Benediction, though there are surely more of them. The recording assembly was the following: C. Dead V. (vocals), Ungod (drums/guitars), Drakhon (bass) and El (lead guitars) as a guest musician. This nearly 48 minutes long album is a real trendkiller, a hard slap into the face of all the wannabe posers!!! I've received the 8-panel digipak



CD version, which by the way was quite tastefully designed. It also includes a separate 8-page booklet filled exclusively with lyrics. Oh, and let me tell you at the end that the impressive cover artwork of Trifon S. perfectly fits the atmosphere found on "Onwards the Mystic Paths of the Dead"!!! Highly recommended sonic devastation!!!

ONIRICOUS "La Maldición" CD 2019 (BlackSeed Productions)

Oniricous is a rather creepy death metal horde out of Spain. Their latest 6-song EP is called "La maldición" (i.e. "The Curse").



Both music- and sound-wise we can enjoy a great old-school vibe that disposes with the attitude of the 90s. The EP starts with an ominous intro, which all of a sudden explodes into the thrashy opening riffs of "Exhumando el horror". It is followed by "El extraño", "La cabra negra" (my fave track) and "La maldición". All these four pieces are about the glory and invincibility of death metal. The EP ends with a mystic keyboardish outro and the spoken summoning of Yog-Sothoth. As you might have understood, their lyrics are filled with horror and Lovecraftian themes. By the way, that content was awesomely supported and illustrated by the cover artwork of Raúl Mortuus. The circa 19-minute EP will most likely please all those dihard death metal maniacs that once and for all have been sworn to the roots of the genre. On this record Oniricous was: Chuster (lead guitar & vocals), Mazo (lead guitar), Al-Wars (rhythm guitar), Tony (bass) and Tillo (drums). Besides the regular CD version, you can get this freaking awesome stuff on 12" vinyl and two types of cassette as well. Warmly recommended!!!

ORDER OF THE EBON HAND "VII: The Chariot" CD 2019 (Satanath Records/More Hate Productions)

Most of the Greek black metal hordes took a completely different approach to the musical ingredients of this genre and, of course, the sound of their materials were different than usual, let's just remember the

early records with Rotting Christ, Necromantia, Varathron or Thou Art Lord, for example. Well, this is only partially true for the 3rd full-length album of Order of the Ebon Hand, because what musically awaits you on "VII: The Chariot" is mainly executed in the plains of Scandinavian black metal. Also keep in your mind that the hellish crew led by Merkaal (vocals/bass) propagates an archetype form of Luciferian black metal. Eight ruthless yet tenebrous compositions in almost 44 minutes is what you will get if you take the fatigue and listen to the new record by these Greeks.



Production-wise everything is fine there, it is a top quality record, so to say. Moreover, you can hear the voice of Sakis Tolis aka Necromayhem from Rotting Christ in the song called "Sabnock". However, I found a bit monotonous and simple their music, but this is how orthodox black metal should sound and look like, isn't it? I think this stuff is specifically for the band's steady fans. But in case you want to teleport back to the 90s, then this material will be a very good choice, that's for sure!!!

ORNAMENTOS DEL MIEDO "Este No Es Tu Hogar" CD 2019 (Solitude Productions/Funere)

Angel Chicote (all instruments & vocals) formed Ornamentos del Miedo in 2017. The music on his debut album is very atmospheric. It comes from the most melodic kind of doom metal, perhaps I would mention My Dying Bride as the main impact. The six bulky compositions offer wonderful musical solutions and the sound production is unspeakably beautiful.

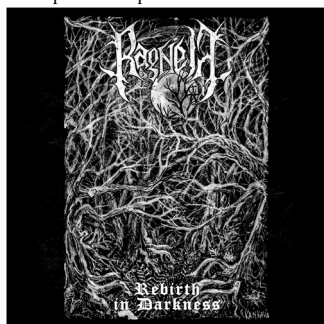


At times the tempo is so slow that it's almost sedative, so I'd definitely recommend this type of music for relaxation, reading and contemplation. The growls are deep, convincingly hypnotic and perfectly fit all the masterful creations found on "Este no es tu hogar", which in translation to English means "This is not your home". The nearly sixty-two-and-a-half-minute record is full of profound emotions, fascinating guitar riffs & keyboard melodies that naturally were propped up with extremely slow drum beats & fills. There's a major ambient-like side of the album too, where the special effects and the ethereal harmonies play the big role. In total, it's a very interesting and cozy album! Already can't wait to listen to the next chapter!!!

RAGNELL "Rebirth In Darkness" CD 2019 (Satanath Records/More Hate Productions/ The End Of Time Records)

Ragnell has been founded in 2011 and "Rebirth in Darkness" is the second full-length album of the Mexicans. The black

metal trio has the following musicians: Eduardo (bass/vocals), Mauricio (guitar/vocals) and Dave (drums). The new stuff contains seven songs plus two bonuses taken from the band's debut EP titled "Black Requiem" (2013). The album tracks are of the so-called orthodox black metal kind with a slight touch of melodic death metal, understand here the Scandinavian hordes of the mid-90s. It's enough grim, incorporating lots of hammer blasts and shrieking vocal parts, but also features a big number of Nordic melodies and patterns we used to hear many times before. Don't get me wrong, this is a decent release supported by a good sound production, but frankly speaking nothing new or innovative was created by the Mexican combo there. Nevertheless, it has its bright moments likewise, for example I personally liked a lot when the screechy vocal parts were paired with clean vocals.



The songs from the EP are more brutal and raw, definitely less melodious. If you crave to know how a Mexican band would play the Scandinavian type of black metal, then have a listen to Ragnell's new record!!!

Bandcamp: ragnell.bandcamp.com
Facebook: facebook.com/ragnellbanda

SACRED SIN "Anguish... I Harvest" CD 2019 (Envenomed Music/GrimmDistribution)

This Portuguese death metal band was formed in 1991 and "Anguish... I Harvest" is their third long play record that was originally released back in 1999. Now it has been successfully excavated and reissued with a newly designed layout plus 6 bonus tracks out of their rehearsal demo from 1997. All the tracks for this reissue were remastered in 2018. The 10 album tracks display a kind of experimental death metal with odd futuristic-like keyboard passages that partly reminded me Pestilence's 3rd and 4th records.



The musicians masterfully handle their instruments and show their skills off in almost every song, but the programmed synthetic drum sound is annoying and killing the overall production. Still I found those songs good enough, well-structured and professionally executed. I am sure most of the old-school thrash & death metal fans enjoyed it 20 years before and the new ones will also be going to like this forgotten piece out of the European metal history! The rehearsal bonuses sound dirty and totally raw, the way it was used to be recorded and spread around two decades ago. Sacred Sin's sixth full-length album "Grotesque Destructo Art" was released in 2017, so hopefully shortly we can listen to their fresh album as well!!!

E-mail: iconbooking1@gmail.com
Bandcamp: sacredsin.bandcamp.com
Facebook: facebook.com/sacredsintp

SEVENSINS "Legends Of Kazakhstan" CD 2020 (Satanath Records/Murder Records)

SevenSins is a murderous black/death metal trio coming from East Kazakhstan. It was founded in 2008. "Legends of Kazakhstan" is their third full-length album up to now so far. It has eight chapters with a playing time of over 33 minutes. Their music is varied enough, thus besides the accustomed fast double bass attacks and blast beats you will be able to hear there a lot of catchy guitar riffs and killer grooves. Of course, most of the time their songs storm with a menace,



but plenty of great mid-paced passages are also featured there. The screams of Walter are filled with rage and hate, they sound absolutely misanthropic to me, but then we have moments where his bloodthirsty screams turn to clean-singing and mystic talks. The lyrics come in Russian language and there are six of their own. By the way, at the end of the disc, the band pays tribute to an old thrash/death metal band from East Kazakhstan called Суицид. They've covered the song "Спи моя справедливость" from the band's sole record "Философия жизни" (1996). Needless to say, they've done a good job with it, as atmosphere-wise it perfectly fits the album. If you are a big fan of the Scandinavian black metal hordes, then I warmly advise you to listen to "Legends of Kazakhstan", it won't disappoint you!!!

E-mail: waltertaro@gmail.com
Bandcamp: sevensins.bandcamp.com
Facebook: facebook.com/Septem.peccata

SHALLOW WATERS "Bed Of Snakes" CD-R 2020 (Self-released)

Shallow Waters is an unmatched post black metal combo hailing from the Basque Country. It was born in 2018 and "Bed of Snakes" is the first fruit of the musicians' triumvirate. The almost 50-minute long debut album consists of 9 dark yet melancholic compositions, which were masterfully structured and performed. The overall vibe is rather relaxing, but still extreme sounding.



Musically you'll find lots of experimentations there, like for example the addition of spectral female vocals in the song called "The Tears I've Shed". Their music is fully built upon (inner) emotions, thus the soundscapes you're going to visit there are mostly displaying a meditative character. The essence of their repertory, as it was mentioned above, is black metal oriented, though the trio easily wanders to other subgenres of metal. As examples, in songs of "My Hidden Friend" and "Scars on Your Chest" you'll discover elements of gothic metal. The album's line-up is: Pablo Egido (vocals), Andrés Pestana (clean vocals/guitars) and Tristán Iñiguez (guitars/bass). By

the way, Tristán was in charge for getting "Bed of Snakes" the most suitable and best possible sound production and let me tell you he nailed it from start to end! It sounds tough, but also quite meticulous. If you're searching for an ultra-melodious post black metal album with deep emotions then here it is, grab it!!!

Bandcamp: shallow-waters.bandcamp.com
Facebook: facebook.com/ShallowWatersOfficial

SHAPED IN DREAMS "Echoes Of Eldren Deeds" CD 2019 (Immortal Souls Productions)

Martin Matiašovič the composer and founding member of Shaped in Dreams is ready to hit the masses with his debut album "Echoes of Eldren Deeds". For this record he recruited some top-notch musicians, as Marc Dzierzon (drums), Linus Klausenitzer (fretless bass), James Dorton (vocals), Tom "Fountainhead" Geldschläger (oud), Matthias Preisinger (violin, viola, acoustic piano), Mikolaj Suchanek (electric piano), Christina Rotondo (female vocals) and the team of Harmonia Nova. No need to say, the outcome is simply mesmerizing. Martin (guitars, French horn, songwriting, lyrics) and Tom did a meticulous job creating and arranging the 9 songs of the album the way they come to us through the speakers. Musically, the core is melodic death metal that was spiced up by the elements of progressive, avant-garde, classical and medieval music. The resulting fusion sounds fresh and innovative enough to impress the fans of technical death metal as well as the ones who are exclusively into progressive music. Me personally is very fond of the four instrumental pieces, but the other tracks are worth the attention too.



Awesome start with awesome musicians, so can't wait to listen to the continuation!!! This 47 minutes long CD comes with a tasty 16-page booklet and can be ordered from Immortal Souls Productions!!!

E-mail: martin.matiasovic@gmail.com
Bandcamp: shapedindreams.bandcamp.com
Facebook: facebook.com/shapedindreams

SINISTER DOWNFALL "A Dark Shining Light" CD 2020 (Funere/Weird Truth Productions)

Two years passed since the release of the debut "Eremozoic" album and Eugen Kohl, the only member behind Sinister Downfall, is ready to offer another portion of desperate



sadness in the form of five lengthy pieces. The sophomore 51 minutes long album continues the well-proven traditions of the funeral doom metal genre and the development of the "Eremozoic" path. Therefore, all the soundscapes and patterns found on "A Dark Shining Light" will cause the effect of a continuation or let's say natural progression. Eugen firmly handles all the instruments,

while his vocal parts sound totally frightening and deathlike, thereby providing for the resulting sound production a very rough glaze. The sonic transitions he creates are all abandoned and full of melancholia. Then there are those simply sounding keyboard melodies, which give the ultimate unearthly touch to the album as a whole. The vibe is freaking awesome there and I can't really stress enough how huge it is, so better make sure to listen to it!!! The titles of the songs are: "A Dark Shining Light", "Shape in the Mist", "Reach for the Dead", "Bury Your Thoughts" and "Behold Darkness". This release was issued in a laconic 4-panel digipak with a 12-page booklet including all the lyrics. Great record and that's for sure!!!
Bandcamp: sinisterdownfall.bandcamp.com
Facebook: facebook.com/sinisterdownfall

SKARZ

"What Remains" CD 2020

(Satanath Records/Exhumed Records/More Hate Productions)

Skarz is a new death metal formation hailing from Greece and "What Remains" is their debut release consisting of eight old-school hymns. The Greek duo, Kostas Sarcastic (guitars/vocals) and Dimon's Night (drums/bass), maximally focused on Death's "Leprosy" album, thus the result is similar in all aspects to that classic, except minus any kind of originality. This band pays tribute to Chuck's heritage and in general to the 90s death metal movement, which, of course,



is a good thing. The sound production is rather enjoyable and reminiscent of those 90s recordings too. I am not sure about the success of this release at all, as I personally would better listen to the old classics instead of "What Remains". Anyway, if you want to listen to over 35 minutes of death metal music that will 70% remind you of the early materials of Death, Obituary and Cynic, then surely go to the link below and give a listen to Skarz! Also interesting to me, will this album be followed by another one or just a one-off release. Well, time shall tell us...

E-mail: humanityzero@hotmail.com

Bandcamp: <https://skarz1.bandcamp.com>

SKJULT

"Lucifer Hominum Salvator" CD 2020

(Satanath Records)

Let me tell you at once that Javier Rodríguez Prendes aka Conspirator, the only member of Skjult, is a hard-working black metal musician, he has been around in different extreme musical entities for twenty years now. "Lucifer Hominum Salvator" is Skjult's third full-length album.



It consists of eight cuts and continues the well-established path of its predecessor "Progenies ov Light" (2018), which means

you will get a broad variety of Nordic style guitar riffs, angry vocals and blasting drum parts there. The song-structures most of the time are mid-paced yet fast and destructive, though one would find a couple of great technical moments there as well. The album sounds very good and well-balanced. Plus, the all-around icy vibe is sort of inevitable ingredient for the music of Skjult. If you are into ferocious black metal music with anti-cosmic lyrics, then definitely give a listen to "Lucifer Hominum Salvator". By the way, there was another Skjult stuff out this year, titled "The Voyage", which besides the title track had also five cover versions included there. Oh, and there was a split cassette release with Inhottavuus too. Now you are clearly understanding what I meant under hard-working musician. Skjult is cult!!!

E-mail: skjult.kuba@gmail.com

Bandcamp: skjultofficial.bandcamp.com

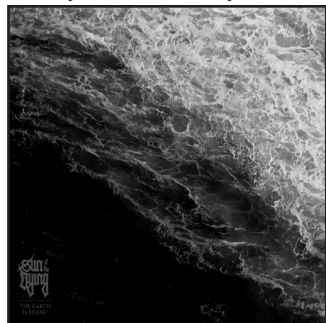
Facebook: facebook.com/skjultkuba

SUN OF THE DYING

"The Earth Is Silent" CD-R 2019

(AOP Records)

The doom/death metal scene of Spain is getting stronger by every year. Lots of worthy bands appear under the crystal clear sky of Madrid and start spreading their wings wide and rather confidently. We've got exactly this winner formula in the case of the six followers of the finest doom metal arts initiated and influenced by such timeless formations as My Dying Bride, Paradise Lost or Anathema. "The Earth Is Silent" is the 2nd long play album by Sun of the Dying. It embraces 7 well-thought-out compositions in over 45 minutes. The music found there is so beautiful, epic and breathtaking that the listener can easily dive into and flow by the streams of the endless sorrow, feel the bleak touch on the skin and dream about the silence, which waits us all at the end of the road. Majestic sounds from a 6-piece band we



surely have to remember and follow on from now on!!! The skilled and talented members of the Sun of the Dying are as follows: Eduardo Guilló (vocals), Daniel Fernández Casuso (guitar), Roberto Rayo (guitar), José Yuste (bass), Diego Weser (drums) and David Muñoz (keyboards, backing vocals and programming). Art of Propaganda from Germany made a good job with this recording, so you can buy it on both vinyl and compact disc formats as well. Eagerly looking forward to the 3rd full-length album from this promising Spanish band!!! Fans of doom & death metal music are warmly encouraged to get their hands on this masterpiece!!!

E-mail: sunofthedying@gmail.com

Bandcamp: sunofthedying.bandcamp.com

Facebook: facebook.com/SunOfTheDying

TEMPLE OF NIHIL

"Schadenfreude" CD 2019

(GrimmDistribution)

The following Russian black metal horde is originating from Kaluga. It was established in the year of 2015. Prior to this release there was only a 4-song EP, "Soul Extremist", issued in 2016. "Schadenfreude" consists of 10 cold-blooded black metal pieces kept specifically in the Nordic manner. Musically, no innovation was made on the nearly 48-minute record, everything was executed in the strict canons of the genre itself, presumably this was the plan. The trio came up with a quality material, but they

didn't even consider the slight addition of originality. It's really a pity that no interest was shown for innovation as there's already tons of so-called quality black metal hordes out there with grey releases and zero ideas. Enthusiasts of Immortal, Satyricon, Marduk or even Dimmu Borgir can try to give a listen to their songs, but I can hardly ima-



gine myself to listen to this album again. Unfortunately, here we have the typical case of a well-produced grey black metal release. So before entering the temple of nihil make sure you like its sounds as well!!!!

E-mail: templeofnihil@gmail.com

Facebook: facebook.com/templeofnihil

THE BASTARD WITHIN

"Better Dead Than Friends" CD 2019

(Immortal Souls Productions)

This international grindcore coalition is going to smash your head with their 22-song debut CD. The over 30 minutes of "Better Dead Than Friends" will provide you a devastating course on how to create a full speed ahead grindcore alloy these days!!! The Bastard Within lineup is: CN Sid (vocals), Gianluca Sulpizio (guitars), Davide Stura (bass) and Kevin Talley (drums). The quartet storms like a sonic hurricane and leaves no mercy for the unprepared listener. It's fast, it's relentless and packed with explicit lyrical content, the way it should be! There's a maximally into your face and blast as fast as you fuckin' can attitude! The album also features some killer guest vocals by Trevor (Sadist), Jason (Misery Index), Asphat (Graves), Māra (Māra), Stefania Minervino (Too Late, Cave, Spoiled) and Juri Bianchi (Addiction Crew, Any Face, Hayma).



To all this you should add the crushing mix provided by Federico Lino and Dan Swanö's brilliant mastering. In a word, we've got a perfect masterpiece here, which I would warmly recommend to all the diehard fans of Napalm Death, Terrorizer, Repulsion, Lycanthrophy, Dying Fetus and Misery Index!!!

Bandcamp: thebastardwithin-isp.bandcamp.com

Facebook: facebook.com/the.bastard.within

THE MALICE

"Legions Of The Dawn" CD 2020

(Satanath Records/More Hate Productions)

This Swedish-German co-alliance reminded me musically very much Spawn of Possession, as they likewise try to mix the US brutal death metal style along with the enchanting melodies of the Swedes. The duo, i.e. Claudio Enzler (vocals) and Hubeister Liljegen (guitars/arrangements), knows precisely how to make their stuff sound in a top-notch way with a crushing manner. The riffs of Hubbe are coming out of my loudspeakers in a crystal clear form, which fact I appreciate quite a lot.

Their material is also fairly technical and modern with lots of killer twists and awe-some growls. I believe last time I've heard this kind of formula was on Decrepit Birth's "Axis Mundi". Let me assure you, "Legions of the Dawn" is a huge debut record that fans of Morbid Angel, Hate Eternal, Nile, Suffocation, Origin, Cannibal Corpse, Terrorizer, Dissection, Souleap, Naglfar will surely going to like and admire from the first note. The nearly 33 minutes long CD is divided to nine chapters and is constantly about the relentless energies combined by graceful guitar melodies. The Malice is a 100% sophisticated death metal squad.



which was recently extended with session musicians to perform this brutal beast of a masterpiece on live shows as well. My fingers crossed, so hope to catch them live in the near future!!!

E-mail: themalicelegions@gmail.com

Bandcamp: themalicelegions.bandcamp.com

Facebook: facebook.com/themalicelegions

THE METAL MUSIC GLOBALLIANCE COMPILATION

"Vol. 4" CD 2020

(Music GlobAlliance)

The 4th chapter of The Metal Music GlobAlliance Compilation is finally ready to hit the masses. This time you will be able to discover exactly 18 bands from 13 countries. Even though there's a few constant or let's say recurrent performers in this compilation series I found the actual volume pretty diverse and captivating. The opening track "The City Feeds on You" by the French Unseelie is an unbelievably well-chosen one as it hits immediately and also guides us into the most sentient world of gothic metal. It has everything that a good song has to own plus I really can't express in words how beautiful the vocals of Anne-Emmanuelle Fournier are. You must hear it to believe! It is followed by another female-fronted band - Access Denied. They're from Poland and "Go, Go, Go" is a song off of their third full-length record. It is a great punchy



sounding tune that correctly mixes the 80's hard rock and heavy metal. Japanese hard rockers of Black Sweet continue with an ultra-melodious, technical yet groovy piece titled as "The Lights". Obviously we have a deal with four masterfully skilled musicians there, just listen to the awe-inspiring soloing work and you'll understand what I mean. Sound- and production-wise it is maximally polished and as soft as possible. The fourth band is Ravenclaw and as you might already know their vocalist Matej Valiska is the initiator of this compilation. The Slovakian quintet presents us "The Way", an epic and rather relaxing power metal song that to my big surprise incorporates even elements of flamenco and estrada. Next we have Garden of

Sinners from France and their song "Ignition", which is fully dedicated to the traditional forms of heavy metal. So if you like the catchy riffs to be tweaked by hymn-like vocal parts, classy guitar solos and sci-fi lyrics, then definitely give a listen to the band's debut album "Truthsayers". The sixth cut has been provided by Luke Lambregts' solo-project called TheMetalian. The Belgians picked out the song "Nightmare in Paris" that will kindly teleport you back to the majestic times of the mid 80s, especially if you take into account the sound production, the riff structures and the vocal parts as a whole. It's all about the confluence of heavy and power metal there with a suitable attitude! Afterwards we can relish to the epic melodies of "When the Snow Cover the Ground" by Celtic Hills from Italy. The gothic-sounding heavy metal trio rips through the battlefields, fights bravely and takes no prisoners! The second band from Slovakia is Slight Lie. They present the title track "Countdown" from their 2nd long play, which music-wise can be described as futuristic heavy metalcore. For a better understanding, you have to imagine the shuffle between the classic heavy metal of the 80s and the metalcore of the 21st century plus be sure to add those inevitable breakdowns of the latter one. Let's go onward to the 9th song titled as "Planety". This super melodic keyboard-dependent composition is executed by Czech defenders of heavy metal, i.e. Power 5. Zealous followers of Stratovarius, Edguy or Masterplan will be going to adore it, I am sure. The next song is called "Hire Gods" and it comes from Bulgaria. Its creators – Ghost Warfare – let us dive into a bunch of spooky melodies and a really atmospheric solo in their special musical surrounding called occult metal. The mysteries seem to follow further on in the oriental kind of heavy metal song "Gods of the Nile" by V-HAJD from Germany. The quintet delivers a classic mid-paced track with catchy grooves and skilled vocal parts. Bolivian Alcoholika L.C. is the one to continue with their industrialized folk metal piece "I am Bolivia". Believe or not, but it almost sounds like a partying wedding song, despite their lyrics tell about rebellion. The 13th track "Los Muertos de Hambro" is offered by Absorb from Germany. They play an old school type of death metal with the addition of clean vocals. Also interesting is the fact that it was formed in 1989. It is followed by the 3rd Slovakian band – Astarot. Their cut is called "Znamená" and it is also about death metal, but the kind that is full of experimental and progressive elements. Then we have Polish deathcore pirates from Vane, whose "Row, Ye Scallywags!" will definitely going to surprise you with its amount of melodies and grooves used there. Track number 16 is reserved for Blood of Angels. The US 4-piece death metal unit unleashes "Miscreant Deeds of Loki" upon us. It is full of blasting drum patterns and brutal growls. Next on the list is Suicide Machine from Morocco. Their kind of melodic yet technical death metal is heavily influenced by the masterworks of Death, Cynic and At the Gates. So you're going to hear that special cohesion in "The Samaritan" added by a few elements of their own. The closing track is given to Humanicide from Uruguay. Their song "Why?" sounds pretty raw as if it was recorded right at the rehearsal place. Nevertheless, they blend the motifs of thrash and death metal rather well, so it would be awesome to listen to this song later with a professional sounding as well. This compilation lasts over 77 minutes and is perfect for promotional use!!!

THORNS OF GRIEF
"Anthems To My Remains" CD 2019
 (Satanath Records/Dying Sun Records)
 Thorns of Grief is a Polish funeral doom/death metal project shaped by Nebiros of the instruments and recorded all the vocal parts on "Anthems to My Remains", which is in fact the debut release of Thorns of Grief. The CD

lists 5 songs and lasts over 47 minutes. The music found there is truly funeral-like. I mean it is quite sad, slow (except a few fast parts) and extremely atmospheric. What's more, in several places I felt the impact of Evoken's debut album "Embrace the Emptiness", which is a good thing, taking into account that is my favorite album from the US undertakers.

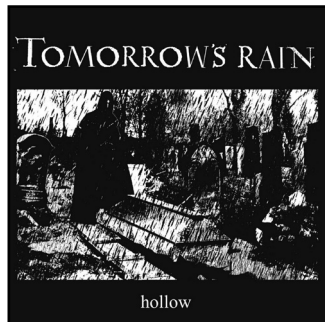


Needless to say, every composition of Nebiros has a very deep emotional charge that is permeated by melancholy, therefore thus exclusively vibrating the tones of despair and death first to the listener's ears and then to its subconsciousness respectively. It is a remarkable doom/death metal album, where the affection of longing for death is included by default. Already can't wait to listen to its continuation! But until then, let me infer to you once more that "Anthems to My Remains" is a flawless creation of art and hence warmly recommended for the followers of both musical genres!!!

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TOMORROW'S RAIN
"Hollow" CD 2020
 (AOP Records)

The Israeli band Tomorrow's Rain (ex-Moonskin) was shaped in Tel Aviv almost two decades ago, nevertheless only this year they've managed to record their long-awaited debut album. "Hollow" and its nine songs were definitely worth to wait for. The six-piece band – Yishai Swartz (vocals), Raffael Mor (guitars), Yoni Biton (guitars), Yagel Cohen (bass), Shiraz Weiss (keyboards) & Nir Nakav (drums) – kind of consciously decided to create a record they would buy as fans as well. Did their aim materialize



properly? Yes, it seems to me so. The musical compound they present through the over 56 minutes long material can be characterized as a fine-tuned mix between dark gothic rock and melodic doom/death metal, of course with the inevitable addition of oriental elements here and there, something that fans of Orphaned Land, Paradise Lost, My Dying Bride, Katatonia, Fields of the Nephilim or The Sisters of Mercy will be going to highly adore. Professionally recorded stuff is this, which sounds absolutely magnificent and intriguing in some ways. There was also a vast number of guest musicians involved there, namely Aaron Stainthorpe, Greg Mackintosh, Sakis Tolis, Kobi Farhi, Fernando Ribeiro, Mikko Kotamäki, Jeff Loomis, Spiros Antoniou, Anders Jacobsson, Shlomi Bracha and Lisa Cuthbert. Impressive list so to say and what's more, there's also a fantastic cover of "The Weeping Song" from Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds plus an acoustic version of the song called "Fear". In a word, you have to give a listen to "Hollow" to believe! An interesting

fact to add is that the band prepared a Hebrew version of the album too, which means the importance of their material is above all!

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TROND

"Willkommen Im Unheil" CD 2019
 (Satanath Records/Black Metal Propaganda Deutschland)

Trond is the newly born black metal project of Tino "Fluch" Thiele, whose name should be familiar from other dark gangs, like Abigor, Wulfgar, Phreneticum and Metamorph, just to name you a few. Tino, the sole creator of the 10 pieces found on "Willkommen im Unheil", handles pretty well all the instruments plus his vocals are



of those extremely harsh ones. The black metal he performs is mainly aggressive, but here and there you can bump into meditative, ambient-like patterns too. Who knows why, maybe due to the presence of the German language or the programmed drums, but I felt his compositions quite militarized and industrialized. I have to say, the 42 minutes of Tino's debut material rushed over me rather swiftly, almost with the speed of the northern wind. Moreover, his repertory has a strong monotonous character. For me, it felt like it was only one song there that was divided into 10 chapters. The CD itself has a nice pit-art and comes with a 6-page booklet including all the lyrics. It's a potentially good release, which I would recommend for fans of totally grim and frostbitten black metal!!!

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V.A.R.

"...Temná" CD 2019
 (Pařát Magazine & Productions)

This CD was coming as a bonus to the 90th issue of Pařát magazine. V.A.R. (Vratislavice Alcoholic Roar) is an old Czech thrash metal band formed in the year of 1989 and "... Temná" is their 7th full-length album to date.



It consists of 9 tracks with a nearly 43 and a half minutes of playing time. The quintet, i.e. Berun (vocals), Shooppy (guitar), Pepino (guitar), Vyczka (bass) and Jeny (drums), performs a 100% time-tested mixture of heavy and thrash metal. They play and create with routine, so the result speaks for itself. Catchy tunes all the way through supported by an 80s sound production. The lyrics were written and sung in Czech, but fortunately their song titles have been translated into English on the back, so here they are: "Dark, You Gonna Be Murky Dark", "I'm Touching Heavens", "Lower Town", "At the Wolf Mountains Range", "Balt the Wind", "Cyanide", "Special Atrocities",

"Devil and Maria" and "Oratory of Decay". I do believe that fans of old-school will appreciate the songs of "... Temná", because this stuff was maximally written for you!!!

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VADER

"The Darkest Age – Live '93" CD 2020
 (Witching Hour Productions)

Without any doubts this is the ultimate re-issue of Vader's first official live album "The Darkest Age – Live '93", originally released only on CDs and cassettes in 1994 by Baron Records. The live show itself was recorded at the Corona Hall in Kraków on the 13th of December, 1993. Actually that was the penultimate concert of the "World Incantation Tour '93". Needless to say, this live album was given the deserved cult status years ago. Besides being fully remastered by the Wieslawsky brothers at Hertz Studio the 13-track material has also been flipped panorama-wise. It's an awesome live show that features Vader's diehard yet evergreen classics as "Dark Age", "Vicious Circle", "The Crucified Ones", "Demon's Wind", "Decapitated Saints", "Chaos", "Reign-Carrier", "Testimony" and "Breath of Centuries".



These songs were appropriately spiced and intermediated with three intro/outro pieces plus a rad cover version of Slayer's "Hell Awaits". The CD lasts 51 minutes and captures the magical vibe of Vader's classic era. Pure awesomeness so to say!!! I've got the 8-panel digipak edition, which looks totally mind-blowing and comes with a great new graphic design with unpublished photos and a killer 2-sided poster. Enough said, buy it right now or cry later!!! By the way, for the first time ever it is also available on vinyl. The gatefold double vinyl edition was remastered especially for the 45 RPM audiophiles. So hurry on as only a few black copies left!!!

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VEHEMENTOR

"Dungeons Of Grotesque Symmetry" CD 2019
 (Satanath Records/Murder Records)

Vehementor is a groovy thrash/death metal formation from Macedonia. Its hometown is Kicevo. The quartet – Darko Nasteski (vocals), Nikola Pejovski (guitars), Ljupco



Stefanoski (bass) & Zoran Stefanoski (drums) – started in the year of 2013 and "Dungeons of Grotesque Symmetry" is their debut release. It consists of nine songs and if I had to describe what kind of music they play I would definitely mention you a mix between the latest records of Machine Head, Slayer,

Carcass, God Dethroned, Kataklysm and Amon Amarth. They masterfully combine the catchiness of heavy guitar riffs with tempting melodies and scratchy vocals. The pace is mainly slow just to provide the biggest power and dynamics possible for all the hooks. There's a lot going on in the about half an hour of material, but somehow I still found their tracks pretty boring. I truly hope they can squeeze in more variety and originality into their forthcoming stuff as nowadays to play and sound in a professional way is really not enough!!! Don't get me wrong it's a very decent debut album, but the metalheads in the 21st century crave for more, especially to be more unique!!!

VICTIMS

"Lorn Echoes" CD 2020

(Slovak Metal Army)

"Lorn Echoes" is the debut long play by the post-apocalyptic Victims coming from the Czech Republic. The 7-piece deathcore oneness, i.e. Hospi (vocals), Venca (vocals), Málci (guitar), Mára (guitar), Ondra (bass), Pinky (drums) and John (synthesizers), masterfully forges extreme music's ferocity with their futuristic visions. The over 26 minutes album has been divided into 7 songs. They are all about complexity, crazy tempo-changes, weird synthetic patterns, angry vocals and things that are common for deathcore and metalcore bands. The album sounds massive and devastating. It's way unmerciful and yet blasphemous to the core. Their strangled instruments were consciously tuned down to hell, so expect some of the most disturbing low ends to come out of your loudspeakers.



Their repertory storms with the speed of the light in a take-no-prisoners mode, except for the last track called "Smells Like Death", which is a short, but very relaxed instrumental piece. In terms of originality they still have to progress, in my opinion, even though they've done a good job with the songs of "Lorn Echoes". Let's see what the future holds for them...

VICTIMS OF CONTAGION

"Lamentations Of The Flesh Bound"

CD 2019

(Satanath Records/Rebirth The Metal)

Being formed in the far 2005 this is actually the first full-length material from the Pittsburgh-based technical death metal brigade – Victims of Contagion. Prior to



this, they had the self-released "Parasitic Unborn" EP in 2014. Musically, we have a polished mixture between technical death metal and deathcore. During the over 38 minutes stuff the following band names popped in my mind: Death, Cynic, Morbid Angel, Obscura, Spawn of Possession, Psy-

croptic, Fleshgod Apocalypse and The Faceless, just to mention you a few. The recording line-up – Chris Edison (vocals), Chuck Forsythe (rhythm & lead guitars, singing bowl, piano & synth), Jon Haden (rhythm & lead guitars), Anthony Zello (lead guitar), Justin Gizzi (bass) and Mike Rush (drums & vocals) – is in the knowing of how to use their skills in a proper way, therefore the six resulting songs are of a flawless production. Their song-structures are enough sophisticated, nonetheless I miss the real innovations, memorable harmonies and own ideas there. I really dig how the CD sounds, it's simply huge, but from my musical point of view these six compositions give nothing intriguing to the listener of the 21st century. I believe the band is still in search of their own style and where to go musically. So let's wish them tons of luck on that road and hopefully with their next release we can witness those innovations altogether!!!

VITAM ET MORTEM

"El Río De La Muerte" CD 2020

(Satanath Records/Exhumed Records)

Since 2002 the Colombian Vitam et Mortem has managed to release quite a lot of materials. "El río de la muerte" is their sixth long play so far, where Julián David Trujillo Moreno (vocals, guitars & keyboards) and Julián Felipe Rodríguez Montoya (drums & screams) continue to spread the ultra-melodic death/black metal kind of theirs. The 10 songs on the album were precisely arranged and executed, so the listener will be going to enjoy it from start to finish. The vibe is mainly Nordic there, with influences coming from the records of Dissection, Mayhem, Emperor and Unanimated, which fact is really sympathetic to me. But lots of other great bands had the impact on their songwriting skills, like Vital Remains, Immolation, Deicide, Behemoth or Hypocrisy, just to name you a few. The use of their native language also adds a vast mystical touch to the entire repertory.



the same way as the otherworldly lyrics about death and the dead. Besides the new songs there are also two special tracks there, namely "Yo soy el siguiente muerto" from the band's second album, of course, in a new interpretation, plus a cover of Masacre's classic "Ritos de muerte". This is dark music and that's for sure, so only the blackened souls should get their hands on this record!!!! I have spoken!!!!

VOFA

"Vofa" CD 2019

(Funere/Exhumed Records)

The music of Vofa (i.e. ghost) is as mysterious as its line-up. All we know that there are four members behind the Icelandic funeral doom metal entity and it was established in 2017. Their self-titled debut album came out in 2019 with three lengthy songs ("I", "II" and "III"), each over 12 minutes. Vofa's horror-filled music at one hand tends to be freezing cold and desperate, while on the other hand it is full of mysticism and heart-felt art. Of course, it wholly builds up from the basic and canonical elements of funeral doom metal, yet I feel very much special about their alloy, since in my opinion, the quartet evolved this sub-genre of doom metal to another level. The next thing that amazed me in their repertory is concerned

to the vocal parts. They are pretty spectacular and chunky from start to finish. And believe or not, but that ingredient gives an extra dark vibe to the stuff. During the over 37 minutes long material you will be able to wander to different places, shades and soundscapes of surrealism. One would ask,



is it masterful or unique? I think both, but you have to hear it and judge for yourself. Me personally, is eagerly looking forward to the continuation!!!

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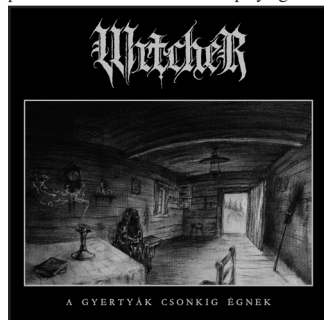
Facebook: facebook.com/VofaDoom

WITCHER

"A Gyertyák Csonkig Égnek" CD 2019

(Filosofem Records)

Witcher is an atmospheric black metal entity hailing from Hungary. It was founded in 2010 by Roland Neubauer (vocals, guitars, drums) and Karola Gere (keyboards). "A gyertyák csonkig égnek" is their second full-length album that consists of five monumental phases with over 40 minutes of playing time.



The duo masterfully forges the enthralling keyboard melodies together with the crudity of the guitar parts and the harsh manner of the vocals. The sort of black metal they display is rather relaxed, profound in melodies and emotions. If I had to compare their music to others in the business, I would definitely pick up in the first place Summoning, because Witcher has that special hymn-like medieval epic ingredient too, just listen to the beginning of "Az utolsó utamon" and you will understand the rightness of my thoughts, then I have to mention Cradle of Filth as an influence or inspiration for the gothic patterns found there. The first four songs have been created by Roland & Karola, while the last one titled as "A hatyúk tava Op. 20. 1. Jelenet" is their kind of dedication to the great Russian composer Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky. Beautiful cover version it is that perfectly fits the Witcher's conception. The CD sounds good and comes with the classy artworks and layout of Anvil Kvlt. To cut it short, if you are in desperate search for a bewitching alloy between classical music and black metal, then immediately pause all your searches as this material will satisfy your needs!!!!

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WITCHER

"Néma Gyász" CD 2020

(Filosofem Records)

2020 marks the 10th anniversary of Witcher. So for that occasion the band has decided to re-release their "Néma gyász" EP and to expand it with a lengthy bonus song "Keresztúton", formerly to be found on the split with Velm. Originally, both ma-

terials were recorded back in 2012, the EP in spring, while "Keresztúton" in the fall. But let me assure you right away that this isn't the cheap-sounding or -looking sort of re-release. First of all, because the four tracks of the EP were carefully remixed, thus providing them a new aural birth. Secondly, the remastered musical content was supported by a tasty 6-page booklet including all the lyrics, an archive band photo from 2012, two previous covers of the EP plus a completely new cover artwork by Anvil Kvlt. The nearly 43 minutes long CD with its five keyboard-dominant epic black metal compositions will surely going to impress the fans of Summoning, Burzum and



Nokturnal Mortum. This re-release is kind of a great gift to all the diehard Witcher fans, which, by the way, was coming along with an awesome anniversary T-shirt and long sleeve prints, so don't waste your time, order it immediately or cry later!!! Hereby I would also like to wish Roland and Karola success on their musical path for the next decade and even beyond!!!!

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ZOMBIE ATTACK

"Bonded By Beer" CD-R 2019

(Self-released)

Kyiv retro thrashers known as Zombie Attack are finally returning with their 2nd long play. The fresh 11-song onslaught is continuing to spread the metal madness, however this time the quartet tried to align their music even more to rock'n'roll. You say Motörhead? Definitely yes, but let's add there a pinch from the Malignant Tumour vibe too. So the partying formula seems complete and trust me it is crushing damn well and the right way! The half an hour album has a lot of memorable twists and turns, plus it comes with a well-balanced, very enjoyable sound. If you like thrash metal, black humor, beer, partying all night and Satan then this record should be in your collection!!! By the way, the cover artwork and all the other graphical illustrations in the booklet are strictly connected to the lyrics.



which I found pretty awesome! Vsevolod Zolotarev of V.Z.artwork did a hell of a great job! Me personally prefer better the second half of the album, which has faster and more complex songs so to say, like "Virtual Reality", "Slave Doll" and "Non Serviam" for example. In addition to all written before I have to mention the influence of Tankard, which is still undeniable in the repertory of Zombie Attack, and bands like Destruction, Exodus or D.R.I., as they all had a big impact on the songs of "Bonded by Beer". Recommended stuff!!!!

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I am very happy to present you the following interview with Michael DiSalvo, vocalist of Akurion. He told a bunch of interesting facts about his band(s), lyrics and upcoming releases. Read, discover and enjoy every moment of our talk!!!



Hello Michael! The story of Akurion starts in 2012. How the four of you forged into Akurion? Please tell us a bit about the beginnings and the birth of your first single "Yet Ye See Them Not" (2015).

- Rob and I decided to get together and listen to some riffs and some songs that were pretty fleshed out already. I had some lyrics and started to add some ideas to the riffs or songs and it seemed to work pretty well with one another. So we kept at it for a few months and then decided we would have Oli come down to check it out. Once he was in, we asked Tommy if he would be down as well. In fact, the first jam we had was with Tommy, Rob and I and we were working on "Year of the Long Pig" at that time. Oli might have been on tour with Cryptopsy by then, but soon after the 4 of us got together and started writing the album.

Regarding "Yet Ye See Them Not", we wanted to put out a teaser single that we knew was gonna be on the record, but we were not ready to record the full length. So we went into The Grid for an afternoon to work with Chris Donaldson. We wanted a live cut, just like the album would become and that was exactly what we did. Of course, in our minds we wanted to have the full length out much sooner, but life has a funny way of changing plans around whenever it seems fit to.

The music you play I would describe as some kind of weird avant-gardist mix of atmospheric yet technical death metal. How do you see this? Was this musical alloy created intentionally or naturally?

- You know; we went into this with an open mind all across the board. Yes, we knew it was going to be heavy, progressive, technical, melodic and moody, but we never laid out plans to stay within a niche. I would say we quickly realized that we had no boundaries and that we were all on the same page as to us writing a record that we were happy with first and foremost and that helped us solidify the writing process and how we were going to look at these songs in a different light so to speak. When you are not confined, great things can happen. We embraced that and it was extremely important to us.

Your debut album "Come Forth to Me" was released on the 10th of April, 2020 by Redefining Darkness Records. I know that the entire material for it was written back in 2015 and that it was a long painful road until its completion. Now, as it is finally out, how do you feel about it? How the reactions to it were so far?

- We feel exhilarated. A sense of accomplishment to put this record out really. Especially since there was an abundance of roadblocks along the way that many bands may have just called it a day and chalk it up as a failed but fun attempt. Not us. I think it solidified the bonds and kept us focused on the end result. We believe in these songs, but more importantly we believe them in the context of a full record. We went in with the notion that we were writing a record, not just a collection of

songs thrown on a record. So yeah, I know we are very pleased with what we achieved. So far the reactions have been quite positive. Releasing the record in a pandemic may have slowed the initial promotion of it, but at year's end, it seems to have picked up some steam again. We know that many ears have not heard the album and we aim to change that situation.



The album features a few special guest appearances. Would you please go into details?

- This was a very important piece to the album as we highlighted sections that we wanted guests to add their flavor in very early on in the writing process. We did not have people come in for the fuck of it, we wanted to have guests come in and make the difference. So by us having Luc Lemay, Lord Worm, JM Leblanc, Genevieve DiSalvo, Austin Taylor, Sylvia Hinz and, of course, Jeanne Strieder involved, it changed the dynamic in each song that they were on. I had lent direction to them, but they added their spirit and that is what we were after.

I am personally very interested what the lyrics of Akurion are about? Tell us in brief about all the topics involved there.

- Lyrics are always a very important piece to the puzzle in my mind so I carefully crafted the words to fit the emotion of the songs. I do approach it that way. Really, the songs can take on a completely different impression for the listener and I always found that to be an appealing aspect to music. However, I will say there are songs that deal with grief, depression, social commentary, overcoming those tragedies and even some optimism thrown in the mix. That's my take of course, perhaps they mean something else to the listener... and that is ok and perfectly acceptable in my books.

Recently you've been part of the 2-year anniversary episode of Vox&Hops along with the other vocalists of Cryptopsy. How was it? Do you keep in touch with all the past and present members of Cryptopsy?

- That was super fun! I love all those guys; they are just excellent people. There is no competition and nor should there be, but I think that has increased the friendships, because yes, we were all part of the same band, but solidarity is where it's at. There is no room

for egos and bad attitudes and for us, we all get it. For the most part I am in touch with my old band mates and that goes with all my projects. Some I am in touch with more than others, but that's life. There is zero animosity, only love and respect.

There's a new material on the way with a brand new band of yours called Unkle Stalin and the Kommunist Joy. What should we know about this formation? From the few video excerpts I've listened to so far it sounded like an ultra-down-tuned twist between the music of Gorguts and the Dillinger Escape Plan. When do you plan to release the stuff and which label will be in charge for issuing it?

- You know, that is a pretty good analogy of what's to come. It is mean, chaotic, groovy and unique sounding even if that analogy is on point. This project includes Mathieu Bérubé from Teramobil and Unhuman, Patrice Hamelin from Gorguts and Martyr and Alex Hebert from Ages and, of course, myself. We have 6 songs that we are currently in the process of recording and we may even add a 7th to the mix. So far we have not shopped it around so, no news on who will be releasing it. We are wide open to listen to offers. This album is gonna be killer.

Beside these two bands you're also involved in Coma Cluster Void and Conflux. What news can you share from both? Do you plan to record some new material with any of them in the near future?

- Yes, Coma Cluster Void (CCV) is in the beginning stages of putting together our 3rd record. I can say that the songs that we are working on right now are rugged as fuck. It is going to be a vicious record full of surprises. The album will be called "Absurd Romanticism". As far as Conflux is concerned, I was simply asked to record one track and play that song live once. Not sure if Tommy and Chase are going to continue with it, I haven't heard anything about it for some time. I stress that means nothing though, they could very well be knee deep in the writing process.

Somehow I've got the feeling that you're already in the process of creation as for the songs to the next Akurion release, am I right? If so, would you please talk a bit about the new songs, their musical directions and, of course, about the lyrical content for them?

- As of right now, there have been no plans to write another album with Akurion. That does not mean we won't, we are just onto different musical avenues at the moment. Rob has joined one of Quebec's classic metal bands, Necrotic Mutation and Oli is, of course, with Cryptopsy, Cattle Decap and Vengeful. So, time will tell. I will say I am open to it for sure but as of now, we are going about our business of promoting "Come Forth to Me" as much as we can.

At the end, please leave the readers your final thoughts...

- Thank you Kornel and Encomium for having interest in Akurion! Please check out the album and let us know what you think. Cheers!

Straight Hate is a very promising grindcore squad from Poland and is pretty close to the breakthrough, especially after the release of their highly acclaimed “Black Sheep Parade” album. I’ve addressed my questions to Kuba (vocals), who enlightened us with all the necessary details on this major record.



Photo by Marcin Marzaj Fotografia

Your recent release “Black Sheep Parade”, which is the second full-length album of Straight Hate, is blasting the spheres of the underground with no mercy. Tell us how the reactions from the fans & media sounded and looked like so far.

- After the release of “Black Sheep Parade”, we received mostly positive reviews. The album is different from the previous one. It is more mature, thoughtful and consistent. Our music is not quite popular in Poland, so it doesn’t have a big impact, like black metal, which is still on the rising wave.

The album features 16 ultra-quick grindcore pieces in 29 minutes. It sounds rather intense and totally crushing. Where did you record it and who was in charge for producing, mixing and mastering this beast?

- We finished the work on the new release quite quickly. The process of recording individual parts and mixing took us most of the time. Only the drums were recorded in studio. Guitars and bass were recorded at home and at the rehearsal room, while the vocals at my friend’s basement ☺. Our bass player – Przemek – was responsible for mixing the material. He did a great job! As you can see, we managed to do everything by ourselves.

Since the release of your debut album “Every Scum Is a Straight Arrow” in 2016 you’re cooperating with Deformathing Production. I see it’s a very fruitful alliance, as your new stuff besides being released on regular CDs got even a limited edition of vinyl presses on 2 colors too. How the sales going on? By the way, what kind of deal you’ve inked with Deformathing Production?

- We are selling very well. At the moment we have just a few vinyls left. The albums we got from Wojtek of Deformathing Productions are almost sold out. I just wrote him about the delivery of new products ☺.

Kuba you’ve been part of the Parricide history along with Wizun. How do you remember your time there? Please mention to the readers which release was your favorite and why?

- Yes it’s true. In Parricide I took my first grind steps. It was the best music school for me. I learned humility there. I saw how underground works in practice. I met many wonderful people, I visited a large part of Europe, I gained invaluable experience

that allows me to do what I like the most. In my opinion the best album of Parricide is “Kingdom of Downfall”. The band on this album went a long way towards brutal death metal.

How’s the situation with the live shows, festival appearances and tours? Do you often receive offers? Apropos, do you plan an extensive European tour in support of “Black Sheep Parade”? Can we expect you playing live in Ukraine?

- When it comes to concerts, we play wherever they want us. Every year we play several concerts in Poland and abroad. Our music is liked in the Czech Republic and Lithuania. Therefore, we are sometimes invited to perform there. This year we were able to play at the Symbolic Festival alongside Benediction and Interment among others and at the Rock & Rose Festival with Venom Inc. If we get invitations for concerts to Ukraine, we’d love to play. There are a lot of grind music geeks in your country. I remember concerts in Donetsk, Kyiv, Vinnytsia and Uzhhorod very well during tours from Parricide. I can confidently say that they were one of the craziest concerts in my life! What was happening there was crazy.

Musically you’ve built up a maximally powerful mix of grindcore hell with a little bit of Swedish death metal vibe that were successfully spiced up and twisted by a fair dose of groove and rock’n’roll-oriented riffs. Is this combination coming in a natural way to you or you’ve been planning to create something like that from the start?

- The mixture you mentioned was created naturally. Only the Swedish sound was planned. I will not hide that I am a big fan of Rotten Sound, so I wanted to incorporate an element of similar sound into our music. The rest of things are spontaneous.

What inspires you to write such insane music these days? As a vocalist who influenced you to start screaming & growling back in the days? Tell us also in short about the lyrical content of “Black Sheep Parade”.

- The texts are a reflection of everyday life, viewed by the average bread eater. I am writing about the problems we have to face. About how we are fooled by the mass media, about people who flow thoughtlessly and uncritically along with the

current created by contemporary trends. Overall, nothing new and revealing ☺.

The cover artwork totally fits the title of the album and is very impressive. How did you find Maciej Kamuda and was it totally up to him to create this fantastic piece of art or you’ve been told him all your ideas as well?

- I knew the works of Maciej Kamuda before. When the concept of the new album appeared, I knew from the beginning that this man must make a cover for us. I just needed to describe the album title and explain the meaning of the lyrics. He fulfilled his work 100 percent.

A few years ago you had a killer split with Neuropathia. Do they still play? The grindcore movement in Poland was always strong, especially in the past, but how it looks nowadays? Are there a lot of newcomer bands and do the old ones still play?

- I have heard rumors and attempts to resume activities of the boys from Neuropathia, but I do not know if they reactivated. In my opinion, the Polish grind scene has been in crisis for a long time. There are few active bands. Many have also ceased operations. There is currently no demand for grind. Far fewer people come to the concerts than ever before. I regret this very much, because our stage has always been at the forefront of Europe. Larger festivals in Poland, with a few exceptions, are not necessarily interested in this music. Here I have to praise our neighbors, namely Czechs. Both we and other familiar bands from the Polish backyard are successfully playing smaller and larger concerts there. In this country, grindcore is a religion. Fortunately, trends change over time, so I hope maybe someday grindcore will come back to the Vistula to favor.

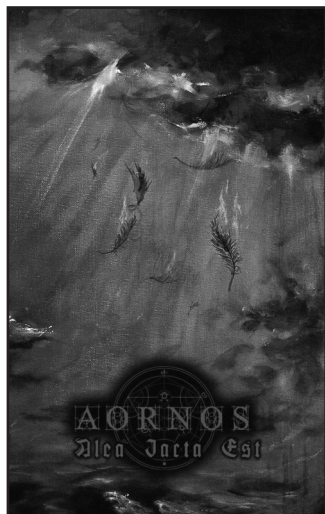
OK, Kuba that’s all I had in my mind for you this time. Please send your greetings to the Ukrainian fans of Straight Hate and grindcore in general. Oh, and please reveal us your plans for the 2020 year?

- Thank you very much for the opportunity to be interviewed. I hope that thanks to it we will reach more listeners in Ukraine. You can also follow Straight Hate’s profile on VK. Greetings from the eastern grind geeks!!!

AORNOS

"Alea Iacta Est" MC 2018
(Fekete Terror Productions)

The following cassette is a part of the boxed set issued by Fekete Terror Productions in 2018 under the title "2014-2017 Tape Collection". The second tape out of four includes Aornos' early material, the "Alea Iacta Est" EP, originally released in 2015.



At the time, the band was fully managed by Algras (all instruments & vocals). Side A of the cassette has 2 own compositions (the title track and "From the Nameless' Pit"), both of them reflects a balanced alloy of symphonic black metal that maximally focuses on the heritage of the Norwegians, it's like a horrific blend between the music of Emperor and Dimmu Borgir. The third track is an interesting cover on Hungarian Carcharoth's "Peccatum Originale?" song. Despite the original one had its lyrics in English, this version comes with Hungarian lyrics and has been renamed to "Eredendő Bűn?". Side B features four more cover songs: Morbid Angel's "Eyes to See, Ears to Hear" (a very odd-like version, especially vocals-wise), Bonanza Banzai's "A Halál Dalol" (the most unexpected cover for sure), Sear Bliss' "Far Above the Trees" (good interpretation of the original one) and Land of Charon's "Az Első, az Utolsó, és az Egyetlen" (nice tribute to this Hungarian gothic/dark metal band). What else? The black cassette, of course, is equipped with a J-card of superior quality and design respectively. It's a must to have for all the pedantic fans of Aornos!!!

E-mail: adarhon@gmail.com

Bandcamp: aornos.bandcamp.com

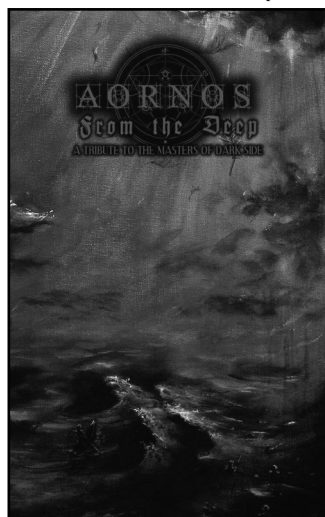
Facebook: facebook.com/aornosblackmetal

AORNOS

"From The Deep (A Tribute To The Masters Of Dark Side)" MC 2018
(Fekete Terror Productions)

"From the Deep (A Tribute to the Masters of Dark Side)" is the fourth tape in the "2014-2017 Tape Collection" box. Originally released in 2017 and available only at the band's bandcamp site in digital form. As you might expect from its title, this release is about cover songs. There are six of them in total. The difference from tape two is that this one has no covers on Hungarian performers. So the list of covers is as follows: "The Dawn of a New Age" (Satyricon), "Eyes to See, Ears to Hear" (Morbid Angel), "Ensorcelled by Khaos" (Emperor), "To Thou Dwellst in the Night" (Arcturus), "The Discipline of Earth" (Thorns) and "Moon in the Scorpio" (Limbonic Art). You can clearly see and hear, which bands inspired or influenced Algras (all instruments, vocals), be it musically or spiritually. Have to admit, he did a damn good job with all the above listed tracks. He arranged them in a masterful way and adapted the originals to the world of Aornos. The outcome sounds balanced and rather enthralling. The cassette is black, like the rest in the box, plus like the rest it comes with an awesome cover artwork and J-card layout

designed by Anvil Kvlt. The only thing I felt a little bit incorrect in this 4-piece collection is connected to the thinness of the tape itself.

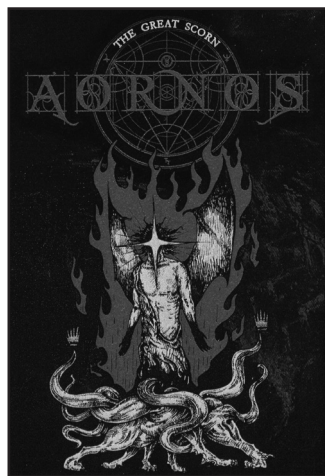


It is almost transparent. So in my opinion, it will be worn out sooner as you would expect. You've been warned!

AORNOS

"The Great Scorn" MC 2019
(Fekete Terror Productions)

To tell you the truth, I've already reviewed the CD version of "The Great Scorn" in the 5th number of Encomium 'zine, but since this tape release is not a simple re-release, I feel the need to mention for you all the differences hereinafter. I will start off with the nine album songs at first. They've got an alternate mix, where the drum and bass tracks were potentially improved, so you can hear more of those instruments in the mix.



Especially I liked how the bass lines have been highlighted there giving an even more sophisticated touch to the whole material! Then we have 3 additional live bonuses, namely "Castellum" (from the debut album "Orior"), "Trace to Beckoning Fade" and "Dysangelium" (from the 2nd album "Mors Sola"). The membership on these live songs is the following: Algras (guitar/main vocals), Tibor Terebesi (guitar/backing vocals), S (bass/backing vocals), Dávid Lőrincz (keyboards) and Róbert Mester (drums). Good to notice Aornos' monumentality is preserved during the live performances as well. Finally, to the red-colored cassette we've got a masterfully designed J-card by Anvil Kvlt that comes with a new freaking awesome interpretation of "The Great Scorn" cover. This over 66 minutes long tape release I would warmly recommend to all the zealous fans of Emperor, Arcturus, Limbonic Art and progressive black metal music in general!!!

ASATTARN/TEOPHANIA

"A Kapu" MC 2019
(Fekete Terror Productions)

This split tape is uniting two Hungarian one-man ambient projects. Side A includes

the song called "Pillars of Time" by Asattarn. The over 20 minutes long composition with its otherworldly yet haunting atmospheres can be a really good choice for another sequel to the "Silent Hill" film or to something like that. Gábor Varga masterly paired the cold-blooded feel of the horror movies with his drone-like visions. Side B has five songs created and performed by Krisztián Antal. He defines the music of Teophania as deep ambient. Well, the over 3 minutes long musical chapters will guide the listener to different relaxed soundscapes that are indeed full of emotional vibrations. But how deep one may enter or dive in there, will be exceptionally depending on the individual's subconsciousness. To be honest, I am rarely listening to such music at home, nevertheless I found both materials worth listening to. The black-colored pro cassette comes with a plain J-card and can be purchased at the links below. Attention fans of ambient, this edition was limited only to 50 copies, so hurry up to get your copy in time!!!

E-mail: feketeterrorzine@gmail.com

Facebook: facebook.com/feketeterrorprod

CARCHAROTH

"Urdung" MC 2015
(Hunug Records)

Carcharoth from Hungary was disbanded for some time, but their heritage undisputedly lives on. That is why Hunug Records dug out the band's second and last studio album "Urdung" and pressed it onto classy grey cassettes. The 10-song material itself was recorded back in 2008. During its 67 minutes one will have the possibility to discover the uniqueness and all the oddities of Carcharoth's music. Their repertory builds up from a really wide range of styles. The core is black metal, but it was cleverly mixed up by elements of avant-garde, progressive, psychedelic, symphonic and folk music, just to mention a few. Needless to say, the resulting material sounds huge and innovative! The involved members were: Molestus Kalamona (main vocals), Ardor (guitar/vocals), Leptra (bass/vocals), Métély (keyboards) and Melkor (drums/vocals).



The album also contains a cover version on Mercyful Fate's classic "Come to the Sabbath" song adapted to Carcharoth's own style, of course. The lyrical content is filled with interesting stories about paganism that were written partly in Hungarian and partly in English. By the way, the word "Urdung" means devil in old Hungarian language and it was also perfectly displayed on the new folklore-based cover artwork! This tape version was strictly limited to 110 copies and can be ordered at the links below!!!

E-mail: hunugrecords@gmail.com

DRENCROM

"Banished From Sanity" MC 2015
(Thrash Zone)

Drencrom is a killer thrash metal combo from Santiago (Chile). The band was established in 2013 and "Banished from Sanity" is their second demo tape that was

originally released in 2014. Thanks to Thrash Zone, an underground label from Hungary, this 6-song beast was out on pro cassettes in 2015 and has been spread around in 200 copies. The members on this recording are A. (vocals/guitar), Max (guitar/bass/backing vocals) and Bullet (drums). The music of the Chilean trio is played and executed in the best traditions of the Teutonic hordes.



Especially, I would mention to you two German thrash metal pioneers here, namely Necronomicon and Kreator. The admixture of their early materials can be heard in the repertoire of Drencrom. Both sides include per 3 songs. The 23-minute stuff is going to slap your face with its speed and aggression. Moreover, the sound of their demo is almost the same as it was produced for the recordings in the 1985-1987 years. It's totally live and maximally extreme! The only thing that I found a little bit odd in their compositions is the use of alternate and hammer blast beats here and there. Anyway, it's a brilliant demo, which hereby I want to recommend to all the diehard thrash metal maniacs worldwide!!!

E-mail: thrashzonezine@gmail.com

EARTH PLAGUE

"Death Curse" MC 2019
(Fekete Terror Productions)

Earth Plague was brought to life in 2012 by D (vocals/bass) and Patrik (guitars/backing vocals). After a demo, a full-length album and a split release with Italian Darkness here they come again to reveal and spread further their profligate visions about death. The 5 songs of "Death Curse" EP show a perfect mix of traditional black metal and return us back to the times when bands such as Hellhammer,



Celtic Frost, Bathory, Mayhem or Darkthrone ruled the earth. This kind of music is not about the complexity and super skills of its musicians, on the contrary, it has to be as plain and fundamental as possible. The sound production was achieved by the well-known canons of the above mentioned bands, so there will be no disappointment from the side of orthodox black metal maniacs. Both sides of the black cassette have the same program, so

you can enjoy the crude melodies of "Death Curse" twice! The J-card is pretty simple for this release, but that's OK. Well, if you are in love with the ancient feeling then this 21 minutes long stuff will surely satisfy your earthly pleasures! So let's celebrate the return of the glorious past along with this release of Earth Plague!!!

E-mail: earthplague666@gmail.com
Bandcamp: earthplague666.bandcamp.com
Facebook: facebook.com/earthplague666

EVILSPELL

"Antisocial Satan" MC 2015 (Thrash Zone)

EvilSpell is a hellish thrash metal gang from Italy that was founded in 2006. Right at once I have to admit, due to the presence of such bands the spirit of the glorious past is kept alive. I mean, while all our beloved thrash metal giants evolved into or progressed to something completely different in a function of music, these smaller total underground units kept releasing relentless musical compounds that are so valued by us, fans of the 80ies. "Antisocial Satan" is the debut album by the Italians, originally self-released in 2010, then re-pressed onto CDs again by L.A. Riot Survivor Records in 2013 and finally manufactured on cassettes by Thrash Zone in 2015. This current reissue features the complete album plus 3 rehearsal tracks. The album itself lasts 31 minutes and divides into 9 chapters. The vibe is totally awesome throughout the whole stuff and can be described as a divine admixture between the early materials of the Teutonic hordes and Italy's proudness, we all know as Bulldozer!



It's a blast-from-the-past-like stuff with appropriate sound production and cover art. The recording line-up of "Antisocial Satan" was as follows: Filo (guitar/vocals), Paul (guitar), Fra (bass – R.I.P. 2010) and Igor (drums). The bonus rehearsal tracks, namely "Antichrist" (recorded in 2012), "Slut of Satan" (recorded in 2013) and "Padre Vostro" (recorded in 2015), are a great addition to this tape release, as one can witness EvilSpell's sonic essence and raw energy from the rehearsal room perspective too. The nice grey-colored cassettes come with white prints on the shell, pro printed full-color covers and were limited to 150 hand numbered copies!!!
E-mail: igor.evill@hotmail.it
Facebook: facebook.com/EvilSpell666

EVILSPELL

"Necrology" MC 2015 (Thrash Zone)

"Necrology", the second full-length album of EvilSpell, has been originally released on CD format through Black Side Records in 2013, but again thanks to Thrash Zone from Hungary it was reissued on cassettes in 2015. Moreover, it was out the same day as the tape version of "Antisocial Satan", thus the cassette shells look identical, both are grey, just with different prints on them. After the tragic happening to bassist Fra this album was recorded in trio, i.e. Filo (guitar/bass/vocals), Paul (guitar/bass) and Igor (drums).

The twelve songs of "Necrology" continue to please our ears with the utmost combination between speed and thrash metal. These Italian fellas really know how to create rad songs and to give back the vibe of 1985-1986 years. So good to listen to these blackened thrash metal hymns, I literally feel myself 20 years younger now, ha-ha... Well, the lyrical content is also 80ies like, as it's evil and satanic. Let me mention to you a few song titles hereby: "Slut of Satan", "Satanic Underground", "Necropunk", "Satan (Madness Pt. II)", "Necronomicon", "Satan Comes Behind the Cross". Good titles, right? And their look and imagery are in perfect connection with the lyrics and the cover artwork. We definitely need more bands like EvilSpell these days!



By the way, the second solo in the song called "Heavy Metal Riders" is played by none other than Andy Panigada from the mighty Bulldozer. Hell, yeah! If you are enjoying the first records with bands such as Bulldozer, Necronomicon, Destruction, Tankard or Kreator, then this material will surely be going a good choice for you too! Can't wait to hear the 3rd album by EvilSpell!!!!

GOATDOMINATOR/NEGRO BODE TERRORISTA

"Goat Terror Kommando" MC 2019 (Fekete Terror Productions/Terrorist Noise Kult Productions)

Attention to all the goat-worshippers worldwide!!! The following split release is going to burn down your mind and tear your soul apart, thus please don't complain if your body appears to be vacant after hearing these six brain-devastating songs!!! You've been warned, aha-ha-ha... Hungarian Goat-dominator occupies the side of terror (which is normally side A) with three raw-sounding pieces of the most primitive and back-to-the-roots black metal compound possible.



It can happen when you cross the music of Hellhammer along with Bestial Mockery for example. Moreover, the vocal parts were recorded almost in a talking or even muttering mode plus added by some sort of transforming effects that turned them sound rather hellish, like the speak of the devil. The

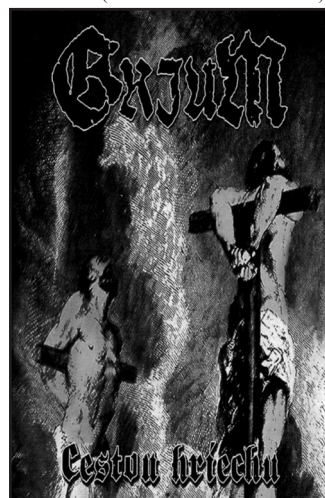
song titles are as follows: "Fighting Under Goatflag", "Demonic Goat Power" and "In the Deepgoathell". Well, fans of primeval black metal will surely admire these goat hymns of the pure decadence!!! Side B that is the side of kommando has been captured by the Brazilian necro-duo known as Negro Bode Terrorista. These freaks of perversion perform three more lethal tracks ("Bode Bélico", "Ruínas Ao Vento" & "Black Terrorist Goat Metal"), which come with a better sound production, but still with the same goat adoring attitude and cravings for the initial values of the black metal genre. While in the repertory of Goatdominator I found the kick drum too silent, here we have exactly the opposite effect. This split tape was spread in the quantity of 100 hand-numbered copies, so in case you missed it so far, be sure to get yours in time!!!

E-mail: terroristnoisekult-prod@hotmail.com
Facebook: facebook.com/Tnkprodistro

GRIMUM

"Cestou Hriechu" MC 2019 (Akne Productions)

Grimum is a black metal oneness from Slovakia grounded in the year of 2013 by G.MorHell (all vocals and instruments).



"Cestou Hriechu" (i.e. "By the Way of Sin") is the second demo by Grimum consisting of 3 songs. It was released on both 7" vinyl (clear, lathe cut) and cassette formats by Akne Productions in 2019. The circa 10 minutes stuff will drive us into a pretty melodic, atmospheric yet avant-garde sort of black metal that was very well-constructed and executed respectively. The guitar riffs/harmonies and the harsh vocal parts have that special dour touch reminiscent of the Nordic hordes, though G.MorHell introduce them from a totally different perspective by adding there the soundscapes of his very own. I found his musical formula rather exciting and hence would warmly advise it to others who are in for the experiments and innovations. The lyrics are in Slovakian and focusing on the sins of humanity. You can order the 7" vinyl or the cassette version directly from the label or the band itself, see the links below.

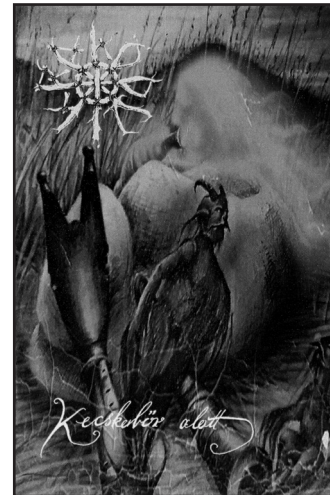
E-mail: g.morhell@gmail.com
Bandzone: bandzone.cz/grimum
Bandcamp: grimum.bandcamp.com

KÖDSZIKRA

"Kecskebőr Alatt" MC 2019 (Fekete Terror Productions)

Rising from the ancient soils of Hungary in the year of 2015, this 2-piece Sopron-based pagan black metal combo is finally ready to present us their debut album "Kecskebőr Alatt" (that means "Under Goatskin"). The seven chapters from Ködszikra (translates as "Fogsparkle") will most likely guide us all into the past, both music- and lyrics-wise. Their aim is to represent us the primordial Hungarian spirit, its folklore, the values, the rituals and the pagan morality. The two members, namely V.R. (guitar, vocals, jew's-harp, drum programming) and P.B.

(guitar, vocals, folk instruments, lyrics), did a fantastic job in excavation of bygone folk instruments and folklore texts. Almost, all of their lyrics include the word "ördög" and tell gruesome stories connected with him, which is actually the old version of the currently used Hungarian word "ördög" (understand here the "devil"). Musically, we have the right combination between atmospheric black metal and folk music. Their stuff sounds enough decent, though I found the snare drum too quiet in the mix and the crash cymbals very lame. In spite of these facts I've enjoyed listening to the songs of "Kecskebőr Alatt". By the way, two tracks out of seven are instrumental ones, "Borús paták" and "Hízsem, hogy él". Great tunes,



so to say! Prior to this official cassette release the band also issued their debut material on a limited quantity of CDs in 2018. So hurry up and order this bouquet of fascinating songs filled by the ancient past of the Hungarians on the format you prefer!!!

E-mail: kodszykra@gmail.com
Bandcamp: kodszykra.bandcamp.com
Facebook: facebook.com/kodszykra

OSTROM

"Véráztatta Várfalakon" MC 2019 (Fekete Terror Productions)

Ostrom is a Hungarian raw black metal band consisting of two members, i.e. P.B. (all music & lyrics) who is also involved in Ködszikra and P.A. (all battle leads and solos). The band locates in Sopron and propagates the Hungarian pride, the warspirit and the patriotism of the past centuries.



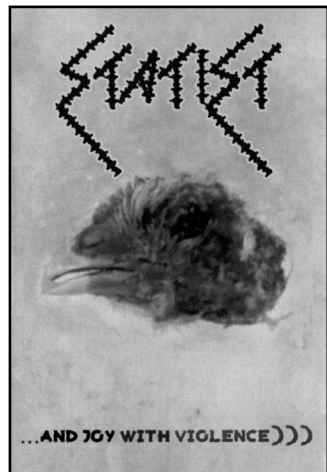
The current 9-song demo was recorded and mixed at Headquarter Ödenburg in autumn 2017 and thanks to Fekete Terror Productions it has been recently materialized on limited number of orthodox-looking black cassettes with high quality J-cards. The music of Ostrom is plain-structured and enough straightforward, where I felt the lyrics and their meanings play bigger role than the music itself. The war stories written by P.B. are definitely something to read for. I mean, when you are listening to their songs

you literally get caught up in those medieval battles. Of course, to feel that vibe in a proper way you must have a good command of the Hungarian language too. The demo sounds good, despite the very low sound levels on both of the sides. This music and its lyrical content first and foremost display the focused dedication towards the Hungarian warriors and heroes, who shed their blood for their country! So let's praise the patriotic deeds of the fallen heroes together!!!
Facebook: facebook.com/Ostromband

STATIST

"...And Joy With Violence)))" MC 2019
(Sick Carnage Records)

Statist is a grindviolence corps out of the Ukraine established 8th of March, 2018. Prior to this EP there was a cassette release named as "Tape One MMXVIII", it included 8 raw rehearsal tracks and was issued on the 7th of December in 2018, plus a 6-song online promo material premiered 29th of June, 2019 at the band's bandcamp profile. The current EP consists of 14 grind cuts. It comes on transparent cassette with color stickers on the shell and a stylish pink J-card. No need to say, it's a pro release both sound- and design-wise. The recording line-up on this EP was: Old – vocals, Igor – guitars, Ed – bass & Lev – drums. The Kyiv-based quartet literally unleashes pure hell with their rather short ultrasonic pieces and the way aggressive manner of vocals. They define their style as grindviolence, which is basically a fusion between grindcore and powerviolence.



Indeed, most of the songs come in that specific mould, but one can clearly hear there the elements of funeral doom metal (just listen to the song "Alcopedope") or brutal death metal ("Titsconversely" will be a good example in my opinion) among others. The guitar riffs are mainly punk-structured rather than grind-oriented, but to be honest I am content with this kind of interpretation very much. All that is left for you to imagine them to be accelerated to the highest speeds possible. One more good thing regarding this cassette is that it has chrome tape. Hurray! All in all, it's a very promising EP from a very promising musicianship!!! So get "...And Joy With Violence)))" right away, while in stock!!! I have spoken!!!

Bandcamp: statist.bandcamp.com

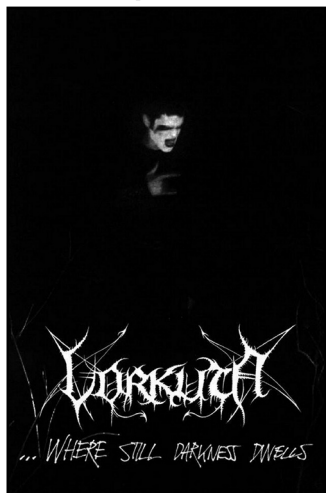
Facebook: facebook.com/Statist2018

VORKUTA

"...Where Still Darkness Dwells" MC 2018
(Fekete Terror Productions)

Vorkuta is a pure black metal horde arriving from Zalaegerszeg, the western part of Hungary. It was spawned in the year of 2003. And "...Where Still Darkness Dwells" is no other than a comprehensive compilation that embraces the band's first demo plus different rare split tracks amongst others. Side Total starts with the four crude demo songs taken from "...Where Only Darkness Dwells" (2003), which back then were recorded with a single microphone, so to speak the true Norwegian black metal way. The vibe is just evil and sick in every possible way

there, so prepare yourself to enter the earthly inferno. This side of the cassette ends with "Seeds of Storm" that shows a little bit better production, but is still very necro-sounding. Side Darkness gathers 5 more wicked pieces, summoned in the period from 2006 to 2008.



Well, those have become much better in terms of sound and production and the whole thing is just catchier than before, kind of evolutionary progress one would say. Also interesting fact that the so-called necrotic atmosphere of the demo songs is piercing through these recent compositions every once in a while. The black cassette and its b/w cover plus the slipcase have been produced the right way as well, so fans of true black metal won't be disappointed in my opinion. Moreover, all the audio files were remastered and edited by Winterlord Rabenaas (Witchcraft) at Rock Out Studio, thus giving a new breath for these old hymns of darkness.

E-mail: cryptstench@gmail.com

Bandcamp: vorkuta.bandcamp.com

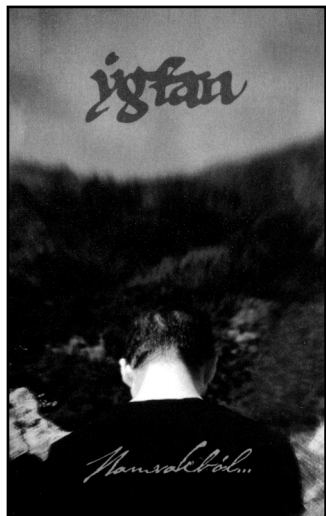
Facebook: facebook.com/vorkutablackmetal

YGFAN

"Hamvakból..." MC 2018

(Fekete Terror Productions)

The rather odd-named quartet from Budapest (Hungary) is going to initiate us into the soundscapes of a very relaxed mixture of post doom and black metal during their 7-song debut album. The nearly 47 minutes long "Hamvakból..." truly reproduces the effect of a wandering for the listener. But you have to dive deep into the sounds of Ygfan and feel them correctly, because only then you will have the possibility to wander around different places of nature, like forests,



mountains, fields, valleys, rivers and so on. In addition, the musicians – Zsolt Bálint (guitar/vocals), Áron Szabó (guitar), László Bodor (bass) and Bálint Tóth (drums) – will provide you with a professional instrumentation and sound quality. The magic is there! So all you have to do when you listen to the songs of "Hamvakból..." is to feel the pulsation coming to you and free your mind. The

cassette itself has a white color and comes with an extensive J-card featuring the album's lyrics in both Hungarian and English languages. Quite impressive material so to say, which has been also pressed onto CDs by Sun & Moon Records from Romania the same year. The name Ygfan refers to the Igfon-forest and it is divided to the part "Ig" that means sacred and to the part "fon" or "fan" that means forest. Fans of post black and doom metal are warmly encouraged hereby to enter the sounds of the sacred forest!!!

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ATMOSFEAR

Issue #24, 2019

Atmosfear's 24th number will spoil its loyal readers with even more pages, increasing from 124 to 152. Featured interviews are: Demons & Wizards, Rotting Christ, Blood, Formicarius, Pedophile Priests, Purgan, Empheris, Sabaton, Ancient Voice, Black Holy Whiskey, (Echo), Belenos, Grenouer, Barkasth, Жатва, Ades Numen, Железный Кулак, Crimson Moon, Nuitville, Nightfall, Fausttophel, Move the Moon, Torn Apart, Sinful, Seducer's Embrace, Fvneral Fvkk, Vessna, White Ward, Visceral Carnage/Roadside Butchery, Ezkaton, Raventale, Amatory, Aborted Fetus, Funere Records, Kadavar, Moongates Guardian, Mettadone, ATMF, Breeding Ignorance, Omph!., Bhleg, Darkend, Ehlder, Lysithea,



Asphodele, Edellom, Elvenking, Majesty of Revival, Totengefluster, Mur, Drunemeton, Hortus Animae, Melancholy Pessimism, Ravenblood, The Negative Bias, Maieutiste, Severoth, Nachtterror, Maeskyryn, Naer Mataron, Xipe Totec, Serpent Seed, Numen, Mayhem, Godagainst, Stormcrow, Nytt Land, Order of the Ebon Hand, Sukkuba, Reido, Bongtower, Savagez, Tranquillizer 247, Tenebrae in Perpetuum. In addition, you can explore reviews on 15 pages plus read an article about Coyote Brutal Fest - 13. Don't you think such a huge amount of material speaks for the level of the magazine itself? Well, definitely yes! This is by all means a professional magazine executed by a professional staff. The pages are glossy and come with high-quality typographical print, easily readable font type/size and as usual brought to you in Russian language. As you've already realized, you can bump there into famous bands as well as into totally unknown ones, which I believe is a good combination in terms of variety. There are also 35 pages filled exclusively with advertisements. Quite a lot one would say, but that's the way it works lately! Well, there is really no point in further polishing, if you still prefer to read the hard copies instead of the virtual ones, then simply order it, you won't be disappointed!!!

ATMOSFEAR

Issue #25, 2020

Let's dissect the content of the 25th number. It has 144 pages packed with the following interviews: Lordi, Monolithe, Runemagick, Stigmatic Chorus, Омела, Adfail, Ulcerate, Squash Bowels, Fecality,

Blood Pollution, Endimion, Elffor, Moon Far Away, Grift, Deface, Saor, Bewailer, Pyrogenesis, Shades of Deep Water, Sjodogd, Blaze of Perdition, Zifir, Yaldabaoth, Perfect Crime, Borgne, Fleshcrawl, Ross the Boss, Shadow Rebels, Liquid Viscera, Navjarmahr, Necronomicon, In Oblivion, Crystal Viper, Feralia, Officium Triste, Deviant Syndrome, 3000AD, Grave Circles, Lucifer's Dungeon, Waxen, Морок, Vofa, Животная Радость, Silvered, Almanac, Moribund Sun, Reveall!, Lychgate, Nyrrst, Oblivion Beach, Grind Заебись Party, Dwaal, Second to Sun, Statist, Black Curse, Pathogen, Obscura Qalma, Путь, Т.О.М.В., Silentium, Aura, Haissem, Svart Lotus, Chamber of Torture, Forndom, Psychosurgical Intervention, Sons of a Wanted Man, Sorgelig, The Projectionist.



To my surprise, there are plenty of reviews written on old releases in this number. I don't have any problem with this, just recalled their earlier strategy, which meant only the fresh releases to be reviewed. Well, times are changing. There are 18 review pages in total plus an article about Coyote Brutal Fest 14. Still missing the editor's introduction, which I believe is a must for any printed publication. Furthermore, I think the more than 30 full pages used for advertising ads are too much. It will kinda turn the magazine into another direction. This number like all its predecessors is still fully written in Russian language, except one interview, which comes in Ukrainian. To be honest, I don't think that Atmosfear will gonna change once its content to Ukrainian, as for example Terroraiser magazine did in the beginning of this year, but you never know, time shall tell us...

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PAŘÁT

Issue #90, 2019

Pařát magazine from the Czech Republic started its activity in the year of 2000 as a xeroxed black & white 'zine.



Since the passed time it evolved into a marvelous full-colored typographic edition with a superior print quality and design respectively. The 90th issue has 60 pages packed with stylish interviews of Mayhem, V.A.R., Ragnarok, Sorcery, Machine Head (25 years of "Burn My Eyes"), Hour of

Penance, Karel "Bendik" Beneš aka Akharon (Dead Carnage, ex-Adultery, ex-Grope for Thesis, ex-Parasophisma, ex-Rhea, ex-Silva Nigra, ex-Vesna), Abortion, Praselizer, Jiří "Skuný" Sládek (Shatoun, ex-Sad Harmony, ex-Abaddon, ex-Cales), Denial of God, PRC Music, Konkhra, Absentation, Runemagick, Wolf Counsel, Novembers Doom, Jiří "Panthera" Rosa (Tortharry, Final Flag, ex-Brillien), Kornel Kontros (Castrum, Unfocused), Nocturnal and Golgotha. Furthermore, you can read what Peter Lengsfeld (Abstract) had to say regarding all the songs of "Lightheory", thereafter to explore in details two retrospective articles (the first is dedicated to Michal Cichý (R.I.P.) and Cerebral Turbulency, while the second one is to Bathory) and to get acquainted in short with the stories of Quercus and In the Abyss (both included in the section called "profilace"). Then you have the chance to dive deep into reviews on recent releases and to analyze them within 8 pages. This number also includes 4 mega posters of A2 format (1349, In the Abyss, Cannibal Corpse, Protector) plus a bonus CD with V.A.R.'s "...Temná" album. To sum it up: it's a super professional and flawless publication, which I would maximally advise to anyone, but especially to those who familiar with the Czech language!!!

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PAŘÁT

Issue #93, 2020

The 93rd number of Pařát magazine keeps pampering its committed readers in full swing. You can read there remarkable interviews with Deranged, M.S.R., Dark-times, Azure Emote, Funeralia, Thanatos, Crematory, Insepultus, Pothead, God De-throned, Devangelic, Naglfar, Assassin, Postcards from Arkham, Wardaemonic, Nyrst, Necrodeath, Thokkian Vortex, Havok, My Dying Bride, Luctus and Necrophiliac.



Afterwards you can bump into an article about Dissolving of Prodigy's "Echoes of My Sadness" reissue, in the "Profilace" chapter you'll be informed regarding the short stories of Apostles of Perversion and Imperial Age, there's also a great retrospective conversation with Juraj Harin about the Rock Extremum years, a label story (Punishment 18 Records) and a special interview with Petr "Habos" Haberland (Deep Throat) on his job at the zoo. The usual dose of reviews is 45 (8 pages) and they are written solely on the fresh releases of 2020, except one, which is dated 2019. Like before it has 60 full-colored, glossy pages of the highest print quality possible, fully written in Czech language and as bonuses there are four A2 format posters (Crematory, Pothead, Vader, Purnama) and a compilation CD of M.S.R. that features two of their albums and five live tracks. Warmly recommended magazine!!!

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TERRORAISER

Issue #3(79), 2019

OK, let's see what do we have inside the 79th number of Terroraiser magazine. The list of interviewed bands/individuals is as follows: Батюшка, Memoriam, Nocturnus AD, D-A-D, Tanzwut, Kryptos, Sacrilege, (Echo), Fvneral Fvkk, Sinful, Forgotten, Aborted Fetus, Hypnos, Ravenblood, Ornamentos del Miedo, Doug Piercy, Fusion Bomb, Critical Extravasion, Трупнобозка.



Then we have festival articles about Wacken Open Air, Metal East, Brutal Assault and Bang Your Head, four pages filled with reviews, some advertisement pages and a double photo page dedicated to Kiss' visit to Kyiv. This number, likewise its predecessors, will keep you busy for a good couple of hours and the well-readable font size will give comfort for your eyes. In terms of page numbers (48 in total) and quality/design we have no changes occurred there and the 4 issues per year are also stable from their side. What else? Well, the constant readers of Terroraiser know that this publication has been always printed in Russian language, so you need to know that language on at least average level to enjoy its content. My fave chats in this number were with Mike of Nocturnus AD, Bruno of Hypnos and Scott of Memoriam. Remember, printed magazines still rule, so don't be a lazy ass even in the era of the virtual insanity, instead order your own copy and have a pleasant read!!!

TERRORAISER

Issue #4(80), 2019

In the fourth and last number for 2019 you can investigate interviews of Bestial Invasion, Андрей Смирнов (U.D.O.), Primordial, Tesseract, Crystal Viper, Esoteric, Novembers Doom, Isole, Possessed,



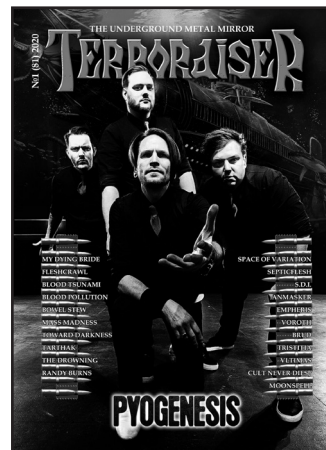
Zaub, Heilung, Mortem, Hell:On, Damiir (Destruction), Wreck-Defy, Bewailer, Mesmur, Torn Apart, M.O.S.S., Hatecrime, Zeni Geva, Pantheon and Absence Betrayal. All of them turned out to be really interesting and informative in one or another way, therefore they will guarantee a pleasant pastime for the reader. There are also 6 pages filled with reviews on the latest underground products. To me this part is the most important one in any

magazine or fanzine, because it reflects how dedicated, skilled and creative are its writers. And to be honest, I really enjoy the way Thrashmentor, the chief editor, reviews/describes the materials he gets. The same goes to the introductory part, which tries to be always up to date with the music industry, its actual ups and downs. This number has around 11 advertisement pages and at the end you can also read a classy article about the Vinnitsa show of Hypnos, Fleshgore and Revolt that took place on the 10th of October, 2019. As usual its content is written in Russian and provided on 48 (A4 format) pages with top notch quality. Buy or die!!!

TERRORAISER

Issue #1(81), 2020

Let me tell you at once that this is the first issue of Terroraiser magazine that comes fully in Ukrainian language. Great improvement for sure. The introduction says that there's still parallelly a second version available in Russian language, but honestly I think it is unnecessary anymore. Content-wise we have also some great upgrades, like the addition of vinyl and book reviews. Still missing the reviews on magazines, fanzines and cassettes, but let's hope that section will be also added shortly. In the actual issue you can read interviews with Pyogenesis, My Dying Bride, Space of Variations, Vltimas, Fleshcrawl, Bowel Stew, S.D.I., Tristitia, Empheris, Tarthak, Towards Darkness, The Drowning, Anmasker, Blood Pollution,



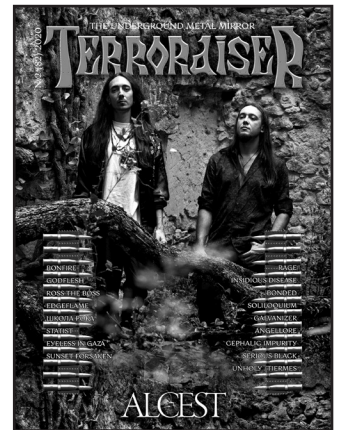
Septicflesh, Mass Madness, Blood Tsunami, Voroth, Brud, Fernando Ribeiro (Moonspell), Dayal Patterson (Cult Never Dies) and Randy Burns. All the interviews were very well adapted to Ukrainian, so I think it will work out for them in the future likewise! As the review sections have been refreshed and broadened a bit, this time you can enjoy them on 11 pages. The quality and the design of the print are untouched and as it was used for a couple of years now it comes on 48 glossy A4 format pages. Nice job!!!

TERRORAISER

Issue #2(82), 2020

This is the number that marks the 25th anniversary of Terroraiser magazine. I think Thrashmentor & Co. are the only ones who can be proud of a quarter century history on the territory of Ukraine. Of course, there are other good and old publications in Ukraine, but none of them can boast of so many numbers and such a long existence. Hats off and huge respect for the endurance!!! This jubilee number collects the next interviews: Alcest, Ross the Boss, Bonfire, Rage, Serious Black, Bonded, Godflesh, Edgeflame, Angellore, Insidious Disease, Galvanizer, Statist, Eyeless in Gaza, Cephalic Impurity, Soliloquium, Школа Рока, Sunset Forsaken and Unholy. As you may see by the different band names the musical palette is rather variegated there. The same goes to the reviews' sections, where you can find surveys on 172 releases from the present and past times too. And finally cassette reviews have been also presented

there, though in a small amount, but truly happy about this addition. With each number this publication gets better and more improved, thus can't wait to read the next issue and discover further changes therein. As its predecessor it's fully written in Ukrainian language and printed on 48 pages of A4 format. Oh, almost forgot,

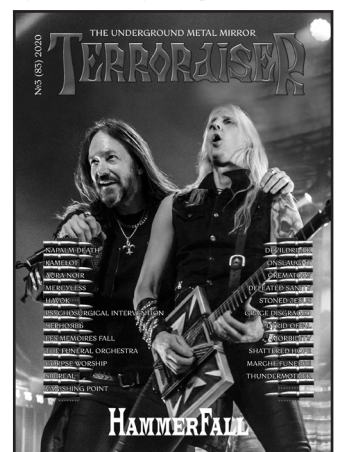


there's also an article about the Coyote Brutal Fest – 14. Well, let's celebrate this special jubilee of Terroraiser together. Support the magazine by buying their latest numbers and spread the word!!!

TERRORAISER

Issue #3(83), 2020

Terroraiser keeps on releasing four numbers per year as planned. So here it is, the third one for 2020. Print-quality-wise it remained the same, but the number of pages have been extended to 56. To me it was quite interesting and motivating to read the interviews with Mercyless, Napalm Death and Onslaught, though the other interviews were done in a pretty decent way as well. So you can read the latest news and plans for the future from HammerFall, ThunderMother, DevilDriver, Havok, Stoned Jesus, Kamelot, Vanishing Point, Grace Disgraced, Crematory, Putrid Ofal, Defeated Sanity, Corpse Worship, Psychosurgical Intervention, Les Mémoires Fall, Marche Funèbre, Shattered Hope, The Funeral Orchestra, Чернояр, Aura Noir, Morbidity and Sibireal. The reviews have been divided to the following sections: Album of the season, CD, live releases, re-releases, vinyl, tape and DIY-releases. They are getting varied and expanded with each number, which is a definitely cool thing. There are 18 pages in total filled with reviews. Most of them written in a laconic way, but still giving the reader an optimal overview on the chosen release. Definitely good job lays in there! The number of advertising pages is about ten and that's a really good ratio in comparison to 56. Its format is still A4, the language is remained Ukrainian, what else do you need? Get it right away and enjoy the printed way!!!



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Not just the music of Descend into Despair is deep in thoughts and emotions, but the answers of Xander Coza (vocals/guitars) too. He talked about the new album, its lyrics, possible live shows, the local scene and plans for a future video clip among others. Read our conversation below and have fun!!!

Greetings to all at Descend into Despair!!! Your new album "Opium" has been released by Funere in May, 2020. How do you feel about it after the passed time? How's the selling and the reaction of the fans up to now?

- Hello Kornel and Encomium and thank you for considering us for this interview. We're very happy with how our latest album turned out. Every time we listen to it, we are certain that we did our best and that it is an honest journey from start to finish. Let's just say that we are a bit disappointed, as the album didn't get to as many ears as we would have liked.

"Opium" is the first release with Funere. What kind of deal did you sign with them? Are you satisfied with them so far and will Funere be responsible for future releases of Descend into Despair?

- We have a pretty standard deal that goes on between underground bands and labels. So far, we are very pleased with how our collaboration has went, they did really good in respecting their end of the deal. We aren't exactly sure on what our future releases are going to be (if any), therefore time will tell.

Could you please enlighten us more details about the lyrical conceptions of Descend into Despair? What themes were touched and covered on "Opium"?

- Our lyrical themes kind of moved on from album to album. The first one, "The Bearer of All Storms", had more or less your typical funeral doom themes, juggling between depression, heartache and suicide. We did try to tell it as a story though, as each track represented one moment in a journey towards ruin. Hopefully we did succeed with at least some listeners. Our second album, "Synaptic Veil", was an attempt to tackle the walls of human consciousness, I say attempt, because it indirectly (due to a very unfortunate personal event) turned into something else, which is beautiful and far more sincere than its original target.

"Opium" is a colossal effort at abstraction. In a sense it's our most minimalist work yet: three songs, each focusing on a theme. The first song, "ensh[r]ine" represents light or the colour white, the second, "antumbra", represents transformation, and the final track, "dis[re]member", focuses on darkness or the

seeing even black metal bands perform on a live Facebook stream is quite disappointing and pathetic.

This is not a compromise I can make. Even faced with the possibility of having to do it illegally, we will still strive to perform our music in a live setting.

You are from Cluj-Napoca. Can you please talk about its underground scene and bands in general? Do you have some constant or beloved places for outdoor or indoor meetings? If so, which ones are those?

- Well, we're the only funeral doom metal band in the country, so making connections is pretty tough. The local scene in this city is, as far as I know, mostly made up of the -core variety. There are a couple of nice pubs, where we enjoy hanging out from time to time. There is also Form Space, a large venue, which has seen plenty of great bands play and has become quite the hotspot for touring bands.

Along the physical CD releases do you have other merchandise (like regular T-shirts, long sleeves, sweatshirts, hoodies, etc.) for sell? Where the fans of Descend into Despair can purchase those trophies?

- As we have done with our previous release, we will also have a t-shirt for sale soon enough, same artist as before. Expect nothing less than an amazing design, fully encompassing the theme of the album. We aren't planning on having any other merchandise, as we think that musicians should focus on making music and not running an outlet store. Orders should be handled as before, by contacting us over Facebook, Instagram, or email.

I've noticed that almost each member is involved in other musical projects as well. Would you be so kind to name the active ones and speak a little bit about each of them?

- At the moment Luca and Liviu are active in another band, a local death metal group called Marchosias. Flaviu is also part of Deirune, a local symphonic metal act.

Well, maybe the next is going to be not an obvious question at all as the songs for the "Opium" album are very lengthy ones, but still do you have in plans to make a video clip for any of those?

- We did, but due to the quarantine we were unable to do so. We had everything planned for a very unique video for the second song, but two days before the actual video shoot it became illegal to leave our own homes. It's highly unfortunate as it would have been a considerable boost for the album promotion. We might still consider it in the upcoming months.

Thanks a lot for the answers. Final introspections are yours. Please share all the latest news and upcoming plans at the end.

- Thank you once again for taking the time to talk to us. We really hope that we can bring our latest album to more people, have others listen to us and hopefully come to enjoy our music. We're living difficult times when it comes to creating music and a lot of times doing your best is simply not enough. We've all invested everything we could, both financially and emotionally, into making this album a reality. We tried to create something completely sincere and unique.

At the end of the day, having a chance of being heard – and giving everyone a chance to hear you – is far more important than the number of albums one would sell.

We just want you to listen to us, that's all.



Descend into Despair was founded in 2010, since that time you've been through a few member changes. Please list the current musicians and also tell the readers a little about the process of creating. I mean, name the ones who are in charge for the new ideas and/or full song structures as well as how and at what point the arrangements appear in.

- Currently Descend into Despair is: Xander Coza (vocals, guitars), Sergio Stanley (guitars), Liviu Pop (guitars), Alex Costin (bass), Flaviu Roșca (keyboard), Luca Breaz (drums) and Florentin Popa (lyrics plus extra non live stuff). In most cases I (Xander) try to paint the bigger picture and provide a sort of general framework for the rest of the team to work on. If any good ideas are provided, then we try to incorporate them. I consider myself to be quite competent with concepts and broad ideas, but not that skilled when it comes to the finer details and this is where everyone else steps in.

colour black. We've used plenty of symbols and motifs in order to convey the desired meaning in each song and it wasn't easy to do so, but I think that we did a really good job. From the opening lullaby which brings you, the listener, into the light, to the constant shifting eclipse of the second song and until the Alzheimer's clouded end of the album, I think that there are plenty of interesting things still left to be discovered by each listener.

In the knowing of the actual worldwide situation will you start performing live shortly or if it is going to happen in the nearest time it will be strictly online?

- I am a strong believer that art is one of the few things that actually matters in life. We might record a special performance one day, but that would only come in the form of a music video. I don't really enjoy what most bands are doing now, I find it cheap and dishonest. Metal used to be about rebellion and

DESCEND INTO DESPAIR

Hungary's new-born and well-seeming death metal entity – Nygmalion – is 100% ready to catch your attention to their debut album “Deluminate” coming out in May. I’ve questioned drummer Gergő Gazdag about the new start, the new record and his musical tastes. Read on and enjoy his laconic answers below!!!

Nygmalion's history started in the beginning of 2020, but it has a strict connection, both music- and members-wise, to Nigromantia. Tell us what's the difference between these two formations and why you decided to transform Nigromantia into Nygmalion? By the way, what's the meaning of Nygmalion?

- It was hanging in the air for quite some time now, I first floated the idea when we were roughly half-way through the writing process. With David, being a full member now since the last record, we have been writing songs and riffs with different flavour, style and approach. And you know there are moments when you ask yourselves ‘does it fit?’ and we shook our heads no ☹️. But we liked and were confident about the new direction and we continued the creative process without asking the same question any more. No matter what ideas we came up with, we asked the question do WE like it. This way we could experiment with ideas that were not Nigromantia compatible without any constraints. I thought that this way we would end up with an incoherent album, but on the contrary. At the end we managed to put together a well-rounded and versatile metal record that we are all proud of.

I named the creature Nygmalion, which is present in the song bearing the same name. This was the first song that came together for the new material, laying the foundation of the sound and direction we ended up on. It is a creature inside me that has been fed with grudge basically from the beginning, ending up in paralyzing hatred that I should have let go long time ago.

You’ve recently premiered an official lyrics video for the song called “Nygmalion”. It’s an ultra-catchy, massive-sounding melodic death metal piece with incredible solos and a dark yet epic vibe. What should we know about its lyrical content and in general regarding the lyrics of “Deluminate”?

- Thanks, I am glad you like it!

Most of the lyrics were written by me – this is my first attempt as a lyricist – and I wanted something that I can relate to. Things that I experienced, went through, felt, survived or sometimes dreamt about. It manifested in various topics, for example I dedicated the song “Human Eclipse” to the event of me turning 30 years old. I have never been your typical guy who got depressed easily, but it was very hard on me. Facing your own mortality and realizing that the fun days are over. Luckily the depression went away and got dissolved with 20+ friends and some substantial amount of substances during a 3-day friend fest, but still it was a hard thing for me to digest.

Another example of personal reference is the story behind “Twist of Fate”. I was having the worst, most horrible hangover and the guys came over to my place to demo up the song. Best timing ever, probably I was still WUI (writing under influence ☺️), and I dedicated this song in respect to my body

that it had to endure these kinds of poisonings every time and I should not wonder when one time it will say ‘STOP’.

Fortunately, the others went along with my lyrical content and also pitched in with their ideas for some of the songs, which were in alignment with my ideas.

Your debut album “Deluminate” will feature 12 songs and it will be available for the masses on 15th of May, 2020. Where did you record it, who was in charge for mixing and mastering it? Which label will be going to release it?

- Our previous label disappeared last time, so we are going to release this one by ourselves. Recording was not an easy process. Now I live far away from the guys, I recorded the drums here in the capital, guitars were recorded at David's place and we recorded the vocals in a third place, so there were a lot of logistics involved. Then we took the material to István Simon to No Silence Studios for mixing and mastering. We already had a pretty good vision in our heads how it should sound like, but István took it to another level. He did an awesome job and I think we managed to get out of the songs what we envisioned beforehand.

What the cover artwork of “Deluminate” is going to symbolize? Is there any hidden meaning there? Tell us more about your ties with Lahar Arts.

- A buddy of mine recommended Lahar Arts. I looked up his artworks and I immediately knew that he is our guy – their drawings just blew my mind. I contacted him and he was very cool – it seemed we knew each other for a long time. Both artworks – for the song “Nygmalion” and for the album: “Deluminate” – are based on his drawings. The phoenix-like creature is symbolizing Nygmalion creature itself. The album artwork is symbolizing the music on this record, we are showing different sides of ourselves, just like the moon, sometimes with full of light, other times full of darkness, but still being the same entity every time.

You are from Nyíregyháza. Could you please talk a little bit about its underground scene? Any bands, studios or music stores you would warmly recommend us to check out? How do you actually see Hungary's underground movement? Which bands are you proud of?

- When I was young there were plenty of good bands, there were places where underground music was welcome, there were concerts every week. Today? Nothing. It saddens me that we cannot play in our hometown, the closest place is in Debrecen where we can perform. If I have to name one band to be proud of it would be Angerseed – we've been close friends with Péter Mátyák for almost a decade now, his enthusiasm and dedication in the underground scene is remarkable. I stopped counting how many times we shared the stage with them.

After the release of “Deluminate” I assume you're going to perform its songs live as well. So

where can we see and catch you playing live in the very near future? Can we expect you to visit Ukraine too?

- Due to coronavirus pandemic, I cannot tell you right now, but we are planning extensive touring with the new material. Ukrainian fans were always good for us, if the opportunity comes, we will definitely play there for sure.

In 2014 you've played with Nigromantia in Ungvár. How did you like the city, the local fans and the venue? Any good or bad memories about that visit?

- Oh, fun times. There was a problem with David's passport, and we had to substitute him. Péter Fehértoy (Andartar) learned all the songs, did a great job, we did one rehearsal with him before the show. Unfortunately, we did not have the chance to do a sightseeing tour, because those were troubling times in that area of Ukraine at that time too. After all, the show was great and the fans and you guys were great to us, we had a fun time there. I remember some vodka and some dispute on the border going home, but it's all blurry ☹️.

Could you please name us some of your favourite bands/albums? Which bands motivated or influenced you to start playing death metal as well as to form Nigromantia in 2008?

- I was not there when the guys started Nigromantia, I got into the picture much later.

My favourites are: Anthrax (Charlie Benante is my favourite drummer of all time), Metallica (pre “Load”), Iron Maiden, Dream Theater (Mike Portnoy era)/ Liquid Tension Experiment, Cynic/Gordian Knot, Death/Control Denied, Opeth (pre “Heritage”).

Recent favourites: Into Eternity “Buried in Oblivion”, Gojira “From Mars to Sirius”, Ne Obliviscaris “Portal of I”, Hypno5e “Acid Mist Tomorrow”.

As far as playing death metal is concerned I've never been a fan of ‘all time blast beat’ bands, but I was always fascinated by the drumming on Death records, especially Sean Reinert's and Richard Christy's playing. Same goes for Martin Lopez's performance in Opeth as well. They are the main death metal influences for me.

What literature you prefer to read and what kind of movies you prefer to watch? Please name us some of your favourite books & movies. The last book you bought was?

- I am more of a movie guy – I prefer horror-, thriller-, dark comedy movies, I just don't understand why they can only make 1-2 good movies per year, others are garbage. Please recommend me some good ones if you can!

I am not much of a book reader type, recent books I read is the documentary books of Bud Spencer and Terence Hill and “I'm the Man” the biography book of Scott Ian.

Well, thank you very much for taking the time to answer my questions.

- Thank you! We wish the webzine and its readers all the best.



If you feel melancholic, crave for loneliness and wish to fit it with an appropriate musical alloy then I darkly advise you to check both albums by Sinister Downfall. Eugen Kohl, the sole member behind the German post-apocalyptic funeral doom metal unit, mediated the answers and transferred us some details on "A Dark Shining Light". Perceive the age of loneliness!!!



Hail to thee, Eugen! First of all, let me congratulate you with the release of "A Dark Shining Light". It's indeed a great record! How's the response of the doom metal fans and the media to it so far?

- Hello Kornel! Thanks for your interest.

The response so far has been very good and I am glad that the album has found its place.

It was issued 25th of May, 2020 by the same covenant of labels, namely Funere and Weird Truth Productions, as your debut album "Eremozoic". How did you hook up with them? What should we know about the sales of both?

- We started working closely with Funere even before the release of the first album. The communication has always been excellent and it is one of the labels, where the owner is really more about the music and less about the business. "Eremozoic" was the first release of the label at that time, which is very special to me. It is also a great honor for me to be featured on a label with bands like Evoken and Mourning Congregation. But of course, these circumstances were completely uncertain in the beginning. Furthermore, it was something special that Weird Truth Productions participated in both releases, helped to make them possible and cared for our Asian friends.

The songs of "A Dark Shining Light" follow the designated path of "Eremozoic", though they were definitely equipped with a heavier sound production. How do you see it? By the way, what motivates you to write such desperate, melancholic and post-apocalyptic funeral doom metal pieces?

- I learn from each of my releases and this does not only concern Sinister Downfall. I always try to improve and optimize my recording processes.

Funeral doom is generally an excellent tool for expressing the emotions you describe. I take the motivation for this kind of music from personal thoughts and things I am involved with. Probably it is a kind of catharsis. Inspiration from literary works also plays a very important role.

The cover of "A Dark Shining Light" was created by Dunkle Stille. She was the author, the model and the photographer in one person. What does it symbolize? Is there any special or personal meaning there?

- Yes, the cover is closely connected to the music and has a deep, personal background. The image symbolizes "resignation to hopelessness". It shows an innocent girl locked up in a dark prison. The chain on her leg intensifies the already oppressive mood. She holds field plants in her hands, which actually symbolize freedom (wide field, air, light). However, these are cut off and slowly die in her hands, adding additional tragedy and despair to the picture. The girl in the picture understands and accepts that she will never get out of this prison again.

Please tell the readers a little about the lyrical side of Sinister Downfall. What topics do you dissect on the current album? What are the influential things when it comes to write the lyrics?

- Lyrics play a less important role for me personally than music. I have always found sounds more suitable for conveying emotions than words. But of course, they should also reinforce and underline melancholy. As with music, again personal things play a big role and literature, which makes me think and creates a certain atmosphere.

You are responsible not only for the entire songwriting, but for all the recorded instruments as well as mixing & mastering. When did you start recording on your own?

- I have always made music myself. Something else was never out of the question for me. I put music on the same level as painting, writing, etc. All this is also done alone, because it serves to represent one's own thoughts and emotions, be it in pictures, writing or sound. And since I don't want to tell anyone what to play, I just play all the instruments myself. Moreover, I still feel the same amount of enthusiasm for playing instruments as on the first day. So the recording process is something very positive for me and I like to do it.

You are involved in dozens of other bands and projects too. The musical palette is spanning from black metal to doom and death metal. How do you manage to focus and write materials for all of them? Which band's new record should we expect to be released next?

- For me, each genre I deal with has its own function and gives me special emotions and impressions. I glorify dark music as a whole.

I am constantly releasing new material. For example, today, September 13, the new Dark Fields album "Oblivion" has been released, which is a close collaboration with the already mentioned visual artist Dunkle Stille. With the singer Malduchryst, who is a close friend of mine, we recently released the first album for our band Cinereous Rain, in which I am also involved in the songwriting and all instruments. There will be much more in the future, because music is a big and important part to me.

What kind of music do you listen to with pleasure these days? Also please mention ten of your all-time favorite albums.

- My taste in music is widely scattered throughout metal and parts of industrial. It's hard for me to list all-time favorites, because so many releases have affected me, but bands that have influenced me a lot in general are Reverend Bizarre, Electric Wizard, Incantation, Hate Eternal, Nile, Moss, Ommadon, Paysage d'Hiver, Lustmord and Kammarheit. There are countless more bands, but I would forget someone anyway.

Besides the CDs do you have in plans to make other Sinister Downfall merchandise (T-shirts, hoodies, etc.)?

- First thoughts are already there, but unfortunately I cannot make a concrete statement at the moment. Sinister Downfall is still a quite young band and surely there will be some merch in the future. At least I hope so.

Please shape your last thoughts at the end and send your greetings to all the Transcarpathian Sinister Downfall fans as well as funeral doom metal maniacs. The space is yours.

- A very special thankyou goes to Dunkle Stille, for her visual and personal contribution to my music and inspiration. Of course, I would like to thank all listeners and supporters of my music as a whole, be it Sinister Downfall or anything else, and the kind words they send me. Thanks for your contribution to dark music!

Also I would like to thank Jane (Funere) for the excellent and close collaboration. This is a label that some others should take an example from. Last but not least, many thanks to you for the interview and your contribution to the music.

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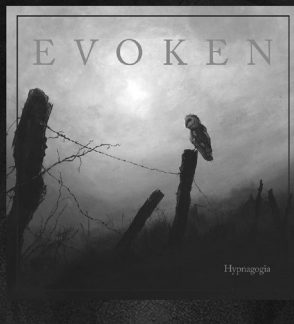
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“THE BOOK OF
KINGS”



ORNAMENTOS
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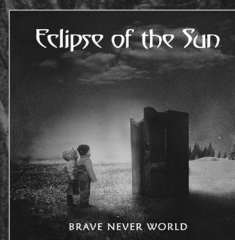
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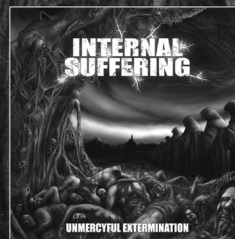
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