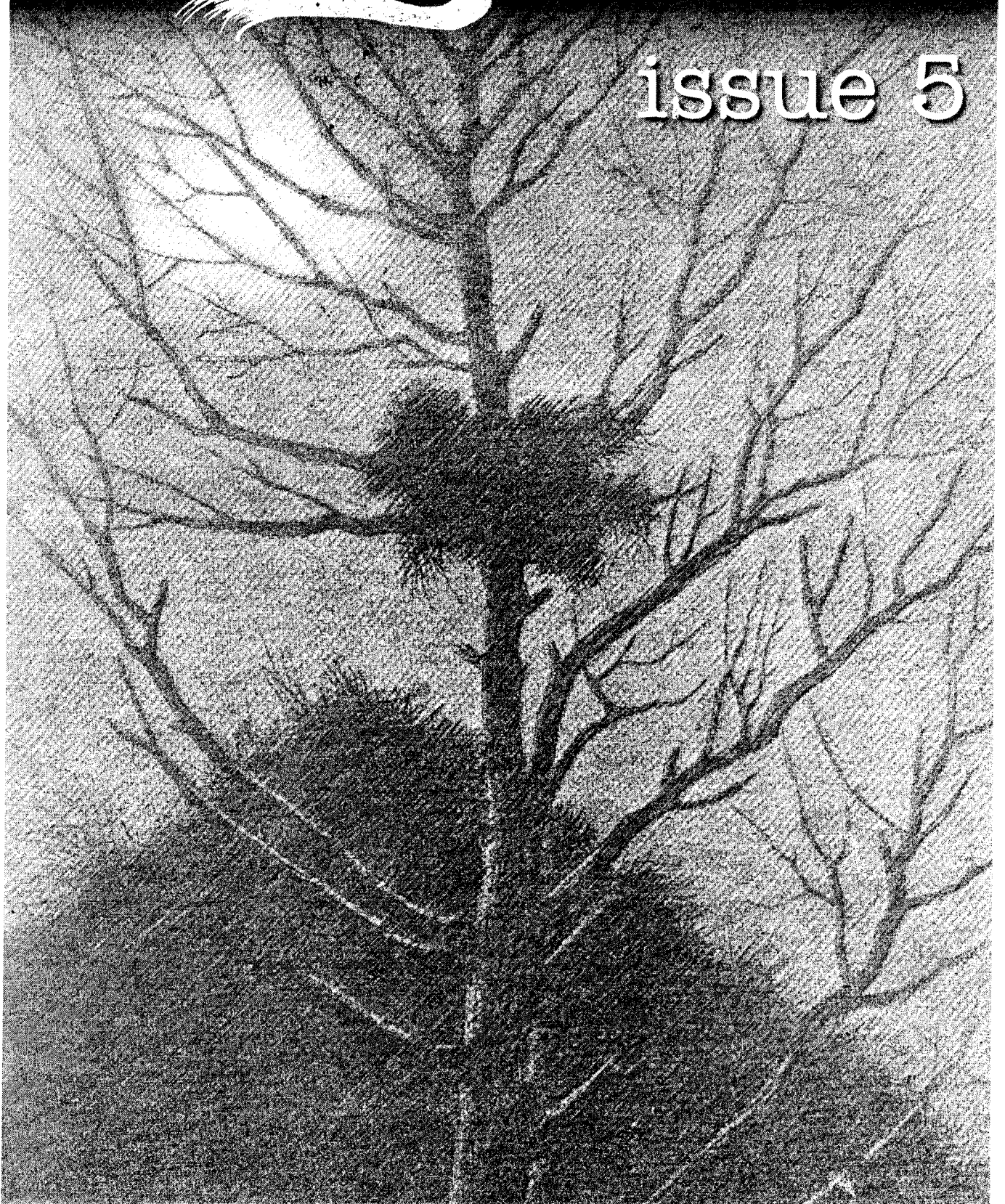


# Leodoradas

issue 5



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# editorial

Hail. First time with new name, my baby is out there again. It's a long time since "Brainstorm" #1 saw the light of the moon, but time flew unstopably, whilst this issue of magazine was lurking behind the curtains of frost and dark. I know that many reviews got old, and some interviews either, anyway they are still brilliant in my opinion. I hope you'll say the same after reading them.

About change of monicker. As you might know we have established here a new organization called LEDO TAKO PRODUKTAI, which takes care on releasing of musical cassettes, radio show holding, underground products distribution and releasing of the magazine. So it was natural to name it under the name of the label. Moreover I had an old idea of kicking the original name out.

It's not just the case of new clothes we try to change the inside contents as well. You can see several articles written by known underground people in this issue. Later on we promise you quite a few more surprises like that. Music won't be thrown in any corner though it will always remain the base of LEDO TAKAS. So await more surprises from us and read this rag on!! There is enough of interesting things down!!

Write us if you have some comments your opinion is welcomed. Yours in the darkest way to artistic perfection.

TADAS

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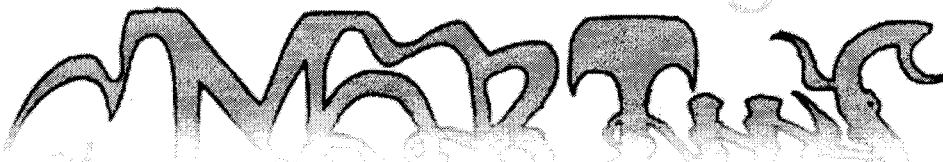
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**SVEIKINIMAI:** Eglei, mamai, Lord Ominous, Vytui bei draugams.

GREETINGS to: everyone at labels, bands, distributions, magazines, radios, who helped me with creating this issue, who spread or bought previous issues, who trusted in me sending promo material, who answered my questions and letters. There're too much of you to mention-YOU KNOW WHO YOU FUCKING ARE!!!



Lord Ominous '96



"Ledo Takas" wants to make a statement, which will definitely raise up our actions: this interview with Mortiiis was made at the time when master of synthis was refusing any talks at all - he's fed up with different kind of features right now, but still agreed to make an exception for you, my stoned reader. And don't look at this as a surprise - we work just for you!

Ok, being more serious, MORTIIS, FATA MORGANA and especially VOND have become a new era dark music forerunners - no wonder that they have stuck our musical views as well. Strange or exciting, but the same person stands behind all these projects - Havard Ellefsen, aka Mortiiis...

I won't name or comment moreover all his releases, as you know them perfectly. Just recently new albums by FATA MORGANA and VOND have been prepared, so look for them; and surely ask about new double MORTIIS album, which is due out on artist's own label DARK DUNGEON MUSIC.

Finally here is Mortiiis himself answering some of the finest questions ever asked!!!

-Hello. What's the world of dungeon darkness in those warmy days down there? You still have some eternal inspiration to get good ideas for your creation flowing?

-First of all, it's not that warm here right now. Seems as if summer just skipped Halmstad this year. Guess we'll be celebrating christmas when the rest of the world is sunbathing.. Well, bad jokes aside, I am currently working on putting my live shows together so I think I've still got some inspiration left.

-Which of your projects are you working on meanwhile? Does it have something to do with the season outside? For example, don't you think that FATA MORGANA reflects more this warmer time of the year?

-I don't know. You might have a point there, the one FATA record that I have done has got its warmer sides I guess. I would compare it to warm rain if I had to compare it to warmth in the first place. The project I am working on now is MORTIIS, which is basically 90% of what I work on all the time. The others are just side projects.

-To continue with that, how do you decide what part of your creation fits more MORTIIS than VOND or than FATA MORGANA? It comes far before you start composing or you decide about that when a track is finished?

-Naturally I know which project I make music for when I start making it. If I decided that afterwards, then it would all become sort of meaningless because all my musical endeavours (or projects if you will) would carry exactly the same feeling and atmosphere. I think I always find a certain identity for each project, so I know somehow what music to make.. The music I have created, the projects I have created is really just the different sides to my personality, light and dark, and the utterly negative and depressed side that sometimes pops up..

-I asked about it as some people say it's all the same or very similar. Don't you feel it starts to repeat itself or it might happen with your new works?

-I think I explained this above.

-Why FATA MORGANA debut keeps in itself even 7 compositions? It was not that usual so far? Does it have anything to do with the band's concept?

-I guess it had something to do with me getting a bit bored with making so long songs. I did it for three records, and also the VOND songs were quite long. FATA MORGANA was a brand new project, I had brand new ideas, and making shorter songs was just one of them. Have a look at the new MORTIIS record.

-It's obviously "Crypt Of The Wizard", I guess we've got the point - it contains 10 short (comparing to other MORTIIS stuff) compositions. Everybody thinks MORTIIS is your main project due to the monicker itself and due to the number of albums released so far. How do you think why? Are these things important for you?

-MORTIIS is my religion (if I may use that word) so of course it is my main project. I spend all my time and efforts on MORTIIS, well 90% anyway, the rest goes to other musical efforts I may be undertaking at the time.

-What about "Blood and Thunder" 7"EP - it isn't a part of your

single series? Don't you mind it's released by the label (PRIMITIVE ART Records) which earlier released quite different music than yours (goth/rock/core)?

-I have known Paolo at PRIMITIVE ART for a couple of years, and I am well aware of the music he releases on his label - very much different from what I make. Still, he offered to release it as a lim.ed. single on coloured vinyl, etc, so I said sure no problem and we did it. Besides we work well together, he is also the other guy behind our mail order company STATIC AGE. The story behind this EP is simple: I was asked to do an intro/outro for a German death metal band. I had an upcoming recording session at the time and figured I could always make something for them. I did, and they ripped me off totally. I did not even received a free copy of the CD my music appeared on. The band was called FERMENTING INNARDS. The music was released as a 7"EP because I figured the fans might want to have the music but not wanting to buy that CD with all the crap music on only for 5 minutes of my own. It is not a part of the single series, however.

-Yeah. About other music. There were some statements that you completely dislike & don't listen to black metal anymore. I'm sure it's wrong. So, tell me what kind of (new) bands attract your attention!

-Well, the statement about me disliking black metal is wrong. However I do not particularly like the current black metal scene, I have seen a lot of trends come and pass, and the same will happen to this trend. That is why I think it is sad with all wannabees whining about how true they are and all that crap, when all they do is to rip off DARKTHRONE or EMPEROR. I enjoy a few current bands such as DARKTHRONE, ENSLAVED, MYSTICUM, GEHENNA, GEHENNAH, IRON RAINBOW, SCEPTRE, ORDER FROM CHAOS (rip), VULPECULA, SADISTIK EXEKUTION and stuff like that. I mostly listen to older shit.. For example yesterday I listened to ANVIL's two first albums, the "Death cult" session from '85 with CORONER, a single by the MONROES ("Sunday People"), and "The Walking Dead" with SAINT VITUS.

-What music (if any) gives you at least some inspiration for your wanderings? Do you think your works would be different if you didn't listened to that stuff?



-I really do not know what has been inspiring me. I think earlier on I was really into the soundtrack to the first Conan movie. I think I took some ideas from that one. Lately some industrial structures have fascinated me, so I have adopted some ideas from there as well, nothing really noticeable though.. Still the same sounds and more medieval/orchestral atmosphere as always I guess. I suppose it might have sounded otherwise if it weren't for there, but then again perchance not, as I think I was heading down this road (musically) anyway.

-What's your point of view to a numerous new born dark/sympho projects popping out nowadays? Isn't it a bit ridiculous having in mind most of them come from black metal background and claim to

have black metal believes?

-I do not care. But as far as I see it, many of these industrial/ambient groups seem to have the same foundational principles as the black metal kids. The only real difference I have noticed is that the ind/amb. scene is not as trendy + the people are more serious about what they do. Black metal attitudes are usually just passing trend in most cases.

-It seems like you wanted to make this music totally personal, to keep it for yourself, but it turned vice-versa, even starting to be a big trend.. Maybe you have an idea what's next (with your creation & with all these followers)?

-I guess starting writing books or something. Haha! As you know I am working on mine, which is just a sort of encyclopedia to my own world. So I would not be surprised if there will be a sudden rise in the scale of authors after my book gets out. Really, I have no idea if I am such an inspiration for other people, but in this world being as trendy and fantasyless as it is I guess the possibilities are there.

-I won't believe it, unless so dumb morons would buy books just for they are "evil", not looking how they are written.. I don't say that about your write-up, though. Leaving and forgetting the world of EMPEROR, you still keep that ancient & magical term in your creation, this time as "keiser". I guess it's your favourite kind of expressing yourself? Has it anything in common with your original band?

-Nothing at all. That lyric was written whilst I still was in the band, that is as far as it goes, and the title of the song is purely coincidental. Of course, while I was in the band, the concept of power and force was burning just as bright as it appears, that it still does within the band today. I think that fact is one of the few that MORTIIS and EMPEROR still have in common.

-I've read quite a few features on you indeed - seems that more and more freaks realise your music reaches many ears. Don't you afraid to be somehow confused if quite far from the underground people start to show interest in MORTIIS? What could be your comment on that feature in Danish "Mighty" magazine earlier this year (describing Mortiiis fave drinks and how he celebrates x-mas)?

-Haha! The article in "Mighty" mag was unusual and anything like that is not likely to happen again, not in the near future. I was in Denmark having a good time and I see nothing wrong in that. The guy on the photo is not Mortiiis however, but a bloke called Havard Ellefsen. Loads of people outside the underground enjoy MORTIIS and that does not bother me at all, why should it?

-Are you glad to have your own label and distribution besides your musical projects? I mean it should be cool to keep it all going, to rid off any other stuff which aren't your nature at all? You don't have any other job?

-The idea is that the label and mailorder is to be my job (already is) and should get me a steady income of money. The royalties I get these days do not finance much for me and besides I'd like to work with something that I know and like, not any sort of stinking factory job or any kind of shit like that.

-So describe your "Secrets of My Kingdom" book! Any appreciable date of release? Won't it be too much for those who'd love to find some sensations in your activity or rummage in your soul's labyrinths?

-I doubt anyone could find their ways in my soul's labyrinths (as you nicely put it), first of all they wouldn't find their way in. The book may appeal as an entrance to my mind, perhaps to some it may be, to most it won't. It all depends on which way you understand and "consume" the book. I cannot and will not comment on its contents, nor I can give any official release date, because I am not ready yet. I think I will be this summer however, and after that we shall see about the release dates.

-What will your next musical releases follow?

-The current release is the hot from the press album "Crypt Of The Wizard" which is a more special MORTIIS release. Limited edition CD in 5000 copies. The next "real" MORTIIS album will be an album called "The Stargazer".

For me like a sensation was the fact that Mortiiis agreed to join Swedish blackers ALGAIÓN on his re-beloved bass guitar!! Old times return!! Nevertheless, his synth music remains, and bunch of new releases just proves that. Don't miss them.



"Here In After" was named the sophomore release of death metal veterans, which started even back in late nineties together with such heroes as MORBID ANGEL, DECIDE and CANNIBAL CORPSE... Look - all of those have done pretty stylish buzz within the extreme metal market, while IMMOLATION had to fight, at least after their scandalous split due to shameful "let's turn our backs" attitude with their previous label. Up to this a four piece did really well, their "Dawn Of Possession" had a tremendous impact on a worldwide death metal scene - yeah, the year was number 1992...

Back after four years, this new release sets new standards for IMMOLATION - the band must continue what they started up, and "Here In After" easily confirms that! Surely, METAL BLADE didn't think on anything else - let the wings of antichristian death metal plague their heavy-weighted catalogues... IMMOLATION had some tremendous tourings this year with CANNIBAL CORPSE, SAMAE, SIX FEET UNDER... During the last tour the band was even invited to the White House to speak to the president B. Clinton about the current gas crisis and how it affects touring bands. As well a new drummer was presented in the person of Alex Hernandez.

Below we have a chat with the band (answers were done collectively), which however took place just after the recordings of "Here In After", on 5th August 1995. It was meant to be included in earlier issue of our mag, yet it's still actual, heading what IMMOLATION were, are and always will be about.

**-How are you doing today? Do you feel the second coming of IMMOLATION stronger & stronger with every day? Could you explain in brief why your return was so long & difficult?**

-Today we are doing quite well, and yes... the second coming is very close, it actually has already begun. We just got out of the studio and have finished recording our new album. A few days ago we signed with METAL BLADE Records and we will have our new CD out in the next couple of months. We are really looking forward to it.

There has been a long delay since "Dawn Of Possession", but it has helped to strengthen the band. Ever since we split with ROADRUNNER in early '93 we had to work hard to get ourselves into a better situation. We spent most of '93 working jobs and then in '94 we were starting to get things moving again. We went up to Canada and played some shows; we travelled down to Lima, Peru and played a show there; we got Chris Forbes as a manager; we hooked up with Frank Stover for our first official foreign address (IMMOLATION Germany); we recorded our new promo tape for the labels; we put together the "Stepping On Angels... Before Dawn" CD for REPULSE Records; as well as dealing with other needed business which helped the band.

Although we weren't in the public part of the scene, we were always pushing to move things forward. It took some time, but we feel that it's going to be worth the wait.

**-Being in touch for a while I've noticed how your recording date was postponed for several times: at first it was scheduled for mid-'94, then - for March/April 1995... Why so? And what kind of studio & producer have you chosen?**

-Well, we always would figure on a time... and then things wouldn't work out the way we had thought. There were lots of delays, but not anymore. We went into "Water Music" Studios (Hoboken, New Jersey) for 18 days in July. We had Jim Forbes (who engineered our '94 promo tape) and the studio's engineer (Wayne Dorell) work with us. We wanted to record in a local studio so we could put as much money into the actual recording as possible. We actually were thinking about Harris Johns again, but he did not have any time open until September, and we did not want to wait that long.

**-Can you name your new material as any surprising comparing to the earlier stuff? Any kind of progression is felt anyway?**

-There are no real surprises, the music is very straight forward as it's always been for us. The music is of course different than "Dawn..." because it's a new album, but it is still in the same vein as our first record. The music is very intense and very destructive. There is more emotion and feeling in the new material, but it is much heavier at the same time. The only progression we have had is to make our music much darker and more twisted. No one will be disappointed!

**-Do you think your return will be a real bone crushing experience, while the scene is overcrowded with (brutal) death metal bands and is even overfed of it - people choose some other kinds of heavy sound?**

-We feel that our new album will be a breath of fresh air into a stagnant scene. We think that people are being over exposed to a lot of bad versions of this style of music. Our music will definitely have a lot more to offer to them, something different than just a brutal sound. It's easy to be brutal, but to put feeling and meaning into the music as well... that's what people are not getting enough of; and we think they are looking for it.

**-Having released your compilation of earlier recordings, haven't REPULSE showed interest to release your new work as well? Is it very important for you - the money thing? Or you try to choose the label which is doing a perfect promotion, arranging gigs, etc?**

-Well, as you know by the first question in the interview REPULSE will not be releasing our new album. We think REPULSE is doing a good job with the compilation CD, but we were looking for someone a bit more established for our 2nd LP. As far as money goes, we can tell you right away that METAL BLADE did not offer the most money, but we felt that they were the right label, and that's why we signed to them.

**-I guess it was a bit frustrating to leave ROADRUNNER? Have you ever had an idea after that to end everything up with IMMOLATION? Or probably you were just happy to leave that money sucking label at last, which is damned meantime by many of ex ROADRUNNER bands?**

-We were very glad to leave ROADRUNNER. They are a good label when they want to be, ...but it's obvious that they didn't want to be good to us. R/C is very trendy and we were just another death metal band to them that they could make money off of.

We never thought of breaking up or quitting. That was far from our minds. We believed strongly in our music and knew that we would get things rolling again. We knew it would just be a matter of time.

**-Maybe you can comment the song structures - are there remained the same harsh riffs followed by mind blowing guitar solos & unstopable drums madness or you put on some new polished ideas & emotions? Do you think a good recording can control one or other good idea - does it mean a lot?**

-The new album is actually more raw. The structures are what they are, they are not planned... we just did what came naturally. It is a very straight forward album. There are new ideas of course, ...only new in the fact that we are not repeating ourselves.

As for production, when you can get the right atmosphere in your recording it enhances the band's sound. Some people prefer to have an unclear production, or a totally clean sound. It all depends on what you're looking for, but the best is when you have that choice.

**-Earlier this year your historic compilation album was thrown out... Who came with that idea originally? Don't you mind that it features both IMMOLATION and RIGOR MORTIS tracks - weren't those bands two different ones? Are such albums always successful and what about yours?**

-Well, Dave at REPULSE came to us with the idea of putting the two IMMOLATION demos onto CD. (Actually, Laurent Merle from "Peardrop"/LISTENABLE Records had originally come to us with the idea in the past, but we just weren't into doing it at that time.)

As we were working on getting the tapes together for the CD we just kept adding more and more to it. We purposely put the RIGOR MORTIS demos on there because we still like those songs a lot, and that is where our demo making started. Before we knew it we put all sorts of things on there and made a great fold out cover for the CD. We figured that we would give the people who wanted to check out our demos something more interesting. Something that gave them a good look back at our early years, and we are real happy with the way it came out.

As for it being successful, it actually is doing very well. That is, it seems to be all over the place. We are not looking for success with old demos, that's for sure. We had just gotten so many requests for the demos that we figured we would give who ever was interested a good quality version of them. It's really just for the underground people.

**-If anyone told you RIGOR MORTIS was better than IMMOLATION is, what answer would follow?.. Don't you feel any nostalgia for your older band?**

-Of course we feel nostalgia with RIGOR MORTIS, we think that the music we made then was great and better than a lot of newer music today. If someone were to say that they liked RIGOR MORTIS better than IMMOLATION that's fine with us. Everyone has their own opinions. To us we like all of what we did and we do not deny it or put it down. It's all part of where we are today.

**-In one interview Ross was speaking that HELLHAMMER, VENOM influenced his musical taste as well. What about others? How do you read that those bands influenced 90% of today's black metal scene? Can you describe your attitude towards black metal scene in three words?**

-All of us in the band were influenced by early speed/trash/death/black metal of one kind or another. Some of us were into VENOM and BATHORY; or DESTRUCTION and POSSESSED... or all of those. The first two SEPULTURA releases, old DEATH, MORBID ANGEL, early SLAYER, NECROPHAGIA and countless others had a big influence and inspiration on us.

As for bands such as VENOM and HELLHAMMER influencing the black metal scene, well, who else would they be influenced by? The fact is that our music is different from that of other bands. Just because many bands have similar influences doesn't mean that they are going to create the same music. We think that the black metal scene is good, we like more of that style that has more feeling, than a lot of new bands today who are just brutal. Not all of the black metal bands are great though, but as any trend gets big there will be some good ones, and some bad ones. Three words: The New Trend.

**-Many musicians of older bands speak they are disappointed with today's metal scene. In their opinion old good days had more of essential moments, more true feelings while today the scene is crowded with cliches and trends. Would you be able to criticize this?**

-Yes it is true that there are definitely more trends and cliches today, but there are still a good amount of bands that are really into what they are doing, and doing it well. They're just a little bit harder to find these days because there's so many, almost too many, bands out there now. There are also many bands that shouldn't have albums at all.

**-There was a time in IMMOLATION's existence when you were taking less care on your mail & underground as well. Does it mean you weren't that much interested in keeping the line with scene or you were really busy back then? I guess the old habit has triumphed?**

-There was a period of time when we were unable to answer our mail. As we mentioned we were working full time day jobs and were spending more time on taking care of other business. We had to do this in order to make more time for the band in the future. Once we got to a certain point, and started writing music and doing mail again, we did in fact write back to each and every person who sent us a letter.

We never lost interest in the underground, we were just very busy. However, because of working for so long, we made it possible to put more time into the band now more than ever before. So it definitely paid off in that respect. We are now constantly up to date with all of our mail and answer every letter quickly. For us it is not a habit, it is something we are into strongly. Now we are just able to give it the time and attention it should have.

**-It was mentioned that IMMOLATION became an all time occupation for you. How do you manage to make living then? Is it really possible to get good money for death meta?**

-Well, we are not really all involved full time just yet. We still have full time day jobs or weekend jobs. But we have to do this in order to support ourselves. We are not making any money off of the band at all. We never have, but we hope to one day soon. Two of us work jobs all week, and two of us deal with the band all week. Every day we all get together and practise at night. So we are definitely able to concentrate more now on what needs to be done with IMMOLATION. That's our first priority.

We do think it's possible to make a living off of music, but it's not something we count on. All we can do is to work as hard as we can at it, ...that's the only way we are going to find out.

**-What kind of tour do you plan after the new album is released? Do you long for the life on the wheels?**

-We love being on the road, and we hope to tour as much as possible in as many places as we can. Once the new album is out we are sure a tour will come up soon.

**-Many bands of today claim having any kind of ambience, atmosphere coming from the inner/outer world, etc. Your point of view?**

-Whatever it takes.

**-What can you wish to that listener who has totally forgotten IMMOLATION & just throws the news about your new release out of his head?**

-Our new album will make him remember IMMOLATION very quickly. We feel that anyone who was into our first album will not be disappointed with the new one. It's unholy!!!

**-Any dosing fuck offs?**

-Ok Tadas, thanks for the interview! Greetings out to everyone who's been supporting us over the years!!! The new album will be out soon so look out for it!! For info just write us; be sure to send 2 IRCs or a SASE for reply. See you all in the After! CHRIST DENIED!!! DEATH...HE LIED!!!





## ATARAXIA

"Il Fantasma dell'Opera"  
AVANTGARDE MUSIC

Why the hell I haven't noticed this project earlier?! ATARAXIA is from Italy, creating a beautiful mysterious operatic symphonic music, having in their collection 4 CDs and one 10"EP already, but still not gaining the recognition they surely deserve! All material so far was released in two years time, and this fifth album counts the third year.

Me remembers no other union with such challenge, especially when it's acoustic/synth music, where you won't find any metal or heaviness. The main creator Francesca Nicolli (known from vocal extravaganzas in MONUMENTUM's debut) handles all female voices writing all lyrics, flute and even drum programming while it's included. She has amazing voice, and if you heard MONUMENTUM you'll agree. ATARAXIA emphasize even higher scale of emotional singing, which is supported by the soundworld of dreamland. Sometimes it gets dark, but includes the mystery. Get it for your own realization - paint your own pictures of ATARAXIA!

As the title suggests this is concept album based on the Leroux book "Le fantôme de l'Opéra". Everyone knows pop symphony on that same plot by Ch.L.Webber, too. It's possible to compare the two (I like both) - this is darker and maybe more sincere, what means you can't live without it. Includes Kate Bush cover "Wuthering Heights!"

## ATMAN

"Like pure unawaked Magic"  
NEW GOTHIC-REQUIEM/REPULSE

Black metal from Spain, a debut album of the outfit which name isn't heard before. Scandinavian sound, quite poorly played material technically wise, and mixed no better... Not the sweetest picture, counting all these thousands of new CDs, which bring anything new or at least strong.

Can't say ATMAN is a shit, but bandwagon jumping with added female soprano vocals does not crash me at all... It's not harmoniously combined, and the recording destroys everything good left in this creation. Soprano vocals are too loud, blacky screams are lost somewhere in the mist of noisy rhythm massmurder (moreover the screamer is very average, no personality at all). Keyboardists create that gloominess, but can't save ATMAN's work from dwelling down into the quickly forgotten albums category... Only "Martyrs, Blasphemers and The Sick" track is worth of mentioning.

My glance was fixated with more attention to philosophical yet easy understandable lyrics, which aren't any black metal cliché, but more comparable to the mind of dreamy poet or writer with his own world. Worth to go thru. But music ain't.

## AT THE GATES

"Slaughter of The Soul"  
EARACHE

Question: how could they do something not worth of adoring after so imposing 6 year career?! It's impossible as far as those five masterminds of metal dedicate themselves to the creativity, not the albums making.

"Slaughter of The Soul" was another, fourth matured opus. Like three predecessors it had an own point, real identic manner, and that's why 34 minute effort has come out as a pure brilliant in death metal jewelry. You have never heard ATG like this, with direct emotional scream outs, cutting rhythm almost all the time, and (surprise!) so low tuned recording, comparing to the older works. This element does fit the concept - mind that beeswarm riffing has gone, there's more of traditional raw death metal, while memorable melodies are as always crushingly heart breaking!!! Yep, melodies and hundredth time praised (by me, of curse) Tompa with his unrepeatabe chainsaw cries still firmly point it's ATG.

The album, having in mind its concept, is completely constructed, as every next song is like a continuation of the previous, being it a fast fuck up, acoustic break or flat death metal following. The end, "The Flames of the End" precisely, has a total meaning of the platter - into netherworld it leads...

So, I was slightly disappointed that Tompa completely has dropped his impresionistic lyrics, and has rather taken over the other topics. But the suicidal concept stands on its own - ATG does not like to repeat themselves. The final comment - PYZDEC.

## AVULSED

"Carnivoracity"  
REPULSE

There's no need to present the same release for the third time, especially that it sucks more or less. Rereleased on CD, "Carnivoracity" includes eight bonus tracks, recorded live in 1995, already with new members, yet the tracks are old, written before "Carnivoracity" in most cases. AVULSED perform "As I Behold I Despise" of DEMIGOD and "Matando Guerros" of BRUIJERIA - those two tracks make the whole record a bit more various and acceptable. But as a whole it's not worth of buying unless you're a fan of AVULSED. Such straight forward primitive death metal makes no sense even to the hard kids. One good thing is that 50 minutes album costs as an MCD - \$10 from the label. Yet wait a bit till the debut full length is out - it will be a head biter.

## AVZHA

"Dark Emperors"  
STORM

Black metal trend has obviously reached the shores of Mexican gulf, and no wonder the wave has taken the start in Scandinavia. Simply this form of evilness easily reaches any shores, and only hell knows how long this process will continue.

AVZHA was quite lucky to release a full length album down there, and this might invoke another bunch of new outfits. Moreover the local STORM Productions takes care on the album, so why should it all stop?

I guess the trend can be stopped as soon as the music starts to repeat itself. And exactly "Dark Emperors" seem very very typical release with pure cloning of Norwegian and Swedish bands. In spite AVZHA make it quite cool and the production is surprisingly good, they lack the identity very much. The same known chords, heard riffs and I'm in trouble - to recommend this or not.

To be honest, in "Immortal Spirit" at last some cool ideas do appear and the next, title track has its charm too - that's the point of real creation!! The band must strive for it, not to follow blindly what has been done already.

Anyway, try this CD (\$17, cassette version costs \$12) as I have positive opinion about their future, all in all.

## BALLBUSTER magazine #1 (52B4)

Let's start our massmurder torrip/crush criticizing section with American almost the biggest metal magazine, which is distributed both in underground and official markets. That's perfect for the editor and his contributing crew (there are many of them), as the rag gets enough of response from the whole country and also from many other lands. So "Ballbuster" takes over metal spectre and covers almost all styles (popular in States) which are not commercial. Many big names, quite a few underground stuff, but the main thing - the biggest attention is given to hard/heavy music.

Let's see... GRIP INC., JADED HEART, THE ORGANIZATION, Joey Vera, ROXX GANG, MASCARA, FIABA, FATES WARNING, STRANA OFFICINA, MY OWN VICTIM, BROKEN HOPE, WIDOWMAKER, GREAT WHITE... What would you say? Very wide and in depth reviews - obviously they are written by masters, only seem funny when they write about the music they can't understand - that which is very useful for you, my readers (death, melodic, gothic, black metal). Then those reviewers make very silly conclusions. But I'm sure I'd do the same if someone asked me to review any hip-hop metal disc. It must be available for 5 bucks from the editors address.

## BALLBUSTER magazine #2 (58B4)

Next issue which is already available from our distribution service (10 LI - Lietuwa, 5 USD - for the world), and another wall of artists and their works commented. Again it shows how professional this magazine is, and that long time heavy metal buddies, experienced in what they are doing, have written this. It's full of various gems and controversial soundscapes. Features more death metal!! IRON MAIDEN, ANTHRAX, HELLOWEEN, TROUBLE, SACRED REICH, PARADISE LOST, SEPULTURA, GWAR, CHRIS, MASQUERADE, Bruce Dickinson, NAPALM DEATH, IMMOLATION, CANNIBAL CORPSE, BATHORY, NOVEMBRE... that's not all for sure.

The layout of this is neat, with coloured cover, nice lettering, graphics, even the paper inside isn't the most qualitative. But interesting talks and unheard stories are much more worthy. Order!

## BESTIAL DEVOTION zine #1 (76A5)

Debut issue, so not good but more amateurish. The questions are quite primitive and they repeat in almost every interview... It kills your wish to enjoy the zine. Only for information taking this is ok, but for deeper look into the music's atrocity and attraction there is no room.

Anyway, zine has coloured cover and surprisingly good layout for A5 format, and will give you many ways to choose from dozens of unions featured: NAHASH, APOLLON, BHAOBHAN SIDHE, EVOL, HYBRIS, DARKSEED, BLACK FUNERAL, DFLSHED, CEREBRUM, SCHIZO, CENOTAPH, NECROMASS, MORTAL GOD, CALVARY, NEOLITHIC, NERGAL, FUNERAL ORATION, WILLOWISP, ESMEGOR, GRAND BEHALS KEY... to name but a few. It's available from "Ledo Takas" address for 10 LV5 USD - try out!

## CALMANT magazine #3 (32A4)

For \$4 you get a purple mixture of different kind of sounds, ranging from metal to industrial and even techno music. Features MISERY LOVES CO., GHOSTORM, VENUS FLY TRAP, ALLEGIANCE, CATHARIS, THE MOBILE MOB FREAKSHOW, Dave Scott, PITCH SHIFTER, MASS PSYCHOSIS, DJ Saga... The writing style of Saulius is personal, with kinda arrogant outlook to almost everything (at least he, likes something very much - then his sharp stingray turns into sweet kiss). Sometimes the reader might get bored by his angry attitude and neverending reviews. Other than that - editor is innovative with layout graphics, various fonts, semi-tones - it really impresses and can be a good example, especially for those industrial/mechanic layout type lovers. Only the text is very small in some places - it's not very attractive to read it up you know!

By now Saulius finished his new issue, so inquire about it - it might be even more experimental and different from the predecessor.

## CHAOS REIGN magazine #1 (36A4)

Not worth of purchasing rag, even it has some decent names inside (DECIDE, INVOCATOR, MACHINE HEAD, ASSAIL, SLAYER, PROGRESS Records, EVANIZATION Productions, DOMINUS, SACRIFICIAL, KONKHA, FORBIDDEN, DIOSYNCRASY, AUTUMN LEAVES, MALEVOLENT CREATIONS). The idea of live interviews ain't bad, but when you have such names and young zine maker, it doesn't work. Their answers are quite arrogant or at least careless...

What about the review section, it shows even bigger amateurism of the editor, so there isn't any need to go thru them indeed. Layout is terrible - absolutely no packing, so you read the entire magazine up in couple of hours. It's copied, so photos aren't full of quality too.

Can't really recommend this, though the price is \$5. You must do something more memorizable, guys!

## DEPRIVED zine #3 (80A5)

A small thicker from Ireland with a cool writing and arguments. Take notice three people contribute here, and one of them is Antonette - the right hand of Ms.Tiziana (MISANTHROPY Rec.). Exactly her interviews and especially reviews are special. You can feel the difference between male and female writing style - Antonette lays down her dreamy thoughts, giving for the reviewed band another colour, like you can listen and notice what's new from that review is said about the music. Another guy is Brian and he contributes quite interesting material either.

Many bands inside - many good ones too: BURZUM, FLEURETY, IN THE WOODS... DARKTHRONE/ISENGARD, MORPHOSIS, IMMOLATION, DECEMBER MOON, MALEVOLENCE, BENEFITS FORGOT, INVERTED, FIFTH DOMINION, EVERDARK, DESECRATION, DARK WHITE, CERUNNOS, ESOTERIC. Many addresses and short info worth of attention, only A5 size doesn't let this zine shine the most brightly. But order it even with this size - it's the choice of editors! We sell it for 10 LI (Lietuwa)/5 USD (world).

## DESECRATION OF VIRGIN magazine #1 (40A4)

A strange desire of the editor to feature outfits from "exotic" lands as he call them. He counts Brazil, Colombia, Russia, Singapore, Venezuela, Cuba... Anyway, the concept is rare and original for German freak - he seems to hate local metal underground. About styles featured - black and death dominate, though not only. As well not only "exotic" bands appear (especially in reviews: HELLSPAWN, FINOS, GENOCIDIO, LOUCYFER, AVERNO, UNCANNY, FUNERAL URN, PRIMITIVEGAM, CALVARY DEATH, NECROMASS, AMEN CORNER, KORHIT, DEATH VOMIT, BESTIAL WARLUST, KRUEGER, MEDIUM...)

Yet the layout is very poor - it's simply amateurish. Moreover strange is that zine is printed in typography on glossy paper. That may attract some more readers though, if you also like Brazilian metal - order "Desecration Of Virgin" for the usual price from "Ledo Takas" address.

## FEAR OF LIFE magazine #4 (40A4)

Yet another masterpiece from Holland! One of my favourite magazines, as it's written simply, convincingly, decently, and layouted even better! Aroo must get a job in any official Dutch mag, for his neat work, objectivity and dedication to the scene. He manages to find some exceptional bands and artists with their works to feature. From musical side it's ELYSIAN FIELDS, TRISTITIA, ABSGOR, ABSURD EXISTENCE, PAVOR, THE 3RD AND THE MORTAL, MAGLAFAR, from painters of horror and bizarre - Juha Vuorma, Jochem But, Denis Grr, Mike. All of them share their mysteries of work/art (call it how you like), and the editor just puts his best effort to give the whole info necessary for that matter. He also is open minded when you glance at review section (even some part of them are too short). To cut it simply - just the excellent effort, and everyone must experience it.

Get from our address for only 5 bux, Lithuanians pay 10 LI. You'll get glossy coloured cover as well!

## INITIUM magazine #9 (38A4)

A cool zine from France, after a long hiatus again on the stage and the best so far! Editor Fabien likes thrash, death and grind, and that is felt yknow inside: ANCIENT RITES, IMMOLATION, THEODICY, EXHUMATION, KATAKLYSM, GUTTED, WARLORD, MALEDICTION, DARKSIDE, GUTWRENCH, FLESHCRAWL, NOCTURNAL RITES, NIGHTMARE VISIONS, THY-NATURE... And many short articles plus tons of in depth reviews. There's also livejournal scene report, ads and other goodies usual for underground publication. Layout is intelligent, even the mag, is xeroxed it looks nice with clear photos, logos and columns filled with info. Available for \$5/10 LI (Lietuwa) from us.

## KOD zine #4 (40A5)

Poor Polish magazine, but not the freshest issue, so maybe it has improved since then. This fourth issue, seems like the first "Brainstorm", so I'd better not criticize it. Though written in English and style is better. But amateurish, hell an hour read up TEMPERANCE, FURBOWL, BIRDFLESH, REGRESSION, ABSURDUS, ASYSTOLE, Irish scene report; PARRICIDE, FUNERAL: CULT, some dozens of reviews. Ask for price if interested.

## METAL-CORE zine #20 (42B4)

Strange people those Americans are. Editor of this zine Chris Forbes (he is a manager of IMMOLATION by the way) stands on his very odd opinion that magazine must look ugly. He uses no photos, no logos, no graphics, no layout in fact!! Just separate pages of printed material (thank hell, not with typewriter - or what is the difference?). Wow! Cover page has a photo of HORROR OF HORRORS!! Unbelievable.

But again and again - if the written material is good, it blows away all layout whims! Chris is experienced writer, so his chats are exceptional. And I really mean that!! Not much of them, mentioned HORROR OF HORRORS, METAL MERCHANT Records, USURPER, "Voices From The Darkside" zine, ELEGY distribution, WITCH-HUNT. But I never read so in depth interesting talk as in this zine!! Only of that it's recommended! \$4.

## METAL-CORE zine #21 (50B4)

Again the same, but with another lion on the cover page!! A progress?? So cool fucking enjoyable interviews continue! WILD RAGS Records, Jeff Wagner/RELAPSE Records, GOSEND, DEATHLINE. "Subversive Agenda" zine, "Cursed" zine. Wanna mention in this review the review (there are tons of them) style of Chris. He likes short notes on every record or tape, but in opposite to many others he gets the point very professionally, describing the base. Then you can go thru the record and get further ideas. Just perfect way for those who hate long reviews but want the real hot true info on the music. Try this poorly packed magazine, as it's written wisely. Price - the same.

## MIGHTY magazine #3 (24A4)

The first split issue of two Danish magazines "Magus" and "Emargization", covering AT THE GATES, SEPTIC FLESH, THE GATHERERS, SIX FEET UNDER, ORPHANAGE, MORTUIS (quite shameful, holy), IN THE WOODS..., IN FLAMES, SENTENCED, DISSECTION, MORBID ANGEL. What about this last, I can't get the position of the editors - if you think indie is answered bad, don't print it at all, but not make clowns from the band. As well I'm still not satisfied with poor reviews (can't name it like that - it's just album title and two words written). No wonder as both guys never written a decent review. It's a big minus!

But interviews are informative, layout is desirable, many logos and photos, colour cover... A long US scene report is included, which is not usual at all. Only the mag is too thin for my taste. Obtain from "Ledo Takas" address for 10 LV5 USD.

## NEAR DARK magazine #3 (42A4)

Layout is neat, the stuff compiled quite strongly, writing is with humour, but too much personalized. By that I wanna say that many infos here are made with friends from the bands, and that's not the "most exciting thing to read what they have to say for each other about their drinks & looks. Other than that is pretty ok, informing about many death/black/gothic/doom music. Maybe reviews are too busy written, and do not explain what to do with one or other material. DISORGE, ETERNAL GATH, MELEK TALIS, POCOOLUS, CHAINED AND DESPERATE, PROFANATHUM, VOMITORY, DISSOLVED, ERUG, THE MARBLE ICON, OPHTHALMIA, EINHERJER, BLACKSHINE, BURIED BENEATH, DAMNATION, LACRIMOSA, BESEEH Not too much? Maybe not... But there could be more packed writings. Features "bizar epaige" (porno news) and scene report from New Zealand. Available from our address for 10 LV5 USD.

## SCREAMS FROM THE GUTTER magazine #40 (52B4)

Editor Dave is an old wolf in the underground scene, making his zine for 9 years. That means this is something which can't be missed if you want to know the decent professional outlook to the music you like. Both reviews and interviews are in depth, described with sense, explaining why he thinks in one or other way. Moreover, SFTG has many columns as special write ups: "Hidden Labels" (this time featured UNSOUND Rec.), "Elder word articles" (RING DIAMOND), serial killers stuff "When My Brothers Lie Silent" (Albert Fish).

Reviewed material includes a wide range of heavy music, but be sure this concentrates on metal most often. Infos are made with MORBID ANGEL, CELESTIAL SEASON, SOLITUDE AETERNUS, THE MEATHUM... Notice that all the latest SFTG issues are distributed by LEDO TAKO PRODUKTAI in Lithuania costs 10 LI - ask about them and buy!

## SCREAMS FROM THE GUTTER magazine #41 (48B4)

Next issue is of march/96 - again with all usual materials for this rag - infos include TESTAMENT, DESCENT Mag., CATHEDRAL, THE GATHERING, Trey Azagthoth (very cool long talk with this monster), FORBIDDEN, DISPLACE(D) Rec., URI Ent., David Berkowitz as next drifter killer... This issue has a better 1 col...



with some semi-tones in background. I bet Dave started to make his mag. look better! Still there're many better examples how the newly styled magazine must look, but not many can compete with this by writing essentially, what is the most important. For foreign people - get any of later SFTG issues from "Ledo Takas" address for \$5.

**SCREAMS FROM THE GUTTER** magazine #42 (48B4)

Ha, this issue is still better layout wise and already has those standards of good looking mag! I don't wanna say again that it's so necessary, but you always like to see a good shaped thing instead of xeroxed poor paper. The editor hasn't lost sharpness of his pen & mind, still noticing what is good and what is not in metal music biz. I sincerely envy to Dave that he is able to release his every next issue after three months - it's like a miracle for me, which seems never to come true...

#42 describes what are the news in DISSECTION, MBR Records, MY DYING BRIDE (good interview!), NIGHTFALL, DESPISE camps. Paul Speckman speaks about his undergroundly spent years, and the article on Ed Gein summarizes this, reminding this is really SCREAM Order!!

**SHADOWS OF MICHELANGELO** magazine #3 (84B4)

My first acknowledgement with SOM, the editor of which is Japanese, but lives in States and likes European metal more than American (as he claims in this magazine). Quite an odd example, so you are right supposing this is not the usual fanzine. Moreover Dal likes to summarize everything about metal movement, and that's quite rare in this zine's area. Of course his summaries are rather subjective, and that's quite rare in this zine's area. Of course his summaries are rather subjective, and that's quite rare in this zine's area.

DISSECTION, THE GATHERING, DERANGED, JOURNEY INTO DARKNESS, DAMIAN CROSS, MEMENTO MORI, GOOSEHEAD, CEMETARY, NILE, EDGE OF SANITY, C.S.S.O., MY OWN VICTIM and EMPEROR share their opinions beside 300 reviews and mentioned articles. Layout, graphics are ok, even there could be more photos for my taste. But anyway - top notch mag! Available from "Ledo Takas" address for \$5 (Lietuwa - 10 LT).

**SYPHILIS** newsletter #3 (6A4)

After closing down his magazine Mika still can't breathe without some write-ups and besides his distribution activities this man comes with this smaller. Some hottest news and a bucket of reviews are mixed with neat articles on CRYSTAL

AGE, MORTAL AGONY, CALLENISH CIRCLE, and a deep interview with Finnish blackster THY SERPENT. You'll get some info on SYPHILIS distro too, so why not to check it out? Some IRCs will bring it to you. Also a couple of new issues must be out, as this #3 release is of winter '96.

**THE UNDERGROUND** newspaper #2 (20A3)

Wow! It's something to scream about! Maybe the best write up after "Terrorizer" went commercial from UK. No wonder as many of the latter magazine's contributors got a new job here: Nik Turner, Andy Bennett, Chris Gambold, Russ Smith, and the editor is Rob Cymo. I'm sure most of you know their writing style and neat materials/reviews from earlier.

This is newspaper, but including many nice graphics comparable to magazine layout. It's released by the biggest UK distributor of independent labels - PLASTIC HEAD. So be sure to read up all the latest info on the highestly ranked labels & bands. It's bimonthly - I hold in my arms issue #2 of Sep'96, and the inside includes ABSU, OPETH, INFERNO, SAMAEI, MERCYFUL FATE, DECAMERON, GEHENNAH, G.B.H., VARGAVINTER and MISANTHROPY Records special. The best underground rag for sure, and take notice it's for free! You need just to write enclosing any IRC and get one of 25000 copies.

pazuzu

second coming of wind

It is a while now when metal market was firmly surprised by a strange music performed with a help of synthesizers, effects and many vocals only, by mysterious project from Austria called PAZUZU - by the name of Mesopotamian demon of deadly winds. Me is not the only one who said "what ze hell - it's not metal!" back then, and was amazed further on - such music can be no less evil or dark than heavy guitaring and immense drumming. Guess what, PAZUZU has started this all a time before it all got to pop out from every softy corner of the world - even MORTUIS was a while later begun! Absolutely I don't want to offend Mr Havard, just wanna say PAZUZU was a new experience for me with all this dark/ambient music two years ago.

A long time I had in mind this idea to speak to them, and the chance appeared after the new corporation, Austrian Black Metal Syndicate had come to the daylight - they released a compilation album of Austrian black/dark bands which features one new PAZUZU track "The first dominion - Renewal of Ages", which is 9 minutes long, as well. And none other than the soul of the band - Pazuzu, stands behind this less-talked-about Syndicate. He disclosed some secrets for us, and told first of all that new album of his project is almost ready - the artist supposed to enter the studio in April, yet to our knowledge the album is still not out (end of November). According to Pazuzu, ABMS is not a label, and he works for DARK MATTER Records, which is a sublabel of SING SANG Records (a major Austrian label) - that's it who released that compilation called "Norici Obscura Pars", featuring unreleased PAZUZU, GOLDEN DAWN, PERVERTUM, TRIFIXION, VUZEM and KNECHTE DES SCHRECKEN (this is his side project) material and will release new PAZUZU album GOLDEN DAWN also works on the album for his label.

So further on read up please the thoughts of Pazuzu himself... I've caught him on one gloomy moment of eternity.

-I feel pretty well, it's pretty early in the day and the sun is shining through the veil of the cold. Thanks for asking, how are you?

I was asking how he's doing, so that's his conquestion. I was doing ok by that time, too... Now I'm not that sure as I'm thinking on all those troubles which delay my magazine's release... Anyway, the time between debut "And all was Silent..." CD and recent activities of PAZUZU wasn't a waste - a band was strong enough all that time.

"And all was Silent..." was the first CD release of an ABMS band, so we were pretty unexperienced. In those days, anything sounded alright to us, we were eager to release a CD as quickly as possible. Now of course we are more experienced, we have more knowledge and therefore, we look back at those times and smile. But I am still proud of that release... it has become a legend. I'm not sure what you mean by the second part of your question, but PAZUZU has always been a band founded on strength and dark emotions...

At some point they can be labeled as a project or blasphemous gathering, while on the other hand PAZUZU is a band. The fretster explains:

-PAZUZU is my main band. Protector and Silenius, the other two members, are both active in their own bands, namely SUMMONING, ABIGOR and the mighty DIE VERBANNTEN KINDER EVAS. For me PAZUZU is a union of us three, who, when the time comes, get together to unite their dark tunes and lyrics. So you see, to me it's a full time band and to the others a kind of project. PAZUZU has always been a bit different...

Next thing is surely about the compositions of new PAZUZU - that specific darkness, created by the black souls.

-Sure, the music will be partly in the vein of the first album (4th track), very baroque and partly medieval. But I also composed some songs that sound a bit like AGHAST or the "Eraserhead" soundtrack. Total dark feeling. There will be about 10 tracks. This time I will make sure that I get a good sound, seeing that I will use the DARK MATTER/SING SANG Studios, which are really professional. Lots of classical musicians like Jose Carreras (!!! - T) have recorded here. I will include lots of effects and samples, etc, and naturally there will be a female vocalist. It's still uncertain if Empress Lilith will appear again... Of course the lyrics and concepts will be in the dark vein. I think our fans won't be disappointed.

Austrian Black Metal Syndicate sounds threatening, but is it really another inner circle, political, occult or religious organization? Frontman tells about its activities:

-The ABMS is just a moniker under which the Austrian Dark Heredes have gathered. We are not another inner circle. We all have our ideas and we all live our lives. The ABMS is in the same time the contact address for PERVERTUM, PAZUZU, TRIFIXION, VUZEM and KNECHTE DES SCHRECKEN. I lead the ABMS, and I keep an eye on the Austrian underground and help to promote good bands.

It's time to step back for learning history, but not Austrian history, yet rather PAZUZU small development, since the start.

-PAZUZU was an idea that was born about 2 years ago. Silenius, Protector had composed some songs, and asked me if I wanted to do some lyrics and vocals. I agreed. The main idea behind PAZUZU was to create a completely new genre of music within the black metal scene. I think we succeeded since PAZUZU was the first band to do this type of music within the bm scene, long before MORTUIS or WONGRAVEN, etc... The ABMS will always offer something new and original. We then recorded the first and only demo "The Ullia Text", which we sent out to just a few labels. Metalion then contacted us and offered a deal. He loved PAZUZU's music, although the demo quality was really bad. We then recorded "And all...", the rest is history. The second album is now ready to come out on DMR. I decided to change label, because I can keep an eye on everything, since I work at the label (promotion, sound... etc).

It remains strange to me why Metalion decided to sign the band, as HEAD NOT FOUND didn't have any band like that anymore! It must have been some kind of exception.

-I think I answered that in the last question. Metalion is a great and important guy in the metal underground. His label is a great label, and I never had problems with the distribution, VOICES OF WONDER. Hal Metalion! I'm not really informed about the musical taste of Metalion, but I don't think he minds goth bands...

Even 6 vocalists appeared on the album, and it was a new thing too. Vocal variation obviously gave a huge ambience to the whole. So all ideas were expressed, trying different styles of singing.

-The vocals never were really planned. We recorded the music and then when we recorded the voices, we let ourselves lose. We interpreted the lyrics just as we felt at the moment. That was the best way to do it. That was the closest I ever felt to being possessed. It was weird. I think the voices make up a lot of the ambience.

Another part of expression within the band are keyboards and effects. There are plenty of them, each sounding as a helluva special thing! There should have been not just the modern equipment, but ideas to fulfill that experience. Pazuzu reasons:

-PAZUZU's first album was very loaded with effects and sounds, whereas the second album will be done with a lot more melodies and harmonies... I use a Korg X5 keyboard and a computer sequencer by Steinberg to compose the basic music. The sounds and effects come partly from my keyboards soundbanks, my own creations or samples that are stored here in the studio. So the facilities I have are pretty modern, yes. Effects are and always will be very important. I am influenced by mainly myself. When I feel like composing, I just do so. It comes out of my soul through my fingers into the keyboard.

PAZUZU support & continue black metal philosophy. As well Pazuzu itself should have been a true inspiration. The main man of the band shares his outlooks on that matter:

-These days one can't really say what bm philosophy is. To me bm must be an antireligious music, maybe even a bit satanic. But not in the common sense. Satanism to me isn't a religion, it's just a way of living and feeling. Satan is a metaphor, symbolising all the obscure things in man. I grew up with a lot of the Chinese mythology and occultism, since my mother is Chinese. So I had a very broad source of influence throughout my life. To me bm has nothing to do with stupid earthbound politics.

As mentioned Pazuzu takes part in another project as well. It's a different experience for him!

-Yes, indeed I play in a band called KNECHTE DES SCHRECKEN, together with Necros, the guitarist of PERVERTUM. There I play bass and handle the vocals. We do black metal from our souls. It's music influenced by the older bm acts. It's pretty cool playing there, since Necros and me are the best buddies. We released two tracks on the ABMS compilation CD, namely "My Empire in Eternity" and "The Wrath of the dying Sorcerer". Check it out... It's different to PAZUZU, since I can give way to my feelings by means of the typical bm style. It's nothing really original, but it's from the heart.

Me wonders why the lyrics weren't printed with "And all was Silent...", as it must have been an ultimate experience - they're written in several languages. Maybe they wanted to keep them only for themselves?

-The booklet of the first CD is another thing. It was made really quickly, without thought. I wanted to print the lyrics. The second CD will feature the lyrics, since they are an important part of the music.

I asked also about contacts with ancient powers whilst meditating & performing those bewitched chants and incantations. Yet this answer did disappointed me...

-Not really.

One more time glancing at Empress Lilith I can swear she is one of the most beautiful ladies I've ever seen (Egle, ka pasakys?!), at least in photo! It might have been a reason they decided to depict her on the CD sleeve...

-She used to be my girlfriend. Truly she is very beautiful. We decided to depict her probably for that reason. You don't find pretty women in the metal

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genre often.

Well, that might be a topic for discussion, though... But we with Pazuzu have it for other time as that's already the end of this chat. So my co-kicker stays about ABMS and related things.

-We will always try to create good music and stay original. Till now I think we succeeded. Behold our new releases and check out our compilation CD. Here's the address: DARK MATTER Records, Lothringenstr. 20, A-1030 Vienna, Austria. Thanks for your support and all the best... ALL IS SAID.

# the gathering strange emotional machines

Their comeback was done couple years ago, with the release of a well known D.S.F.A. Records compilation album "Parade of the Underground", where once legendary & popular outfit presented its new track "In Motion (part I)" together with a new female vocalist Anneke van Giersbergen. At time it was quite surprising to see THE GATHERING without any male voice, but as far as "Mandyliion" showed itself the idea worked perfectly, so this band did returned the old blown away fame - all this year after the "Mandyliion" release was a pure success with album's great reviews and not that small tours flowing... Take a look to THE GATHERING's inside through the views of Anneke herself - the newest person in their ranks...

**-Hello Anneke! How are you doing personally & what's up with THE GATHERING since the beginning of 1996?**

**-Hi! Well, personally I'm doing very ok! Most of my time of course I spend with the activities of THE GATHERING... Since the beginning of 1996 everything has gone so fast! We're doing all**

the good things and we play a lot, and we learn also a great deal in this weird "music world".

**-Did you have any tour for "Mandyliion" support? How was it like for you? It was the first time with heavy touring?**

**-We did a lot of shows in Holland to promote the "Mandyliion" album, about 50, but our first tour (with MOONSPELL) was through Germany, and that was good, but we all got very tired, both physically and mentally, very heavy for us.**

**-What was the aim of "Strange Machines" MCD? You had some unreleased tracks & wished them to have on CD? Or it was just a promotional release to spread a word about your latest full length?**

**-The single "Strange Machines" was indeed meant to boost up the selling of the "Mandyliion" album, and it had also two tracks live, but they were also songs from "Mandyliion". The single actually made it into the Dutch charts!**

**-You're the latest person to join this quite old outfit. How was it like to begin working with those musically matured guys? Did you know them earlier?**

**-I didn't know THE GATHERING before I joined the band, but musically and personally we're on the same level so it all went very naturally and good.**

**-I'd even like to ask: have you listened to heavy music, let's say, five years ago? How do you like THE GATHERING first two albums? Which one is better?**

**-Yes, I've been listening to heavy music before, actually I was in a speed metal band called SEVENTH EPISODE, but also in a jazz/blues duo, but I like metal - METALLICA, SLAYER, FAITH NO MORE, that kind of stuff... And I like THE GATHERING albums also, especially "Always". I think that "Almost A Dance" is good but I don't think the voice fits this music, but it is good also on its own...**

**-You're the fifth person in the band behind the mic! Aren't you afraid to be not that long-time vocalist as well? Or it simply doesn't bother you? What do you think on earlier singers of the band?**

**-I'm not going anywhere!! We like it now as it is... luckily! They have a new sister and I have five new brothers!! I liked the singer Bart Smits from "Always" - he's good, and the female Marieke on "Always".**

**-Tell please, did you have any musical development earlier? I believe you used to sing in chorus or somewhere like that...**

**-I've had music/vocal lessons for 10 years now and I've been doing various things with music, and yes - I began to sing in a choir.**

**-One more question about your vocal duties. Do you think they ideally fit the music of THE GATHERING - it's still harsh & heavy enough! Wouldn't you like to make something very own, to release your own album or just to make some your own songs?**

**-Making music with THE GATHERING is very satisfying for me now but there is so much more music than metal or whatever we make. So far now it's great, and all the members (although we don't have much time left) are involved in other projects, just to live out there are other musical sides... I make my own music too.**

**-Where do you consider the band to stand: in metal row or in more atmospheric/space music shelves? Are you always happy what others write & make you fit your vocals in? I mean it's sometimes quite heavy, with double bass drumming, and sometimes - just the opposite...**

**-We don't really think about and care where we belong in music. As long as you feel you're making good music that makes you feel better. What I'm saying is: if you put us in a corner, that's ok, but we don't focus on that.**

**-I really wonder by the light, kinda flowing manner of your lyrics! You should be really dreamy (but I won't say pensive) person. Maybe that's only your contributions to the music? Tell us what's the process of writing the lyrics all about!**

**-My lyrics are my everyday life, and what I feel is what's on paper... Sometimes I dream it, and I wake up and write everything down, and sometimes I see, hear, smell something and get inspired. It's wonderful! If you feel rotten, and you write all that stuff down, you lose some of that shitty feeling and you can go on....**

**-To continue with that, I also find out some basic topics in your poems: dreams, wandering, love, unknown dimensions & wish for them! It makes me think you're so usual & thoughtful person as other chosen people, but on the other hand - so individual & unrepeatable...**

**-I feel, and everybody has feelings. It's just - how deep are your feelings, and what do you want to do with them. I like to explore what's inside my head, cause there's definitely something in it: It also makes it sometimes hard for me to comprehend it all, but... that's also a challenge!**

**-Please tell some words on album cover concept - you use some ancient pictures & ornaments as well as those masks in the background - what do they represent? For me it's like another side comparing to your lyrics - I dunno why, ha...**

**-Well, the artwork is used because we're simply interested in this stuff. And it's beautiful. So that's it actually, we picked the most beautiful ones out of a big book and the ones that would fit the best with the lyrics.**

**-It seems like this period in THE GATHERING's history is real fantastic. How do you think it can influence your later creation? Will it take some other form or you have those patterns laid a while ago & don't want to step aside at all?**

**-Everything influences us, so of course this relative success also. What we won't do is to make songs that we won't back up and for just making money! Whatever happens, we will go on making our own thing.**

**-What is your opinion on the bumper thing which is such atmospheric music nowadays, mixing any possible metal style with some much more emotional stuff and even classic passages? Do you consider it as a new musical dimension? Does it have a real potential?**

**-You can mix everything with everything if you like. If you listen to different music styles, you will obviously hear it back in the music that you make, so yes, it's a musical dimension which also can change very quickly...**

**-For the end give some expectations to the future... And make us sure that you read and support underground publications!!**

**-For the future, we would like, no, we're gonna make a new album, hoping you all will like it again!!! And good luck to the makers and the readers of your magazine! Thanks for having us!!!**

*It was Anneke with her own world and unique THE GATHERING character, so let you give the necessary credit to the band's originality and open mindedness!*



the gathering



Who has appeared the first on earth: this sign or the man? It was thought of by man, or it existed from these times when time and space started to develop?

The symbol of great universal harmony, arrived up to our days thru historic dust and will be flying thru lines of darkness and light into eternity.

Good or evil, light or darkness, order or chaos, victory or death, mind or insanity, day or night, devotion or profanation, Eastern star or Western one, Lucifer or Venus, Mary or Lilith, Satan or Holy Trinity, microcosm or macro, at last ruling universal powers wizard or mad religious fanatic?

All these oppositions and many answers to fundamental questions are within this mighty pentagram symbol of wizards. Ancient Jews called the sign "The star of Solomon", thus paying honour to this King, which, according to them, was as perfect as it's possible for a man. In ancient Greece five pointed star was a symbol of wise men and mathematicians of Pythagor school. Later on, when mason lodge was establishing, which was for uniting universal builders of wisdom temple, the pentagram became the symbol of this brotherhood. Worth is not to forget the red star of Kremlin (in Moscow T.) either.

So what's special in this symbol, used up to now for magic rituals, rites of satanism and attribution of many musical bands.

Many authors do not explain if they involve any subjective position towards the answer of pentagram understanding. The essence is, that we can't look into this sign without a subjective position of man onto it. As only either man possesses the pentagram or it possesses him, either he acts with a help of pentagram or he's upon effect of pentagram. Cuz this sign, as we'll see later, as well symbolizes the man. The sense of position is that pentagram can symbolize as microcosm (the world) as well as macrosm (inner world of man), and also the intercourse of them both. Even practically used as active instrument of magic, this symbol has several aspects.

Pythagor, who has created the magic numerology, has expanded the pentagram into such combinations of numbers:  $5=2+3$ ,  $5=3+2$ ,  $5=4+1$ ,  $5=1+4$ . There's a basic philosophy of occult pentagram in these collections. We'll analyse each of them briefly.

The first combination  $5=2+3$  means maybe met for reader many times negative pentagram. Having two acute apices above, it ideally places in itself so called head of goat Mendes, which symbolizes Satan. Two horns directed at the sky symbolize a rebellious idea of this demon.

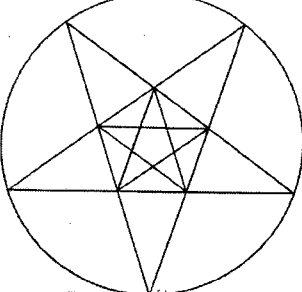
Taking macrocosmic position, which means pentagram circumscribed with circle (circle symbol of universe), there are two apices (number 2) raised above, what means dualistic perception of the world and contempt of holy trinity (number 3). In this position the world is understood as the equality of light and darkness, and trinity as the interaction of two opposites, which results the creation of lower end matter, universe, life...

This world doesn't have a monotheistic god; religious submission and principles of belief, it is ruled only by opposites' interaction of natural powers. And it doesn't provide the principle of universal governing by one power.

Taking the combination  $5=3+2$ , we have so called positive pentagram, with one apex above. Macrocosmic position has an obvious monotheistic or holy trinity ruling base. The ruling of divine trinity reflects in all religions, where one highest power rules and holds in a balance the powers of light and darkness. That's a religious perception of the world. It's a symbol of monotheism and hierarchy. Just remember the Kremlin (which hasn't accepted any universal religion except communism) red star.

Expanding the microcosmic pentagram into  $5=4+1$  and  $5=1+4$ , as well we get positive and negative pentagrams, but they mean a bit another matter.

Number 4 in occult philosophy symbolizes the nature, consisting of four elements: fire, earth, water, air. Number 1 symbolizes the



ledo takas #5

highest origin of consciousness, will, intelligence, ego, pure consciousness or spirit. In that way the man consists of these five elements.

Taking man as positive pentagram  $5=1+4$ , we get will, ruling four natural elements. That's a man which is the master of his own desires and senses. His motive power is only will, consciousness or mind. It's a man, who acts by his own will.

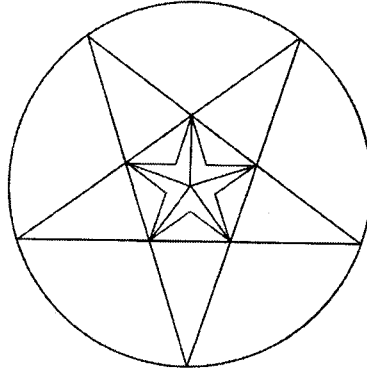
Taking in opposite way negative pentagram, we get an impulsive man, which behaviour is ruled basically by external influence on his physical origin. It's a man without will, cast by circumstances and outer influences or directions. Cuz negative pentagram from microcosmic position means unrulled madness.

Man is by its inner will selfdetermining creature, and he reacts to the world as to the outside. Both good and evil he accepts as only the reaction to outer actions. Man can talk, grinning as much as possible about evil and "cultivate" it, until evil doesn't touch him. But when it happens, he shuts up, the same moment and starts resisting by all means in the name of survive.

The pentagram, both positive and negative, can be good or evil, depending on the position you look upon it. Important is one thing: if a person got in negative microcosmic position of pentagram in his life, the end approaches for his freedom of personality. He gradually fails and degrades. A man subconsciously feels the essence of pentagram. That was shown by a famous French magician of XIXth century Papilus, who was experimenting with hypnotic clairvoyance.

For a subject, lead into hypnotic somnambulistic state, different signs were showed, painted black, red, white, and things. The reaction and impressions were observed. The pentagram was among them. Positive pentagram was shining with a pleasant reflection and attractive azure shine. Negative pentagram was shining with an unpleasant and repulsive red shine. We can make an unequivocal conclusion that a negative pentagram symbolizes threat and evil, and positive rest and good.

The most interesting is to analyse deeper the man's intercourse with the world from philosophical position of this sign. It's seen that a microcosmic pentagram of opposite polarity ideally fits in the



middle of macrocosmic pentagram. It can't be another way as microcosm and macrocosm are the opposites, the intercourse of which makes the balance.

Taking the case of  $5=3+2=4+1$ , it's seen a fundamental position of man's life. A furious religious fanatic or energetic worker of society can reflect the extreme type of such people. Most often they are grey persons or submissive professors of monotheistic religion. They've got in the state of negative pentagram, ruled by positive macrocosmic pentagram. Their wills and thoughts are ruled "from above". Feeling quite safely in this state they lose the most important freedom of personality. And got caught into nets of eternal sweet slavery service for "the supreme". Most often a person who was in negative pentagram state for a long time and hasn't found another way out, simply delivers his own will for higher, finding shelter and warmth.

On the other hand, taking the  $5=2+3=1+4$  case, completely another view is seen. Of positive pentagram, acting by his own will, person stands in the middle of negative macrocosmic pentagram. Out of that clearly is explained the fact that in front of a person who chose freedom and who raised his will above everything, the world turns its frightening dualistic horns.

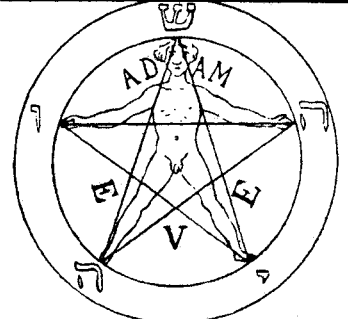
There isn't any rulling or taking care will anymore. But a man stays lonely in a severe opposed and threatening world for him. For survival he must fight for himself and rely only upon himself.

Yes, that's actually freedom, but who said that it is easy accessible? Only the warrior can withstand on the way to freedom.

A man can't be free when he's overruled by common religious or social mind, which is called eghregor in occultism. He plunges into the masses and the will of his personality melts in common will, but it's considered as good for society.

And in opposite, if a man gets free and rise his own will above everything, he by his mind and state has to isolate himself from society and religion, but it's considered evil in society. Freedom and loneliness are two inseparable one from the other things.

It's not hard to notice in the middle of microcosmic pentagram, fitting pentagram either. Some occultists explain that there's a hope to salvation even for degraded madman too. Or that in highly intellectual person we can find faults and bad characteristics, which basically are consequences of personal past or personal story, oppressing him. In this case the ideal symbol of magic warrior, who



rid off his past and seeks for freedom, would be a negative macrocosmic pentagram (circumscribed with a circle), in the middle of which there's a five pointed star, the rays from its ends going into one point.

This five pointed pentagram with rays from the centre symbolizes the magician who rid off his past and bad characteristics.

All magic traditions as Eastern as well as Western assert that a man seeking for freedom can hold on against dualistic position only in such condition, rid off his past.

Using the pentagram for practical use in magic, it serves a special role of conductor or insulator. Passed or beat back is the energy concentrated by a help of will. Here effect and destination depend on the position of pentagram either.

Positive pentagram is a conductor of positive (nature) energies, analogs of them can be sympathy, love, benevolence, friendliness though. Yet it surely is an insulator for negative energies.

Negative pentagram is a conductor of all negative (red) energies, such as aggression, anger, evil, hate, yet insulator is positive. A positive pentagram is used for entering into contact with deities and creatures of high intelligence, as well with a man. But most often it's used for protection from negative energies and negative creatures of the dark. Yes, positive pentagrams protect from various enchantments and attacking aggressive natural powers during rituals.

Different thing is a dangerous negative pentagram. With a help of it it's possible to get in touch with dark creatures either. But besides, it has offensive characteristics. That's why, sometimes it's called the offensive pentagram. As a brilliant conductor of negative energies this sign can change all the negative energy of operator (magician who fulfils the ritual) into another person: in this case the magician writes the name of that person in the centre, even better, if he puts into the centre small things or body parts (hair, clots of blood, etc.) belonging to that person and visualizes him. Talking incantations he invokes evil powers and when his hate and aggressiveness reach the culmination, stabs with dagger into the centre of pentagram, cutting the entire negative energy into the object. If the magician is strong, we shouldn't talk about the results. The weak side of this method is that negative pentagram can cut through the evil in opposite direction too. Also may be that magician won't stand invoked by himself dark powers. Or if the victim is stronger, either protects itself, all the energy and powers which haven't found where to realize themselves, will return thru pentagram and will attack with a double might that operator.

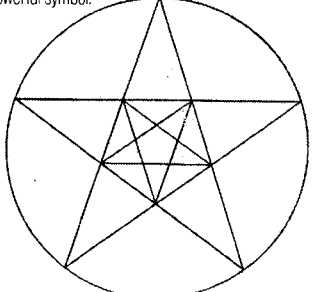
That's why for example wearing a negative pentagram on the neck, if above described conception isn't given to it, a decent attention should be paid to this effect of reflection and opposed penetrability.

Besides it's worth to mention that elemental forces obey to the magician, seeing the pentagram in positive position. As I've mentioned this sign symbolizes the supremacy of will against four elements. Microcosmic positive pentagram expresses the will of magician and elemental forces feel that.

Turning to the end I'd like to mention one more thing. As far back as Leonardo da Vinci was fascinated by one intercourse of sides, which is 1,618. It's so called "golden" section. Everywhere where this intercourse is dominant the man feels harmony and beauty in sounds, colours, dimensions everywhere he can find "golden" section. It's an unarguable index of harmony, directly connected with life forms.

The essence is that in our analysed pentagram this "golden" section dominates absolutely. Whatever sides and their intercourses we'd take, we'd find it everywhere. If the centre of gravity of man put into the pentagram conforms with the "golden" section, such a person looks very harmoniously developed.

So shouldn't a thought foists that pentagram is a symbol of great universal harmony? That it's the most beautiful symbol. That it's the most powerful symbol.



ledo takas #5





Who doesn't know "...Again Shall Be"? Maybe not everyone had a chance to hear demotape "Alone Walkyng", yet it's released on CD as well nowadays. Someone said HADES play traditional old fashioned black, but I'd rather call them the top notch creators of the slow form of this genre. HADES manage to compose every smallest piece of their songs so damn neatly that the finished result gets just great - totally tight and professionally put together, making some kind of hateful masterpiece.

Here follows a talk with Janto, who plays bass guitar besides his main vocal duties. As my memory reminds it was late spring when I got that chance, so first question naturally was asked about rising spring sun and Janto's feelings towards it. No wonder was to learn that it didn't evoke any brighter feeling in his frozen soul. "No, not really" - says Janto.

Some hottest news in HADES ranks is the next album, which will be produced by FULL MOON Productions again and contain the next dose of underworld experience. My interest is compiled: "Yes, we have composed our second full length album, but it is yet to be mixed. The difference between composing this album was that a lot had to be done without Jorn who serves time in jail for arson, he could only participate 100% the two last months before we had to enter the studio. Since he is one of the main songwriters in HADES it was hard to work without Jorn. We also had to rehearse the songs in the worst dump of a rehearsal place you can imagine, so the conditions before the recording of "...Again Shall Be" were way better than before the new one. Anyway... the new album is called "The Dawn of The Dying Sun" and will hopefully be released during September/October." I'm sure those troubles still make those compositions even harsher, grimmer or whatsoever, yet it must be the same HADES I hope! "Well... "The Dawn..." is definitely a HADES album. The music is very much in the same vein as on "...Again Shall Be". It turned out more or less like we predicted. Some stuff such as "Awakening of Kings", "Pagan Prayer" and "The Tale of a Nocturnal Empress" are filled with medieval atmosphere the way only HADES make it. Other songs, such as the title track, are more intense and heavy. I think "The Dawn..." is more varied than "...Again Shall Be" but this is basically up to the listener to judge."

But why "The Dawn of The Dying Sun"? Maybe this title has anything to do with the previous album and lads try to make some kind of sequence of that? "The dawn of the dying sun can have a lot of meanings but to us it means the beginning of the end. It is not linked to "...Again Shall Be". I came up with this title after I wrote the lyric for a song. I named it "The Dawn..." and we chose to name the album the same. It describes very well the message of the album. The lyrics are quite different than they are on "...Again Shall Be". Much more destructive and dark."

As I remember HADES was the first band for me of those mid/slow tempo bm which I really liked. I guess it was not so easy to try new patterns (especially in Norway!) while most of the scene "inhabitants" accepted faster compositions & rather used style. Janto contradicts: "In fact it was quite easy, for the same reasons you mention. We had other ideas than most of others. Me and Jorn just mixed our ideas into the song "Unholy Congregation". Before I joined HADES he also had the song "Alone Walkyng". These two songs are basically the two first HADES songs (which still exist) and out of those songs we had a good pattern, or concept if you want, to base our music on, which we still follow to a certain extent." As well me was interested if Janto considers his band as purely original and innovative. In my opinion it's even a good example for others' inspiration - that means something! "We don't consider HADES as 100% original, but I dear say that we have found our own style which holds a strong identity. If people copy us is their problem, not ours."

When you get a new album of the band take notice at composition "Alone Walkyng". Yes, it's the same legendary demo track, and four piece decided to feature it again, like new version. "As before mentioned "Alone Walkyng" is one of two songs we based and formed our concept upon. I guess a trademark is a good word to use. Everyone who knew our demo expected us to have that song on "...Again Shall Be" and that is the only reason why we saved it. To piss people off and make them ask "why". I have no number of how many letters and interviews which ask "why did you not put "Alone Walkyng" on the CD?" Anyway... Yes, it is a rerecorded version we put on "The Dawn..."

Listening to HADES compositions comes the conclusion that they totally know the goals with this art of expression: how to handle things from A to Z, they're sure to put all the best to that... "We do try to make things as good as possible, but it's not always easy to find ways to do that. We have different opinions about loads of things and we discuss our work to pieces sometimes. I guess we dumped 3 or 4 songs in the process of making "The Dawn..." All of us have to be at least 95% happy with something before we use it. Sometimes we

make two songs a week and sometimes we use months on one particular song. It is a lot of factors playing in during the process. But when it comes down to the very basic we do know what we want, and we form our music out of that."

The union was formed by Jorn in 1992, when he finished his experience in IMMORTAL. Musician wanted to create a music style that was both filled with melancholy and atmosphere to please his lusts of memories of old Bergen... Remi who was a member of legendary DARK previously, joined him. Soon Janto and Stig completed the line up to start a deadly combat... Yet thus far it was unknown if latter twos had played earlier and where. "I think Stig also played in DARK if I'm not mistaken. I have been in various bands since I was 13-14 years old. But the band I played in before I joined HADES was called SCAVANGER - we only kept it going for a year or so. I played guitar and did the vocals. I guess it sounded like a crossover between BOLT THROWER and early CELTIC FROST. Anyway SCAVANGER splitted up in July 1991 and I didn't join HADES before November 1992. The only experience I took from SCAVANGER to HADES was some live experience I guess..."

Those paganistic wanderings within the lyrics are quite convincing & surely are born after the true clashes with ancient memory. How are they transformed from the dwelling thoughts to written lyrics? "When I do the lyric it normally starts with a thought or an idea I've had for a while and I write a first outcast. Then I go over it one or two, some time three times before it is finished. Then I name it. Lyrics are something that always will change a bit from album to album. Sometimes I feel stuck and I have no ideas. Then I realize that I do but it has taken a new form. It's hard to explain so I can't be bothered to try."



My sight especially got caught on "An Oath Sworn in Bjorgvin", where a concrete place (Bjorgvin/Bergen) and date (21st December) are mentioned. It has anything to do with history or something in common I believe. "An Oath Sworn in Bjorgvin" is a product of my imagination. The story itself apart from the time and place. Bjorgvin is the ancient name for the city we live in (Bergen) - it is surrounded by seven mountains. One of these (Lyderhorn) is believed to have been

the place for pagan rites. Some say that's where the witches gathered in sexual orgies with Lucifer. These are all myths and tales spread around this particular mountain. Much like the German Blockberg. The date is the darkest night in the year. It is a well known date. This time of the year have always been celebrated in various ways. Nowadays it has been moved a few days and it is called Xmass and have been christianized like everything else but in ancient times it was usual to make sacrifices of various kinds to the elder gods. And so feast upon mead and meat, and out of that I wrote the lyric "An Oath Sworn in Bjorgvin".

Even though HADES don't sing in Norwegian their music is strongly influenced by local culture, folklore and tradition. I wonder how it's possible having in mind that neither guitars nor drums were national instruments of northern Europe cultures (including Norway and Lithuania, by the way). Isn't it a kind of paradox? "No. Because whatever you like to call our music it will be metal and to play metal you need guitars with distortion and a drunkit. We are a metal band, not a folk music group." Ok with that, yet digging deeper, maybe we simply can't understand that modernism takes more and more room deadening the ancient manner of expressing oneself? Or we, with our modern means, can even enlarge the entire expression, to make kinda another dimension for the forgotten realms of the past? Janto starts to hesitate: "Both yes and no. Music has existed as long as mankind and through all times people have made up new instruments and new music forms. We like metal. We play metal. We are also partaking in the future development of metal. This happens to all kinds of music forms: classical, folk, requiem pop... whatever. Someone might find the seventies heavy metal so cool that they choose to play heavy metal in the DEEP PURPLE/BLACK SABBATH style. Some like modernistic classical music, others prefer Beethoven. Some play folk/medieval music with help from synths etc, some play it the old way using traditional instruments. Things develop. If you find what you seek in the music it does not matter what it's played at. If you see what I mean." Yep, I must admit man has some reason down here.

Speaking about Jorn, like Janto mentioned he had some problems with police due to ancient church arson back in 1994. Janto comments this further on and says his opinion about actions like this - really brave form of expressing oneself. I tried to provoke him like it's a showing oneself and is worthless against asshole society... "Jorn was accused, put to trail and found guilty in participating in church arson. He was sentenced to three years in jail, of which he has seven months left to serve. I do support those kinds of direct actions against the church as an institution and its congregation. It scars and it hurts. It is a fist in the face of society!" As well a frontman was asked to tell some words about balance of image and music of bm bands, and recommend some new promising outfits for "Ledo Takas" readers: "I do agree with you, musically most of the new bands don't seem to care too much. If they can take some "cool" photos and find a "cool" picture for their demo/CD cover it does not seem to matter too much how it sound when they play. I did find SWORDMASTER quite interesting but I'm not sure if they go under "new" bands. To be honest I don't pay much attention to every thing going on."

Some older diehards must remember once famous techno thrash outfit HADES, the fame of which has faded away later on. Anyway, I won't choose the same used monicker for my band. "They contacted FULL MOON Prod. and claimed royalties for us using "their" name. That's how the "Norway" under the logo came on the reprinted CDs. It was annoying but necessary. On "The Dawn..." we will just have a small sticker in the corner of the cover, informing that we are the Norwegian HADES and so on..."

One of the latest my interests was to know why they don't play live shows, but as you can see from the picture it's a pure mistake, so Janto's wonder is obvious: "We do indeed play live. We have played several gigs here in Norway. The most reason one was on the 23rd of May this year, along with GORGOROTH and GEHENNA. We even made a live recording of it, which we might release in the future. I don't see anything wrong with touring. We will most likely go on tour ourselves as soon as Jorn is released from jail. Some time in February/March'97."

Well, here the talk stops, everything you could learn from it is written above... Be sure to survive til the dawn of the dying sun era, when total devastation begins... "Our mighty "Alone Walkyng" cass-EP is now released in CD format with new cover + lyrics etc, order it from the band address for 12 USD". Check out HADES reviews as well as some releases information down there.

Unholy intrigue has started since "As Jerusalem Burns" demo was released - it seriously grabbed my attention in spite of some mistakes and pretty underground level. That's no problem as MELECHESH sorcerers admit that either and it's natural to see the band in process of improvement on its first recordings. The main thing is that wall of negativeness, which a mentioned demo tape is full of; moreover - seems like MELECHESH originators have kept their secret silent till the day X, and it has arrived in late 1995... That day started the next plague, in the centre of holiness - Jerusalem. Hardly believing that and being wondered by MELECHESH Mesopotamian heritage, I've conducted an interview with the main mind behind soulful black metal union - Melechesh Ashmedi.

He told me about the start in late 1993, when this fiery musician supposed to have a solo project, but in early 1994 Lord Curse (dr) joined the band, and then it was a turn of Moloch (g), Thamuz (b) and Cimeries (keys) to fill the rest vacant places. Meanwhile both last members are kicked off and that was my first interest to know why it has happened and who replaced both...

-Hail to you Tadas. Yes we had some line up changes but the heart of MELECHESH remained the same. Late'95 Thamuz had to leave the band, being the only Israel member in MELECHESH. He had some military obligations which forced him to leave the band. Thamuz was a great member and we were very satisfied with his musical abilities & performance, and his evil attitude, he is still a brother of MELECHESH. However the case is not the same with Cimeries, apparently we misjudged Cimeries, he was not true to our cause nor were his musical abilities satisfactory. Now we have found a new bass player Ulsur and up till now we find him very suitable for us. He is active music-wise & has deep occult studies, so he has the dark attitude for MELECHESH. And I take care of the keyboards now.

Quite a time has passed since the first demo was recorded, and it wasn't any empty gone days for the band. Frontman compares some new tracks to earlier ones:

-Since "As Jerusalem Burns" recordings we wrote newer songs which, in my opinion, are better structured & sounding than the older songs. I'm not sure if we can compare the new songs to any of the demo tracks, the new songs are different and show what MELECHESH tend to produce. Other than that, I realized an idea that I had, which actually is my side project, also entitled after me - ASHMEDI. It is Mesopotamian/Arabian ambient cosmic desert synth music. I recorded a couple of tracks and it sounds very dark. Besides that we're working on a journal for our order - "The Order of Mesopotamia". It is a journal that discuss Mesopotamian myth, satanism, occult, etc... So since our debut demo MELECHESH have kept busy & dedicated.

Well... as there still should be more info on the band itself, I must add MELECHESH have recently got a 7" EP deal from German DEVILISH MUSIC PROPAGANDA label, and meanwhile that record is out. It's entitled "The Siege of Lachish" and limited to 666 copies. You can get it for \$7 from the band's address. For the same price a single of ASHMEDI must be available either - it's limited to 333 copies! The main news remain a rerelease of "As Jerusalem Burns" demo in CD format, with two bonuses. It will be done by two American labels: BREATH OF NIGHT Rec. and PULVERISER Rec. in latter part of the year. And it might be pressed in Europe by PROGRESS Records.

Knowing that it's easy to come to an idea that demo has got many decent reactions. Maybe the band thinks it's not worth of it, or they aren't that pleased with it nowadays?

"As Jerusalem Burns" got very good reactions - lots of the dark souls around the world enjoyed it. It got good reactions from zines, distributors and general fans of black metal. I think the demo deserved its response because the music was plain simple good black metal, music-wise, & dark emotions filled the demo. As for myself, I'm not very satisfied with it because I always say to myself I can do better, besides I had then the vision of creating mid eastern black metal. I enjoyed "As Jerusalem Burns" but I knew I could do better. By the way it is sold out.

Here a man has in mind demo tapes. To the point is noticing that both progressive black metal and emotionally evil violent black metal terms are used describing the music MELECHESH perform. We was interested how it's possible to combine those two totally unrepeatable sides of emotions...

-Our music is black metal, Assyrian black metal or Mesopotamian metal. We have progressed our style so now it is more or less a new style with the exception of a couple of traditional black metal songs. Some of our songs contain those evil emotional sounds; on the other hand they contain violent riffs. We use now more than one style of vocals - for instance we added some normal vocals in some songs, we also used more Arabian/mid eastern drum beats & guitar riffs.

As always we asked if MELECHESH did any promotion with the demo, bothering record labels to listen to that music... Ashmedi was kind to comment his views on black metal bands doing promotion and those which do not do that.

-Naturally we sent off some demos to labels, but it wasn't like a mass promotion. Not every black metal band needs promotion because it also depends on which part of Earth you come from. Soon we will record the new songs so we will be sending it to labels.

Anyone should wonder that mentioned demo tape was recorded live in studio to DAT - it should have some influence on final result. Music sounds quite raw, yet it has some primary charm, unpolished & original idea... What about trying live recording again?

-I like recording live to DAT for it catches some feelings that would be hard to get out on track recordings. The sound was produced by myself. But then I did not know as much as I know today about sound so there were a couple of mistakes. Our new recordings will be on tracks but in the future we will definitely do live recordings even if they will be only for us.

-I was sure my collocuter wouldn't argue the influences of traditional Scandinavian black in his music. He argues that it's hard to do without it, and here I also agree:

-Yes we also have Scandinavian sound, no band in the scene is 100% original, every musician on Earth has drawn influences from somewhere else, but good musicians add to their influences and try to make something new. Mid eastern folklore music, also Armenian music, which influence us, has similarities to some Scandinavian folklore music in the new songs we have some Scandinavian residue in the music, of course depending on the song.

What about oriental sounds, they reminded me a bit those SALEM and ORPHANED LAND use. However MELECHESH never has anything to do with Jewish music, so my mistake was more than evident. Assyrian pride is clearly represented here, and that's the topic of those darkos.

-There are no Jewish traditional music because we are not Jews and we never were!! Our families are of Mesopotamian origin and like all of the cases in Europe, Mesopotamians in the last millennium or two were forced to be christianized. So we were born in Mesopotamian christianized families, but we have denied christianity for it is a lie. We have purified ourselves with true evil. So our music is Assyrian - fuck Jews and their music. What you heard in our demo is Arabian music, not Israel Jewish. SALEM & ORPHANED LAND create great music but I do not like their lyrics.

Later on we've plunged into satanic & pagan theories, which might be a topic for entire encyclopedia, though I believe a frontman explained his views clearly, considering my protest about mixing both ideologies. Melechesh Ashmedi told us more about Assyrian cultural knowledge as well...

-Here you have to understand Mesopotamia was the place where black magic, sorcerers, genuses and evil were born. The true satanic faith come from our origins. We do not worship that Satan of judeo-christian formation. We believe that Satan is a powerful negative energy - entity that is drawn from evil, hate, death, pain and spirits of darkness. We live our daily lives with satanic codes but we come from a pagan nation "Assyrians". If you know about our Assyrian gods you would know that they were not those angel like peace loving gods but they were filled with fiery emotions, ruthless to our enemies, and negative evil energy did exist in all of them. If you heard about the "Necronomicon", well, it is taken from pagan Mesopotamia, and it is one of the most powerful of books. You are right that pagans got nothing to do with satanism and that is the case everywhere in the world, except the middle east - Mesopotamia. Mesopotamia & ancient satanism are one!! If people are interested to know about Mesopotamian/Assyrian heritage, they should write to us with a small fee - they would receive the journal of the Order of Mesopotamia, which has a lot of info about our heritage, but also has practical magic, too! The fee is strictly for covering the costs - this is non-profitable for us. I can't describe all about Assyrian wisdom in a few lines though.

To continue with that, polemics reached the interpretation topic, when I stated that's the case of finding a key to any ancient book or experience... Everyone should find his own acceptance, not bothering about the same way of interpretation...

-in satanism it is very personal. This energy has different effects and values for the individual. Also occult is very personal but there are a few basic ritualistic methods which are unified and agreed upon by most occultists and they are made to assist the individual in his own private path. About the ancient cultures, especially of Mesopotamia - they are proven fact in a historical sense but to some individuals the scriptures and books may have some personal

links and interpretations.

The one and only fact that MELECHESH is a unique gathering of blasphemers in Jerusalem makes some sense to respect those guys... Quite sarcastic is to imagine them as any forceful organisation down there, ignoring all the other small (in that case) sects like christianity or muslims. I doubt if that would be a wanted event, yet more like a religious paradox...

-This is not a sarcastic idea, but more a living proof of the power of evil for it now exists in the heart of the holiest city on Earth - the home of the three major religions of this pathetic god (judaism, christianity and islam). For the first time ever satanists exist in Jerusalem. And that is power, we are not legal, we are an underground secret order. The police tried to arrest me but they couldn't find me because they only knew my black metal name, not my birth name (what about po box address then? - T). And to correct you furthermore, christians and muslims are not small sects - they are very powerful (I haven't stated that, I've just said "if it would happen" - T). Now we haven't got enough power to legalize our order and go on the open, but in the distant future we see it coming. This order is not for the general public - it is for us, we spread through it the message about Mesopotamia/Assyria and only the true and powerful may join, the general public are only weak sneeps of God. Besides our existence did prove to those religious sects that found out about us that their reign of god's will is dying and evil is stronger.

I ignore all the politics, and who knows me can simply confirm it twice as firmly, but meanwhile my mind makes me think about MELECHESH homeland... How do they feel among all those wars and what solution they can get across?! Those bombs on near-by street must invoke any reaction inside satanic minds!! But Jerusalem is already burning...

-It is great - let the sheep of god kill each other while Satan in us watch with a cold sarcastic smile. Only one thing is - we are worried to loose one of the band members in those bombings. We are not afraid to die, but it is not our time yet. There is no solution for this country has always been in war because of god. Jews steal lands from the muslims - muslims kill Jews - Jews kill muslims etc... the only probable solution is both nations should die out or simply abandon this pathetic "god". Meanwhile we enjoy all of this - it is truly inspiring. We have put a curse on Jerusalem.

Finishing with those geopolitical topics I'm sure we've got the same conclusion that war should never stop, especially if it helps our Earth to be cleaner. Back to the music, I was right to notice MELECHESH members don't ignore other types of it, not only black metal. Just take that Ashmedi project, for example. You know, it's different from other black outfits, which ignore others...

-We like and respect all music which is evil and cold. But we also appreciate good musicians. Those good non-black metal bands we listen to with our ears and mind, but the black metal bands and other satanic music we listen to with our souls and black hearts. Besides black metal we like ambient, atmospheric soundtracks, classical music, old speed metal, some death metal and generally non-mainstream dark evil music + medieval + folk. Some black metal fans don't appreciate music and some true black metal warriors do appreciate music. Some can't stand anything besides black metal because they cannot find their need and lust for evil music anywhere else and some do.

So good for anyone appreciating different styles of music - I hope MELECHESH will be discovered by many serious music worshippers as well. Let their visions of unholy come true... Ask about T-shirts from the band with logo and pictures designed, don't forget you can obtain some newly recorded material as well. We'll wait for new MELECHESH recordings too.

-Thank for the deep interview, we'd like to hail the Lithuanian scene for being active, and we enjoy lots of Lithuanian bands. Hail MERESSIN for keeping the old flame burning. Look out for our upcoming T-shirts + upcoming releases. Hail Satan, Hail Mesopotamia, Hail Sorcery, Hail the Black Arts!





## COMECON

"Fable Frolic"  
CENTURY MEDIA

COMECON is like a whore who waits for the next client - the richer, the better. First, L.G.Petrov, then M. van Drunen, and now M.Grewe. Hm, not a bad collection, yet these are three different personalities who simply make the whore do what they want... So, what kind of identity such a band may have?!! COMECON simply will never grow up as a band, they will remain as a four piece to get some money (of course, if they'll change the screamers further on). On the other hand, for how long is it possible to follow any new trend on and on?!

Well, Martin van Drunen is an exception due to his wonderful skills. He was able to make one helluva brilliant of even such an outfit! But Marc Grewe just brings back in memory COMECON first album, where Lars Goran Petrov played as a puppet in commercially addicted music. "Fable Frolic" yet is not a new MORGOTH rip-off, though Marc's style is absolutely the same as on "Odium".

If you think hardcore death metal is what you like, you still should think again before stealing this - get a listen! If it's your first and last listen to "Fable Frolic", you can suppose this review has some reason.

## C.S.S.O.

"Negro Louwes VIII"  
MORRID

C.S.S.O. stands for CLOTTED SYMMETRIC SEXUAL ORGAN and perform a brutal kind of music named as grind/gore. If I said they come from Japan you would draw a purely right picture recollecting GORE BEYOND NECROPSY & tones of fikes - I suppose Japan can supply lotsa more grind outfits.

Unfortunately it's quite problematic for me to judge about their abilities comparing to others as I simply am not a big enthusiast of grind/gore. I dare to say C.S.S.O. aren't that 100% typical in their musical ideas, yet I mean just those intro-like effects, samples & other schizo sounds. "Real" music wise it's quite difficult to be original - the stuff is played and overlapped. By the way, some likeness can be felt with German grind school (BLOOD, DEAD). The only thing which outstands is swinging rock'n'roll rhythm in several tracks - it does makes a record bearable to listen to the end... for the person not adored of gore/grind.

Recommendable only for fans.

## DAMAGED

"Passive Backseat Demon Engines"  
BLACK HOLE

A very extreme outfit upcomes from sunny Australia, and you'd better believe they grind it roughly! This MCD release is the third in their collection after a demo tape in 1992 and a debut "Do Not Spit" album one year later. Can't say where they have gone since those times, but on this five tracker DAMAGED prove themselves being very extreme and dedicated outfit. The songs can surely apply to the fans of BRUTAL TRUTH, early NAPALM DEATH and likes. It's more deathly grind, but some hardcore influences appear. By the way recording was done live, so the skills of DAMAGED are surely high. Maybe a desperate voice of Chris is a bit irritating, but I can't see why it shouldn't be cool for others.

Wanna hear a grindcore version of "Equinanthom"? You'll get it here - it coincides, even having in mind nobody will do it so majestic as the original. On the other hand, it's pleasant to hear that the art of Quorthon and Co. is evaluated in Aussie lands too. Get this launching release if you like BRUTAL TRUTH and check out another review of DAMAGED somewhere.

## DARK TRANQUILLITY

"The Gallery"  
OSMOSE

So, highly expected album from Sverige's own masters of pure melody is here, starting the next OSMOSE era, I guess. A sophomore release (excluding "Of Chaos..." MCD couple of months ago), which must have been done in a perfect manner. Is it actually?

I bet "Skydancer" was a total mindkiller as it was the first melodic death album on the bill, and it was so fresh plus crushingly tight that it did extremely good. Today we have 1000 various copies of DT sound, and some of them manage to discover unknown paths even overruling the beginners (ergh... see IN FLAMES review).

"The Gallery" is not that blowingly smashing, at least concerning how talented & thoughtfu! the guys are!! It surely is the first rate LP, but the band simply couldn't do something no less wonderful. Slowly actually down, taking even more I.M influences, having Michael on vocals and not forgetting usual hooks they cause some heart blows - just go thru opener "Punish my heaven", epic "The one brooding warning" or rabid "The empiness from what I fed..." Still gods, no doubt, but I expect more next time!

## DARK TRANQUILLITY

"Enter Suicidal Angels"  
OSMOSE

Relevant comeback? Yezz, mes dammes + monsieurs! Some kind of that... Actually it's a pre-release to one more album initially titled "The Mind's I" - this MCD should make people hold their breath, attentively looking for a new album. Includes one album track "Zodijacky light" (look for its video version in spring!) & three tunes never to be published anywhere else!

I like it more than "The Gallery". And don't be mistaken, thinking me started to like short MCDs of Gothenburg area phenomenon more than full lengthers... It's just a coincidence with IN FLAMES, nothing more... (well, maybe they really started to repeat themselves finally?) or like that.

DARK TRANQUILLITY suddenly got a clue that with strict extreme compositions they still are thicker and better! As far as that melody and melancholy goes, it comes and runs away, but no more than in "Skydancer" - as much as needed!! More of power and more of ambitions, take that album tune or follower "Razorfever" - it surely rocks, thrashes and kills! D.T. at its best, without any fake forceful elements to soil purity of neodeath metal. And wear party music as well. No, I wouldn't be glad to hear one more hit like "Archetype" on "The Mind's I"! But it surely won't find that place down there - it's occupied by true melodious music already!! Compliments.

## DARKWOODS MY BETROTHED

"Autumn Roars Thunder"  
SOLSTITIUM

Sophomore album of Finnish pagan/black formation, which left out far east land and travelled better to not that far but firm country as Germany. SOLSTITIUM does all the best to promote their bands - Finns have not missed sign to them. Especially when they're a bit acquired to handle things down -

both musically and promotionally.

So musically DMB improved without any doubt. Still the same Scandinavian black, but much more polished, neat and technical - nothing comparable to the first album. A difference are these calm atmospheric tracks with very specific vocalizing of Pasi. You should remember his manner from debut album, and I'm speaking about that operetic voice. Maybe there are too much of such gothic bm songs, so first record stands higher on rudeness point. But I see it as a natural progression of guys - they want to extend the bm possibilities, so why to ban it?

Only lyrical ideas of Teemu sometimes seem very funny - pagan primitivity is read within them. Can't say they're as lame as MORNINGSSTAR ones, but in some songs it's a pure fun. Maybe they want to be natural, but don't say anything special - that's clear for every self respecting free man. Anyway album is recommended!!

## DAWN

"Sorgh På Svarte Vingar Flogh"  
NECROPOLIS

They call it blackened death metal - maybe the best way to describe this "Swedish" music, known so well during past two years. "Sorrow Flew on Black Wings" is the title of this MCD following after a successful debut album of this band two yrs ago. Improvement is obvious, as polished material is always much more listenable than worse done stuff. So, technically it's better, but music wise also. Style of DAWN is formed meanwhile, sounding catchy, evil, fast and extreme. Of course it's in the same manner as many other Swedish black/death, yet having enough of proof to be labeled as supreme music.

It's only two 7 minutes tracks, supported by an acoustic intro and majestic cover "Night of the Living Dead", originally performed by thrash legend INFERNAL MAJESTY. Otherwise every track here is individual unlike blackened death music, and that's very important if you want to be own in this ocean of sounds. Costs 10 USD (USA)/12 USD (world) only, so pretty worth of obtaining, especially if you like their "Naer Solen Gar Niber for Evogher" album.

## DEEDS OF FLESH

"Trading Pieces"  
REPULSE

Label's type of band - from California, managing to play 11 tracks in 30 minutes, so it's nothing else but American fast as hell brutal death metal. Three piece is called even faster, more powerful and technical than other bands of such kind (PYREXIA, INTERNAL BLEEDING, CRYPTOPSY). But who wants it still faster, more grinding and becoming one poor monotonous album? Are there still not enough of them wanting to be the fastest in the world?!! They'd better take care that every of 11 songs are grey, repeating the same on and on... I respect the skills of guys, but they should take care on some own face in music scene.

If someone played me tracks of DEEDS OF FLESH, INTERNAL BLEEDING and PYREXIA it would be impossible to separate them. They all play the same stuff which is possible to listen for 10-12 minutes, no longer. And I'd better get on BROKEN HOPE or INCANTATION - those who have some originality, variety and don't wanna be the fastest or brutalest for devil's sake.

## DEMILICH

"Nespithe"  
NECROPOLIS/REPULSE

This legendary album was recorded back in winter '92, just a few months after DEMIGOD's one and only record was immortalized. Then DEMILICH were signed to American NECROPOLIS, but due to limited distribution it was rereleased nowadays in Europe. No wonder about REPULSE Records, and no wonder to hear that brutal quality those bands were famous for.

I can't say DEMILICH simply follow what DEMIGOD had been started, but it's definitely the same line, those majestic riffs, fast tempos, sulen sound... Good quality if you ever liked Finnish death metal! I dare to say DEMILICH weren't that gloomy, that terribly tight, even their vocalist Anti sounded quite loosey with his gastic gargling style in my eyes, but "Nespithe" still remains one of the classic death metal albums. The purest form of intensity!

As a bonus this rerelease contains a four track demo '91, so you will get a complete discography on one CD for \$16 only. What about the song title "The Planet That Once Used To Absorb Flesh In Order To Achieve Divinity And Immortality (Sullocated To The Flesh That It Desired)?"

## DERANGED

"Ratler-X"  
REPULSE

You know, with this ten track debut CD Swedish extremists make a huge progress towards catchiness and lightness. Their earlier works were still immature, with an awful gargling of Per. Can't say he's perfect on this platter, but at least it's bearable to go thru this killing spree, which contains of 10 try-outs.

As I mentioned earlier DERANGED's music has some kicks in the ass and it's improved with powerful drum madness, guitar blizzard and overall intense attitude. To call it grind would be too strong, but grinding death metal is the best description.

About originality... Well, forget it. When the musicians play real heavy and tight, it sometimes is not necessary. "Ratler-X" still isn't the perfect example of the style, but definitely not bad. In my ears the band has grown up. Maybe that's a help of Dan Bengtsson (formerly INVERTED member), who took the bass duties from now on? CD = \$16.

P.S. One more question: what's common between DERANGED and ROLLING STONES?

## DESASTER

"A Touch Of Medieval Darkness"  
MECROLESS

Unlike many of newborn black metal releases that debut album of German DESASTER was firmly promoted by the band's earlier stuff, and was a pleasant welcome to the scene. Even their debut demo "The Fog of Avalon" was not that good, the sophomore effort "Lost In The Ages" had a dose of charm within angry compositions. Later on a split 7EP with LINGCOD, and now - an album, born by the small label.

Like on the previous releases DESASTER remain loyal to the tradition of the style - they perform black metal in a raw straight forward form, sometimes being fiery as the autumn storms, sometimes calming down to the dawn-like twilight. Can't name their melodious parts melancholic or wandering - it is still the same dramatic music, only not that extreme. DESASTER smell of the 80ies as well, thrash/death influences make them sound quite old waded, with today's technology. And what a tribute track "Devil's Sword" for DESTRUCTION! Very impressive. Also check out "Visions in the autumn

Shades" and the last composition "Into A Magical Night".

Get this highly matured piece of strong traditional black metal! Both LP and CD cost the same \$22.

## DESIRE

"Infinity... A Timeless Journey Through An Emotional Dream" (adv.)  
SKYFALL

Maybe the third Portuguese band to rise up from the local heavy underground, following MOUNSPELL and INHUMAN - the latter is still rising as well. Oh yeah, DESIRE sound quite interesting and scintill - they play doomy death metal, and it's possible to say "dooomy" in this case, even it's death metal (in its slow formula).

I remember INCARNATED (the prename of DESIRE) as quite boring outfit of the same style described, thus this first full lengthier is an appreciable improvement. Ah, it's three yrs between those recordings, so that really matters. But DESIRE surprisingly remained the same - sorrowful melancholic but rough brutal music. This form of crawling death metal was popular 3 yrs ago - CASTLE pops up in my mind. For me and such people who like that flowing/moving motion it's a cool follower of what was started and just fully forgotten. As well gothic metal fans should accept this - it has some variety, female choruses, acoustics... Male vocal department is shared between CASTLE rip-off growls and screamy bm type (both performed by Teat) - outstanding!

All in all, my thumb up, yet DESIRE will actually gain respect on those who like not just to listen, but to think together as well. Not for winst! Available from the band for \$20.

## DIABOLIC POSSESSION

"Ripped To Pieces"  
GROUND ZERO ENT.

Originally those four tracks were recorded back in 1993 and released as demo tape of another American deathrash outfit with a brutal approach. Later on GROUND ZERO ENT. rereleased it as an MCD, which is available for \$12.

What it's possible to hear on the platter are four straight forward compositions, with no originality at all, yet performed orally ok in the frames of the style. Quite catchy, with changing speeds and several kinds of vocals (from guttural growls to thrash screams). Every tune is hardly different from the other, but in general it's listenable. And if you accept some other American deathrash (there are lots of shitty outfits), this might seem pretty intelligent. Though to make a big deal with such the music was impossible even 3 years back. Or DIABOLIC POSSESSION prepares anything mindblowing? Hard to believe, listening to this extend.

## DIABOLOS RISING

"Blood Vampirism and Sadism"  
KRION-H/OSMOSE

As far as this synthetic black experimentation is not a new thing already, the pioneers of the sound had to work seriously to get the similar kind of extremity as was firmly used in "666". In my opinion this sophomore work yet isn't that tight and brilliantly arranged as the predecessor. Ok, DIABOLOS RISING a bit stepped into other circle of pain - they have tried more ambient synthetic music, together with extreme industrial madness. But for me personally it isn't that convincing, sounds like another project for that matter.

Moreover, yellow dyed piece of laser includes some compositions being pretty ordinary for industrial straight forward music, but not DIABOLOS RISING. In general Mika and Magus remained as dark as possible, as frightening as never before, and get you over the edge. Mantle of lunar cult! Yet for the perfection of "666" this time some strokes should have been necessary. Maybe for those who like more ambient stuff than healing industrial/core this will be quite a discovery. A gem for vampires?

## DISGRACE

"Superhuman Dome"  
MORBIID

Lads promised to feature some unreleased tracks from the second, unreleased DISGRACE album "Volume Two - Black Lizards Cry", but as it spins on, I find only new typed tracks, and no death metal at all. For band it's easier to say and to follow the path they all are into in 1996. Let's hope the idea to release at last that legendary album won't die (Dave Rotten, what are you waiting for?!).

Not much can be babbled on this eleven tracker, especially if you know my opinion on the previous MCD. The same heteroclockmetal with dancable grooves, rock'n'roll rhythms, industrialized vocals and (more clear than earlier) sabbathesque sound. The last thing is new in DISGRACE overcharging spectre of influences, but no doom or dark structures are used here, though.

Rock/metal suits well, but why "hate"? If this has anything to do with the feeling like this, it's only grungy/punky protest form. Can't stand it, sorry. Umm, let's go dancing by this music, and then let's go vomiting. Nope, you'd better ignore this shit.

## DISMEMBER

"Massive Killing Capacity"  
NUCLEAR BLAST/RELAPSE

One more intensive band turned into a piece of rubbish. If it was any snail trendy outfit I'd piss on them. Yet when talk comes on DISMEMBER I just can add that it's stupid to follow blindly ENTOMBED, and that by wiping out you can't stay "as always extreme".

Goah! Just look at that cover... Even it's drawn by K. Wahlin and this guy as always has done a good job, the idea is so primitive... The same is with music. It would be ok, if only primitivism did the job, but DISMEMBER are also much slower, most orientated, and Matti uses some kind of L.G. rip-off vocals. Should we call it DISMEMBER? Who of old death metal fans would listen to such a parody? So, just another sell-out for bullheads' pleasure.

Three songs remind earlier DISMEMBER though, and I bet that's the last compositions of that killing death metal they ever written. I mean "On Frozen Fields", "Collection By Blood", "Life - Another Shape of Sorrow" and also instrumental "Nenia". Make a four song sample out of this album, cuz the rest must be ignored.

## DISSECTION

"Storm of the Light's Bane"  
NUCLEAR BLAST/RELAPSE

I remember "Cold Winds" - a track of this four piece in a DEAF Records compilation back in 1993. It was so surprisingly melodic death metal, something new and unexperienced by that time. Three years passed and the result speaks instead of any reviews: DISSECTION became the leading team of melodic Scandinavian black/death, with two incredible albums "The

# alburrnggh

Sombertain" and this sophomore effort.

Surely the band has firmly grown, even comparing to a debut album. Extremely catchy tunes, classical tracking of eight compositions. It's difficult to believe but listening to the music you simply forget about separate tunes - DISSECTION turns as a musical event! Taking the album as a gathering of tracks you get only five tunes of pure DISSECTION with decent speeds + crushing heaviness + a bloodbath of metal shavings. Moreover, Unisound has given the best possible production (especially comparing to "The Sombertain"), where every individual touch of cymbal, soundscape of the chord is felt if it's humanly possible to say. So, back to the tracks, "Where Dead Angels Lie" is more of a blacky ballad with dreamy interchanges and the perfect acoustic in the middle, spiced with drum rhythm! The climax of the album indeed. Even "Night's Blood" and "Soulreaper" are damn polished and sound no less brilliant. The album starts and ends with two instrumentals, the latter being a piano drama, as if completing the story of this Storm...

"Another huge review could be written on the poems of Jon, but you'd better feel that cold and blows of northern winds yourselves... "The blackness that falls is coming to stay". Monumental.

## DORMANTH

"Valley of Dreams"  
ARISE

Quite a few metal releases upcome from Spain nowadays, and the range of different types of the style is growing day by day. Formula of brutality ain't the only in this land! DORMANTH i.e. play a neat blend of melodic death/thrash - intelligent form with classic arrangements, solid leads and up tempo rhythmic section. Though a firm heavy metal touch is added, with melodic guitaring first off all.

In general DORMANTH can easily be identified as the followers of old AMORPHIS, PARADISE LOST and earlier TIAMAT, only with a higher dose of traditional deathrash. Since it's not the first try to copy those monsters, so it's not the last either, and not the most perfect. In spite of that Spaniards are quite sticky, not boring, a bit amusing, and hopefully not too weak as a metal band (I'm not sure, huh!). You can get this debut album for \$18 from the band.

Recently they kicked out an original drummer and seem to recruit several new tracks to get another deal, as they've broken down with ARISE.

## DORSAL ATLANTICA

"Alea Jacta Est"  
COCLIMELO

One of first wave thrash outfits from Brazil! and I'm glad to review them as in the past I've heard quite a few good responses on music from jungles. Can assure you - it's much better than two last SEPULTURA discs. Staying in traditional thrash/death frames and playing the stuff with flaming energy. Only vocalist carries lessons from Max circa '93, but that's only a lesser part of influence. DORSAL ATLANTICA path their own way thru death and thrash alternative - changing tempos, changing spirit of each track (find here dark sad songs & careless rock'n'roll tunes). Plus add nice flying leads - good album guaranteed! But old way, I remind.

It still can be not boring, still showing some imagination in the depths of the style. Only DA must take serious care on vocal department and as soon as possible to rid off the groove/mosh influences, as that's dangerous with possible result of "betraying the old style. By the way this album is of 1994, so there might be a new record as well - ask the label about that.

## DYING BREED

"Repressed But Not Extinct"  
HIFAM/RPM

Hm. Say Area thrashers? Not exactly, but rather in that sense. DYING BREED definitely mix more than one straight style of metal. Some of the best recognizable would be thrash, speed, death and hardcore. The latter is felt thru the entire disc, and first three are like another part of their music.

First of all it's not any new invention to combine that stuff. Next, this outfit rolls on in a pure American straight forward manner, so for any experiments there's no place (the last cut "Farth A.D." doesn't count). Just get 40 minutes of raw metal with groovy rhythms, uptempo beats and hardcore type of vocals. In my deep opinion Pat's guttural garglings destroy quite a thick image of this music - at least it'd be more acceptable with another type or without vocals! But that's a part of business and the only way is to throw this CD out (if you agree with me about vocals...)

By the way, "Aporioned Grief" was featured as a soundtrack in movie called "Beyond The Law", starring Charlie Sheen, so this should be a good push to the band. DYING BREED prepares a new release as well, already recorded and entitled "When You Die". Still you have some time to order this debut at RPM.

## EARTHCORPSE

"Born Bleeding"  
SHIVER

The next platter in a nonstopping flow smells of melancholic and rude atmosphere, no wonder that it comes from British boys. EARTHCORPSE boils in the scene since 1991, and that's their first full length success, not forgetting an appearance on SHIVER Rec. comp CD few years ago. The same song takes presence here, and that's the best they can offer indeed. Other 5 tracks are so gloomy & unimpressive that you easily drop asleep at least 2 times per song... That's a pity as EARTHCORPSE has some potential drifting in senseless ocean of depressive sludginess death metal. Maybe they mostly remind me Dutch CASTLE (rip) yet EARTHCORPSE express their feelings pretty modestly, which results in a rather boring soundtrack for nostalgic remembrances...

The music doesn't take you as much as it should have to! For me doomy soundscapes must recall those esoteric senses, at least some crying out response inside - I should look for the other album than "Born Bleeding". As well I must tell ya about seventh track, which is the opener actually, carrying a pile of keyboards' sounds - it just prepares you for a deeper melancholia than it really is.

Wish guys I mean Mark - voc, Matt - g, Dan - g, Rob - b, Justin - dr) more cloudy evenings next time...

## EDGE OF SANITY

"Crimson"  
BLACK MARK

Supremely! Because it's EDGE OF SANITY, because it's a wonderful conceptual one track album, because it's a blend of new and old EOS, because it's recorded in "Unisound", because it features five excellent musicians, because it shrieks!

Dan states the basic musical ideas were written in 24 hours, and the lyrical

concept, a good futuristic story, took them exactly the same length of time. Well, even it might be a slight overstatement, EDGE OF SANITY simply prove that real masters have no boundaries and their minds can work out something great in any circumstances and place... For the Swedes conditions were pretty fine - the catchiness is a firm proof of that.

Indeed this 40 minute track seems like a long musical story with lots of ups and downs, expressed by great speedy death metal (including hellish screams of Mike/OPETH), similar to PAN-THY-MONLUM'S Dericid), gothic overtones taken from Dan's experience with NIGHTINGALE, straight forward mid tempo metal breaks and melodious interchanges, reminding "The Spectral Sorrows"... One helluva "Crimson", which is impossible to be described! Experience it yourselves, metal kids. EDGE OF SANITY did it to confirm the symphonic majesty of the style. Congratulations!

## ENOCHIAN

"Night Monumental Evil"  
LEVIATHAN

Ain't it a joke? Can't believe but it ain't. I'm sure - only for ENOCHIAN members themselves. Who else can be so silly and close minded to write and sing Norwegian lyrics, use Norwegian symbols, act like they're from the north, when actually the band is from Czech Republic?!?! Or those mid European "true blackers" just wanna pay on trendy wave and get some free money out of that?! That might be true as what else could those Norwegian titles on the CD cover might mean? It attracts such stupid kids who wanna buy as much CDs with Norwegian titles as possible. ENOCHIAN presented themselves in the silliest way imaginable, but unfortunately it's getting not funny as far as that image is concerned not for circus clowns.

Musically Czechs are close to trendy nordic bm sound with keyboards which remind PHLEBOTOMIZED, and clean vocals reminding old ISENGARD. There are several average tracks like "Monumental Demoniun" or "Hedningenes Hymne I Landet I Nord", but in general that stupid image scares away even the craziest Norsk fan. Avoid!

PS. I've got an information new ENOCHIAN is in English.

## ENSLAVED

"Vikingfir Veldi"

DEATHLIKE SILENCE/VOICES OF WONDER

I'm really sorry to feature so old release, but as soon as we are ready to review everything we get we can't miss any old album. What's the point to talk anything when such a classic is on the row?!

Absolutely finest ENSLAVED work, which made so big impact on the scene, which simply spread a word that black metal sounding band can be called "viking metal" band. But that's another story.

This is one of the first bm releases, which made the author of those lines to adore this unruly style of art. Five prolonged and extreme compositions with a majestic touch, aggressive approach and northern monotony. ENSLAVED have stepped from their origins, this album was the last of that symphonic and monumental sound, earlier disclosed on "Yggdrasil" demo and "Hordanes Land" MLP.

This back catalogue of all those works is now available on CDs, so move your ass to get them all and remember that "Vikingfir Veldi" shines the most brightly among them.

## ENTHRONED

"Prophecies of Pagan Fire"  
EVIL OMEN/OSMOSE

Conditionally possible to name ENTHRONED as sons of the second Belgian bm wave (together with AVATAR), as they got deals after the famous ANCIENT RITES. Right - both bands don't dig new styles, they play pretty known stuff which was mastered in Scandinavia. If AVATAR happen to rip off Norge scene more or less, then ENTHRONED like Swedish borders. So - don't think it's lame music, cuz stuff is composed, arranged and played nicely. If there still weren't enough outlets from Sweden, this album would have been met like a new blow of cold wind. But the problem is that there're quite a few bm bands down Europe, so Belgians are like a bit late with it.

Once again it's much better than loads of amateurs with CD deals, let's say from France or Finland. For real bm lover this band is a very listenable experience. Only if you're getting fed up by the style - then leave it out for others. CD is full of aggression, velocity, atmosphere, burning crucifixes, bla bla... Worth of spinning out in my opinion.

## EPIDEMIC CAUSE

"Tar East"  
SHADOWS OF MICHELANGELO

The first product of new born label (earlier known as a magazine only) is a CD single of Japanese industrial metalers - three boys from Osaka. EPIDEMIC CAUSE had some recordings like demo tape and 7"EP in 1994, so they aren't any newcomers about this nowadays popular sound.

This is kinda pre-production to the first full length of the band, so it must show what these extreme people are all about. They do that noisy industrial with a help of distorted guitars, drum machine (looh...) and wild of different effects. If I get them right EPIDEMIC CAUSE like mid and slow tempo rhythms, with more space for various interchanges, experimentations, obscurity... First track is still mid tempoed, reminding PITCH SHIFTER, and then - slow tracks of GODFLSIH kind. Vocalist likes both very extreme screams and almost crying narrative singing.

At times this music links a bit to moem alternative mainstream - maybe this will be erased as soon as possible. If not, I guess next time I have some problems to listen to them. Now industrial metal freaks can spin it for \$8 only.

## ETERNAL DIRGE

"Khaos Magic"  
MORIBD

I'm not familiar with a debut album of this German team, but this sophomore effort is firmly convincing! Indeed I was wondered by that strong death metal, performed in a unique way, combining old style with modern technics and outstanding ideas.

What they reminded me at the early stage of listening was NOCTURNUS! I personally haven't heard much of music being like those gods, at least some try outs of sounding like NOCTURNUS were poor and soon were forgotten. ETERNAL DIRGE successfully invades into space death metal and continues legendary epopee - mind you, with a very own blend of keyboard-laden space soundscapes and death metal! At times this metal steps into thrash area, being quite raw yet catchy. Synthesizer makes the main deal as the person behind this instrument creates some flying atmospheres indeed! Vocal style is similar to NOCTURNUS, as well as the production.

Moreover, "Khaos Magic" contains 200 MB of audio video motion data, with a nice, yet a bit primitive cyber space animation and keyboard music! Not

that often yet, so show it for your PC's - prepare them for biocide.

Very recommendable for NOCTURNUS fans, for the usual CD price.

## ETERNAL SOLSTICE

"Horible Within"  
POSEIDON/DISPLEASED

Straight forward energetic thrashy death metal is what this album deals with. The style every knows and the style hard to invent something outstanding (yet we have some exceptions!). Even it's my first clash with ETERNAL SOLSTICE (they have already one album and a split CD with MOURNING earlier), I can be sure this band beats the same line since the beginning in 1989, and will beat it till the end of days... The most reasonable comparison would be label mates ALTAR, though there could be much more comparisons indeed.

"Horible Within" is ok if you still like uptempo beats, if you need some light metal, if you're tired of experiments in metal fields. But it's quite disappointing if you have some more refined taste for music! It might cause some yawns due to the same cliches and orders: you know what will go after that part, then again...

Yet for me personally such music gives some strength, impulses to act in any particular situation, so this disc won't be put away for ages in my collection. At least for refreshment's sake.

## ETERNE

"Still Dreaming"  
CANDLELIGHT

Quite a name in the underground - this release was rather long awaited affair for gothic doom rock fans. The result is pretty ok, yet ETERNE still can't please the evergrowing scene with something extra brilliant or at least enjoyable.

Still they successfully mix pure gothic rock in the best tradition of the genre and kinda progressive doom with sun hints of heavy sound, met only in metal spheres. But the whole try seems a bit forced, as to the end you start to fall asleep due to the same combination of darkness and progress.

Maybe this twice tracker would please more the gothic lovers, but I'd surely look for something more expressive, with another style of vocalising and a real drummer instead of a machine. Foggy Albion must have some opposite energy towards myself...

## EXCRETION

"Voice Of Harmony"  
WRONG AGAIN

Look at the label which released this album and you'll get a clue what it's about. The saga of progressive neodeath metal continues! EXCRETION take the path their kindmates DARK TRANQUILITY, IN FLAMES and others have paved. One more surprise as they outburst with such a massive energy that you forget about any likeness and fall into this antediluvian chaos, which has the only ray of light - melody.

Like the rest of colleagues EXCRETION involve the power of heavy metal, yet their extreme death metal roots are felt maybe more heavy than let's say, in NAUFRAG music. Those guys as well know how to write neat compositions, so there's no problem to get into them, to catch a line through every single song and the whole album.

Hopefully the change of style (it was done after two demos and exposed on third "Suicide Silence") wasn't forced in this case, and "Voice Of Harmony" quite convince in that even the most sceptical listener. Nothing to add, just get it for your collection (\$18 - Europe, \$20 - elsewhere).

## EXPULSION

"Overflow"  
GODHEAD

With this release of EXPULSION the Stockholm death metal history has been completely written. It's not over anyway but the scene had a lack all these years as one outfit still had no possibilities to scream out and now it's done.

Guys started in 1988 together with NIHLIST, TREBLINKA, DISMEMBER, GRAVE... Then something went wrong and others left EXPULSION far away from the success. You see where all great Swedish death metal bands are now? Take ENTOMBED, UNLEASHED, GRAVE, DISMEMBER... No one play that old style (and no one is doing good music today). Only TIAMAT headed for something extremely fresh and they succeeded.

EXPULSION can't grind the pants either, but they took another direction. This record shows a band as matured metal act with a heavy pounding attitude, firm riffs and solid structures. It's not easy to call it death metal as the music has plenty of classical riffs, some kind of BLACK SABBATH feel and slow moody manner. Only the vocal style of Fredrick doesn't apply to me - it's too soft and powerless. The music needs some deeper and strict voice.

Quite an intelligent platter which might gain some listeners. Somehow I still think EXPULSION will be quite different next time.

## EYEHATEGOD

"Dopesick"  
CENTURY MEDIA

After three years of silence on the sight again upcome New Orlean sludge pioneers. Guys did had some serious projects during those yrs, including the appearing in DOWN, SOLENT GREEN and CROWBAR recording sessions. When it comes to EYEHATEGOD the band remained loyal to the learnings they were doing earlier. Again the album is packed with nihilistic ideas and full of hatred soundscapes.

Can't say that it suits me yet sludge/doom sickos will like it. Heavy rhythms turned slower and even more heavy. And besides that a new topic is mid tempo rock'n'roll rhythm with conformable sick riffs and more than extreme vocals.

The production's fit to the music: while it's raw - compositions sound raw, while it's filled with hate and anguish - compositions sound heavy and disgusting.

I doubt if EYEHATEGOD will find any new listeners with this new album, especially in Europe (here we have much more enjoyable projects), but for old fans "Dopesick" can still be a brilliant. Like it or hate it.

## FATA MORGANA

"Fata Morgana"  
DARK DUNGEON MUSIC

According to Havarid this isn't as important project as MORTIS to the composer himself, but who really cares if it's magic, mysterious and wandering? Indeed FATA MORGANA debut platter is quite different from MORTIS and VOND yet it does include the same keyboard dominance, even the same darkened tuning and that eventual trademark of DARK DUNGEON MUSIC.

Those Swedes have surprised me once again. I was not sure I'd dig "The Shadowland" up since I haven't been introduced to what extremos are up to now, but that platter kicked! Guess what... INVERTED was interviewed in the first issue of "Brainstorm" and back then their bassist Dan (now in DERANGED) was talking. Me wants to be honest: then I've contacted them just seeing that pretty nice flyer. Their music was not bad, but...

And now INVERTED have much more to offer - their brand of pure Swedish death metal has taken extremely sharp edge while it's impossible to be senseless if you ever liked death. I've got them again as you see! One mutherfucker Kristian took care on my questions - he is responsible for drum madness in the band, as well as doing some underground helluva job with his VOICE OF DEATH Records and distribution label. We started up our discussion from growing since those early days. It kinda reminds working in another way, not forgetting that maturity which definitely has come to INVERTED frozen scapes...

-Yes I agree with you that "The Shadowland" is the biggest step forward for us since the beginning. I see it only as a natural progression of our music. We didn't sit down and thought that "hey this time we should do something new!" Instead we wrote the new songs just like the old ones. But this time we tried to arrange and structure the songs in a better way. We took a lot more time on us to put them together in a proper way, still I must say it's absolutely "the INVERTED sound" with dark and brutal music. But still with room for melodic riffs and rhythm parts.

"The Shadowland" dwells of some kinda own style, even it's old fucking death metal! Kristian obviously agrees:

-Actually I think we have some kind of own style. But we are not trying to create directly any unique sound for us. Instead we play the music we really like and have listened to for so many years. And to be honest with you we don't give a shit about trends, etc. We play dark death metal mixed with some old thrash/black metal the way it was meant to be! The old ancient way!

Swedish death metal circa '90-'92 still makes a weighty influence on INVERTED sound, that's some stuff like reminiscences of the past - HYPOCRISY's "Penetralia" crosses my mind over and over again...

-Not only the old Swedish bands influence us as a matter of fact. All old death/black and thrash bands from middle eighties to '90-'91 have quite a big influence on us. Still we do our own music and we don't try to copy other groups' sound. By the way, I don't like HYPOCRISY that much.

For the last couple of whites INVERTED experience with new vocalist Henrik and bass player Joel (ex.EXEMPT, if someone still remembers them), so maybe those guys turned the rest to create that stuff INVERTED are famous nowadays?

-We are very satisfied with both Henrik and Joel but actually they have not written so much music on the new album so I don't think they have changed our sound any special. But since summer '95 we have a new guitarist called Anders Malmstrom. Because original member Mats left the band because of personal reasons. I think this will make a very big impact on our next album. He is a great musician and fully

dedicated to the metal scene - just wait and see...

Death metal is deeply in their hearts, that's for sure. And now Kristian reasons why some people call this music one sided, without any feelings, no room to dwell. It must depend on every single person who listens to such a music.

-Death/black metal is not only in our hearts, it's our religion! We live for the music. Honestly I don't give a shit about people thinking that death and black is one sided. Then don't listen to it! This music is for people with dark and brutal feelings. For persons who know how much spirit the death and black bands put into their music. This is not a trend - this is a lifestyle you choose!

And this music guys do is not overfilled with various technical or mastery tricks, yet it's very listenable! A great deal within its acceptability makes melody, even it's used in an own brutal way.

-Our music is pretty straight forward I suppose but still you can find some melody and melodic riffs in the songs. We are just playing the music we like and live for. I've nothing against putting some melody in the songs as long as it is dark and brutal.

Speaking over the recording of "The Shadowland" it was said that the band was completely satisfied with it. He thinks it's a bit raw and deadened. Somehow I supposed INVERTED will use another studio next time...

-Yes we are totally satisfied in how the songs turned out. The sound could have been a little heavier and better - I think it will be even better next time. About another studio - that depends on how much money SHIVER Rec. are willing to put into the next release money-wise. It's absolutely a question about the budget for the next release.

In general, most SHIVER bands complain that the label is a bit slow with handling things... INVERTED CD also was released only after a while since the recording. Surely it can't please the band.

-Of course it's boring with delays but that's nothing we can steer. Hopefully the next album will not be delayed at all. As long as it is put out in a reasonable time we are satisfied.

Wonder or not, but INVERTED had some nice relationship with infamous WILD RAGS Records - this label has made a name of Swedes work in American underground. Although the freterster reasons:

-WILD RAGS has spread our name very well in the States but our relationship with them is not so good nowadays. Actually Richard C promised to put out our MCD in a rerelease together with 3 bonus tracks but it seems like he doesn't give a shit about it as it is 1 1/2 year delayed! He doesn't even answer our letters anymore!

So who said this fucker is honest??! At least INVERTED say no! Another important thing is INVERTED always stand on the devil's side, they never seem to refuse satanic approach. What causes this interest, this eternal source of all their ideas? It's interesting to know why they don't spread their lyrics to others - it's also important charge!

-First of all I won't call myself a satanist because I'm not. I am very interested in the occult subjects though, and that's why I write about it in my lyrics. We don't want to put the lyrics out! First of all they are very personal and also I think Henrik's

voice is pretty clear and mostly of the lyrics could be heard if you just listen carefully. The music is the absolutely most important thing and actually I see Henrik's growling voice more like another instrument to create a dark and occult feeling and atmosphere in the music. The most important reason for the unholy/satanic approach in the music is that this is what death/black metal is all about! Death, destruction, unholy rituals, blasphemy and anger. We live and play for the dark and brutal music not for any God or Satan. I see Satan more like a symbol for the fight against money greeding religions, especially christianity.

The band still doesn't have that much live experience outside of Sweden. It's hard to get a decent tour nowadays, while all organizers seek for black metal or atmospheric bands and while SHIVER ain't that quick getting tours... Or maybe it's not their cup of tea?

-It's very hard to get a good tour these days. We have played a few shows in Poland and some in Great Britain but most of the shows have been in Sweden. At the moment SHIVER Rec. is working on a tour in Belgium and Holland in late '96. So we'll see what happens with that. Touring and playing live gigs is the ultimate experience! We love it!

Step outside, where Kristian explains his outlooks to the metal in general, not ignoring other types than death! He has his very own opinion on so called "false" metal music:

-To be honest I'm mostly listening to death/black and thrash metal + some real heavy metal. Grunge, hardcore and Seattle metal/rock makes me puke. I don't give a shit about false metal bands - they fade away pretty quickly anyway!

As I've mentioned earlier Kristian is strongly connected with the underground world, doing his own distribution & small label. Someone may call it "everyday crap", as it's no profit thing for a drummer. It's just a way of living, and believe me, such people as him and me, hah, understand each other very well...

-Yes, it's a way of living! The underground is my life. I will never stop supporting it. You're right I don't make that much money on my distro, but I'm now slowly starting up a record label and in 1997 I will put all my time into that and INVERTED. I can't actually think of working with something else than metal music. I spread the stuff both on shows and through my mailing list. Send 1 US\$ or 1 IRC to get my latest list filled with underground stuff! Support the everlasting underground!

Do it of course, and it will shine as never brightly! Here we go to a close with INVERTED's Kristian, and before he says about new songs of the band, let you all take the Swedes very seriously - their music is awesome!!

-We have about 3 1/2 tracks ready by now (June '96) and we will hopefully begin the recording of our second album in January '97. It will be out before early summer '97 I hope. In the meantime order our full length CD and split 7"ep (INVERTED/CENTINEX) from my address or from SHIVER Rec.! Thank for the interview Tadas! Good luck with the zine. All underground maniacs and fans don't hesitate to write us but be sure to include 1 IRC or 1 US\$ for sure and fast reply! New T-shirts available now for 16 US\$! Stay dark!







You know, sometimes you get a chance to take a listen to the band you never heard before, and whatever huge your surprise is that "new" unity of damn original musicians do anything but a masterful art!! Me never ever had an idea what OPETH might sound like and where the hell they are from until CANDLELIGHT Records dropped some lines on them and their debut album "Orchid". It's reviewed down in another section as well as OPETH's new work under the title "Morningside", which was just released - maybe the same week I had an opportunity to interrupt into Mikael's busy summer days...

"Evening yourself! I feel fine thank you! I reckon the remaining souls of OPETH walk the lonely path without problems as well!", says the frontman towards my traditional greetings. I believe the band had some busy time after the success of "Orchid": playing live, rehearsing, counting sold CD units... "Oh yes, - Mikael continues, - of course we have been doing those things you mentioned as well, but most importantly, we have recorded a follow up to "Orchid" entitled "Morningside"! This second volume of ours is set to be released in late July, so keep out for that one! We have been doing a few gigs with MORBID ANGEL and BLOOD DIVINE as well! This took place during a week over in the United Kingdom! Otherwise... not much!!" He must be kidding saying the latter, huh. That's the label which brought four Swedes to UK, but one week seems to be just a small tour instead of any bigger one planned after the "Orchid" was out. "I reckon there has occurred a slight misunderstanding! We never really "toured" to support "Orchid". We've done a few concerts, yes, but no actual tour! Anyway, CANDLELIGHT Records is currently working hard to find us a decent headline tour, but we'll see what happens!"

"Orchid" recording sessions took place in "Unisound" even back in March 1994, far before the release. Some serious reasons should have delayed the process, or I guessed the band did it before the deal was signed. Guitarist/vocalist reasons: "The deal from CANDLELIGHT arrived in late 1993 actually! There are numerous reasons for this annoying delay of the record! In fact, the reasons are so many that it will take too much time to explain everything! Let me put it like this... lawyers, money, laziness!!" Nothing more nothing less. Going further back to the start, OPETH had only several rehearsal tapes and nothing else up to this deal. They formed in 1992, by the way. But you know, in Sweden to record a reh. tape is not as problematic as in Lithuania... I mean the sound might be better. "We did not release any of our reh. tapes! They just got in the hands of tapetraders for some strange reason! We didn't even send them out to the labels. CANDLELIGHT was the first company we ever contacted by ourselves due to our interest in the label. By then, they had already decided to offer us a deal!" - firmly protests Mikael, and he's absolutely right - the music OPETH perform must have been noticed from the very start!

Difficult to stamp music, hard to define what kind of label might work with it! I guess CANDLELIGHT with their open minds are pretty the point, and why they shouldn't?! "We did have other offers, of course, but CANDLELIGHT was the most interesting one! We still receive offers from bigger labels, but we're signed to CANDLELIGHT for one more CD! You're right about the fact that OPETH isn't easy to categorise, but I'd say that this matter makes the companies getting worried instead of relieved! You see, we don't follow any trends like the companies do! I reckon that if we would have been a total blasphemous black metal band we'd be signed to the biggest metal label there is due to this embarrassing BM trend!"

Returning to the beginning stage of the band, it wasn't so easy to come to that multidimensional sound, at least back then... Anyway the deeper patterns of the subconscious were still opened and made OPETH so wide, unlimited. "We used to be an ordinary, and pretty damn mediocre death metal band, but we found our sound eventually! I guess the reason for the evolution in OPETH's music is because we've all become better on handling our instruments and therefore been able to

experience more with our personal abilities as well as the band's concept!" Mikael answers to my statement about reaching some higher, never before reached by others places of musical forms: "I do not see ourselves as an ultraoriginal band! But, no one can deny the fact that we're superior in what we do! There is no other band on this earth that sounds like us, but I think the reason for the band's personality is because we dare to experiment a lot with different brands of music. We do not hesitate with any of our ideas as long as it sounds good! That, my friend, is the only way to develop as a band. I see so many young bands that not have got any identity of their own whatsoever, and I feel sorry for them because they are nothing! They are the spawn of others' ideas! Too many are not looking beyond the latest trend, too many dare not to tread other areas! OPETH don't have that problem any longer!"

Me was interested since the very start about debut album's title and picture on the cover - so colourful and maybe naive? There should be something common with the beauty (flowers??)... A frontman haven't expected such a thought from me, ha! "I don't know what you mean with "naive", but the title reflects other things than just the beautiful flower on the cover! The title is not the concept of the album! Orchid reflects OPETH! It's as simple as that! If you gaze behind that picture you might see it all too clear. The flower itself represents beauty and power, vitality! The darkness behind it represents danger. Sum these words up and you'll see what OPETH is about!" Well, my statement has provoked quite heavy weighted answer!

The same as in debut album, "Morningside" is full of various melodies - they definitely grab your inner whatever evil or brutal it is! Classical melodies and the basic for OPETH: "As a musician melodies are essential! Melodic does not mean "nice" or "cute"! To me music cannot be made without melodies! We try to write riffs and arrangements that are immortal! Riffs you find yourself humming about to! Hell yes, it's a basic element for us! OPETH is a melodic band, but melodically unpredictable!!"

What Mikael thinks about his growls or screams - do they fit that perfect the whole concept & ambience? I'm sure this part of the band will remain forever unlike many post-death outfits, which refuse it and starts to "sing" like pop stars (CEMETARY, if you want some names, ha ha). "Every person has got different opinions, but we feel that the screaming voice is part of our entire sound, so are the acoustic guitars, so are the clean vocals. We would not have done this album if we couldn't stand behind the material to 100%! I'm proud to say that I am a huge OPETH fan! And I have every right to be since I write most of our material! This doesn't make me a hotshot in any way! I have other favourites as well, I just appreciate my own work!!" It must be the point when a frontman knows that he is on the right way, that his effort makes the audience be amazed!

I was quick to name the band as guitar oriented, and maybe it was too much to pronounce the names of M.Friedmann, S.Vai, Y.Malmsteen... But Mike must like making music similar to the grands of guitar! "Oh, Yngwie is a personal God! I totally adore his first three albums!! They are absolutely top-notch!! But, I do not see OPETH releasing an instrumental album with only solos on it! We are a band with a big musical interest, an interest to try other paths within the reverending forest of music! But one thing is for sure... OPETH will always make an OPETH album, not something else!"

Somebody might have already noticed that the same Mikael appears on the newest EDGE OF SANITY masterpiece called "Crimson" with his infernal screams reminding me PAN-TY-MONIUM on those parts! Again my colcoluter screams out: "Dan and I are great friends, and I admire EOS as well, so it was nothing but sheer pleasure to participate in the making of "Crimson"! That album is a masterpiece and death to them that say anything else! It contains music, real music, not overated

Gothenburg rubbish!! Oh, maybe I'm too hard on the Gothenburg people. Let me say like this... AT THE GATES rules!! To me it was an honour to put my voice and solo on the "Crimson" album! It is, in my opinion, already a milestone within the world of metal!! And so Mikael just said what I might write in my "Crimson" review, yet he goes further controversially saying that EOS include some OPETH influences on "Crimson"!!! Maybe it's vice-versa and the latter simply made some hooks sound catchier or more perfect????!! "I am sure that Dan has got influenced by the sound of OPETH as he's one of our biggest supporters! If this is true, I feel it's an honour! I'm too influenced by the EOS sound, and especially the new album of theirs!"

As you know earlier some CANDLELIGHT releases like EMPEROR, ENSLAVED were pressed by CENTURY MEDIA in States. I had an info there was some negotiation about "Orchid" being pressed like this, yet it hasn't worked finally: "They were supposed to do "Orchid" as well, but Lee (CANDLELIGHT boss - T) wasn't satisfied with the money they offered, so the fell through! Of course, I am disappointed, but I am glad that our CD is available there any way through RELAPSE! I've been in contact with the American CM office for quite a while now, and I know for a fact that the entire office are worshippers of "Orchid", so I'm a bit confused that they didn't offer more to get the license for it! But USA is a difficult market when it comes to music, and especially when it comes to the music of OPETH which might be more than the yankees can handle. I think they were afraid that it wouldn't sell enough copies! The thing is that most of the letters I receive are from the USA which might mean that there is a bigger interest for OPETH there than CM think!" Yap, it's a damn poor attitude to miss such a band like OPETH.

Anyway, one American record label still noticed them and offered to participate in legendary nowadays CELTIC FROST tribute compilation album!! It was DWELL Rec. which included the Swedes and gave them not any other track but "Circle of the Tyrants", which they remade into some kind of atmospheric version!!! Mikael deals on that matter: "When we were offered to participate in this CD, we found out that none of the other bands had chosen this track. We thought that a tribute to CELTIC FROST wouldn't be complete without it, so we chose it ourselves! We rehearsed it 3 times, and then we were ready to record! I feel pleased with the way it came out. We had never used keyboards before, so this was an interesting opportunity to try it out! This was though, the one and only time we will use keyboards! We wanted to sound like it was OPETH covering the song, so we rearranged it a bit... put our own brand on it if you prefer!"

Quite a step aside was to know Mikael's favourite and most listenable musical artists for this day. And he immediately started to list them all... "CAMEL, BLACK SABBATH, JADE WARRIOR, CRESSIDA, CULPEPER'S ORCHARD, INDIAN SUMMER, GZAR STILL LIFE, MEFISTO, SCORPIONS, BETHLEHEM ASYLUM, BEGGARS OPERA, FANTASY, KORPSE, SPIROGYRA UNICORN, LED ZEPPELIN, FRUUPP, TEARGAS, MELLOW CANDLE, FOREST, NECROMANDUS and more..." Jaaj, quite impressive!

Back to the new record, a frontman told that "It is called "Morningside" and it will include 5 new tracks, and the album is exactly 66 minutes and 6 seconds long!" I bet my stereo shows 66:07!! So, "the magic hidden on this disc is more progressive and symphonic than the "Orchid" adventures! I reckon that if the listener concentrates on the music he/she will be granted a journey never before experienced when it comes to the world of music! This is for your souls, for your deepest thoughts. Bring them out, give us the control, give us the right to mesmerize your spiritual mind! The adventure's waiting for you..." So far the story ends with Morningside - impossible to categorize music, which must be absorbed hearing the entire album and not the first two minutes of track one, according to above mentioned Lee

# alburrnggh

If we compared FATA MORGANA with those releases it's much more diverse, with changing mood, no wonder that seven compositions are featured. Anyway it's still depressive, dreamy and supreme due to background shivering sounds. As well the compositions are emotional and those emotions flow from the nature, I guess. Some opened views raise listening to "Fata Morgana" or "Stargazer": maybe vast pits of water, cloudy skies and even burning ground.

You won't hear any vocal try out on this disc, so this is like special. Moreover, I'm sure such music is much more acceptable to wider audience, and I have already some examples. If you see any figures while lurking into the sky, this might interest you either. Order at DARK DUNGEON MUSIC - CD costs \$18 (Europe)/\$20 (world), LP - \$20. Like a purified blend of violent nature.

## FLESHCRAWL

"Bloodsoul"  
BLACK MARK

Who thought German combo will soft down? Nobody! And the result is clear: "Bloodsoul" kicks the same dose of heaviness off your arse as the previous full-length "Impurity". Old school of death metal prevails in the band's compositions, yet FLESHCRAWL manage to pull not only technicality of this style but also structures of each track. That's why their blend of natural aggression, power of style, energy and brutality let FLESHCRAWL name as one of the leaders of the scene. In Germany I guess they overran their colleagues, at least being the oldest dm band, grinding the ancient way!

This time sessions took place at Peter Tagtgren's own Abyss Studios, and again the sound is desirable. It also got a chance to feature Peter on some screaming backing vocals!

Aha, guys at last decided to print their bloody lyrics - not that very frightful, what do you think Stefan? FLESHCRAWL also seem to lost their original bass player so the bass lines were recorded by guitarist Mik.

As always Germans stayed true to themselves and again recorded one unreleased track of another band - DEMILICH from Finland (see review elsewhere). I bet "Embalmed Beauty Sleep" sounds 100x greater here! In general that feel of ancient dm is linked with Scandinavian (i.e. Finnish) school - maybe that's only my remark? So states: "Bloodsoul" is an album which no die hard death metal freak should miss! Stefan adds: "It ceases blood!" So is my opinion.

## FLEURETY

"Min Tid Skal Komme"  
MISANTHROPY/AESTHETIC DEATH

Alexander and Svein Egil are right not commenting what kind of music they play - that's the matter of the listener. Whether you had some meeting with FLEURETY earlier, you're interested to check out what kind of progress Norwegians made and surely you are even more excited after reading that they turned more experimental and innovative way. If never heard of the band name - check them out, as these guys do that music out from their feelings and heart put into it.

Though why to hide their bm roots? Early stuff was much in that vein, and it's felt here either. Though FLEURETY couldn't avoid melting down to the level of progressive outfit, they still remained that inspiringly fresh, even without siren screams of "A Darker Shade Of Evil" EP. Added is the feeling of subtle nature touch, purely exposed with those acoustic/electric musical parts and freeing female voice. I'm sure cover artwork says much about them... it's of undecidable colour, haha, but is quite fine.

Recommended stuff for flying souls and heartburning visionaries.

## FORGOTTEN SILENCE

"Thots"  
OBSCENE/METAL AGE

Czech Republic is responsible for a couple of majestic atmospheric bands and FORGOTTEN SILENCE is one of them. That's their second release, which consists of about 70 minutes of gloomy refreshing music. A debut demo was released in 1994 and was called "The nameless forever... the last remembrance".

So, this second step is as various and lively that it's not possible to put it in any frames. A cross-section of dwelling blows, anger of fiery sparks, antique firestorms, and tears of heaven... Feelings are flowing from this album, human desires take a shape...

No wonder that "Thots" are based on I. Allende's book "La Casa de los espíritus" and B. August's movie by the same name. As they name this music is "original motion picture"... Who knows, maybe further on FORGOTTEN SILENCE will make a soundtrack to any movie?

Firstly released as a demo tape, this was quickly noticed by two local labels and pressed on CD format! That's not the end in FORGOTTEN SILENCE's career - I'm sure.

## FURIOUS TRAUMA

"Eclipse"  
EUPHONIOUS/VOICES OF WONDER

Already the second album of Danish thrash addicts and damn good piece of energetic metal. Mind you, some old rockers perform their best on this platter: Lars Schmidt with guitar and vocal duties (for some time he was KINKHRA bass player) and Morten Nilsson on drums (recorded MERCYFUL FATE's returning "In The Shadows" opus back in 1993!). So, to speak about quality of structuring and composing the tracks is a waste of time. Indeed the production is raw thrashy, yet tight and packed well.

The style FURIOUS TRAUMA play can be named as a blend of old and new schools thrash, with clear core influences, especially what concerns Lars screams. It'd be better to do without this element, as the resting thrash pit is decent not fast as fuck all the time, but aggressive at any stage. Classic vibes and melody appear in more moody compositions like "My Dying Time", while faster kicks remind SACRED REICH (especially "Sacred Bond") or extremos EPIDEMIC.

Social lyrical approach makes this less attractive, but in general for a modern thrash lover it will be a nice gem. Available at VOW for \$18 (Scandinavia)/\$21 (Europe)/\$23 (world).

## THE GATHERING

"Mandyliion"  
CENTURY MEDIA

How strongly one person can influence the entire band! My guess that musical must rule such a sensitive music as this outfit performs. Don't wanna return to so widely spoken earlier stuff of THE GATHERING, just say I liked first and hated next album. Anneke surely is the brightest what could get that chance to shine again. Doubtlessly five guys have never lost a firm approach to symphonic metal music, but they were feeling that only this kind of vocalising beauty can raise the music to the top.

"Mandyliion" features 8 equal compositions and I want to say they are as a neat carpet of pulsating natural existence, sometimes running out to the forests of gloominess ("In Motion #1"), other times making it free as young and careless child of lost generation ("Leaves"). Please check out a video of the latter song, if you still have some doubts. THE GATHERING have managed to release themselves from earlier death metal tuning, so the result is irreversibly flying. Like those strange machines...

THE GATHERING weren't THE GATHERING if their music have not included that spacy synthesizer experimentation, and I can just agree with bio statement about PINK FLOYD type of brand music. But Anneke makes the main deal - crying, singing, breathing, whispering and doing miracles with her voice, which can't be described. Make sure that this release ain't temporal - enjoyment arrives every time one takes a listen... yeah.

## THE GATHERING

"Strange Machines"  
CENTURY MEDIA

It's a single released soon after "Mandyliion" was out. Features two versions of a title track, one of them - in a single edit, another - normal track version. As well two live cuts are included: "In Motion #1" and "Leaves", both from "Mandyliion". They were recorded on 8th October '95 in Hofland during the show. I must admit THE GATHERING are real strong live, especially Anneke! She uses her voice with the same sharpness, not forgetting any thinness and adding natural forceful development of the line within the track. It's possible to feel her breathing at times, the music seems so close to the heart. Of course sound is perfect, maybe even better than studio effort (hah). As I know it's just a promotional single to "Mandyliion", but every collector must ask about it. No less enjoyable than above reviewed masterpiece.

## GEHENNAH

"King of the sidewalk"  
OSMOSE

Surprisingly this joke is not over, so maybe Swedes are going to lead this drunk path further on? Me was thinking it's just a funny story to make a good laugh at current bm trend, when GEHENNAH released "Hardrocker". This sophomore release anyway put this band somewhere closer to metal than circus artists - they simply got a bit more conscious about what they are doing. It's more felt not in the music, but in general attitude to things of musical industry. At last they got a chance to become sober once, and describe that GEHENNAH stand on old heavy rock'n'roll and nothing else.

You must have not much brains to create and perform such a music, especially that it was overpolished by one and only band - MOTORHEAD! And they are still alive, y know! Huh, that might happen with Swedes too, yet they have the idols and not every luckless listener is as "wise" to ignore MOTORHEAD accepting GEHENNAH. Otherwise speaking, downy image is the only thing this outfit has as own, but salty metal and hard rock kids will like them in any case.

No fun to listen to alcoholics who make it dirty - first of all you must get some vodka or whiskey, and only then to put "King of the sidewalk"... Not a very charming perspective though (bang your heads for Satan).

## GIGANDHI

"Eafflesia"  
BRAVOICES OF WONDER

According to bio Danish rockers violent the scene since 1991, being one of the most promising acts. Maybe that's like that, but on this record I can't see anything what could raise them as a unique outfit.

We have a deal with hardcore and metal influenced industrial music, performed in the manner of current trend. Can't say that it's had structured music, or mindless are the musicians, but it can stick only to real industrial headbangers. Moshing parts do nothing for me, I'd rather enjoy those yelling experiments and sampled ambient explosions. Yet two riffs are good - provoking: one in "No Shame", another in "In My Head".

Guess what - GIGANDHI is influenced by hindu religions and the term "hindustrial" sticks to the stuff they perform. Though to feel Indian soundscapes among heavy mishmash is as difficult as to separate industrial from industrial.

GODFI EST is the keyword so you know to love or hate it.

## GODFALL

"The Sound Of Robogroove"  
ABSTRACT EMOTIONS

On the first 15 minute MCD release Finnish five piece shows quite a step aside from their earlier material. I remember GODFALL as a quite groovy deathrash outfit with a good sense of emotion in their music, at least on REPULSE compilation. It's their problem, but a new approach ain't very exciting... Take the landmarks GOD FORSAKEN (mostly) and CONVULSE, add some hard rock and METALLICA clowning - you've got it. Not that much convincing, right? At least for those who supposed to see GODFALL among the innovators.

Moreover, skipping off one more additional track ("Fertile Tears"), which was mostly like the old stuff and which was included on original advance to MCD, shows that guys simply are trying to forget their demo times... A pity.

This five tracker is indeed well structured and greatly performed by the band, and it brings even more groove than earlier, yet I'm quite disappointed with GODFALL's attitude to take care on anything but trends. Too weak attitude and too weak effort!  
Dancable music for only \$11 everywhere.

## GODKILLER

"The Rebirth of the Middle Ages"  
WOUNDED LOVE

Duke Satanale is the god of this project, putting all his antichristian powers into majestic medieval black metal music. Even drums are programmed as many one man projects like to do, this 5 track MCD sounds very cool! Not one sided, not monotonous, not copying one or other popular trend, but keeping an own spirit, dozed with the style's carcass, fundament. This price of darkness from Monaco knows how to attract attention - does the music

intense, crushing, but melodious and haunting too. The need for GODKILLER increases proportionally to the number of listens.

OK, don't expect here any outstanding stuff either: vocals are the mix of Varg and Vangandr of HELHEIM, keyboards remind nocturnal play of the winterdemons, and guitar riffs still link to Scandinavian tradition (but aren't the copy of anyone). I liked the best "Path to the unholy frozen Empire" due to mystic keyboard line and filling atmosphere. You need no other outfit whilst searching for the bm of highest rank able to strike the trend. Wait for a debut CD in the fall of 1997.

## GODSEND

"In The Electric Mist"  
HOLY

The lightning doesn't strike at the same place twice, and when it comes to real masters, they don't repeat themselves on and on. "As The Shadows Fall" was a pure doom album in its traditional form, like you it or not. So this time with mastering Gunder Audun Dragsland and four added bandmembers (including Henrik Pettersen - ex.CARPATHIAN FULLMOON) GODSEND strike with something totally different in a dreamy gothic music. A huge progress and free challenge, simply the compositions from the heart, like you it or not.

Difficult to name it metal, it's more like a blend of various moods, beginning with 70ies progressive rock and ending with doomy slow metal compositions with an ambient touch. Every track stands on its own, independently tuning the dose of heaviness, emotion, romanticism and flight of thought. "In The Bitter Waters" has a base of distorted black metal guitars, while many other tracks do without metal heaviness, using only clear voices (Dan Swano on backing vocals), acoustic guitars and piano harmonies.

In fact first three tunes seem to me a bit too softy and joyful, yet beginning with "In The Bitter Waters" I start getting into this CD, and then it's cool till the end. And that continues with every listen. In other words, experience it yourselves, but be ready to a fine surprise.

## GOLGOTHA

"Melancholy"  
REPULSE

GOLGOTHA would be a very cool atmospheric/death metal band if it had another vocalist. Meaning efforts of Annon are very weak and completely out of place in this moody music. He would better fit any mosh/core shit, called aggressive music. Or LIVING SACRIFICE would be a good example to compare.

Everything else is more or less brilliant, including gloomy atmospheres, slow flowing "motion" parts, which aren't that pure copy of early PARADISE LOST, but rather of that wave. Faster death metal compositions bring more energy and dramatism, but they are polished and constructive. Both sides of GOLGOTHA mix together and blend into rather melancholic and still heavy result. Jose contributes a dose of synth background, even the same Annon with his narrative vocals adds some charm tones to the whole. So does Carmen (female vocals).

I can't leave GOLGOTHA not mentioning the incredible production and CD layout! Jesus Canovas - remember this name, as he draws some wonderful abstract pictures, 11 of them are featured in the booklet. It impresses...

So, if you're able to ignore shitty vocal duties, then "Melancholy" might seem at least good. Otherwise let's wait for fine change... \$16 is the price.

## GRAVE

"Hating Life"  
CENTURY MEDIA

Ha ha, still hating life... It absolutely doesn't mean that with such a feeling it's possible to make good intelligent music. At least GRAVE decided to spit on anything they had done in the past and with such a label of being full of hatred they think ten new tracks are great. Bullshit! Stop making a laugh of yourselves, guys. It would better fit the title "Making bux" or maybe "Clowning ENTOMBED, as they had done damn good sales with "...Blues".

It makes me sick to hear that so dedicated in the past bands jump on the bandwagon and try to survive in the scene with mindless songs and shitty albums. Who needs such a shit? Only some snotters can buy "Hating Life" to please their silly instincts on silly moshcore parties. Pounding fravesty of death metal.

Actually GRAVE former bassist/vocalist Jorgen departed to ENTOMBED, so this album features only Ola (guitars/vocals) and Jensa (drums). If they are gonna stay a two piece, it's simply impossible to bury ever raging death metal band. Boycott!

## GRIMOIRE

"A Requiem For The Light"  
EUPHONIOUS/VOICES OF WONDER

Quite an interesting case: black metal from Israel going along with antinazi advertised Danish label. What do all n/s bm heroes say about this? Everyone knows what, hah. I don't wanna draw into any kind of political aspects in my musical review section, so let's take a look what this requiem stands for.

Comparing to the first and only demo of year 1995, four musicians improved with their techniques and musical ideas as well. Their early material is very primitive and typical bm (in contrary to the bio statement "the most original black metal to come out of Israel, so I sincerely haven't expected anything better from this debut full length. Well, it's still strictly Scandinavian styling, but with more credits to own atmosphere, first of all added due to Eden's (MERCENARY, ENUCHIAN KEY, SAD ENT-HEUS, etc.) keyboard magnificence. Again I wouldn't agree with bio, where oriental touch is pointed as priority - maybe in "Neivah Ha'Tom", but it's not a usual track. More or less GRIMOIRE take the bm "made in Europe" roots and perform them with quality, even not bothering that much about originality. Hot & impressive cover art!

Get it from VOW for \$20 in Scandinavia, \$22 in Europe, \$23 in the world.

## HADES

"Alone Walking"  
WOUNDED LOVE

When a band is great in what it is doing, it's great since the very beginning. That's why some demos released on CDs are so cool and wanted in the scene. HADES bring back their earlier recordings, which are no less wonderful than a debut album. The demand for "Alone Walking" was so huge that a CD release was a question of time only.

Even it features two album tracks ("Unholy Congregation" & "Hecate / Queen Of Hades") and one song soon-to-be featured on the next album, this smaller still remains classic of black metal genre - pounding, crushing and infernal. Even though the sound quality isn't perfect (done in "Grieghølet")





"...and so... the deep woods beckon once more...there are many foes who now must feel the death-kiss of my steel..."

Thus speaks Byron, grim pagan warrior swathed in elder sorcery, summoning power from the ethereal gleam of the horned moon, swords dripping ever crimson from the spilled blood of a thousand epic battles... Epic orchestral phantasies, astral and avantgarde... masterfully magical music stepped in brooding atmosphere and thunderous power! That's BAL-SAGOTH. "A Black Moon Broods Over Lemuria" was a breath taking experience, and a further inside into mist shrouded realms is natural...

"And so, up the long white street went Brunhild, daughter of Rane Thorfinn's son in the Orkneys, goddess of the sea, and queen of age old Bal-Sagoth..." Aye, it is deep night and the moon gleams brightly... It was a very long time ago indeed that the idea which became BAL-SAGOTH first came to me... I was compelled by my own dreams and by wonderfully dark forces to form this band... a symphonic black/death metal project swathed in a dark fantasy image... I always intended to call this mighty creation BAL-SAGOTH, which is a name taken from the great works of Robert E. Howard. Destiny led me to meet suitable personell, and thus the dark vision became reality, and the mighty BAL-SAGOTH was born!" - starts Byron his assured speech. Moreover he comments the response that debut album got (including bad reviews as well... "indeed, our first album, "A Black Moon Broods Over Lemuria" was released a while ago, in May/95... and it was recorded even longer ago... in mid 1994. The response was and still is excellent, all the reviews I have seen have been outstanding... I'll wager there have been some bad ones, but we haven't seen them, and would not even worry about them in any case. It is good that people are so willing to embrace the dark and astral power of the mighty BAL-SAGOTH. We are currently writing our second album, which we will record very soon... the newer material is even more powerfully symphonic and darkly fantastic than the old... there will be a great many dark journeys and surprises in store for people on our second album... the saga continues!"

Here Byron means a limited edition of book format of the upcoming next album, yet I'm interested in mainman's opinion on cheap popularity, having a good example with COF... "Bah! We will NEVER be a trendy band! It is true what you say, "every trendy jerk" does seem to like COF... just recently I was told of a fool who wore one of their T-shirts, and full corpse-paint, dancing to some band like POISON at a trendy rock nightclub, and he wore upright crucifixes around his neck! This is the state of things over here... it is ridiculous! People merely want to follow a trend, they have no inner convictions or power... those people are thralls! Our fans are TRUE WARRIORS, and if they are not, then they should not be listening to us. We do not want "cheap popularity", we will NEVER seek it, and we will NEVER follow or create trends, for we will always be true to our dark, immortal quest." Continuing on the selling theme I wonder about those labels making limited edition albums, which reminds me a selling out as well, only vice-versa... "Making limited edition albums is fine... our LP was only available as a very limited edition, for I still like vinyl, even though everybody these days seems to buy CDs. It is up to the band and label how many albums are pressed... if people truly want to hear a band's work, then they will make the effort to seek out their albums. If the demand is evident, more can be produced."

But find out what Byron can say about the music itself, as it's so multidimensional, either emotional or dark, and metal too... "It has always been our intention to create music of a powerfully atmospheric and passionate nature, containing many varied emotions within the songs, and encompassing a wide variety of moods, from raging battle carnage to serene ambience, and everything in between. I aspire for our music to weave a dark and ethereal spell, and I hope that the music evokes emotional response in people, for there is much emotion, from fury, to great despondency, to sublime victory, which goes into the creation of our dark art." At times BAL-SAGOTH try to destroy all the cliches, putting one riff after another in a way other band would put it vice-versa, or mixing overall brutal riffage with dreamy keyboards... "We have always strived to be original... it is vitally important to us. We want our songs to be journeys for the listener... dark journeys to many fantastic places. We strive to keep our music free of boredom and dire unoriginality. It is true that our approach is much more unorthodox than most bands, and that is how it must always be... we make our own path... we do not follow another's footsteps, and we never will." And yeah, keyboards make a big deal in this emotional musical side! Others use them just to get the lacking atmosphere... "We use keyboards as a central and vital part of the band... the music is entwined around the imperial and astral majesty of the keyboard... the keyboards are the prime facilitator of our dark atmosphere, and we take their incorporation very seriously indeed. Other bands who use keyboards only use them to create an occasional moment of atmosphere, and often use one note, but we use full orchestral chords and swathe our

music in the power of the keyboards, and this is something we will continue to do, without doubt."

Further on, I hear some basic THERION "Of Darkness..." era influences in BAL-SAGOTH music. Brutal death metal still should rule their hearts... "In fact you are the first to say this, I think. I greatly admire THERION's "Of Darkness..." album, it has been a favourite for many years, as their "Beyond Sancturum" album is also. In truth, none of the other members of BAL-SAGOTH has ever heard THERION's music! Indeed, I do still hail to death metal as well as black metal, I have been into the styles since the beginnings with HELLHAMMER, BATHORY, CELTIC FROST, etc. These bands are still the best, and will never be bettered." Speaking on black metal side, a screamy vocal does the deal in BAL-SAGOTH. As well some other vocals are used, expressing the lyrical side. "The varying vocal styles are essential to reflect the different emotions of the stories, to drive the narrative and aurally depict different events and characters, etc. The variation mirrors the shifting moods of the lyrics and the music, and is essential in expressing the subtleties of the lyrical content, and in the creation of myriad atmospheres within our works."

Stopping on poetry/lyrics/sagas, Byron does them extremely majestic and looong as natural stories. I guessed that's the inspiration of R. E. Howard as well, adding his own inner creativeness. "I have always been interested in the art of storytelling, and I consider it an art of utmost power and relevance. For as long as I can remember I have been fascinated by stories and tales of all kinds, and thus it was inevitable that this passion should be entwined within my lyrics. I believe that words are a form of power, and that this power must be wielded correctly and imaginatively. I studied literature at university and I have always sought to spin sagas... I am a warrior poet who is driven by an inner force to tell these tales... tales which summon inspiration from many sources, including dreams and journeys I have made to other worlds, and which can be read as simply epic adventure sagas, or people can search for the darker, hidden meanings in the stories if they wish to. There are many more chapters yet to be told in this epic saga!"

On a photo 5 guys are featured, yet "A Black Moon Broods Over Lemuria" was recorded by 4 persons. "The story of the members is as follows... in the studio, Jonathan plays all the keyboards, but for live appearances, he prefers to play drums, therefore, we required a member to play keyboards at gigs, thus we acquired the fifth member you see on the photograph. The recording line up is, and will remain, Chris, Jonathan, and myself." On the same photo I see lots of likeness with SKYCLAD ones! It made me ask about Byron's view on them; and on SABBAT, and about that likeness. "I greatly admire the first two SKYCLAD albums, but I think the first two SABBAT albums are much, much better. SABBAT remain one of my all time favourite bands, they were true masters of their art. I don't think we are "cloning" SKYCLAD... our image is much darker and more malevolent, and our intent is quite different."

Quite a time to speak about earlier period of BAL-SAGOTH...

"We recorded our apocryphal demo in the deep winter of 1993, it was a very raw and archaic affair, and was only available as a very limited edition to people who sent blank tapes. We released several rehearsals also, all during the time prior to the recording of our debut album."

Byron seems to be real deeply in paganism and mythology... He specifies: "Indeed, I am a deeply pagan person... I hail to my gods and goddesses eternally, I pledge my soul, flesh and my steel to them now and forevermore. You will forgive me if I do not go into detail about my faith, for my belief is a private thing, and I am a very private and misanthropic person. Suffice is to say that I take my religious beliefs very seriously... some have called me a fanatic, in fact, I am; a heathen and I am fervently proud of my faith." However, is there an era he wanted to travel and stare with his own eyes? Byron should have experienced that... "Aye, I often travel to other times and places, even other worlds. I do not require pot to make these journeys, although I do oft' times partake of such. I have stood upon ancient battlefields, with my bloody sword in hand, and with slain enemies at my feet. The heads of dead foes litter the ground before me, for I cleave three with each swing of my blade. A thousand men have felt the searing death-kiss of my steel, just as a thousand more shall feel it. I revel in the carnage and slaughter, and the banner of my people flies triumphantly in the wind. Ancient spirits come to me in dreams, and in the waking hours... I commune with the spirits of the deep woods and the windswept moors... there are many portals and gateways to other realms on my island, and powerful magic runs through the sacred earth. Soon I shall return to the mystic realms... my destiny beckons... my immortal quest continues..."

I wondered if Byron plays any instrument besides his vocal duties. There might be any project if he does, as in BAL-SAGOTH he must concentrate only on vocal chords. "I also play bass guitar and keyboards to an extent, but in BAL-SAGOTH, I choose to concentrate on vocals only. This way, I can devote all my effort and power to the vocals, infusing my work with complete energy and dark passion. There is in fact the possibility of a side project manifesting sometime in the near future, but I will not elaborate on the exact nature of such an undertaking at this time... wait and see what the moon brings..."

Last but not least I asked about cognition: how Byron considers that... as neverlasting horizons in front of one's soul? "I seek wisdom, as I have always done, and just as all men have done since the beginning of time, for there is no knowledge that is not power. My magical and occult studies have brought me much elucidation and knowledge, but there is still so much to learn, so much yet to know. No one can ever know the entire truth of existence, or the true nature of the cosmos... only the gods know those things. For us, life is uncertain, and we can taste but a brief and tiny amount of knowledge during our lifetime. My gods are with me, and I shall ever follow the shadowed path to my destiny..."



*This music is more than beautiful - it's the end of the world! This statement ain't exaggerating PUISSANCE You heard their compositions? Then of course you will agree... if not - simply get your filthy fingers up on the platter "Let us lead" or couple previous demo tapes... One of those, exactly "Obey, hate, die" have caught my dark attention and the next thing was simple - more of PUISSANCE!! For collectors I'd say the unity had one more demo tape "Krieg", both counting in 1995. Guess you still can get them from COLD MEAT INDUSTRY - the label which simply couldn't miss such a phenomenon!*

Actually below written interview was conducted by the CMI staff, so "Leodo Takas" nails Mr. Karmanik & Co. for cooperation!!

You surely know that PUISSANCE is a dream-came-true of two negativity adores Henry Moller and Fredrik Soderlund, and this latter guy is so much busy with his black metal projects OCTINOMOS, PARNASSUS, earlier ALGAION as well. To fully understand the meaning of PUISSANCE artform & philosophy you must check out the meaning of the word itself, that being power or divine strength... Before closing my mind down I'd mention one person in the band is declared clinically insane and is now retired from all work other than his musical creations... Guess which one he is (I'd chose both), ha.

The first "Let us lead" album deals with the end of this planet and the manmade apocalypse they intent for this world. Overwhelming orchestrals and powerful marches. An intriguing journey through a wide variety of musical masterpieces. That's PUISSANCE. Moreover they state that the content of the record is not to be confused with music or poetry since it's far beyond such artistic nonsense, and neither should it be compared to anything else since nothing can measure up to the true reflection of the end of time, life and of course the world.

-How on earth were you able to create such an intriguing and powerful masterpiece as "Let us lead"? It simply must be one of the best records ever produced?

-Ever heard of Nietzsche? He was right you know, we are the supreme beings.

-Yes I guess you're right, but are you really as rightwing as the cover art suggests or are a nonpolitical band as you claim?

-I wouldn't call us either left or rightwing. We are simply the human



-Your first album that I must add is a masterpiece nonsurpassed by anyone has already been declared a classic by almost everyone I asked, how do you explain such an amazing reception?

-Well I think it's simply because we are what we say we are, Superior. As we always say, if you just hate enough, nothing can stop you.

-You are supposed to play at CMI festival in Erlangen, Germany this summer, how will it be possible for you to measure up to the expectations one has of a band of your magnitude?

-I don't know since the world will probably still be around at the time of the concert, and therefore it will not be a truly puissant experience, but hopefully we will produce a taste of what is to come.

-When did you start up PUISSANCE and how is it possible for two so extreme personalities to work together?

-I think that PUISSANCE was something inevitable. Back in 1991 when we met we immediately started to twist and reshape each other's minds and shape our thoughts into the perfectly compatible furnace of destruction you now call PUISSANCE. But to clear out any misunderstanding I must add that PUISSANCE didn't become an artistic project until 1993 when we set up the first devastating blow against mankind. We recorded three songs on the demo "Krieg", which is still one of the most brutal experience available up to this date. I'm not even sure that we can work together or if we even like each other but since it's the only way we can project our hate and keep it from consuming us, I guess we have to cooperate.

-Don't you think that "Let us lead" will be too hard to live up to on your next album since it is so extremely majestic?

-It will not be a problem since our evolution is yet to be completed, at the moment I think that PUISSANCE is heading towards a more militant image and the next album be just as brutal and destructive if not even grander than "Let us lead" if it's possible, but all plans aren't completed yet so you'll have to wait, buy and see.

-How can you stand to live with such an aggressive and hostile attitudes as yours, don't you ever contemplate suicide?

-Of course we do, but we have agreed not to leave this planet unless we can drag everyone down else with us. But I guess the temptation of the blade is something we will have to live with.



elite and we have come to destroy all you filthy scum who dare to call yourself humans

-Some people might call that a somewhat Nazi inspired view, what would you reply to such an accusation?

-Oh please don't give me that. Just because we find all people to be absolute losers and morons doesn't mean that we are nationalsocialists. Everyone deserves to die, and by the way, Hitler didn't succeeded so I guess he is beneath us as well.

-Those are very hard words, aren't you afraid to get labeled as some kind of extremists?

-So what? People can call us whatever they like. We are not a political army, we are just antihuman and antihumanist band. Our plans do not include racial segregation in any shape or form, we want to kill, rape and destroy everyone and everything, that's not extreme, that is human.

-So I guess we have sorted out your political views, so let's move on to your musical conquests. What inspires you to write such powerful and brutal music?

-First of all, don't refer to our superior creations as music ever again. We have no desire to be confused with human art of any sort or kind. Our main inspiration is the pitiful world and its sad little inhabitants, their pain and suffering brings us the joy we need to create. But that doesn't mean that we are artistically indebted to anyone. We are everything.

-I'm sorry about the last question, I didn't mean to offend you, I hope you don't hold any grudge against me because of it?

-It's alright, you're not more than human, and humans, unlike us, have a tendency to make mistakes.

-Yes I guess you're right, is it ok if I continue the interview now?

-Sure



-One of you, namely Mr. Soderlund, is apparently heavily involved in the black metal movement and has put out quite a few triumphant releases such as "On The Demiurge" by OCTINOMOS and "In Doloriam Gloria" by PARNASSUS. What does black metal mean to you? Isn't it so that black metal is mainly populated by people swinging axes and ditches at every opportunity?

-That might be true to some extent, but there are actually some fairly intelligent persons involved, but it's starting to get a bit watered down by all the shitty releases popping up from all corners of the world. But black metal means a lot to both of us, and none of us is less involved than the other, although Mr. Soderlund is more of a metal composer and still wants to write good metal music were Mr. Moller has given up all hope on new black metal bands due to the massive inflection of crap releases over the last years.

-About the artwork of the CD, who is the brain behind this intriguing and overwhelming cover?

-That is the mighty Mr. Karmanik and PUISSANCE. As always Karmanik did a splendid and tasteful job and with us by his side it simply could get any better. In fact it's one of the most expensive and advanced covers ever made for a CD. There are of course T-shirts and posters available - those are of the same supreme taste as the cover, unfortunately for you the vinyl version is practically sold out but if you hurry you might still be able to get a copy of this exclusive LP.

-What are your plans for the future?

-To rule, to kill, to conquer.

-Thank you very much for your time, if there's anything you would like to add, feel free to speak now.

-No I think we have made our point

# alburrrggh

cassette came out in 1993. One note: it's not a SEPULTURA copy though, but standard nonetheless. Look for something else.

## INTO THE ABYSS

"The Feathered Snake"  
GLASNOST MUSIC

Half-German, half-Creek progressive/gothic rock outfit is surely one of the highlights on German label. No wonder that INTO THE ABYSS have already had one independent release "Martyrium" back in 1993. I'm sure this sophomore output is a huge improvement as the music is strong, tight and brilliantly composed.

To take the album as a whole is quite problematic because guys use a wide range of ideas, transforming from an art rock inspired dreamers to even a heavy weighted guitar maniacs with a firm metal edge, and vice-versa.

The case is not due to use of sax or violin (performed by Helmut Eckstein), it's not due to pulsating moods, but rather in the mastery of connecting every separate piece of melancholy into one rolling ball, which gets bigger and bigger with every track.

My favourite is "Resignation To The Void", maybe due to violin whirrwinds reminding nothing else but SKYCLAD - this track has so strict will and firm approach.

Impressive are the poems of Janis. He gets inspiration not only from Mexican mythology (which influence is decent), but also from loads of stuff: A. Camus, A. Rimbaud, W. Blake, even sculptures of A. Rodin! You might guess about the lyrics, but to get a real point - obtaining this is a must. The same goes for the music - gothic carousel...

## INVERTED

"The Shadowland"  
SHIVER

The revival of Swedish death metal! A brilliant catchy nine track effort conquering the heart of any die hard freak of old good scene. INVERTED refuse to follow any new trend, they still improve the old good sound, and keep the gone out fame alive.

Since their earlier releases the band grew up into one helluva combo of fiery nocturnal creatures, writing so damn tight tunes. Nothing new here, but convincing no less than your extrainnovative band of today. Listen to those pounding rhythms, infernal deep growls, straightforward and melodic arrangements, thrash hooks - what do you want else? Everything is completed, polished and worked out. Not the fastest in the world, not the truest either, rather in an intelligent simple way as in the best tracks "Diabolical Ceremonies", "The Dark and Bitter Moon", "The Infernal Gate" and other six. Old HYPOCRISY comes to mind, yet Kristian denies any influences. Just read up the interview for that matter.

So far the best SHIVER release and a cool example of Swedish death metal in years. Get it!!!

## KATATONIA

"For Funerals To Come..."  
AVANTGARDE MUSIC

Cool to hear Blackheim again screaming with his infernal voice. It was so specific on "Jiva..." and I personally missed those vocals on "Dance..." album. On this MCD follower he again shares his voice with Renkse in every track, so the old KATATONIA music is back surely. They're still the same gothic/black as since the start, yet vocals still means a lot.

Away from that, MCD has four tracks of majestic atmospheric nature, dark landscapes and bitter melodies packed with mid tempo rhythm. Musically KATATONIA seems unrepeatable, even some clowns try to rip them off, and the same can be stated about lyrics. They dwell of poetical silence, wrapped in dark inner matter, expressed by monumental words and phrases...

Two last compositions as if let expect the next material will scream... Title track has a doomy acoustic form, and "Epistel" happens to be just an outro of noises. The sophomore full length will be called "Where hearses go at midnight".

## KATATONIA

"Brave murder day"  
AVANTGARDE MUSIC

Yes! It rocks! Blackheim, Renkse & Fredrick did it again rejecting any possibility to dethrone KATATONIA off the gothic/black/doom shadowthrone. Even it sounds like their previous works identically, this disc is one of the better to come out this autumn. Maybe I was missing something fresh yet catchy + intelligent for this dismal time of the year? But in winter it sounds no less thick and genius.

Only six tracks, yet a neat order of them, great variability of KATATONIA's hooks in almost every song - nah, you know that: all... Screamy terror of Renkse again, double bass and melody flowing as one, and gothic surroundings. Guys are experienced - that's clear from the very first riff of "Brave".

I liked that idea - first track is called "Brave", next "Murder", third "Day" (check out album title - different from the mentioned in above written review, though!). What about the latter, it's an acoustic breakthrough into gothic rock (pop???) with balls - I like it a lot! Do you? Please just do not claim KATATONIA turned commercial - keep that opinion for any other shitty outfit, but not on Swedes. Happy New Year - hail & kill!

## KORPSE

"Revirgn"  
CANDELLICHT

Here it is, the sophomore output of Scottish death metal leaders, KORPSE. Many have adored their debut release "Puff The Floor" (I've heard only the track featured later on on CANDELLICHT's compilation, and liked it either), so the same neat stuff was expected from "Revirgn".

Well, what concerns me, I'm not fully content of this disc, even it's good qualitative aim, a bit thrashed, I'd say. Maybe too less of power for me. You see, KORPSE slowed down and prefer mid tempo rhythms now, continuing British deathrash tradition (BENEDICTION, GOMORRAH!), but some more tempos would do well. Like in "Till" or "International 1001". Somehow they remind me GOD FORSAKEN from Finland, especially with groovy riffs & vocal similarity.

This album has some outstanding cuts either: instrumental lullaby in "19 days", hardcore/industrial spew in "No Exit", but it still remains for me a bit monotonous. I dunno why though. Maybe the British syndrome? But SABBATH influences shine on, however.

Produced by Paul Johnston, "Rhythm" Studios work - no lousiness for lovers of clear sound! Styled deathrash hippies - grab it.

## KVIST

"For Kunsten Maa Vi Evig Vike"  
AVANTGARDE MUSIC

If someone asked my opinion what is the discovery of black metal in 1996, I'd doubtlessly say KVIST!! Yes, they are from Norway, they still perform the same grim form of the unholy music in the world, but they are so powerful and firm that the art called music just fills up your inside, your physical and mental shape, and brings you together to the world of oozing blackness...

Three tracks are featured from "Promo 95", and three additional tunes complete this unstoppable stream. Those older songs are a bit changed and improved. In general KVIST might remind the intensity of EMPEROR, the fury of SATYRICON and the anger of new MAYHEM. Mind you, this is still a very own piece of black metal, not going further off Norwegian school. What makes KVIST different and so majestic are raising melodies, dramatic character of compositions and last but not least - quite a special recording with immense double bass drums sound and very rough guitar line (as if this sound is put in any narrow but very long box).

Maybe that's the music which is like one endless story of vast realms and darkened skies, which reminds such hopeless tunnel. I just suggest you to descend down to this tunnel... and meet the fire.

## LOVE HISTORY

"Desires"  
NORTHERN DARKNESS

Oh ja, the next old recording of this Czech doomy band, as after their demo '93 they recorded next six compositions released as a promo tape, then - MCD on Italian label. It's nonetheless cool than earlier stuff, even LOVE HISTORY have changed more or less. They are not as simple and that death metal attributed, but more doomy and avantgardistic at times. Flute, clarinet (in instrumental "Labyrinth of Love" sounds incredible), violin are the ingredients together with classic metal line up and female vocalising.

For my taste first demo was maybe better, but it's not the case of "that's good, that's bad", but rather - "that's the best, that's great as well". Vocals of Robert aren't so expressive on this MCD, in general he sings less - there are more instrumentation here going or clean vocal parts.

LOVE HISTORY can't be questioned in any case - just spin both recordings full of melancholic atmospheric metal and get a grip. This is available for \$10 only!

Some line up changes occurred in the band, it was even defuncting for some time, but now they're back together, yet without Robert and Blös (guitar). We must wait and see what will happen with their music anyway.

## LUSTFUL

"The Almighty Facets"  
OXJUMELLO

Would you dare to listen to any '88-'89 death/brash band, which was just on the bandwagon wave back then, and today it means nothing for the scene due to its trendy sound and forgotten music as soon as a new trend has popped out? Listening to LUSTFUL such a relative compare comes to my mind, yet I must admit - not for the entire album as at times this Brazilian outfit gets a bit higher, first of all stopping that mindless grinding rhythms and taking more care on melodious yet brutal riffs. On the other hand when they wanna be aggressive almost all the time LUSTFUL turns into a poor copy of MALEVOLENT CREATION or CARGASS. Stop with that stupid straight forward shit, realize that it leads to nowhere, to a childish silly tormenting of instruments.

Take more serious attention to what the instruments can give. It's possible to get some catchy music not losing the aggressiveness by some more intelligent innovative forms!

Yes, LUSTFUL are better than their lamnates MORDETH or SLAVERY, but no doubt that this record won't spread much in a wider territory than Brazil.

## MARDUK

"Heaven Shall Burn... When We Are Gathered"  
OSMOSE

Before the recordings Swedish black metal heroes have kicked out a vocalist and second guitarist, but it hasn't influenced this fourth full length effort. Moreover, vocals were recorded by Legion (ex.OPTHALAMIA)! His voice is much richer and makes the entire effort sound pretty firm. As well drums recording is rather different from the previous album. Back there were some outstanding hints with cymbals and thundering effects. So I miss them in this new album.

Everything else is in the purest MARDUK tradition, with hellish speeds, crushing black metal overkill, though you still get those tormenting melodies within this harsh massmurder. Indeed there's not much mid tempo or slow parts left, so guys decided to speed up, I guess. It works! Maybe it's even the point which still can't claim it is a copy of "Opus Nocturne". But nothing exceptable is really laid behind these eight compositions.

Don't get me wrong, an album is really strong effort, and for a black metal listener it must be a gem. Only those who don't like earlier MARDUK can easily pass this without attention. Me loves traditional Swedish unholyess! Plus majestic artwork!

## MARDUK

"Clorification"  
OSMOSE

Convincing! What could one expect from MCD of MARDUK three months after their 4th album, including even four covers (MLP version has a special addition in shape of VENOM's "Hellchild" - a pity not to hear it as it was recorded back in September '92)?! Of course the same fury and mardukish mindless speeds! Aha, covers are picked exactly like that - speed, fury, extremism within the riffs and bloody web of pitiless darkness.

"Total Desaster" is the best! Natural German destructioned (DESTRUCTION?) vein in Swedish hall of fame. Technically performed - it leaves you with jaws dropped. The same story with BATHORY's "The return of the Darkness & evil", only this track has another soul - different from what MARDUK use to do! That's why sounds pretty exotic. And two covers are performed from Canadian horde PILEDRIWER - it was my first meeting with them, thank to Legion & Co. I bet I'd like to hear more of PILEDRIWER! A bit less tempo, but thrash and evil for sure!

"Clorification" here takes presence as being remixed to remind you there's also a new full length, and this MCD is just a bonus to that - but what a bonus!

## MASTER'S HAMMER

"Slagry"  
KRON-HICSMOSE

Vlasta and Franta should have had to pick any other name for their new project. That's as clear as the majesty of both MASTER'S HAMMER's albums - the same ones, which both guys "listen during a party and laugh very loudly" nowadays. I do respect their new ideas, progress & especially innovative thinking, but to call death/satanic metal fans stupid idiots - that's the limit! Listening to any kind of music has almost nothing to do with one's level of intelligence (stupidity, if you want). Bad choice, you-knows...

The music on "Slagry" is completely another story. It is a new approach to classical and national (Czech) music, wrapped into the form of avantgardistic heaviness and/or darkness. If you ever heard the names (and works!) of Giuseppe Verdi, Chuck Berry, Aram Chacaturjan and have a minimal understanding how Czech national music may sound like - you might dig this up. Otherwise take some lessons!

Obviously "Slagry" won't be a bestseller, more like a "love or hate" one, yet it's recommendable... Difficult to describe the moods or list the effects they use, simply it must be heard to stay really surprised by. I just wonder what we can expect further on, minding the progress of today's technics?

One minor point: won't "Slagry" become boring after a while as every other his album?

## MAYHEM

"Live in Leipzig"  
AVANTGARDE MUSIC

Just wanna mention that this immortal live black metal classic was recently rereleased in a limited digipack edition, as the old normal CD version was sold out some time ago, and demand for it was extremely huge. This new packaging is wonderful - never published before photos of that German show, purely reflecting that mournful atmosphere, photo of Dead on frontcover and Euronymous - on CD picture. The album was one more time remixed either, and the sound is clearer now. The only thing that I miss on digipack is that statement of Euronymous, which was printed in original album pressing:

The music is out, and it remains uncomparable, even it's performed with terrible mistakes here and there. Don't miss this soon to be sold out pure fucking arnageddon!

## MD FLUSH

"Mr.Scornful" (adv)

Four tunes, 16 minutes of power/core/brash, released by the five guys themselves as a MCD which is on sale for just \$9. Quite worth stuff according the price, but what about music? I'm not a fan of funky metal with powerful vocals and groovy hardcore attitude, but who cares? I know many people liking such boring stuff just for banging their heads or just for partying together.

I must admit Parisians have skillful base for creating - no wonder as they are together since 1991. As if they were more heavy earlier, says their bio - it should have been thrash, because many thrash hooks still take place on this recording. At times vocalist Jerome takes Av's of GNR note, melodiously continuing with words' endings - that's much better than your usual MACHINE HEAD rip-off bludge. But it happens only at times, and the music still links to hc grooves, which is a sad thing, blowing such potential listeners as your reviewer is.

## MELANCHOLY PESSIMISM

"Recompense to Saints"  
TAGA/METAL AGE

Technical death metal is always welcomed and respected on the pages of "Ledo Takas", especially when it has the standards which let calling this brutal music interesting or attractive. This Czech five piece outfit almost fully fill the described characteristics, only sometimes their dm is too much one sided and primitive. But no monotony at all - tracks (there are 16 of them) are different each from other. The variety ranges from grinding extreme, doom laden dm passages, melodic (a la "False" era of GOREFEST) mid tempo compositions with virtuosic solos, and even acoustics like your goth/metal favourites + thrash instrumentals with dreary spirit.

Sure heroes of the festivities are the performers themselves, especially I wanna except Flegin (bass) and Peir (drums), and as mentioned, the solos of Peika. Easy to feel the professionalism of musicians. They should have been playing their instruments for a decade of years, no less. That's the first LP of MELANCHOLY PESSIMISM, still learning to compose tracks, but I'm sure later on we'll hear about this outfit no less fascinating responses than on their countrymen KRABATHOR.

## MENTAL DESTRUCTION

"Straw"  
COLD MEAT INDUSTRY

A very heavy plater, but not metal at all. To get and swallow this Swedish two piece formation is not a thing to do with your girl - it hurts unlike this latter example. To find the key for adoring this noise/industrial you need to have a clue what it's like - not an industrial stuff which is listenable. Forget all MINISTRY, SKREW and even G.G.F.H., as MENTAL DESTRUCTION hurts ten times harder.

I wouldn't say I like them as those mentioned bands - probably it's too noisy for my ears. I can't find enough of satisfaction listening to them. Okay, "This Darker Entity" and "Rise" have some synth ambience among these factories, even this latter form prevails - that might give some clearer ideas about expressive ways of both guys. But next eight compositions do without any understandable effect besides heavy noise/troll. Didn't I say it cool?

"Straw" isn't the first MENTAL DESTRUCTION output (check out their back catalogue on CMI lists) - it's their new work after 4 years absence. Like others on CMI it comes with an impressive layout (digipack CD) & stuff. But very heavy for ears indeed.

## MERCYFUL FATE

"Into The Unknown"  
METAL BLADE

The legend of evil returns with the third album in three years and it seems like MERCYFUL FATE have seriously taken the throne of heavy metal. Yes, exactly that as on this album such true old way sound prevails on the album, leaving last two efforts with their speed/thrash influences and higher tempos. It's quite a while to get "Into The Unknown", but if one takes some five spins and he knows what heavy metal is, there's no problem. Of course those pounding riffs aren't that damned aggressive, maybe less powerful, yet MERCYFUL FATE's charm is as convincing as ever. Can't say that guys had some commercial intentions, no way. Music from the heart simply finds its place in the heart of a listener, so the mind must draw the right conclusion.

King (how could I do without some lines on his work?) still finds some new



# alburrrggh

gems in his variety of singing. Listen to him in guitarless parts as well as speaking in "Deadline"! And enjoy the overall effort. Somehow the greatest tracks are put to the end: "Holy Water" and "Kutulu (The Mad Arab - Part Two)".

I dare to state it's not the best work of MERCYFUL FATE, yet it's another classic in the band's discography. Oblain!

## M.E.S.T.

"Matter-Energy-Space-Time"  
DWELL

Cool T. is the mastermind of this boundless experience, performed as a musical equivalent and put into one hour in our measure system. In fact, this transcendental groove has no time limits, neither imaginable boundaries where it might end. The music flows into nowhere, filling up vasts of cosmos, kinda disappearing in the deep distance of a night sky...

Arranged and mastered in Amsterdam, this album also expresses the spirit of a famous atmosphere in a legendary city. Yep, M.E.S.T. is acceptable for both ambient/trance dwellers (as it's hardly can be described) and careless dancebeat sickos. I guess there are even more of danceable rhythms down there. But at the same time a pure, sometimes rather dark electronic ambient stream surpasses your wish to beat the rhythm.

And an oriental tripe psychodely, and then don't argue that mentally M.E.S.T. make you even sicker (I don't say foolier). I'm sure this modern experimentation can be enjoyable to some free mind owners.

## MIND RIOT

"Peak"  
GODHEAD

Like their labelmates MOURNING SIGN four piece Finnish band comes from death metal background and plays some sticky form of psychodeic metal. I'd like to hear their earlier material (two demos and self financed "Plasma" MCD) to see how they were developing.

Anyway, the result is "Peak" - a diverse and outbursting album of metal music mixed with qualitative schizophrenic ideas. No, it's not any psychometal, it's rather listenable, but to get the point what it's all about is pretty hard task. Once plundered into bass guitar based rhythm, then returned to the more heavy and/or industrial horizon, and again experienced in blues (?) classic. Melody is important in MIND RIOT, but it's like traditional metal hit, not that speedy new wave of death metal type. Right, heavy metal influences and psychodeic grooves make them so undecipherable, of course adding vocal abilities of Tunno to sound diverse and juicy.

Try "Rain", their top track doubtlessly! Or "Balerinas" - sounds not that typical! "Peak" is for open minded people, if you ask me...

## MINDROT

"Dawning"  
RELAPSE

After MCD "Fortorn" MINDROT reappear with a full length release including two MCD songs. This music is pretty controversial to get into it from the first listen. It might be hard to accept as far as you don't like one of those styles: doom, industrial, hardcore, gothic, grind. Simply those different schools are combined on this album, with the consequences known only to bandmembers.

I can't say that all the mix is successful, neither I feel any album line due to changing atmosphere all the time. Again and again they return to crawling slow gothic dreamland, but in periods between some psychoheavy doom or grinding death mechanisms ruin an innocent picture. One is clear: MINDROT have nothing to do with positive energy, cheerful speeds and easy sticking to things. "Dawning" is rather fiery, violent and gloomily apocalyptic. Definitely makes you feel standing in the dark and shivering...

Warning! Not to buy this CD before you take a listen to what it all stands for.

## MISANTHROPE

"1666... Theatre Sizarro"  
HOLY

That's what is called brand intelligent oddi metal music! Frenchmen were going towards this catchiness all the time since their inception in 1988, and finally all the scene claims with excitement - there's something exceptionally new, strange, powerful, heavy, professional, cryptic, modern, majestic, bizarre!! I remember Philippe's words claiming MISANTHROPE would never play for listener's pleasure - they did not do that until now, but I'm sure the listener has found the band with all its tricks and manner of knock-outting!!

How else to name this 67 minute epoch full of so wide spectre of moods, and not only misanthropic! Musically you'll find here everything - from raw death metal, which was close to MISANTHROPE only till 1992, to rocky or atmospheric music, which is present and does very well! Classical arrangements, and nowadays synth technics either! They fit each other as they are done like one flowing stream. Especially wanna mention German sang "Schattengesang" - my fave in theatre of misanthropists!!

I'm glad of MISANTHROPE - they always had a reputation of strangers in metal world, but now, when the scene turned quite into pack of strangers, they get that acceptance which deserved for several yrs. This album made it for them!

## MISERY LOVES CO.

"Misery Loves Co."  
EARACHE

One more new born major act is on a visit to our mag. You know it is always interesting to analyse the music and to learn how those bands are capable to shoot out to the centre of the masses taste. MISERY LOVES CO. is a typical example as that's their debut album, originally pressed by a small Swedish label, and then rereleased for a wider audience.

No doubts, it's the sound - modern, technologic metal spiced with industrial peppers and last but not least - a subtle dose of melody. It might not be heavy as hell, it might not be hateful as hell - it can be quite intelligent & industrially atmospheric - rather surprising term? Swedish fellas do take care about PANTERA, MACHINE HEAD, but they neither sound like those trends nor are so monotonous & feelingless - you really feel some breathing out of music!! It's strange as in industrial music is hard to find this. Maybe that's why MISERY LOVES CO. are that exceptional and can't be categorized.

But to be honest till the end it's still not my cup of tea - I'd better offer you loads of true atmospheric bands, which easily find the ways to your inner world while those Swedes must try hard to do that.

## MOLESTED

"Stormvold"  
EFFIGY/REPULSE

Five new tracks of the most harsh recording ever known to death metal. If

you don't know MOLESTED is a very brutal death metal outfit from Norway, which earlier killed the ground with "Unborn Woods in Doom" demo and "Blood-Drauer" album. Experiencing this music for the first time nothing comes to mind as a guttural noise, mixed with drummy noise. Even now I think that the production MOLESTED use is very own and different from the usual. I can't understand why they deadened guitars in the final mix. What your speakers translate are drums crusher, bass guitar overload and more or less listenable vocal recording. If it's done to make it as brutal as possible, so one huge minus to an overall impressive MOLESTED stuff.

With a tighter production it would sound very powerful, showing extreme and melodic at the same time riffs, slightly covering black metal style. In that case the tightness of a drummer would make you insane, too.

Absolutely not easy to get into MOLESTED, but if you're a die hard death metaler, don't miss "Stormvold" - this MCD make you think death metal is not just cool, it's great! Price is only \$10 (Europe)/\$12 (world). Available from REPULSE Records (they will release next MOLESTED full length in mid'97) as well.

## MONUMENTUM

"In Absentia Christi"  
MISANTHROPHY

The slowest band in the world, but this epithet comes when we move the preparation of MONUMENTUM to release this disc, not when we speak about the music. Another, already good thing about this slowness is, that Italian heroes made it perfect in a pure sense of this word. No other formation has ever made anything like this - moody motion picture to dwell into and never to rise again. It's great that metal (more or less) people managed to create something, that musical world in general can be proud of.

All characters of MONUMENTUM act like one theatrical troupe, according to sounds flowing from CD spinner. And that same motif which repeats on and on, being the main axis of the album, only partly reflects that monolithic misanthropic soundtrack to the monumental images of wisdom. Exceptional is job of Françoisa - she does not appear as your usual female vocalist, but rather keep it all alive, doesn't let male heroes to die or put themselves down for some invoking reason. But she is helpless when "La Noia" comes... Straight to netherland it leads you and lands of orphaned.

Another five years will pass by till Italians prepare for the second coming, but it will knock-out again.

## MOONSPELL

"Wolfheart"  
CENTURY MEDIA

Challenge like career of Portuguese band - this debut album is a nice evidence. Fulfilled with metal majesty, gothic interludes and national character. Yeah, that latter trait shines among many others in MOONSPELL music, moreover that metal world hardly had any Portuguese folk involved.

Surely it's not only that, as "Wolfheart" is balanced as one good machine to swing your mind with its dark tale. If comparing with previous "Under The Moonspell" MCD, guys improved with what they want to achieve in music, and thus there're those goth influences, nice female choruses, even several attempts of Langsyvar to sound like Glenn Danzig!

All that combined with black metal roots sounds pretty impressive. Kinda passionate songs with some vampyric texture + fitting dreamy keyboards. Especially wanna mention "Alma Mater", "Vampiria", "Trebrarura"... Only if you listen to "Wolfheart" very intensively, you'll be bored quite soon due to songs' flowing manner. I wish you to listen to this album rarely - then it will still keep that dark web upon you!

## MOONSPELL

"Irrigiosus"  
CENTURY MEDIA

With this album title guys obviously wanted to state they piss on any limitations both in their musical wanderings and on any critics towards their everchanging nature. Actually those lads returned extremely quickly, that "Ledo Takas" haven't been in time to release another issue before. Surprisingly MOONSPELL managed to write another 11 songs during numerous tours after "Wolfheart". It's possible to speak about great inspiration in such a case.

Mind you, "Irrigiosus" is still different from the predecessor, though not that much, as usual. Who said "Wolfheart" was much different than "Under..."? But to compare this work with the first MCD - you'll hear a big difference.

Ok, MOONSPELL went more gothic, used much more monumental vocal tones, medieval keyboard arrangements, even monk choirs! It's fascinating indeed. Gone are folk influences, almost gone are black metal remains, even that screamy vocal part is still used, but Portuguese leaders have brought some progressive/ambient elements, and dare you ask - techno imitation?! Sounds nice, epic, like "Wolfheart" in its simplistic form.

Yeah, this will go big, and "Awake", "Raven Claws", "Full Moon Madness" can easily hit the streets at any moment. Only I'm slightly afraid this can get quite boring after some 20 spins when every next riff will be known. But that's the part of such monumental (poppy?) goth music.

## MORDETH

"Lux In Tenebris"  
HEAVY METAL ROCK

Releases like this always make one wonder why musicians don't strive for their own music, and rather down others. They choose easier way, but the ball nevertheless flies to them again - nobody is going to buy second rate albums.

Brazilian bands practise this way very often and that's why you can hardly find a good outpating release down there. Many like MORDETH repeat boring riffs of 1986, repeat without any sense of creativity, just for aggressiveness sake. Deathtrash can be listenable whilst it's refreshing, diverse, at least catchy. And here you just can experience the same grinding drumming and exactly the same riffs on every of 13 tracks. Vocals are so trendy, with SEPULTURA line that it make me piss on this effort.

Easy to say "outdated", but it's more than that. Outdated, uninteresting and soulless. Forget.

## MORGOTH

"Feel sorry for the fanatic"  
CENTURY MEDIA

Long time passed since death metal ruled five German hearts, but now they completely refused their roots stepping into very shameful mainstream region. What the hell? Do they all got older and wanna earn big money with this fucking music?! I don't get a point though. And still doubt if I will, when I'll get old like them.

But MORGOTH nevertheless turned independent, refusing their metal roots. Huh, it's still "a bit metal", but grungy, even techno/beat in "...and it's amazing

consequences" appears. Well, everything irritates me: shitty vocalising of Marc (some time he growled like the devil himself), weak riffs of simple street grunge/rock, and those partly industrial, partly poppy effects either.

In general this new CD has something left! from "Odium" (maybe that industrialism), so to say MORGOTH leads on their own path forward airt' far from the truth, yet this step ain't successful at all. At least for the old band's fans. For them German ever brutal outfit is dead now, unfortunately. I feel really sorry...

## MORNINGSTAR

"Heretic Metal"  
MOONLIGHT

At last, Finnish pagan metalheads learned how to arrange profound ancient way metal music, that it would sound interesting. So far those three guys have released many recordings including MCD and one full length via WILD RAGS "Rivendell" (of course those two were extremely delayed with releasing terms), but music was quite primitive and uninspiring - slightly blackened thrash.

The new CD is composed in earlier years too, but shows MORNINGSTAR as more advanced, with a great ancient feel, showing up several memorable ideas. It's much more black metal oriented now, even keeping a great ancient metal spirit alive. Some times of 11 are fast, what was alien for the band earlier. Many heavy metal oriented riffs, the vocals sound usually in screamy guttural (thrashy) way.

I was surprised about keyboard invasion - it's combined with old hm lines (maybe comparable to CARPATHIAN FOREST?) though performed by the engineer J.Poikolainen. DM 23 (Germany) /\$ 20 (elsewhere) is worth of paying for this classic metal output! Only lyrical side is a way poor & even funny at times: "From the west came a priest and he brought a message with disease..." Hm, what to do with those pagan verses...

## MORTEM

"Demon Tales"  
MERCILESS

Many praiseworthy responses were laid down in the press for several years before this debut album of Peruvian metal legend - at last German label dared to sign them for showing to all others that in so hot South American land it's still possible to find a band which doesn't copy SEPULTURA or SLAYER for that matter. Moreover that MORTEM exist since 1986 producing their music not every half a year, but preparing it with a care.

Exactly: "Demon Tales" is completed of 3 tracks written in '86-87, 4 tracks in '92-93, and 3 tracks - in '95. They aren't laid in this order - mixed together instead, but listening it's easy to notice which is which. Old tracks have a noticeable thrash influence, while new stuff has an obvious black metal touch. But in general it's death metal, even not that pure and "one song fits all" type. Not easy to make a decent comparison - somewhere it reminds CANNIBAL CORPSE (yet slowed down), then - MORBID ANGEL; even somehow I feel my ears refining ANCIENT RITES (myself is surprised to realize that).

Well, "Demon Tales" is not bad at all, even it doesn't shine as brightly as these mentioned outfits do. Recommended for old school death metal freaks, who like up tempo fucked down brutality. Price: \$20.

## MORTIIS

"Kaiser av en Dimension Ukjent"  
COLD MEAT INDUSTRY

The author remained faithful to his originality - no drastical turns, no unexpected variations. On this third album MORTIIS yet expands his own visions, opening new and newer gates of the Kingdom. Those lethal soundscapes just scratch the sleepy cells of mind and make it work in the time and space of Mortis land. Moreover, the thunderous hammering brings you back to the glorious past, even then when the beginning of times had its first shape...

One can go on with the description like that, and surely it's up to every single personality to imagine and interpret the majesty of this dark dungeon music. Get out of those catacombs and make your ears filled with those arrangements.

Maybe "Kaiser..." brings back in memory a debut album, yet the composer surely has improved since then. So, the latter composition of the two is simply the greatest MORTIIS has created to date. It's thundering, blinding and untiring, depending what is your state of mind. Something to learn from, no less...

Great cover art and perfect music makes this one of the most wanted releases brought by CMI. \$19 is the price.

## MOURNING SIGN

"Mourning Sign"  
GODHEAD

New streams always surprise and make take a very serious listen. After a debut MCD "Alienor" of very young Swedish outfit, which was a brilliant example of extreme and raw death metal with some decent gothic overtones. This album is like a new form of the same stuff, but composed with some wider abilities.

Sincerely I liked "Alienor" more due to the tough strengths and darker attitude and simply because that music was more acceptable to my ear. This nine tracker is not bad at all, only it sets new formulas of expressing the same or very similar ideas. Dm extremely is substituted by no less harsh deathtrash volcano, dark gothic ideas were remade into some kinda progressive elements, and heavyweight was spiced with a slight core influence.

Maybe the result is grown heaviness + dramatism, but take a listen to "Ashes of my relics" - where do they get that melancholy from?! Mind you, MOURNING SIGN successfully combine the two, not forgetting other colours too. Keyboards give an additional background to this controversial view. Taste the sweet drops from the well of truth... Not like others.

## MURDER RAPE

"Celebration of Supreme Evil"  
COQUELEO

You already can get sophomore album of MURDER RAPE "...and Evil Returns", which is recently released by bassist's Agathodemon's own EVIL HORDE Records (CD price is \$17), whilst here is reviewed their first output on the biggest Brazilian label, consisting of seven songs and two in/outros as well.

The names of MYSTIFIER, IN MEMORIAN and Kees say something? If not, then those guys combine black and death metal in the same way: mid and slow tempo catchy riffs are diluted with strong heavy base, plus gloomy thick melodies are added. I can't avoid sticking Brazilian black/death/beat, what in this particular case means MURDER RAPE stand as an example for other (younger) local bands. Indeed my point is this team makes such stuff the best

# show report

LEDO TAKAS MAGAZINE GOLDEN PRAHA'96 SPECIAL SHOW REPORT

MYSTICUM/GEHENNA/MARDUK October 6th, 1996 (club "Bunkr")

ROTTING CHRIST/MOONSPELL/SAMAEL October 7th, 1996 (club "Bunkr")

It was a damn godly golden fall days when your mighty editor together with coupla suite persons at last got that chance to move to brilliant Praha with one and only mission of visiting and elucidating two helluva great underground shows, which took part in the heart of Europe "Bunkr" rock club. I won't describe here how wonderful this place on earth is (I mean the city) and other full of adventures experience, which we all together happened to go thru it's an exciting show report, for devil's sake!!

First of all I must say hail to that cute lightheaded girl from the club, which got us the chance to participate and observe what was going on there, as well as to my true friends from Brno: Petr and especially Marek! As it always happens, we supposed to see only one show, and luckily appeared in a right place at that time when two days dark metal has occupied our poor "Bunkr". It sometimes happens, man...

...FIRST NIGHT...

It was something I will never forget some kind of ultimately negative and very dark + powerful, 100% intensive experience! All three bands created and completed that atmosphere of total crush, aggression, undivinity and purity of black soul. You know, I've never been in foreign show before, where the sound is perfect even in such small club, but definitely the bands, namely 12 guys and 1 girl (mysterious lady Sarcana from GEHENNA) all in all devil's thirteen symbol, did the main thing... Then it's no wonder, huh. Ah, there were some "true" Czech kids, which were SO evil that we couldn't stop laughing, but overall I liked local audience I'm sure it's a pleasure for bands to play as well. MYSTICUM opened it up and I was... just blown fucking away!! TOTALLY!!! Listening to their tape or CD you know it's raw & brutal & near the edge & stuff & stuff... but to be SOOO!! My biggest surprise in years I'm a total worshipper of the band since the show!!! Glance at those pictures you'll get the point... That energy is brought by all three members and plus a drum machine (wow! do I like it??), vocalist/guitarist Raven being the harshest surely... Can't name it otherwise than Norwegian insanity of black supremacy. Total blowout!!!

GEHENNA was the most expected band by me, and they absolutely proved my expectations! Songs from both spells and new "Malice" album were performed with such energy that my jaw was dropping with each track lower and lower... They speeded up almost 2X comparing to studio recordings! Such



SAMAEL

SAMAEL

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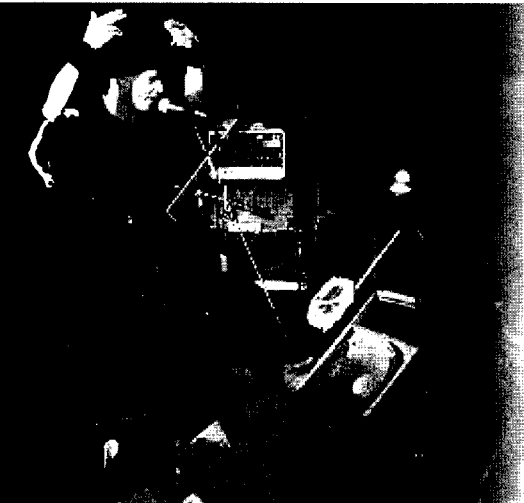


MYSTICUM

GEHENNA

ROTTING CHRIST

# Praha



tracks as "A Witch is Born", "Shairak Kinnummh" sounded strange on such speed, but no less powerful!! What a tight and precise drumming of Dirge Rep blasts looked like a machine of war and doom!! GEHENNA set passed by in no less speed than MYSTICUM.

MARDUK closed the eve down, and to tell you I was rather sceptical about them before! No longer than til first riffs of the set... Fury!! That's a right word for both guitarists, especially Morgan, for skinny yet talented Legion, who spewed out every word off his mouth like the dirtiest blasphemy, for everheardabout relentless bass player (well, for MARDUK tour at least) Peter Tagtgren, and finally for damned soul behind the drum kit let hell will never forget him... Other than that is nothing to tell about you might imagine that fury of MARDUK!! Songs were performed from almost all albums, including demo track, and even DESTRUCTION cover at the end! After this show I've started totally worship "Heaven Shall Burn..." opus. That's it.

...SECOND NIGHT...

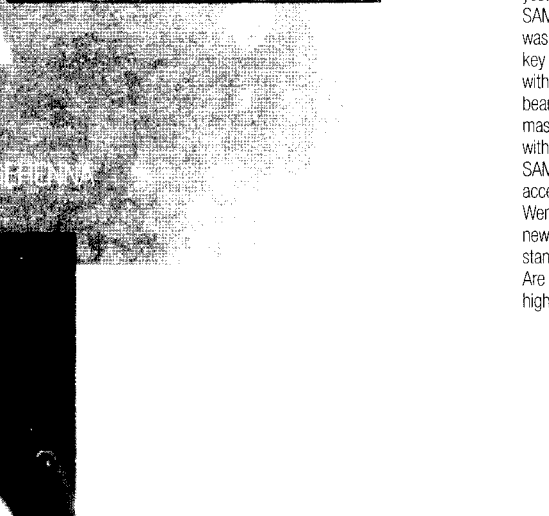
This time "Bunkr" has caught up much much more diverse public, where you could find black, gothic and other music liking people. No more bm kids with corpse paint, but more girls in general, wanting some extremely close contact with Langsuyar or Vorph...

ROTTING CHRIST have opened and played only 5 tracks I guess. As big my surprise was to hear their new CD and to like it, as huge my disappointment was to experience them live. Strange but Greeks totally didn't appeal to the public as well. Even they tried, pushing some "Thy Mighty Contract" song...

MOONSPELL were more lucky to set a fire below the stage, yet me supposes their appearance was more mainstreamlike than underground. They have a right to feel stars though when such strong following repeats the name on and on MOONSPELL... Set was spiced with background video effects not bad. And their new guitarist is awesome! Better than RC, yet much less flame than yesterday's hordes did made.

SAMAEEL needs no presentation, even in show report. Uhh, that was serious! New concept, tearing himself apart xy behind the key and drums at the same time (!!), sarcastically smiling Vorph with convulsive, typical only to him manner of singing and stage bearing, jumping like a hc juvenile Masmiseim and new rented master of rhythm Kaos... A foursome making the audience shiver with every track performed. Mostly from last two albums, SAMAEEL haven't forgotten "Into The Pentagram", but the last accent were two shinees off "Passage" "Rain" and "My Saviour". Went mad with those ambient intros between the tracks. It was a new thing for metal band, no it is!!! SAMAEEL still set new standards, and I was lucky to get that seen.

Are you sure you're still hesitating about such shows of the highest masters?? Think again!!!





# Theatre of Tragedy



You should perfectly know this unique formation after their tremendously successful debut self-titled album, which happened to appear in mid'95. According to the band, it has been sold over 17000 times up till March, and Japanese fans only have bought about 2000 copies of the CD! Actually, seven piece Norwegian outfit has already recorded their follow-up to "Theatre of Tragedy" album, which is out when you read this. To my knowledge it must have been recorded in July at "Communication" Studios in Ludwigshafen, Germany - Pete Coleman happened to be a waited producer of that thing. To mention just a few he has worked with PARADISE LOST, AMORPHIS, LOVE LIKE BLOOD... Some new songtitles told by secret by vocalist Raymond include: "Bring Forth Ye Shadow", "And When He Falleth", "A Rose for the Dead", "Der Tanz der Schatten", "Black as the Devil Painteth"... Raymond bragged that he had a lyric for another song but he didn't know if the grammar was correct because his German was not too good; anyway, it's called "In dem Spiegel der verfluchte Geist" - if you see the new album of TOT, don't forget to check out if this song appears or not!! The working title of this album was "Velvet Darkness they Fear" and it wasn't changed.

Before going to an in-depth talk with the singer, I'll finish with the fresh band news towards their activities. So, Bruno of experimental gothic maniacs DAS ICH was interested to do remixes on 1. or 2. of TOT songs, and there should appear an MCD together with English version of "Der Tanz der Schatten" ("Shadowdance"??...) and "Manhattan Skyline" by (what???) A-HA. As well relevant is the appearance of THEATRE OF TRAGEDY on Norwegian tribute to JOY DIVISION with "Decades", and also on local sampler with a new techno (i) version of my favourite track (not only from demo times) "A Song by the Hearth?!" Got it??! And now - straight to the talk... Raymond speaks:

-Cheers! How things are going? Well, quite nicely as a matter of fact. We are at the time being occupied with making songs for our new album. They seem to be working out quite well; we just made a promo recently (which by the way is not available to anyone) and we got an impression of their whereabouts in the musical landscape - a bit different from our album, though still with the THEATRE OF TRAGEDY style. Except from that there is not much going on. Oh, well, Pal Bjaastad (guitars - T) quit the band in August last year if that is of any worth knowing, and the chap replacing him is called Ger Hikkeid.

A frontman tells on what was going with the creative potential of the band since the release of a debut... It really was some kind of innocent and majestic beauty of the dark as music can carry in itself...

-Musicwise I think we have become darker. The songs are not so sweet and "pop-dittyish" as on the album. I think. Perchance we have also hastened the pace on the new songs, making them rockier. At the same time they have become more diverse and also maybe a bit more "experimental" than before. Bear in mind that i.e. "Dying - I only feel Apathy" is from 1993, so it would go without saying that we have developed since then. Anyway, at least I guess that the music has become darker; it's hard for me to differentiate between music and lyrics because when I think of the songs I only get connotations to my lyrics, which now definitely keep more to the shadowspheres of life. They more or less revolve around themes such as vampires, erotica, s/m (this theme not belonging to the dark ones, of course...), death (...not in a gore aspect, by all means...) and religion. So, if you can hold on until August/September this year you can find out for yourself if you think

that the songs still hold the same expressions of feelings.

TOT seemed to have a tour last summer, promoting the album. It must be fascinating for such a seven members orchestral. And I wonder how was it like to hear that music live, on stage - it ain't "play it loud" thing, you know...

-Actually the tour spanned from December the 8th to the 23rd because the ATROCITY feat. DAS ICH album was somewhat postponed, and as I believe you already know we were only support act for them. Anyhow, we were by all means satisfied with the tour. I daresay that it was some of the best moments we have ever had, despite all the problems. I do not want to explain the problems because they might include persons I'd rather not want to talk shite about. The audience was great more or less all over the line, the bands were great as were the roadies and the beer was for free, so could it be anything else than fuckin' fun being on tour. We are all eagerly awaiting the next one. Yeah... one big family... families usually do quarrel don't they? Well, for once we stayed away from such happenings on the tour, except from one or two small ones. Here at home we more often have our fights but we know that we would be living so closely to each other on the tour, so that we realized that we had to extend our limits of tolerance and hence staying away from the anal quarrels. We rather concentrated on playing, drinking and having fun.

As every other band, TOT had their beginnings, and it was the year 1992 - winter time, of course... Coupla yrs later, in May 1994 union recorded their wonderful demo tape which received grand reviews. That was a tape me got interest in them; I was really damn shocked about the music - it was just a blow out, indeed a great piece of art! Especially having in mind the start of TOT, first recording. Most of the beginners just learn to play on their demo... THEATRE OF TRAGEDY had the potential even far earlier, I bet...

-Thanks a lot for your compliments!! Anyhow, how we managed putting the songs together?! Well, the songs are rather simple as a matter of fact. There usually is a synth/piano "riff" that is the basis and on a such "riff" there are guitars put on top, quite simple guitar riffs most of the time. There is nothing that could be compared to prog like elements. Yeah, we sort of learned to play on the demo, or a bit before. None of us, except Liv (soprano - T) and Lorentz (piano/synth - T), are educated musicians; we just learn things as we go along.

Comparing demo to the latter material one can notice that band's style turned a bit thicker, kinda more balancing either on doom/death or on goth/dark wave. The demo contained all that stuff at the same time, somehow connecting both sides. Raymond argues on that matter:

-In my opinion the album still includes - and balances on - all of the above-mentioned genres, though I daresay that we kept away from death-metal. Albeit on the demo we still had more of the, if I may say, lowbrained death influences, that is, in the song "A Song by the Hearth?!" Now, on our new material we have put more effort into showing a bit more of our goth-rock/dark wave sides, but I should emphasize that it is still metal!

While demo included some normal vocal overtones of Raymond, so later on he refused to sing in that way. I'm sure it sounded great, kinda adding one more dimension to the overall sound... So, my surprise to hear that "A Song by the Hearth?!" was too deathly...

I guess that on the new album I'll use some more normal vocals again. We just recorded a promo recently where I tried singing and it worked out rather ok, so I will definitely try it out for our new release. Actually I tried some normal vocals for our last album but it just did not sound good; it was totally disharmonic, so I left it out or replaced it with growling! Maybe the reason was that I was too nervous when trying it, but anyhow I will just have to make sounds that do not sound like when you are torturing a cat. Huhhuh... did you think that the vocals in the beginning of "A Song by the Hearth?!" were amazing????? (Yep, I still purely love that part of the track!!!!!! - T) God! That is some of the worst vocals I have ever heard in my entire life; I sound like a bloody faggot, and maybe that was one more reason for my keeping away from such kind of vocals at a later stage.

To be honest, just after getting the CD, I've desperately started picking the opening track of the demo up, but what was my surprise and disappointment when I realized that it doesn't appear here!!

-Ehmm... maybe you understand one of the reasons for our not including that song on the album if you read the above answer. Moreover, that song isn't really well structured, it is just riffs following riffs. There isn't really any "read thread" in it, in other words it is quite messy. At parts it is also too metallish and certainly we try to stay away from that genre. Anyhow, actually we will be doing a new version of it soon for a local sampler, a techno version as a matter of fact, simply called "A Song by the Hearth?" (1996 135BPM)!. And I will definitely take away the "singing" in the beginning and replace it with some growling or shite like that.

Yo, my taste seems a bit different than Raymond's, at least about

that song... Anyway, the duo of him and Liv is great, and nobody would argue that. They manage to sing at the same time, leading separate lyrics, as if having some emotional talks with the help of music. It's quite an innovation, I have never heard something like that before.

-The basic idea is of course that one can have dialogues or plays if you prefer. By doing so one can more easily put forth different points of views and discuss the pros and cons of different topics. To do so is not too easy when there is only one narrator, right? It is especially more convenient expressing the relationships between man and woman with a dialogue, but on the other hand it is perchance easier to philosophize about i.e. religion in a soliloquy. Innovative? ...well, it takes more effort to write such a lyric seeing that two points of views should be considered - which by the way leaves a quite neutral point if view freeing me from preaching morals - and for the fact that I need to write a longer text. Otherwise there isn't too much else to it. No, I had not heard anybody else doing such a thing before I did it, though I am sure there are others who I am not aware of.

Surely it has to do with play styled lyrics, I believe. This style with old English language reminds me British school of drama, being some kind of a tribute to it or a sentiment to medieval style of the art. To cut it short - sincere expressive art of poetry. Me told to Raymond that if he wouldn't have said the lyrics played the main role in THEATRE OF TRAGEDY me would have been surprised!

-The reason for my choosing to write in older English style is that I rather want to create verse that is not so much longer in use, and hence easier keeping away from a cliched language, because in the long run ordinary English, or especially American inspired English language becomes somewhat "worn out". I do not think it has to do with a tribute to British School of Drama, but as you stated to make our music and lyrics more sincere and more as one whole. The lyrics and the music should sort of relate to one another instead of going their own ways. Sure, the lyrics play a great part in our "creation", I think that the lyrics in some aspects are more dominant, not because of the fact that I have written them, but because they have formed the whole image of the band, and it's through our image, the Shakespearean one, that we have earned a good deal of reputation. I am not saying that the music is not of importance, for that it is, but the lyrics have lead to our particular type of vocals, which also has turned into our trademark.

Are you sure those lyrics flow straight from his own experience, being a reflection of his real world? Me see both sentimental and dark patterns, which have something strong to do with love...

-Well, the purpose of poetry in my eyes - in other words how I like it - is to create a world beyond our world; a place where we can escape to in between the chores of our everyday life. A purely imaginative place where one does have to think of society - social criticism should in my opinion have nothing to do in poetry - and where there are only fictional plots and persons. Yeah, fictional; nothing serious. This is the type of poetry I prefer and write for the band. I am not saying that social critics are bad, on the contrary, but I am not the type of person that wants to read about the shite I can experience every bloody day; as I said I want an escape from reality. Moreover, I am not interested in others' morals and meanings. So anyhow, maybe they are not fully coming from my experiences, although it is impossible to avoid putting one's own personality and feelings into the writings. Huh... I guess that the sexual parts in i.e. "Sweet art Thou" as well as the love parts in the other songs that contain such a topic, surely are inspired by my life

# the 3rd and the mortal

a very happy and funny gang

## The 3rd and the Mortal

with Liv, but by all means are not a reflection of how I lead it. The new lyrics more or less revolve around themes such as Vampyres, erotica, s/m and religion, and this time they are much more dark. Somehow, most of my new lyrics have connotations with Lucifer; I do not know how or why, but it does not mean that we're satanic; maybe it is just a good "person" for metaphors and similes?? God grows...

Changing the topic into one about studio experience, it's curious why the band have chosen not Norwegian studios, but Dan Swano's own "Unisound" for a debut album and German "Communication" for the sophomore work. As for the first, it seems to be a real underground cult place (if musicians want to get a superb quality), but just check out what Raymond has to say on that matter:

Our drummer Hein already knew Dan Swano from before through letters so he just contacted him asking if he was free during the Christmas, and that he was, so... Working with Dan... hmmm... he somehow was too much of a 9 to 5 person and too sloppy with notifying us on things that could be done better. After listening to the CD a couple of hundred times I have come to the conclusion that Dan did a rather bad job, the sound is rather poor, at least for us - such a "futuristic, mechanic" sound isn't really what we wanted. Moreover, he was too much in a hurry; even though if a take was bad he told us that we need not do it again because he can fix it in the mix, and as dumb and naive as we were we just followed his words, and hence the result, which is not as good as it could have been if done properly. Besides his equipment is also too bad for our standards as are the accommodations. I do not know about Norwegian studios. Maybe where THE 3RD AND THE MORTAL have been recording could have been a quite good choice, but there is nothing we can do with the first album. For our second one we have already booked the studio: "Communication" Studios in Germany with Gerhard Magin as an engineer and Pete Coleman as a producer.

Anders Mareby plays cello on TOT debut disc. He is Swedish and also worked with EDGE OF SANITY recently. I've got an impression the guy just makes money playing that instrument on every album he is asked for, ha. Anyway, you must agree cello gives a somber touch to the music of Norwegians...

As I knew when we went to record our album was that we wanted some cello, or if nothing better appeared, violin on some of the songs. Though we did not know where to find any, but it happened so that Dan knows Anders Mareby since ages and besides they both play in a prog band called UNICORN, and when we confronted him with our problem he suggested Anders. So, Dan just arranged it for him to come down to the studio and give a listen to the parts where we wanted cello and hence he recorded what he thought would be appropriate, and indeed his playing became pleasant and bloody beautiful, so... What the cello means for me?! I do not really know, but as just mentioned it became beautiful, so it sounds good without saying that there was some kind of an impact of meaning, but how to define it I do not know. Overmore, cello is by far my favourite instrument. Nah... I do not think that he will become much at playing the cello; all he got from us was a copy of our CD. So, are we cheap buggers! (I hope you aren't, ha ha... - T)

For me, who probably ain't that familiar with everything what's going in dark/gothic scene on, TOT and THE 3RD AND THE MORTAL were the forerunners of this sound in metal circles of Norway. I mean both those bands are quite far each from the other musically. And I was very much interested to ask a frontman what he thinks on this, and on solo career of Kari.

No, not really, I do not think that we were the forerunners here in Norway making this music. I do not do about THE 3RD AND THE MORTAL but at least we were quite late; it was only as late as in the winter of '92 that we got together, yet at that time we only made pure death/doom metal and it was not before September or October '93, when we got Lorenz and Hein, that we started making more gothic-like metal and even more in February/March '94 when we got Liv in the line up. Maybe that we have got more exposure than the other older doom/gothic bands here in Norway could be a reason for this mis-perception? Yeah, I know that we and THE 3RD are quite far away musically, especially when you take their latest album into consideration; they have a more slow "independent" or "4AD" sound whileas our new material is quite uptempo and rocky though still keeping to metal. I do not know which of their releases I prefer because I have only heard their new one a couple of times, but if I gave it more listen I guess that one would be the most preferred seeing that it is far removed from metal. Kari's solo stuff I have not heard as yet.

One of the last my questions was about black metal trend, and as I supposed Raymond was damned unhappy to hear it...

Well, actually I am damn bored with this question; I get it in every interview I receive. Anyway, I think that the black metal trend is purely blockbats as is everything connected to this genre!! Blahh... I do not give a horse's ass to these "penguins"...

Oh, that was the strong opinion, so I leave it up to you to think it over, and thus far plunge into THEATRE OF TRAGEDY, as they really enlivenate the world. Raymond closes up this article, giving an assurance the band will try new lines and spheres, that their new album will be even more juicy and expressive:

Hmm... ok... Hello readers, we won't stop on this, we'll try new lines and spheres and the next album will be even more juicy and expressive! Apart from that, thanks a lot for the interview!!! "Fans", please enclose an IRC for answer!

A great deal was made in last few years presenting the scene some shockingly new waving outfits from Norway, and the first (not the third!) of them was THE 3RD AND THE MORTAL, a bunch of features for whom were published in various types of musical press. We aren't following any trends, and this feature is as pure as any other in this magazine. Let us state like this: we treat the band as any other great formation from Norway, which this issue is full of. Let you won't be misguided - THE 3RD AND THE MORTAL play very abstract & complicated sort of music, having less metal than you ever imagine. Hell yeah, they did played that sort of music few years ago, but times are moving on... Their progression can be easily heard from all four recordings: "Sorrow" MCD'94, "Tears Laid In Earth" CD'94, "Nightswan" MCD'95 and finally, their latest brilliant "Painting On Glass" CD'96, which is further more experimenting in various soundscape waves; avantgarde streams, breezing industries...

It might seem at any point that new album ain't that clear in musical sense, and especially for musical critics. Anyway, most of people really enjoy that work, and thus speaks bass player Bernt Rundberget: "We are very glad for the response we get for "Painting...". We did know we had done a good album. But we are a bit surprised for the good reactions because we think that the CD maybe was a little difficult to understand and get in. It seems like many people have their eyes open for that kind of music right now. I hope many more will go the same way. Some listeners and especially reviewers don't understand what we want but mostly it seems like they accept and understand our message." Indeed the audience is much more acceptable for bizarre music nowadays, and I doubt if THE 3RD had such a response few years ago - at that time they were much more traditional. But maturity has come as "we have done our most mature work until now. I think we also will develop with later stuff. The band got a CD deal early in the start, and I think people hear that we have changed quite much since we started. All bands do that, but very often band develop and find their way in years before they get any deal. They have found their way when they do their first release. We couldn't do that. We have been growing and maturing while people have heard us from the start."

To be honest, I had a chance to hear only the first and last releases of the band, and that is a great lack for me, but Bernt clearly told me that "it was obvious to turn that way we do. I think it what we want to play and the way we will show our music. I think that in the start we played much more guitar riffs. The reason of that was that it was the music some in the band who played together were doing before. Four of the guys had played a lot of death metal before, and it took a time before we got over to some new ideas. After a while we began to think different and our music developed more. We also had some changes in the line up. Right before the recording of "Sorrow" I came in as the new bass player. We changed vocalist in early '95 and I think we came with some new thoughts and ideas." He seems not to feel any sentiments towards those guitar instruments used in the past: "As I told the guitar riffs are almost gone. It comes of the way we develop our music."

Well, it ain't that clear if the changes of music and of vocalist were the cause of each other or one particular thing, but in fact Kari used quite different type of singing than Ann-Mari does. The latter girl must have some own ideas to influence band's music - the writing process. In some tunes it even seems guys have to fit her manner of singing. "Yes, it was necessary to change the music a bit after we got a new singer. There are big differences in Kari's and Ann-Mari's voices; Ann-Mari has a voice which she can use for different music styles. Kari has specialised her voice in one way. They also have different ideas and backgrounds in music. But it is mostly the rest of the band who make all the music. And we work it out together all six. That's the way we always have worked." Anyway I was developing my idea that Ann-Mari sometimes uses the guys as only accompaniment to her performances - such thought came to my mind out from "Painting On Glass". I've even checked out some slight similarities with Diamanda Galas or even Bjork! Though Bernt contradicted again: "We never feel that we are just a backing band for our vocalist. It is obvious that a singer will be known better than the rest. And specially when it is a female singer. But we always try to make it clear for all that we are a six piece band where everybody counts. I don't think that Diamanda Galas or Bjork influence Ann-Mari or the rest. Myself, I like both artists. We have different influences which are all kinds of artists and styles. We have very different task of music, something I think is great, because then elements from all kinds of styles is a part of our music." Next thing this Bjork fan was asked to share his opinion about Kari's solo career: "Kari has worked with a record deal, which she has finished now. I think she will be out with an album early in '97. She continue to work with her style where she use an acoustic orchestra for backing up. Musically we have gone two different ways."

Hard to define those musical patterns THE 3RD AND THE



MORTAL mix, though they are so different each from other: in one tune it seems like a rumble of 30-ies sentimental music, in another - a high-tech mix with various effects & hidden spectre of emotions... Bernt adds: "We like to experiment in studio. We don't want to do an album where the sound is the same in every track. It's much more exciting with various sounds. I think most of the listeners also feel that way. We have got very good response for the production."

As you noticed I've used the term avantgarde for THE 3RD's music here and there - it makes me feel like this, but what about themselves? Do they really use to be called that way and what is avantgarde in general? "Avantgarde is a kind of new music, which is very laid back and easy and some kind of special for the most of listeners. It was first used in the jazz style. I think avantgarde music can be said that it's far out for many people."

If three first products of the band were released under a small HEAD NOT FOUND label, so this latest album is a product of VOICES OF WONDER Records - a bigger label, taking care of HNF distribution, by the way. I won't wonder if THE 3RD AND THE MORTAL will get some more attention and serious deals worldwide. It's pleasant to hear that can't change the band that much, speaking about underground thing... "We always hope to get attention from as many as possible. I think our latest album have a chance to get us more known. We will work for getting a bigger deal when we will be finishing with the deal on VOICES OF WONDER. We have a hope to live and get so much money that we don't need to work with other things, which we must do now. I don't think it's necessary to leave the underground because of getting a major deal. It's possible to work both ways."

Even Bernt tried he couldn't avoid my top question about Norwegian black metal scene... Though I've asked how he liked ULVER's acoustic brilliant "Kveldssanger", nothing more... "I haven't heard the album from ULVER. THE 3RD have never had much in common with the black metal scene. We respect the music they do, but not the behaviour of many in the scene."

"We don't sing in Norwegian because mostly we are selling outside Norway. We did it in a few songs but decided to write all in English after a while" - he adds to assure the band don't use any means to show their Norwegian side. On "Sorrow" MCD Kari used to sing in Norwegian, as I remember - it wasn't that bad...

"We do the music we do because it's way for us to show our meanings and opinions," continues Bernt, while he gets closer to the band's inner, supposing about netherworld's influence on the music and thirst of this material world... but I don't think you must go and think that because we sometimes do sad or dark music, we believe that way. Many will be surprised that we are very happy and funny gang. We just want to do our music that way."

The last thought which came to my mind about the band was that they are always creative, and maybe that limitless music made me think so, cuz in fact "we have periods we are very creative, and also periods we don't manage to do anything. We work good under pressure. We also do much of the music in studio. Almost half of our last album is made in studio." And so is this experimental work - you never know what to expect... Ok, if you want to obtain any album of the band, do contact them as they have each MCD for \$12 and CD for \$20; T-shirt costs \$15, poster - \$7. Top class!

down there. In spite of really evident SAMAEI influence, if you contradict. At a moment this platter might seem a bit outdated cuz four piece don't have any smart idea thru it all, though agree that this brand of dark metal must smoulder of the style's depth - it was meant to be rather conservative. So true fans of antiquity already know what to do.

MUSSORGSKI

"In Harmony With The Universe" MORBID MADNESS Acclaimed as a very strange music of Polish cosmic art creators, who are developing this style since 1991. During these years MUSSORGSKI had ups and downs, but the base was left - that let them to come to this debut recording, which shows the ways to other planets. Well, for metalheads - surely. Other people might not understand the path of MUSSORGSKI, but me sees only that. Wandering among cosmic chaos - music prompts this idea. How else to name that messy industrial suffering?? Ok, now I must assure you it's not a usual industrial band, go fuck all around if you think so! It's kinda black/electronic/synthetic/death metal influenced industrial. And I failed again trying to describe it. No dance, no bm grinding, but own point to heaviness, coldness, technology and cosmos!! Even 15-tunes, some of them are just instrumental/electro variation (slamming against humanoids? surfing amongst cosmic rubbish?), so that gives an additional space effect. MUSSORGSKI... is he (a composer) ever thought his name would be used for space traveling? Or it's too much to call this music like that...no, I guess no.

MYSTIFIER

"The World is So Good That Who Made it Doesn't Live Here" OSMOSE No, this release ain't ass kicking, together with two first MYSTIFIER albums. This time they bring a tenor singer (male), but that doesn't help. In general I'm not against operas, but females do it better, nah. At least when their skills are used with metal music. Maybe black/death isn't that subgenre of the movement to fit tenor vocalising that perfect? And this outfit might not be the best to go together with that either. Lots of guessings, but the answer is one - still average album consisting of six compositions, full of mid and slow tempo moods, with several quicker interchanges. For those who know Brazilian school of such music, "The World..." (what a title?) won't be any kind of surprise. I stress - even with tenor. Though don't be mistaken as me was at first - album has that screamy vocalist either. In fact MYSTIFIER have only two members of "Goetia" sessions left, but they still remain the rulers of this outfit. I'm not sure but guess the album isn't that extra hot in the market.

MZ.412

"In Nomine Dei Nostr. Satanus Luciferi Excelsi" COLD MEAT INDUSTRY This is probably the darkest and most fiery project in frozen meat's fridges, popping out with as harsh sounds as your broken vacuum-cleaner, of course being plugged... Actually hailing from Sweden MZ.412 bring up some dark industrial ways of ambient, every now and then wrapping it in military rhythms or adding the suffering voices of serial-killers... All wealings & immature earth crawlers - scath! And beware... Mind crushing heavy noises unjure your actions & body cells begin to fight against each other... This album just invokes a total selfdestruction. Hm, I mean it's not the one I adore though, I should listen to pure thunderstorm instead, but otherwise you seem to have a thirst for even thicker noises after it (the thunderstorm) ends up... Nevertheless it's up to everyone: does this invoke some processes in the mind or not... Paedophilia cum sadismus!! Furthermore, MZ.412 are ready to protect you from returning to normal state, their new opus "Burning the temple of God" is out now and next material has been actually laid down. It was said to include a doze of black metal and explore further into dark industrial destruction.

NAGLFAR

"Vittra" WRONG AGAIN One helluva monolith is this nine tracker from supreme masters of melody and firm musicianship, including their older songs "Emerging From Her Weepings", "The Eclipse Of Infernal Storms" and likes, plus several new tracks "Vittra" shows the high potential of NAGLFAR, undoubtedly leading those lads to the highness of new wave progressive death. Actually interviewing the band I was doing a small fore, an advance, as "Vittra" was still growing on me by that time. Meanwhile I must admit it's really great work, and even those influences of Gothenburg brothers seem quite natural and suitable. It's wonderful to take a listen to such a tight playing and enjoy the fiery storm created by atmospheric hints. Maybe NAGLFAR include some slight black metal ingredients comparing to others, but surely has nothing to do with black metal as we know it. Like Andreas promised, I'm sure the next release by NAGLFAR will be even much better, painting those pure lines of own compositions, but thus far enjoy "Vittra" - meet thy forest goddess! Available from W.A.R. for \$18 (overseas - \$20).

NAHASH

"Wellone Aeternitas" DRAKKARLEDO TAKO PRODUKTAI The second Lithuanian bm outfit with a CD deal, and they must be quite happy to get it after the only demo. Though it sold really good and still keeps selling, new stuff surely blows out earlier material. With better ideas and their performance, first of all. Music turned more catchy (but some additional technics should be mastered though), and especially creating process has lived out another renaissance. With this release NAHASH purely show they have a strong potential, even stronger than was shown in the first demo. Sadly, limitations of studio abilities weakened the sound and deadened some original ideas, which can be herd only when you know songs very well. But looking to it as 90-ies black metal release - the band has something original to offer, in soundscapes of extreme speeds and slow dreary parts. No wonder that music is created under the influence of dark wailing vocals. Only it could have been longer than 30 minutes product, but that is for the future I guess... Available for \$18 (CD)/\$7 (MC) from "Ledo Takas".

NAPALM DEATH

"Greed Killing" EARACHE After so disappointing 1994's effort there's another try out of British extremists, presenting not only new ideas, but more like a new challenge! Yes, I think NAPALM DEATH live up their next renaissance with this seven tracker - mini CD. While "Fear..." was so one sided, monotonous and repeated, this sample of new approach shows NAPALMs as the seekers for something new, forgetting the borders of extreme death/grind and even metal. "Greed Killing" is only a pre-release of new full-length, but sets new focuses of the band: thoughtful industrial intensity, sampling experiments and raging blasts from the past. The mix is surprisingly good due to various structures - interesting continuations and intelligent juicy sound. Two tracks on this low priced single are taken from new LP, four songs are featured only on this MCD, and the last is "Plague Pages" live in New York - a bad song from previous album. Anyway - obtain, you'll get some satisfaction.

NAPALM DEATH

"Diatribes" EARACHE Not long time after the single "Diatribes" hit the street, bringing forth even 12 refreshing tracks of the same kind laid on "Greed Killing". Actually this track is the hit of a day with its melodic pattern, hooks and firm performance. Speaking on the new vibes in ND composing, industrial/hardcore approach might be the main with all these danceable grooves, yet things like Barney's vocal abilities make the deal too. He started not only to spit words in his gore-like manner, even not to scream out at times, but also sing in narrative vocals! Of course, that happens when samples appear and ND get there where they had never been before. I mean psychedelic industrial insanity. No doubt that "Scum" and likes had more power + extremity - obviously it can't be overrun, yet "Diatribes" stands as a refreshing input with a breath of blowing wind - something what guys missed since "The World Keeps Turning". Hungry for direct metal/industrial blend - get it now! Hopefully the band won't turn another PITCH SHIFTER or GODFLESH either...

NATTVINDENS GRAT

"A Bard's Tale" SOLUSTITILUM Not just the address is same, but also some musicians between both NATTVINDENS GRAT and DARKWOODS MY BETROTHED. Let that be, but a slight comparison may be made between both - the same kind of arrangements, styling, tricks, sound of vocals, keyboards, etc... Ah, that's actually what is the best in the music of Finns - keys performed by Tuomas, and operatic vocals of Pasi (even he sings only in two tracks). This album differs from what band made with their cassette "Dr Svanar Flyger" - gone are metal ruggers, guitars sound very soft in the background. Material is much more rocky, simpler arranged, but keeping the dose of northern coldness and atmosphere especially. That's why NATTVINDENS GRAT work can be called as masterful and quite innovative. Mind you - guys are still young and full of new ideas for next releases. Influences might be seen of TIAMAT circa "Clouds" and goth/rock scene. Very wonderful is combination of rock/metal, when Suvvi takes the mic - she adds that necessary silver colour to the pack. At times vocal abilities of main (session) singer Wilsa can be questioned, but good thing that he doesn't want to be standard. Actually I said enough reasons to not miss this album!

NECROMANTIA

"Scarlet Evil, witching black" OSMOSE You know what, I have never been a fan of NECROMANTIA and even of Greek bm scene. To say precisely I ignore first works of the most famous bands, including the reviewed. But sophomore full-length of one very innovative outfit has changed my mind. Yet it's possible that the next effort won't evoke any emotions in my heart again. What about "Scarlet...", I can assure it's one hell of an effort - with much more challenge, flowing thru entire disc, and supreme NECROMANTIA sound, excepting the darkest atmospheres known to black metal. Occult melodies, wonderful background of synthesizers, and surely some kind of sorrowful romanticism within the bass guitar soundscapes. What new ideas are felt? A bit more polished combining of melodies and occultism, not losing the Greek origin, and stepping no further than progress of the band itself. As well, slight heavy metal impulse makes me wonder. To cut it short if you liked NECROMANTIA earlier you'll adore this platter. While you pissed on them couple years ago, you must try again to receive a pleasant rightful satisfaction. Epic.

NECROPHOBIC

"Spawned by Evil" BLACK MARK The perfect return known to death metal history! Who still remember "The Nocturnal Silence"? Only the oldest death metal freaks; and thus this Swedish outfit was almost buried by others. As well as their beloved style was buried. In spite of the next CD "Darkside", which is still in works, three years break brings forth an MCD of four tracks. For the restart it's damn enough. Again surprise, as besides a title track there are three covers of SLAYER, VENOM and BATHORY! What else could that be. Quite interesting versions, as "Die By The Sword" is performed in pure death metal vein while "Nightmare" includes some thrashy lead and screamy vocals, and "Enter The Eternal Fire" is almost classically repeated original... with better production of course. To sum it up, I've heard some better versions. But now the title track... Man, if you know something about Swedish school and like the new wave of black metal, NECROPHOBIC will smash you. 3 minutes and 18 seconds is the example how killer "Darkside" will be. Near death metal rifting, infernal melodies and unholy vocals of Tobias. From the shadows - to the very top.

NIGHTMARE VISIONS

"Suffering From Echoes" HEAD NOT FOUND/VOICES OF WONDER Metallion signs more and more British rockers - NIGHTMARE VISIONS were first of them. Rather unknown name so far, so it's quite a surprise to learn this album was recorded in September '94. We have here some typical death metal in mid tempo speeds as Brits like, with slight up tempo extracts and much more of slow tortures. Cuz this style is surely wide-spread, NIGHTMARE VISIONS don't bring anything exclusive. They remind a bit old PARADISE LOST and otherwise some rawness of HYBERNOD appears here and there. Especially Andy's voice is similar, though

it's quite standard. No doubt about "Twisted and Deranged" being the best tune, maybe due to that energy or good riffs. As well the use of French in "Les Reves du Sang" must receive some compliments not only from my side, but also from French speaking deadheads! Do Englishmen began to respect Frenchmen at last? Unbelievable. I can recommend the album for die hard deathers, and only for those who like British style of thing. Not the main HMF bestseller.

NIHLI LOCUS

"Ad nihilum recidunt omnia" BOUNDLESS Prosaic one track MCD from Torino, which is real hot European city, but still has some cold minded guys to express such monumental art forms. Quite a surprise to hear them so drastically original, even combining your 90-ies metal genres at their darkest. Doom, death and black metal unite in one, and it's like another chapter of oneness, one blend of three styles like one track of three separate compositions. NIHLI LOCUS have ideas to sound attractive: first of all with doomy guitar arrangements, useful synth lines, and, according to music, variation between growls and screams. They don't earn on different effects, but short female vocals in final bm part of "Memoriam Texere" impress. Otherwise, this music would do as well ok being classical line up faded, and it's an obvious plus & congratulation for guys! I'm sure these Italians will make quite a few surprises further on, and especially pointing that dark metal styles can be united, extended, at last raised up onto the art of godly blaze. I hope NIHLI LOCUS will try new forms of it, but it must remain wonderful! Obtain this MCD quickly! Price is \$11.

NORTH

"Thorns On The Black Rose" ASTRAL WINGS Can't say that NORTH is just another Polish horde, but definitely not anything to scream in existement. The production, sound and compositions themselves are in a traditional Norwegian vein. You may ignore this saying it's pretty Polish, but actually local black outfits have quite less to do with original own style. NORTH is of course much more close to GRAVELAND and BEHEMOTH than let's say IMMORTAL or DARKTHRONE. The latter mentioned heroes at least combine thick production with their own ideas, and add good musicianship, more various speeds/ideas. Polish frozen souls do everything with much less variation, originality, and surely - worse production (though it's not their fault to have worse studios). What still saves them are some catchy riffs in several tracks, which fascinate as if you'd have a deal with the biggest names of the scene. One or two cool riffs make the whole track sound more catchy and some line appears among separate tracks. I mean "The Heretic Kingdom" first of all, and also "As Hermits return". Also "December Thoughts" can be added - it's a track with a calmer mood. Only this kind of individuality can make NORTH worthier! Try that way, lads. Black metal maniacs, you'll enjoy this for sure. CD costs \$18, cassette - \$7.

NYCTOPHOBIC

"War Criminal Victims" MORBID If you expected something different from the past releases of this German grindeth union, you were probably kidding. This kind of music can't change, it just can be a bit improved, or made worse. Indeed NYCTOPHOBIC have had quite a few releases previously, including a 7"EP on MVI Records and another epee - split with AGATHOCLES. Interesting that NYCTOPHOBIC play "Theatric Symbolisation Of Life" record here, too. Styles of both bands are pretty similar (in general grindeth outfits don't differ each from other that much). German four piece do it pretty technically, much better than many other loosers. What about 18 compositions, they are all like one, except the intro - slow guitar doom, like grinders use to play on intros, and the finishing track, which is a TV except only. Many intros from political speeches & TV films are used, but that's usual for grindcore. What about vocalists, the main one irritates from the second part of CD. The debut CD of NYCTOPHOBIC will gain the praise from grind fans, especially those liking AGATHOCLES.

OBSCENITY

"The 3rd Chapter" MORBID Actually REPULSE ain't the only label to produce old wave death metal, or at least this German four piece is another band to the pack of Spanish label's comrades. Ahem, I mean that OBSCENITY is a cool dm outfit and one hell knows why they having already two -bums out still haven't been known in wider circles. I'm sure such the class is worth of a higher deal (of course if it's possible to find a decent meaner label for such music. Well, MORBID really seem to rise up OBSCENITY's actions, cuz 10 tracks kick try ass. Pure 90-ies death metal, fast/mid tempoed, grows like ALTAR's, speedy quicks like DECODE's, mid tempo grooves like DEATH's or, something else's of NYFL Fest's of 1990-1992. And some Dutch influences ("False" era GORFEST, GOD DETHRONED I guess?), too. You'll find a subtle yet firm melodious interchange here and there, two vocals change, so what else is necessary for a thickly produced dm platter? Nothing indeed. If two first OBSCENITY albums were like this they'd already been on the top. Moreover it was done 3-4 yrs ago. But now it impresses me either.

OFFENSE

"Aside" (adv) ABSTRACT EMOTIONS A boring release from Spain. OFFENSE follow the path of once popular slow tempo death metal. Ironically can't name it as doom/death as there's simply too much of deep grunt and crunchy guitars. As well doom was meant to be not so downtoned. Though "Aside" ain't that in dimensional effort, guys try to involve some depressively melancholic lines in their music. Probably it works better than those gray compositions with no identify. "Shining Dawn" must be quite interesting track on that point. But clear is that OFFENSE should work on their ideas really harder next time, especially if they have some wish to rid off typical riffing and to find their own goal of writing such a music. It's fucking difficult to be noticed with the most of "Aside" tunes, but time will tell if OFFENSE use their potential laid in deeper corners of the album. You can check it for 17 USD from ABSTRACT EMOTIONS.



## OPETH

"Orchid"  
CANDLELIGHT

Swedes have wiped many artists' eyes, who tried to create something nicely arranged, gothic, melancholic and classical, but still with metal axis. They have shot into the centre from the first try - you know how "Orchid" was popular in the old continent? And if there is someone who doesn't like this, well then he might be "true" blacker or hc/mosh kid. Away all these thoughts, as OPETH music must invoke the brightest views. Not because it's so joyful music, but because it adds many of optimistic emotions - the mood gets respiration listening to that calmness of metal... Sounds bizarre? You'd better listen how guys combine harsh screams, bpm velocity, gothic beauty and majestic classical arrangements!!

Having such a metre as Mikael behind the mic, it's possible to overrun even such fellas as Dan Swano! Musically to overrun even KATAIONIA and a bunch of failed bm cappels, which tried to be dark but melancholic. Just a sweetest candy into your lips if we speak about composing art laid down here. Again, don't expect here any poppy metal, but real heavy music which is arranged with thought, divine ideas and perfect combination of modern means. Simply a must, and maybe "the bigger must than most of black/death nuts" featured in this issue.

## OPETH

"Morningrise"  
CANDLELIGHT

Garh! Mikael must be very upset as it actually lasts for one second too much - 66.07!!! And that's the only (the most slightest imaginable) minor point about this debut album's follow-up! Obviously OPETH is a very thirsty formation to write and arrange the sophomore album of such effectual music in so short time. Less than year went by since "Orchid", and next five loooong compositions are here! You see how much I'm excited as every thought is ended with an exclamatory mark!!!

He respects their professionalism, but again - wonderfully performed material with amazing rhythm section (bass guitar of Johan now sounds firmly as he cuts some own lines here and there), electric and acoustic guitar variation and more than earlier of singing vocals plus calm unplugged breaks. Right is CANDLELIGHT boss Lee saying you can't get all about OPETH from two minutes listen - take it as a whole! Then you'll feel all the majesty. It's not necessary to divide album into particular tunes - it could do as one long track instead. No wonder that songs last for 15-20 minutes... I still haven't mentioned mountful artwork inside the CD and beautiful picture on the frontcover. It reflects what's inside, in hell made child... To end the fame bury of OPETH - lyrical dimension impresses no less. And maybe enough to get them that huge attention?

## OPHTHALMIA

"Ma Dolorosa"  
AVANTGARDE MUSIC

Rich sophomore output from the gothic/black/doom pioneers, with more than one hour of pitiful obscure music and no less of majestic esoteric lyrics! Don't mention the cover artwork and other layout games, as they are excellent! The stuff you've probably heard on "A Journey in Darkness", debut album of Swedish precursors, is almost repeated on this platter: as always careful and thick with a neat story in every track. The stuff is composed very masterly, and so it makes a nice impression - the feel of finished story.

Musically some heavy/rock ideas are brought together to make it more rocky I guess, or at least to sound with a hint of SABBATH attitude. Just listen to Night's (aka Emil Nordqvist, also plays in SWORDMASTER) bass lines... By the way, he is a new addition to the pack, as well as Legion with his aggressively powerful screams. Notice that Emil's brother Jon (Shadow) from E-SECTION did the vocals on "A Journey..." album.

This album should have been shorter, yet two bonus songs are featured, and one of them is mighty "Deathcrush" cover! A crushing tribute to sum this long journey, even it's not anything MAYHEM alike. Pity album!

## OPPRESSOR

"European Oppression Live + As Blood Flows"  
MEGALITHIC

That's the band's second CD, though not a sophomore effort to highly acclaimed "Solstice Of Oppression" (unfortunately, I had no chance to listen to the debut). As the title suggests, CD contains some live-material from a European tour last year and if you don't know, "As Blood Flows" is their 93's EP which was earlier released on tape. Moreover you'll find here a cover version of MOTLEY CRUE's "Looks That Kill" (the loudest band to cover up) and a new version of "Human Sacrifice" from a debut album.

Nothing interesting or promising - just a bunch of boring brutal death metal songs, composed without any sense or meaning. I have no interest to describe it, you'd better listen yourselves. Though it's not the highest and/or best ever made material within this genre. For maniacs only.

The latter part of CD contains quite bearable sound, so live tracks are awful just because the guitars are too weak & thin, and they are lost in vocal overtones plus double bass drum attacks.

Yeah, this is cheap: \$12 (USA)/\$14 (elsewhere), though nevertheless not worth of it.

## ORDER FROM CHAOS

"And I Saw Eternity"  
GROUND ZERO ENT.

A farewell release by American death/black legend, which contains three re-released tracks and '93 version of "Webs Of Perdition". Actually being quite different to their music, I just can suggest to obtain this MCD to real fans of the infamous Satan worshippers. Those new tracks are still in the old traditional vein of rough metal with Pete's usual internal greetings from his "Duh".

"De Stella Nova" is an ambient track with a thundering effect and some organ involved - the superb end of the band's activities. No way back straight to hell. As well "Imperium" is quite outstanding as that's an instrumental track, yet pure ORDER FROM CHAOS.

You can get it for \$12 from the label, which has some shirts with MCD cover printed - they go for \$20. Anyway, Pete Helmkamp has already formed another obscure project... ANGEL CORPSE! Debut album is out now on "SMOKE"! Though Matt from GROUND ZERO claims a new project of Pete is named VULPECULA, and this label's gonna spew out debut MCD. So, expect one or two new bands!

## ORPHANED LAND

"El Norra Alla"

## HOLY

This is the band's sophomore output on mighty HOLY Records, and Israeli visionaries haven't disappointed for the next time. Myself was fascinated pretty much of "Sahara", so this should have been a complete successor if I'd like it even more. Well, maybe "Sahara" is still better for me, but ORPHANED LAND have absolutely not stepped aside or got worse. Just their progression towards original point is special, maybe less acceptable for "everyday use" than usual background listening - that's good indeed.

I might point out national Israeli music influences on their sound, which aren't that much of an interest to a particular metal lover. I mean they are very stable, just several tracks with vocals + oriental instruments, which sound curiously to European; let's say: Even father of Yossi (Ig) takes presence with vocalising.

Well, that's a minority in any case as it's still metal like we know it (from "Sahara" too). Great oriental funkiness in both vocal parties and guitaring, invoking some adventurous experience, some grooves here and there. What a hell else?? - SABBATHesque rhythm in some places (especially in "Flawless Belief" - just that known bass/drums consequence).

Obtain this music not just because it's almost 70 minutes long disc, but due to that oriental excellence.

## PAGAN RITES

"Pagan Rites"  
WARMASTER

Oh no, this is not a returning album of infamous Swedish pagan warriors, as they seem to split up once and for ages - that happened in 1994, if we want to be exact. For older metal follower this command must be known due to their extreme productivity in 3 year career, and memorable music left.

It's entirely collected on this compilation album, consisting of their main recordings: "Pagan Rites" demo '92 (some time reviewed in "Brainstorm" #2), "Pagan Meta" demo '93, "Hail Victory!" 7"EP '94, and said to be specially recorded 4 new tracks, but that must be any promo material never released before.

Who still hears PAGO RITES name for the first time - they played a neat mixture of mid tempo heavy metal and old wave black metal. It was pretty original mix, with sometimes screaming, sometimes operatic vocals of Tomas; very simple riffs and rhythmical section. Anyway, some tunes like "Domain of The Frozen Souls", "Pagan Rites" had a dramatic character - that's what you expect from intelligent satanic rockers! Available at our address for 60 L/16 bux - the edition is limited!! "Blood of My Enemies" cover included! And the classic "Unholy Ancient War"!

## PAN-THY-MONIUM

"Dream II"

AVANTGARDE MUSIC

A bit old re-release of PAN-THY-MONIUM's classic demo tape - it was done in early 1995, but you'd better notice that recordings were done in 1992!! Anyway I have to AVANTGARDE for showing the mentioned first steps of one of the most original death metal bands for the world - not everyone had a chance to obtain their demo, not everyone supposed PAN-THY-MONIUM to grow into that avantgardistic orchestra of esoteric hymns.

Right, on this recording the music is still not that refined as on "Khaos" or last album, but easily recognizable, bringing in memory '92-'93, arggh... Brutal, grinding, but showing the ways for dwelling - who could experiment that lyingly back then? Not much of artists, exploring brutal stylings of metal. If PAN-THY-MONIUM had a baritone sax back then, this MCD would have been released much earlier I guess; or would have been included on that debut platter.

One bonus tune "Vooiccheos", recorded in 1994, but it's just 85 seconds of keyboard music and (what else?) clock ticking. Add this MCD to your death metal classics collection - this is my order!

## PAN-THY-MONIUM

"Khaos" & Kon-Fus-Ion"  
RELAPSE

Hard to believe it's a swan(g) song of the most avantgardistic death/grind outfit, the purest form of experimenting erily with great masters; moreover the real story of PAN-THY-MONIUM is revealed... Rumours were very popular in the scene during all these 6 years, and probably many know that Dan and Benny of EDGE OF SANITY were the masterminds wearing Day Disyrah (bass) and Winter (drums) pseudonyms, but who has ever thought it also was featuring Robert Karlsson/Dereck (vocals) of ex-SCYPOZOA, and Dan's brother Dag Swano/Aag (saxophone, lead guitar)!!! Unfortunately, the mystery had its end, and these pseudonyms now seem as a nice game.

Totally the opposite must be stated on this last piece of PAN-THY-MONIUM's art, as it features some best music written by psychos! Two prolonged compositions "The Battle of Geheeb" and "Thee-Pherent" include the famous avantgardistic themes, mindless grind/death, deep growls, hellish screams, drunk sax sound, and melodies of heaven! Yes, melodies are the most encouraging on there, and the combination with noise anarchy sounds are effective. "Berial" is like a transcending composition to reality, the return from the Raagoochinnaah world, with keyboard-laden count of minutes and seconds. And "In Remembrance" with one minute of silence ends not only this classic album, but the eternity of PAN-THY-MONIUM, is it real possible, ha?!

## PARADIGMA

"Mare Venis"

HEAD NOT FOUND/VOICES OF WONDER

One more wonderful outfit from Norway!! PARADIGMA were in the scene earlier with demo releases, but only this debut album happened to become a real breakthrough for them. Simply because the music is great, splendid in it's natural running form. No forceful elements, no fake cliches, but a stunning atmospheric tradition and metal approach.

That's why to name PARADIGMA style ain't that easy as far as they remain loyal to the feelings laid in this work, full of art in a straight form. Besides the music, some human feelings mixed with nature monumentalism are in the lyrics, mainly written by Tom. They remind me a classic poetry with two lines of the action, one being of nature, another - of human.

Musically wise the most outstanding are melancholic melodies and supreme guitar chords, sometimes slightly taking any avantgardistic direction, but still remaining catchy. Also three types of vocalising are more than refreshing: silvery soprano of Zilla, dark grunt of Tom and male tenor of Tom Erik. They change each other with such a gap that you can just want more and more. Of course, Zilla is the best - how wonderful she sounds with a whirlwind rhythm in "Best Regards!" Or monumental "Come Winter" - I bet this cute girl will shine as bright as Karl!

Already a new MCD "Skadi" is out by now (costs \$16), so hurry up to take it

together with "Mare Venis" (costs \$22) from the band address!

## PARNASSUS

"In Dolorum Gloria"  
SECULA DELANDA/OLD MEAT INDUSTRY

A new label in ranks (well, actually the resurrection of former INFORTUNILUM Records), and its first release - for true black metal lovers. Eight tracks just in the face with decent tempos, technics and melodies - simply the mayhem of medieval symphony!

So, who is responsible for all this, you might ask? No other than F. Soderland. Still have some questions? Actually PARNASSUS could easily be a continuation of OCTINOMOS, as the main musical idea is totally the same. Probably the name has something to do with non musical matter:

My problem with OCTINOMOS was that I extremely liked those compositions, but due to their repetitiveness I was bored extremely quickly... Indeed PARNASSUS seems more matured at this point, and I really dig it, but who knows what I will say one month later? To say the truth, it's the problem of some other Swedish teams as well.

Not a bad try, especially counting the various moods within the album, and notorious composer gets some response he deserves, but I'm sure his best work (project?) still lurks in the shadows...

By the way, check out that odd production, which seems quite bad & softy at times, yet is obviously special, not typical for the style.

## PAVOR

"A Pale Debilitating Autumn"  
IMPERATOR MUSIC

If someone asked me what his ears on this album, I'd say the excellent musicianship. Right, death metal of PAVOR is very strong, one huge kick in the head, yet it's still traditional music; in the style of 1991-1992. Moreover - that's the goal of German five piece act, they wish to have death metal kids among the listeners, not anyone else!

So they've got a right stuff to show - devastating, energetic and extremely catchy. Surprisingly PAVOR aren't that extreme or brutal, but intelligent technical compositions sound firmly; purely making a view of a solid heavy weighted death metal band.

About musicianship - it's brilliantly polished. For those who wish to play technodeath and still lack some technics there's no way but at first to listen to PAVOR. Especially Michael (dr) and Rainer (b) stand out off the pack, making a rhythm section one immense machine, which works as a German punctuality. Add several outstanding bass solos, by the way! PAVOR can be compared only to DEATH by this point, yet the latter have more refreshing musical ideas.

Anyway, one of the better death metal works recently, absolutely worth of attention. Obtain this album for \$22.

## PAZUZU

"And all was Silent..."

HEAD NOT FOUND/VOICES OF WONDER

Gosh... What is the time that I'm reviewing this masterpiece? It's released ages ago, but shines as coldly as the full moon in a stormy winter night... And why Pazuzu speaks that this debut is pretty messy, primitive and simple? I can't understand. Ok, maybe there aren't much of technological tricks that CMI bands now dispose, and probably PAZUZU will use later on, but music charms with its genuine attraction, simplicity! Variation among these 14 tunes: calmness and hot minutes go one after other... Dramatism is the keyword to surpass this attractive charm. Use effects are 100% in place, surrounding the dark waves in the silence of magic.

PAZUZU wouldn't be so spontaneously expressive if they used many tricks, effects, samples. This project for me is like a reflection of human sinister part - in most tracks (though not in "The Churning Seas Of Absur" or title track). Like you listen and see the sources of human origin with all the darkness around this sacred thing. Soundtrack not for the resting sleep, but for stepping down to natural birth of universal powers...

Must tell this was a pushing album leading me to the magical world of dark wave/symphonic music...

## PENITENT

"Melancholia"

COLD MEAT INDUSTRY

Some musical illustration to Marquis de Sade perversions and desires... Do you know what kind of music? Symphonic! Yeah, it's a XXth century symphony, performed by modern synthetic means. I can't imagine how wonderful it would be performed by classical means! That's my wish to both creators - Beastus Rex and Azgoli. Brothers, try to get a chance to reach natural instruments and the fame for you is guaranteed!

Thus far PENITENT create very dark tales, ambiently lulling all around this epic creation. Strings, pianos, background tone, every now and then appearing drum rhythm giving that solemnity... Vocals of Beastus are preachingly calm, tempered, deep, as if he says these words from some esoteric place - like teaching the listener his truths: "Happiness does not exist. Only the beauty of pain!" Especially great are "The Dance Of Demons", "The Undertaker" and "Possessive Thought!"

It ancient symphonies were romantically fight in most cases, so this symphony is romantically dark - and that's for the best of music's sake. One of the most recommended CMI bands, and a very serious candidate to feature in "Ledo Takas" #6. Price - like other CMI stuff.

## POCCOLUS

"Poccolus"

HAMMERHEART/DANGUS

Pleasant to see Lithuanian bm horde on CD; moreover it's the first (but surely not the last or only one) to emerge from the darkest part of metal movement here. Surprisingly released very far away from the land of pagan frost, it reached European shores anyway. DANGUS rereleased it in cassette format for Baltic States (in Lithuania available for 9 Lt).

"Poccolus" has 10 songs, an hour long album - all tracks were written in 1992-1994, before the "Promo'94" was even thought over. The music is different from that - faster, more black metal oriented, and more trendy. If promo had very slow, even ambient dozed ideas, then this album gathers quite typical for this style riffs & rhythms. Guess what, after 4-5 songs it starts to repeat itself on and on, and Scandinavian influences even levels POCOLUS with many of others.

Indeed several gems in guitar or keyboard lines appear, and I mean the ending part of "Ugnis kyla virs Azuolu", the beginning of "Begeyte Pocolus", the thunder effect of "Pudens misko snabdesia", old bm styling in "Ile aies...". All in all, almost every track has something exceptional, but on the other hand - I don't hear any track completely own or done till the next. But

Since this band belongs to the elite of new wave death metal from Gothenburg, I guess there's no need to present their music - it simply rules. I'd better tell that Andreas, who handles guitar in the band, is such intelligent and simple guy as you and me, so to read below written chat is more than a pleasure. Be sure, that he claimed it to be one of the better interviews he's gotten so far. This man should also have a clue how the interview have to be like as he's working on his own magazine "In The Caves" - if you get a chance to check it out - do it as possibly soon. Andreas must have really nice ideas, since his work in NAGLFAR is awesome and tight. Back to the band - if you like Swedish bombastic metal makers, you'll like NAGLFAR as well. My recommendation!

-Hail Andreas. It's quite a while after your album's release, right? You still consider it as the most perfect your performance to date? There are no things you'd like to change? Why after a while musicians realize they could do it rather better or in other way? You shouldn't be hesitating while you're a musician!

-Hail Tadas. Yeah, it's been out for a while now. It was released in Oct/Nov '95. I think we've developed our playing skills a bit since then so it's not the perfect performance. I am very satisfied with the result though. The only thing I'd like to alter is the intro, which I don't find to be powerful and evil enough, but I guess you're never 100% satisfied or what do you think?

-It's a question of progress and improvement, so that's good to find out those mistakes. Better sooner than later. There were some talks about your new songs put on MCD. Is that idea still working? Maybe you've already done that recording?

-We're in the progress of writing the material for the mini-CD, which will be released on WRONG AGAIN later this year. The planned title is "De Profundis Clamavi - Kings Of The Profane", and it will contain 4 tracks and hopefully a cover. It will be recorded in our hometown this time instead of the "Abyss" Studio, which we used on "Vittra". The reason for this is because of that we haven't got a permanent drummer now, and the session drummer has to travel.

-Huh, shitty reason, but it's only session... no wonder. In any case it seems like you're following in IN FLAMES footsteps? You would like to get a helluva attention with that new extend and to attract some bigger labels attention? I suppose in that way, considering even better songwriting & ideas of the band (I'm sure of that!) at the moment.

-We're not trying to follow in the footsteps of IN FLAMES at all. In my opinion they sort of left the death metal thing behind more and more, and entered the dominions of heavy metal. That is a thing we'll avoid, developing our style to the more extreme. I mean IN FLAMES are cool, but that's not how we want to sound, big label interest or not. By the way, if you didn't know, IN FLAMES are now signed to NUCLEAR BLAST Rec. At least that's what I've heard.

-Yep, it's not any secret while I rewrite this interview, cuz some time has passed and IN FLAMES are out with a new record. Damn sure, you don't play in their manner, yet I haven't said that!! Your way of releases are the same - first album, then MCD... So, tell briefly what the differences are between "Vittra" and new songs! There shouldn't be much of innovations, should there?

-The new material is more aggressive and scrawfilled than ever. Just wait and see. The mini-CD will crush "Vittra".

-By the way, what do you think on your label mates? They are all of the same style you're dealing with - is that a shortcoming or more like a merit? On the other hand, don't you think Wez managed to get almost all the best Swedish melodic death bands (except one... do you know whom I mean)?

-I like everything Wez and Per has released thus far, but I can't agree with you that it's all in the same style. I mean since IN FLAMES left the label there's only us and CARDINAL SIN, who I

might add are fucking godly, that are into this style of music. I think Wez and Per have done a great job finding original and good bands that have something to offer. I suppose you're referring to DISSECTION when you're speaking of the one band they missed?

-No!!! It was DARK TRANQUILLITY in my mind. Well, you never count all of them - DISSECTION so damn rule!! Nah, I'd better torment you with some cliches/names/labels things. Do you consider NAGLFAR as a pure melodic death metal band? For me it's difficult to define that line between melodic death and black metal, especially these days! Some your riffs are real blacky, pal!

-Yes NAGLFAR is a pure death metal band with lots of melodies. There're many people who label us as a black metal band, but I can't label ourselves as that, because of my total worship to this music form. To me black metal has to be satanic, and as you've noticed our lyrics are not so. All the members aren't into satanism either, so we'd be hypocrites if we labeled us as black metal. Catch my drift? Of course we, or at least I, are heavily influenced by black metal, so it's unavoidable to not have some riffs sounding like it.

-Using mythological things in your monicker you might also be considered as black metal. Could you say you're inspired by Scandinavian myths & culture? What about those who claim black metal is "responsible" about ancient beliefs & image? Do you know German blockers NAGELFAR?

-I don't believe we're inspired of the lore and myths of Scandinavia, but definitely fascinated. I'm proud to belong to people who fought fiercely when the christians tried to convert them. So there is a band from Germany that's called NAGLFAR?

-No, NAGELFAR exactly!

-I know there's a Norwegian band called NAGLFAR too. I don't really care about these people, but I think they should change their band names, because we are here to stay. And we will NOT change our name. Hmp!!

-As I understand from your lyrics Vittra is the goddess of the forest? Could you comment a bit why you have chosen it to represent your album? Is that front picture just mean it's her depicted, or it has some deeper meaning?

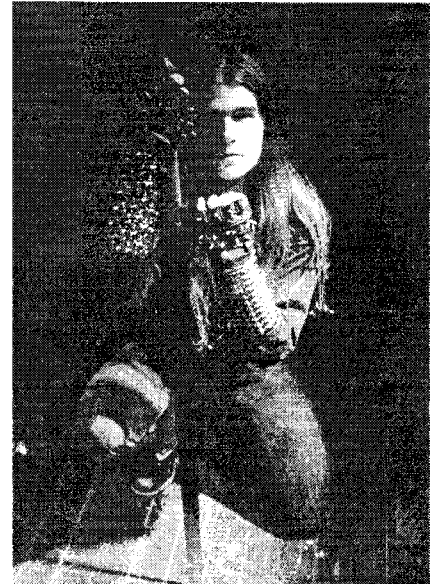
-I don't know why we decided to call the album "Vittra". There's no deeper meaning behind it. We just thought that it was a good title of a CD. Yes, the album cover is supposed to portray Vittra. According to legends, she was a creature of the forest, who loved men into her embrace to possess their souls. She's one evil bitch I tell you.

-Going thru your lyrics I was rather surprised to realize you use much more of your own inner resources than mythic wisdom... It has something to do with your feelings? Feelings towards... love? Someone said: "All the poetry & lyrics are dealing with love without any exceptions". Would you argue?

-What the fuck? The lyrics are NOT about love! Not the pathetic kind of "love" that common mortals express anyway. I can only speak for the lyrics I wrote, but this is how I interpret them: "As The Twilight..." is about suicide, "Through The Midnight Spheres" is about immortality and vampirism, "Sunless Dawn" is about unleashing the dark powers in order to reach eternal night, and finally "Exalted Above Thrones" which portrays a mortal's obsession by a female vampire. So the only "love" you find is desire and obsession. I do not look upon love as others might do...

-Neither do I. What about your lovely drummer problem - have you found any? Were you satisfied with your earlier sticker's work & ideas? What was it like to team up with drum machine? I hate it really!!

-No we haven't found a permanent drummer as earlier mentioned, but we'll try one out after we've finished the work with the mini CD. We were very satisfied with Mathias, since we found him to be a very promising drummer. It was a total disaster when he left, and we were pissed off at him for months. But now there's no hard feelings, at least not from our side. He's playing in a band called EMBRACING SHADOWS (or something like that) and they've signed with the German label INVASION. I wish them good luck. We'll never use a



drum machine again, that's for sure. At least not with anything official. It's impersonal, and impossible to get the right atmosphere with a machine. To make it short: I hate drum tool!

-True, huh. All your songs ever written since the very beginning are included in the debut album. I suppose the band must be really lucky due to that fact. Maybe it also means you always were writing cool tunes, kinda had potential since the very start?

-The demo tracks aren't the first ones we made. We didn't feel satisfied with our music until the recording of "Stellae...". Therefore we decided that the demo tracks would qualify the standard on the CD. They are tracks we're proud of, and we didn't feel like leaving them behind.

-When and why Morgan decided to cut his long hair? How do others feel about it? Don't you consider it as a disaster for metal heads' image? The old spirit is going out with every hair-cut!!

-He cut his hair a long time ago, since he's starting to get bald (haha! tragic loser). He shaved his hair in the back of his head, since he didn't want to let go off his hair. It was done with lots of dilute, both from him and the rest of us, but it started to look kind of pathetic. I think the old spirit is gone, but not his taste in music, and that's the most important thing.

-You have some reason, Andreas! Maybe you're going to get a keyboard player sooner or later? Is that instrument really necessary for NAGLFAR, while your guitar riffs give already much of ambience to the overall sound?

-No I don't think we'll ever get a keyboard player. We're planning to stop using the keyboards after the mini CD, since we think we can get the right atmosphere without them.

-How have you come up to get Peter for backing vocals? It's kinda trendy nowadays to have someone "more known" appearing on? What about HYPOCRISY (older and newer) and THE ABYSS music?

-Yes, we knew it was trendy, but who gives a shit? We wanted some brutal backing vocals, and we knew that Peter had a cool voice. I must say that I am not so impressed with HYPOCRISY's previous releases, but the new CD "Abducted" kills! I like THE ABYSS in medium doses, but I can't listen to it through the whole record. It gets a little boring after a while.

-Do you perform live a lot? Managed to get any tour or just some "bigger" shows around?

-No, we haven't played live that much. Only four gigs, but they were cool, except for the last one, which messed up totally. Bad sound, and lousy audience. We were offered a small European tour, but due to the fact that Mathias just left the band at that moment we had to decline, which was a pity since we really want to get out and play.

-Your image with all those nailfilled armbands, cartridge belts isn't any new, but quite convincing... What does it mean for you personally? The topic should be about the same old heavy metal spirit?

-I don't really see it as an image. Ok, maybe we don't walk around in public with spikes, because of people staring too much, and that's irritating. But we don't use them to look evil or cool. It's the old style, which we (or at least me and Stoffe) feel comfortable with. Hail the hands of the eighties!

-How will your music change with years? You can be sure you'll keep it that sorrowful and energetic?

-Hopefully faster and more somber with every release. We won't wimp out, if the style would change, then so the name will change. And in that case I'll quit.

NAGLFAR are Jens Byden - vocals, Andreas Nilsson - guitar, Morgan Hansson - guitar and Kristofer Öllius - bass. If you wonder, check their art out - "Vittra" CD and brand new "De Profundis Clamavi - Kings Of The Profane" MCD!



New name in a neverending ocean of Swedish death metal - SANGUINARY! I mean this: four piece should get much more attention due to great sticky brand of killing death metal. Guys released the only demo so far, simply titled "Demo 1", but it deserves some highest response and I dare to say - labels interest. Yep, if it were 1992 SANGUINARY would have been already signed. Thus far Leini (g/voc), Danne (g), Raimo (dr) and L-E (b) have juicy four track tape with thick but melodic heavy compositions, which by the way were recorded in "Unisound" and produced with top notch equipment. I've got a chance to interview Matias Leinikka (aka Leini), who had some thorough thoughts to disclose for you...

-How do you feel being the band which takes care on the music being very famous some 5 years ago? Is it easy to ignore all the crap around about your music's outdatedness and unoriginality?

-We feel good about it, our music is based pretty much on the "old and true" death metal but we've added some melodic and heavy influences to it coz we don't want our music to be called "old death, sounds like any other band from late 80's/early 90's". You just can't say that our music sounds outdated, but you can instead say that it has an old feeling, people usually say that. No, it's not easy to ignore all crap which comes out to the stores. We have lots of death metal bands (even more black bands, I think) but at least 70% of those new releases (mostly rehearsal tapes) suck a lot cause of unlightness and stucky sound quality, unoriginal music with pretty good riffs but put badly together etc. Many bands go to a studio to record something too early, maybe sign to a label before they're ready to fulfill the deal so they make lots of songs fast and the record comes out as a failure. When many labels want to sign the band and the promoting has done pretty well you should prepare the band for a deal, not earlier but later if you have some doubts.

-Do you consider SANGUINARY tracks as purely original? If not, what is the aim to play the stuff just repeating anyone? Maybe it's your kinda position towards "dead Swedish death"?

-I consider it pretty original but not purely original, I mean, we're not just repeating other bands but we haven't made a new death metal style either. We have a bit of heavy metal feeling in our music which is not a new and original style but using that influence to death metal songs makes it original, I think. Our music is getting heavier and "more heavy metal" after each song, our new songs are a lot heavier and a lot more original, also with a big heavy metal style in the death music so it's getting damn original, I think. Like I said, our music is not "dead death metal", just filled with an old death metal feeling which is a big difference.

-Listening to your demo I've noticed that EDGE OF SANITY and GRAVE must be your main inspirators, aren't they? By the way, what do you think on the latest albums by both bands?

-No, EOS and GRAVE does not inspire us a bit, they're both big bands with a pretty original style but we don't sound like them at all even if their music is good as far as I'm considered. GRAVE's latest album "Hating Life" is pretty good but all the songs sound too much like any other song on the album and EOS latest so called "one song album" sucks a lot coz there's too much acoustic parts, too slow music etc. I really wonder what happened to the band after their great "Purgatory -Herglow" album, it was good.

-Hm, check out both reviews to know my opinion... Even your demo is only the first product it shows great skills & cool performance. Can you tell briefly what earlier bands you were experiencing, or it was just a natural learning within SANGUINARY frames?


-SANGUINARY was formed when the band where Raimo did the vocals and I played drums split up, we "changed instruments" which was a pretty natural thing to do. We were only Raimo (drums) and me (guitar/vocals) in the beginning but Danne (guitar) joined the band pretty fast and L-E became a member a bit later, both of them new and without experience of playing in a band.

-So, what were the general reactions towards your demo? Do you consider it as a success? Maybe some labels have taken a serious care on you lads? Or you think it's too early to think about this?

-I think it has done well, the music speaks for itself so all we need is to promote the band so SANGUINARY will be a well known name, u know. There has been almost no complaints at all so I'm really satisfied with our work, people have called to a few radio stations outside Europe screaming for more


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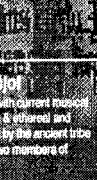
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pressing service, we payed more than 7000 SEK (that's more than 1000\$) and they left two spelling mistakes (one on "Insensitive Mind" and one on my last name), gave us one wrong tape and made a new master from the original DAT tape without letting us know about it, we'll never go there again.

-Somehow I wonder why the inlay doesn't include the lyrics - it would fit the cover concept cool... Don't you think so? Or probably lyrical side is that much personal? I bet your lyrics have less to do with death type of texture than your average death metal band?

-Easy, we simply didn't afford to print lyrics, it would have costed us at least 150 \$ extra and we just didn't have the money at the time. No, our lyrics aren't that personal, I don't give a fuck if someone reads them. I usually write about lies, falseness, religion and betrayal written in a very bloody and occult way, but other kind of lyrics can be written too.

-Away from that, you've mentioned you're Finnish. What about others? Don't you mind to keep your music a bit own, stepping from that Swedish death metal? And how did the other band members like the idea about Finnish cover art?

-Yes, Raimo, L-E and I are Finnish guys and Danne is Swedish and... well... his father is Finnish but Danne can't speak the nice language. We consider our music to be in the veins of Finland and I think that the cover art was a cool thing to do, it looks nice doesn't it?

-Yep, it does! Though next thing I want to ask about your views to black metal. From your letter I've made a conclusion you don't like it. Where does this intolerance come from? Wouldn't you suppose there should be more tolerance among various metal styles & people within the scene?

-Personally I'm not a big fan of the black metal music, there is a few good bands but there should be more. What I don't like in the musical way is the "MARDUK and DARKTHRONE kind" of black metal and especially not those who repeat them. Yes, I think all people in the scene should act like human beings but in black metal usually only the older folks do, but those young ones (12-15 years old kids) who think they are Satan himself deserve a bullet in their head. I don't know anything about the black metal underground, it might be cool, but I know for sure that there's too many unserious kids at gigs. I also met this guy once, he was around 14 years I guess and tried to look evil with his failed corpse paint so I just couldn't hold myself and started to laugh at him and he spoke to me just about this: "I have read Necronomicon, I will cast a spell on you so you'll be in great pain this midnight blah blah..." Well, he took his satanic ass away pretty fast when he noticed that I didn't give a fuck about his "spells".

-Listening to your tracks one may discover some slight progressive elements in the music. I guess "Unreliable Faith" is the most recent track on the demo, as it's more diverse than others?

-It might be a bit different than the others but it's still in the veins of SANGUINARY, right? In fact, "Unreliable Faith" was one of the latest songs we did before we went to "Unisound". "Eternal Cry" was our second song that the band has ever made and there is a big difference between those two songs.

-And what about new compositions? You should have completed some new tracks since May95 when demo was recorded! Can you claim those new cuts are a pure improvement or just a step forward?

-Our new tunes are more original and more SANGUINARY, we've spent more time to make the songs better and more perfect so the result is simple, they're so damn great so you want to bang your brains out, raw and heavy from the beginning to the end.

-Just've checked out a "beer ad", I mean your ad with "Lapin Kultu". What's the purpose of this joke (?)? Maybe that beer is your favourite, or you advertise their production? Or due to it's Finnish beer?

-Ain't it cool??? Actually we just used the picture for these reasons: 1. There was room for a picture. 2. We had no photo of the band. 3. It's a great Finnish beer.

-Wish ye loads of cans, pal. Anything you want to add or contradict my style of asking questions?

-I liked your way of asking questions, you're a born editor so I have no complaints and feel honoured to "be a few pages" of your zine, keep up the good work. All you readers, send 5 USD and the demo is yours, cheers!

*Once again take a serious notice on the progressive outfit - I'm sure Leini will write me thank as a future CD release, ha. No, SANGUINARY play really impressive!*

SANGUINARY, interviews and compilations has been coming and going so... A few labels have shown interest too but nothing is signed yet but we'll might release our demo on CD (which means much better sound quality) while Raimo is in the army but it's still just a plan, but who knows what we'll do when he comes out (September this year).

-You've mentioned sound quality, I guess you didn't miss choosing "Unisound" Studios? Was it your thoughtful choice or you just picked "Unisound" due to its name? Are you glad how Dan mixed things down?

-Yeah, Dan made a great work and was an easy person to work with, he gave ideas and a sound that we are satisfied with but of course, that is his job... We're less satisfied with the

100 to 1000

100 to 1000







HELHEIM took me by storm... Though their demo releases weren't that to be excited about, yet debut "Jormundgand" album, released by German SOLSTITIUM Records (young but firm pagan metal label!) happened to become a pure marching storm of sheer violence, cold areas covered and unholy hymns performed. Actually this three piece outfit from Nordas (Norway of curse!!) was formed in 1992, and even at time it had the fourth member, the nucleus always was the same as it is nowadays: Hrimgrimir - guitars and vocal, Vanargandr - bass and vocal, Hrymr - drums, piano and synthesizer. I had some chance to speak to Vanargandr, so here follows anything like HELHEIM's journey through the ages of Norse pride and my discoveries about it all...

-Hail. What's it like to hold your own piece of music pressed on CD? Was it your biggest dream, let's say, 2 yrs ago? Don't you feel it gets to be just a next point in your heavy-weight experience, or it's really an exceptional event?

-Hail. Well, now it's a long time since it was released, but when I first got it in my hands it was really an amazingly good feeling. Since I was a little boy, 6 years old, I wanted to play in a band and release a CD, and I made it.

-Are you pleased how things are rolling with SOLSTITIUM? Carsten keeps all promises? Is his distro net wide enough (does this bother you a lot)?

-Carsten's doing a great job, nothing to complain about. His distro net is quite good, but here in Norway it's poor. Nothing that he does bothers us.

-I remember your debut demo "Helheim", which was quite messy and not that much exceptional. What are your thoughts about it meanwhile? Was your intention to play as fast as possible avoiding any slower parts? Why?

-Our first demo "Helheim" is quite a funny one I think. The music is actually quite original and weird; I think. We never thought of having it as fast as possible, we just recorded what we had, and came out with a good piece of weird black/death metal. Then we liked it a lot, now I never listen to it, but I stand for everything we've released so far anyway.

-The second demo "Nidr ok Nordr liggr Helveg" (means "Down and North lies Helheim") was much better, I suppose (I haven't heard it)? Is it to blame for your deal with SOLSTITIUM? As I understand some tracks from that demo are featured on CD? What are those tracks & why have you chosen them exactly?

-Yes, because of "Nidr ok Nordr liggr Helveg" we've got a deal, and you're right, it's a much better demo. We chose only one track from the demo to feature on our CD, and that was "Gravlagt i Eijudne". We chose that track cause that was the only song we found worthy to be on the CD.

-Haven't you had an idea to repress an entire demo on CD? It was 50 minutes all in all! Maybe the sound quality was too lousy?

-There was some talk about it, but I don't think it will be done. The sound quality is not bad, quite strange but listenable anyway. We spent a hell of a lot of money on it, and we wouldn't do that for lousy sound.

-Speaking about your line up, why do you prefer only three persons in a band, and not look for a second guitar player? Are you sure he wouldn't bring some wonderful ideas? Does a three piece line up mean you are not interested to play live (or you play with one guitar



instead of two on recording)? Does Nidhogg who once used to be the fourth member play in any band meanwhile?

-Nidhogg left the band due to personal problems, we decided then that we don't need another guitarist, and we don't want it either. We are perfect now, and we're not open for ideas from another guitarist - no, me and Hrimgrimir are pretty selfish. We want to make HELHEIM's music, and no one else shall come with ideas. That's how it is, and that's how it will be. We play live, and it works perfectly. What Nidhogg does now I don't care about.

-Tell me who does the main high pitched screaming vocals in HELHEIM? Does that person used to listen to early FLEURETY and DARKWOODS MY BETROTHED a lot? Or you think your screams are real exclusive?

-It's me who has those ravelike screams. This is my voice, and I've developed it myself with no influence of others. I don't like FLEURETY, and I'm certainly not influenced by DIMB's vocals, cause they're not good on their first release. The vocal is mine, so I look at it as exclusive.

-What was it like to work with Pytten at "Grieghallen"? Don't you think the final mix could have been slightly cleaner? Will you use this studio again?

-Pytten is a good engineer, and the cooperation was good due to some disagreements. We will for sure use "Grieghallen" again. The sound is as it should be - we wanted it this way, cause it fitted the music pretty good I think. If we wanted it cleaner we could easily do that.

-In your music you mix both ultra speed blasts and quite wandering slow compositions, as if to breathe some air at times. Was your intention to join those patterns into one monolithic album or precisely leave them quite independent each from other?

-The songs are all individual, they have their own spirit. They're made in different moods, so therefore they're all different each from other.

-Do you reason that HELHEIM's music is more outstanding than usual in BM circles? What do other people say on that matter?

-We're HELHEIM, and we create pagan art, we want to stand for ourselves, but who doesn't? So therefore we just have to accept that we're in the masses with the others. I don't think that anyone else apart from ourselves find us so fucking special. They may adore us, but we're not sitting on a throne for

ourselves.

-You should have good contacts with other countrymen of the genre - what is their opinion on "Jormundgand" (mention some known names)?

-Everyone I've been in contact with likes our CD, and that's nice. Some names? Well, Sabbath of ENTHRONED and Nergat of BEHEMOTH are two of them.

Important to emphasize that guys entirely relate their creativity with pagan belief, and they strive to regain pagan pride and honour, to praise the elder gods and the cult...

-Tell briefly what the place Nordas (sounds freezy!!) is & what's it like to live there? What are the sources of pagan tradition down there? You seemed to praise that ancient bequest... But wouldn't it be another wimping out when 90% of population would bow to ancient gods?

-Nordas is just a usual place where people live, nothing special. You cannot find any traces of pagan traditions here, that's impossible. It's just a usual place to live. I hail the pagan cult and mythology as a symbol of heathens. Mythology and religion are two different things. I'm not bowing myself to Odin, the god! bow to is myself.

-HELHEIM are one of those few bands which has enough of feeling & melancholy without unstoppable use of keyboards. Congrats! Is it always useful & necessary in your opinion? And how have you come up to use trumpet plus jewsharp?

-Thank for the compliment. Every part of a song has own little touch of perfection. You know what I mean? We are very specific with that matter that every riff shall be good, therefore we manage to have the atmosphere all the way. Trumpets and jewsharp are instruments which shall bring majesty into it all, especially the trumpets. Don't you agree that it does?

-Yep, surely I do as I've just asked about it for that matter. Going further, I'm amazed by finishing the album "Galdar" - probably the most dreadful track in years! You know, many tried to make their music as fearful as never before (let's say ABRUPTUM!), but your attempt was the best so far! Your comment on that matter... Don't you feel only the man's voice can be so dreadful, not the instruments? By the way, haven't you invoked any spirit performing it?

-Thank once again for your compliment. I haven't looked upon it as fearful, but more like obscure and weird, know what I mean? "Galdar" is a song of sorcery which is performed with a resounding, screaming voice. Odin is the originator of the Galdar. Yes, I agree with you that man's voice is more dreadful than instruments. Me and Hrimgrimir were standing in the studio together while performing "Galdar", we both got a strange feeling of majesty which we both long to feel again, but no spirits were invoked.

-We're heading to end, so tell the story about your names for that matter. Why have you chosen exactly those names & what do they mean?

-Vanargandr is another name for the Fenris wolf. Hrimgrimir is a name used by Thursars or Frostjotuns, and Hrymr is the captain of Naglfar, the ship that appears on Ragnarok. We chose those names cause we liked it, just as simple as that.

No simpler way to stand on one's own, and HELHEIM confirm that with wonderful music. When you obtain their releases don't forget what you've read above, and thank "Ledo Takas" for presenting one helluva pagan brilliant.



Stop at this horde if you want to get a picture how Norwegian black metal looks like in its purest form. No other band yet managed to record so typical album as "Nattferd" is and I'm not kidding telling you that it's one hell of an album! From the further interview with Thyme you'll learn next stuff of RAGNAROK may be a bit different but me guess this four piece will still mark their roots lay in Sarpsborg, Norge.

-Hail Thyme. I suppose it's still not much time after your debut's release. What's the response so far? Is it in the way you were expecting?

-Hail to you too! About our "Nattferd" release, as you said, it hasn't been out too long and the response is what we expected. Because of the bad promotion don't we mean that we have sold badly. The demo "Pagan Land" was out very shortly before and therefore - a bad spreading of the name. But we await a better sale and promotion in the nearest future and we will do a second recording to another release on CD very soon. I don't know when it will be released but I know that it will be a great one. So look forward to the second release of RAGNAROK.

-Returning to "Nattferd", are you satisfied with it for 100%? What could have been done better? Wasn't it too early for the album? Are you sure it can stand along with, let's say, IMMORTAL or SATYRICON albums?

-No I'm not 100% satisfied with the "Nattferd" album as I said in the answer above. There were problems with the promo stuff and not that good sound quality on the oldest recording ("Pagan Land" demo). But at this time it seems like a better future for us and that's why we're going to do the next CD very soon. Also new T-shirts will be printed with a new picture on, but there is still some "Nattferd" T-shirts left. So order it now! And I won't say that we are going to be bigger than IMMORTAL etc. at this moment, but in the future RAGNAROK will rule as the day of Ragnarok is true.

-To be honest, for me your music is nothing new + innovative (yet it's great and performed in a top way!). Does that mean you listened and still listen mostly to your country heroes? Get inspiration from them? Or just want keep those things really traditional and simple, to prevent black metal from changes and mutations?

-I do think the Scandinavian style is the greatest and influences of that we can't deny. The style is the most atmospheric style in the world and it has an extreme aggression and hate inside of it. So let's say that we make traditional Norse music but the lyrics on the next album will be different from the "Nattferd" release.

-You consider yourselves as pagan believers. Does it really has anything to

do with Satanism as some kids claim? In my opinion Paganism was never even close to satanic practices and cults! I hope you, having that name (RAGNAROK), know Scandinavian mythology pretty well?

-I think that "pagan" is a word which is "against christianity", it's an old word and therefore many think it has something to do with the Norse myth, it has too but we are not believers of that myth. Anyway, we use the name RAGNAROK because of the meaning of it and mostly all metalers do know the meaning now. If not I can explain it very shortly with another word... DOOMSDAY! When the sun turns black and the world is surrounded with darkness then a new time in darkness becomes true!

-What could be your reaction when someone throws: "Ah, those RAGNAROK just follow the trend with their Paganism and myths..." You aren't really the first praising the old times!

-I have a great country love but not at this time of Norway's history. I like the old times very much, and long before the trend of the myth in music I was interested in this myth by reading it. We use some myth in our lyrics but not much as you see for yourself. Some lyrics are very much into the Norse myth, but some are just barbaric and hateful lyrics which are the dream of the battle against Christians. I use old warrior myths to do the lyrics more poetic and interesting than just write "Aaarghh... Kill the Christians". But as I said before, the new lyrics are different from the old ones.

-If I'm not mistaken a band called PERDITION HEARSE existed a while ago... Is it the roots of RAGNAROK, just another band, or probably you have only changed the monicker later on? Could you tell briefly on those beginning steps?

-You have been mistaken about that assertion! PERDITION HEARSE is another great band from Sarpsborg. Culto of SHADOW DANCERS was one of them, but it has been a while since they have produced something. Anyway there isn't too long ago that I've heard that they would release something. I don't want to go deeper in their story because know too little about that band. Anyway it was a great band and the new band of Cultoculus SHADOW DANCERS is a great band too, but it isn't in the black metal music as you certainly know.

-I'm sure I was mistaken by the same PD BOX both RAGNAROK and SHADOW DANCERS use. So again a question out of the topic - about "Sepulchral Noise" zine...

-I think you are mixing us with Cultoculus projects. The "Sepulchral Noise" zine is also one of his projects. And I can't say much of his work, it's not my case. It's a good zine anyway. Hail to Culto!

-Back to your experience, you had only one demo out? What was the response like, I've heard the market was quite big on that piece of blackness?

-Our first demo was nothing to be proud of, the sound was awful and only after the second rec. we were satisfied with the result. Unfortunately it lasted just for a couple of months, because of the CD release.

-How have you come up with the idea that demo tracks must appear on CD? They were too good to be missed on the album?

-The demo wasn't released in a great number of tapes and that's why we have them on the CD. And I must say that the world of doomstayer believers have to hear that piece of work too.

-I consider your cover artwork quite impressive, kinda mixing photo & painting styles. Was it used to get that special feel of majesty or you wished to mix the nature and its artistic impression?

-We used a professional photographer on the front cover and three of the other pictures. I did the rest of it. We did use a lot of data equipment to do the front cover and I like the result. We borrowed that equipment in a newspaper in Sarpsborg, and I have to thank them for that. The photographer was also very interested in the CD project and that helped us a lot. Just to mention it for anyone interested the pictures were taken in the Old Fortress of Halden. The meaning of the front cover is shortly explained with the sentence "Nattferd" (A) Journey through the Night). The Deathcruise of the Dark

Knights. Up from the Abyss do we walk gathered to crush the weak and fateful ones. We still walk up the hill and we still have a journey in front of us but Knights of the Unlight don't like defeating and one night will reach the top and evil will reign on this fuckin' weak earth.

-As well I noticed that you packed your inlay sleeves with photos of winter, but your own photos were perpetuated in summer. What can it mean?

-It's just that we took the band pictures in summer and that I like winter the best and the nature is showing its power more in winter and less - in summer. I really don't care much about that, and by the way the photographer wasn't connected with us before the great winter was dead. I like to do the pictures in the wintertime because of the art of nature is such majestic, you can see the wickedness in it if you want to and have the eyes for it. For me it isn't just pictures...

-Wanted to ask about keyboard parts of "Nattferd"... Did you come up with ideas and Pat just performed them or he thought them out by himself? In any case agree that he knows how to make it tight! What can you say about him as an engineer?

-We have most of the ideas but we are not that good at synth as he is. Anyway he is a great musician and he seems to know a lot about many different music styles. He is a great engineer and he's getting better and better, it's just great to have him here in Sarpsborg. Actually I look forward to do the next album with him in October.

-Outside is 1996, that's three years passed from those historical events in Norway, when everybody tried to judge about bands from "what they have done", not "what they play". Don't you feel times are changing and meanwhile those who deserved recognition have already got it? Is it a positive thing in your opinion?

-Yes I can feel that times are changing, we have some mutual fights in Norway but it's just a waste of time I think. I think the music is more important now and that's great but things which happen beside the music are also important, so we can see christianity fall in defeat faster. I think time will change again in another way but the music will always be the most important to me.

-Tell your opinion on the latest intention in underground world to mix black metal with every other kind of stuff: folk, goth, dark, thrash, doom, occult and likes? You like such bands?

-BM is BM and it will always be: It was a time where many styles were mixed but that time will more or less die. In my opinion there's some good result of mixing styles but I don't name it BM. I think the more old BM fashion comes now. Not that much mixing as it's nowadays. We have to wait and see! I like atmosphere in the music and RAGNAROK will be one of these bands in the future.

-In the band you seem to have different tastes about corpse-paint? Were there any argues considering that Rym is quite significant figure in RAGNAROK?

-Yes, three of us like to have the paint in our own causes, and Rym doesn't see why he would use it. But we respect him anyway, he is a great music player and he just make more and more magnificent pieces. He is a very original person in his own way and I like that.

-For the end tell what it's like to live in Sarpsborg?! At least in Lithuania there's kinda myth it's full of blockers & quite known names in underground... Do you often see Metalion, hanging out together? Is he responsible for your success?

-Sarpsborg doesn't have a very big BM scene, but I see that it's growing in the younger generation. I don't have that much contact with them. About Metalion, he is great friend and he is responsible for a lot of things, but he has been in Australia for some months now and he couldn't do much from down here, so we had to work hard to make RAGNAROK one of the big bands but now as he is back in business and I'm not sorry about that. OK that's all from the view of RAGNAROK for this time, and thank for good questions. And hail to all Knights of Black Metal and you know what to do!!!

Trust my word - RAGNAROK rules!







# the land of stone and frost by Lord Ominous

What you see here is not big nor exhaustive comment on the trip to Norway. Maybe it's not usual look to this land, but anyway - quite special. I hope it'll help some persons to treat themselves carefully in the north as well as learn some things you are never going to expect from local people. Lord Ominous from ANUBI speaks..

Being long-haired you can easier learn what's going on in Norway. The police will most probably catch for the poorest trick, passing by drivers won't stop and so on.

If you think that you'll make a good travel in this land by autostop as in Southern Europe, at least don't say it loudly. I've tried this way - cheaper but exceptionally difficult. Prices in Norway are fabulously high in general, so I didn't let myself travel by bus and sleep in hotels.

It was in September-October 1995 when even the lower part of Norway starts preparing for a winter sleep. I resolved to travel with a tent, without a sleeping bag, but with lots of jumpers, etc. Surely, an aluminium pot and full sack of groats, sausage, cheese and other food, not mentioning already the clothes, which took up the biggest part of place. I must say right away that I haven't slept warmly a single night, all the time chattering my teeth and awaiting the morning. It was up to 5 degrees below zero at nights.

In spite of that the land made a huge impression. Fjords, mountains, my favourite fir-trees, stones and sounding with red berries rowans in them. Fir-trees, birches and rowans are the main trees here.

And small towns left on me bigger impression than, for example, Oslo. Especially it was reflected in Sweden, let's say Stromstad. Indeed magnificent borough. We shouldn't forget SWORDBMASTER and DISSECTION come from



town and when it became dark I went to the grove to put a tent. Passing the highway circle the police caught me. The first question was if I have money, then - passport, and there - why Norwegian visa is missing (which isn't demanded), as they saw that Swedish one is included. Even a fallen out from my pocket nut was an important object for them. They found it and were surprised themselves that it's a nut. Then were asking if I was hungry. Did they do that with courtesy? So, they took me in their own "Volvo" and brought to the office. There said that I'm illegal. It was quite pleasant!!! Put for twenty four hours. Maybe you know what for? I was waiting for deportation to Lithuania again, but they changed their mind and decided that I'm legal for all that. But they have found some occult/satanic literature, letters, flyers in my sack, developed my photos - found ancient churches photoed there. That made them think that I'm going to burn them. I've got to answer cool to all their questions which stirred a smile deep in the heart. Asked exhaustively what places and people I'd visited. They've made some photos with tables, taken finger-prints. The police was afraid that after the return I can make a "mission" in fire's honour. That's why they insured themselves.

But wards are tidy, a soft bed with a bedding. For dinner two sandwiches with milk were brought. In the evening I've asked to let take my own food. They have let. Next morning we were seen off Norway to Sweden - by raft. Only when it sailed away the police went out.

Drivers also were afraid to take seeing me with rings, leathery, black and long-haired. I saw their scary glare... Drivers were complaining that they had a bad opinion about long-haired persons. It's obvious that bm mafia played a dark and frightening role in its land. As from the police I've



Gol Kirken

there.

One town in Norway we called down curses upon. We (that town is called Gol) stuck there for two days and couldn't go out neither forward nor back. It wouldn't be pleasant to spend next night down there, as it's the highest place we reached in Norway, and the coldest either. Through Gol we had to reach Bergen, but it was still 300 km away so to stick somewhere deeper was no wish at all to think.

In Bergen I had to visit Ulvhedin from TAAKE. He was the main inviter of myself. Somehow we've managed to go out off the damned place, but back already. I went in the direction of Larvik to Jan Wessel from DIES IRAE, but haven't found him at home. Then went for a walk in the

got to be a satanist is illegal. What's the fuck? What a society of cowards?

In Oslo I was visiting TENEBRAS O.V., met MOONLORE, ISVIND. At that time when MOONLORE were mixing their recordings in Oslo studio. Studios aren't different there and here.

An interesting fact that TENEBRAS O.V. member Andre and Even from MOONLORE are interested in toy soldiers. I don't wanna comment in Oslo we were in two metal shops. I was in 'Euronymous' one - very small.

Oslo doesn't have gothic buildings. Their castle is erected only in XVIIIth century. I haven't noticed any exceptionality of the city either. At least small towns are greater. And the nature smothers everything.

The land of stone and frost.

# paradigma

*They are from Norway... performing some gloomy atmospheric metal, comparable with country mates THEATRE OF TRAGEDY, old THE 3RD AND THE MORTAL... That shouldn't stop you from checking the band out as PARADIGMA combine some excellent metal music and classical symphonic lines, thus being absolutely own and obviously unique about their style. Everything you need is to accept their riding natural tales - must love purity of sound...*

The questions were answered by K.J. Lervag (drums & percussion) & Tom Kvalsvoll (bass vocals & lead guitars). Both guys showed a great interest to answer my quests, so this indie happened to be real informative (as all others in our mag!!!). Besides, Chris Eidskrem (bass guitar), Zilla (soprano vocals & keyboards) and Tom Erik Evensen (tenor vocals & guitars) complete the line up, responsible for "Mare Veris" CD last year and new mini album "Skadi" recently. At the time being Tom is writing new material. It is likely that the other band members will also contribute to the songwriting. The next full CD is due some time in 1997. PARADIGMA also hopes to do some touring connected with this release, but nothing is confirmed yet.

**-Hello. For a start, what's the mood in the PARADIGMA camp these days? What are your expectations or everykind-of-experience this hot summer?**

K.J.: -Hello to you too, Tadas. I have to disappoint you about the weather, it's not very hot up here. Right now it's raining and a temperature is below 12 C. Nothing to get sunburnt from, but we write our songs indoors, so we have no complaints. We are currently working on new material for our next album, which hopefully will be out some time in 97.

Tom: -I have to disappoint you about the weather, too... I live in Oslo now, and it's 25 to 30 C every day here. That's just too much! But my general mood is fine anyhow. Besides attempting to record some demo tracks which I'll pass on to K.J, I am quite occupied helping out at a mastering studio.

**-Your new MCD "Skadi" was released some months ago. Can you tell me please what was the rush to release it... did you have some unreleased tracks left from earlier, or did you just want to show your audience a brief example of your new experience? Wouldn't it be better to wait a bit and make your next full length CD?**

K.J.: -Was it a rush? 10 months? Maybe, but we felt we wanted to do it. Right after the release of "Mare Veris", a kid named Erik showed up at our rehearsals with a cello. It turned out great, as his presence made our music even more moody and beautiful. He even played live on our releaseparty for that album, and has been with us since. We recorded the Astral version of "Best Regards" for a compilation CD, and also the RUSH cover "Witch Hunt" was intended for a compilation. None of these comps were released, so we decided to include them on the MCD. In addition to this, we wanted to record the MCD because we knew it would be quite some time until our next full length was ready.

Tom: -"Skadi" was important to us, and these five songs had to be released on that CD. "Skadi" marks the ending of PARADIGMA's first era, which consists of "Mare Veris" and the latter. These two CDs



are to be considered as two different sides of one issue. Therefore, I think it suits "Skadi" to include two rerecordings of older tracks. They show where we have been, and at the same time a glimpse of where we will go. I'd like to add that "Skadi" is 30 mins long, so it's not much shorter than many full length CDs.

**-In your opinion, did the music itself or your manner of composing change more or less comparing both releases? Do you think you've got more experience during the last year?**

K.J.: -Our music is constantly developing and changing. It would be meaningless to write the same song ten times. We are artists, and that is always a challenge we meet by working thoroughly on each composition.

Tom: -Yes, that's true. Our spirit and general musical goals don't change, but we always discover new territory. My personal way of composing hasn't changed very much these last three years. But I have more experience, and consequently, good ideas come easier when I need them. At the same time, I am more critical to our songs now than, say, two years back. Without self-criticism one won't get anywhere.

**-What about the titles "Mare Veris" and "Skadi" - you seem to like Latin? Do the two titles have something in common, or are they just coincidental? And what do they mean?**

K.J.: -"Mare Veris" is, as you say, in Latin. Directly translated, it means "Sea of Spring". "Skadi" is not Latin. This is the English name for our Norwegian Jotunwoman Skade.

Tom: -By "sea of spring" we mean our spring. The spring of blissful mourning chants. The birth of the raptured darkness of the tribe PARADIGMA. "Mare Veris" is also one of the dark patches on the moon. "Skadi", yes. Away with the spring, straight into winter... In Norwegian folklore, she was symbolic of winter's peaceful slumber and howling winter storms. In the myths, she was once married to Njord - the god of sea and wind, who was also the personification of summer. Not surprisingly, she abandoned him in favour of Uller, the wintergod. Njord couldn't bear nine nights in Thrymheim, and Skadi couldn't stand the three nights in Noatun either. Symbolism pertaining to winter vs. summer. And other things. Skadi is important to us, as she symbolizes our heathen hearts altogether. Under her white veil the dead seeds await a new spring. That which once was. That which is from us bereft. Inevitably, as winter, she is our symbol of death. The death of...

**-On the other hand you seem to prefer English for your lyrical expression. I'd like to know why. What about using Latin (that would fit perfectly to your musical orchestrations!) or native Norwegian?**

K.J.: -English is the ultimate rock language, and everybody understands it. What's the point in writing great lyrics if nobody understands them? Don't get me wrong here, I'm not saying we'll never write in other languages. In fact, we have... but I won't tell anything more about that, you'll have to wait for our next album.

-I'm not sure if you agree, but to me it's Zilla's voice that makes your compositions outstanding, especially when she's singing the lead vocals. It's also her main performance, and yours more as an



# let the summer suffer its atonement in white

accompaniment kind of thing in my opinion! What do you think?? I must admit your job is really perfectly done - one must just listen to the tracks ignoring the vocals and he will agree.

Tom: -Eh, lost you at the end there... do you mean you must ignore the vocals to fully understand the music? (NOT! - T.) I surely hope not! The vocals and the music are two sides of the very same matter. Anyway, I'm pleased that you like Zilla's vocals. We are three vocalists in this band, and people are of different minds concerning who's our actual lead vocalist. Personally I don't care. The three vocalists represent necessary elements, of which all are important.

KJ: -Some think Zilla is the main vocalist, some think Tom Erik whilst some again say Tom is the chief. The truth is - none is. Everyone has their specific responsibility and none of them are arguing about that... I hope.

-To sum up the whole composing, the other (male) vocals add the most atmospheres and that particular gloomy, even medieval and bombastic feel at times. What other vocal experimentations would you like to do further on?

Tom: -I think our three voices are quite sufficient! At least, we haven't any plans of doing anything very different from that right now. Our three individual vocalists will improve and maybe change a little, but that's all.

-Norway is still associated with black metal to many people, but I dare to state that more and more brilliant atmospheric metal bands come from over there! What do you think? What's your point of view about THEATRE OF TRAGEDY, by the way?

KJ: -I have only heard one of their songs, but I've read somewhere that they sound a bit like us. If that's the case, then they ought to be

common mood in your subconscious?! About that nature thing... using those great photos & some inspiration for your lyrics, don't you feel you can be mistaken for being a Norse/Viking/Pagan band?

Tom: -We are proud of our nativity, nature and heritage. We are true-hearted Heathens, so in that sense we are a Pagan band. Although we don't use our personal convictions as an image. No, I don't think anybody takes us for being a Viking band.

KJ: -You don't have to play so called Viking metal to express feelings connected with nature.

-What can you tell those who think that Paganism/Occultism is meant to express feeling connected with nature?

Tom: -Paganism and Occultism IS pure expression of unity with nature. But never confuse this with those image bands that claim to be "occult" or whatever without having the slightest clue of what they're talking about. Far too many confuse the terms occultism and mythology. Many even put pure fantasy tales in one of those two branches. These three terms are to some extent connected/related to one another, but they should still not be confused with each other.

In his letter Tom mentioned he's working on a side project THRAWN as well. Music is said to be more chaotic than PARADIGMA, but no further comments were given. KJ appears here too, as well as Greg (vocals, effects) from ESOTERIC! Yet THRAWN won't compete with PARADIGMA in any way, as it's solely a side project. The CD will be released on a decent label, even no deals won't be signed until the recording is complete.

-If you lived in a different (warmer?) country, would your music be as it is today? I mean, do those landscapes or your mentality have that main influence on the whole creative process?

Prokofiev thoroughly. I owe them a lot when it comes to my knowledge of melancholic structures and musical passion.

-How did you choose the artwork for "Mare Veris" and "Skodi"? Did you want some abstract paintings to represent the mood of the albums or their lyrical side? What about John Rostad's style and works?

KJ: -It was a coincidence. I was on a shopping round in our hometown when I walked into this art shop. John Rostad's paintings were filling the walls, and I fell in love with them. I bought five paintings. When I showed them to the rest of the band, we decided to use a very suitable one for the cover of "Mare Veris". Later, we just happened to have one that was perfect for the "Skodi" concept. Rostad is an older man, but he was flattered that we wanted to use his art for our album covers. All he asked for was a copy of each album. I don't know if he liked the music though, but he sure liked the artwork.

-Do you like to experiment with your written tracks, maybe making some new (ambient/acoustic/rocky) versions later on? Are you keen on covering other bands' works? What kind of music would that be?

KJ: -Such things aren't planned. They just happen. But they will always be some weird stuff on our forthcoming EPs and MCDs.

Tom: -You know we've done some of that stuff already. The risk of overfocusing on old material is evident, so we shouldn't rerecord new versions too often. We thought about doing an acoustic interpretation of "Journey's End", but we already did two of the tracks of that album. Enough is enough. As for cover versions, we do some live. We played some NYMPHS and BLACK SABBATH on our last two gigs.

-Will your next release be on HNF again? Would you like to get some



good, or what? And I think you're right in your assumption. There are a couple of excellent bands that don't play bm from this country.

Tom: -Tommy (THEATRE) suffered a stroke not long ago, and I sure hope he will recover. I think they're a decent band and think they deserve all the success they can get. They're just about in the same position as us, although we've never been influenced by each other. Maybe they're a bit more ordinary doom/death.

-I know you listen to many kinds of music, but please tell me, which (new?) metal bands attract your attention? I believe you have some good pals among the black metallers, too?

KJ: -The last CDs I bought was ARGJURUS, SISTERS OF MERCY, the first CATHEDRAL CD, PENTAGRAM and Julie Cruise. A nice mixture of diverse music. The way I like it to be. I don't know any black metallers personally. In fact, PARADIGMA is the only metal band from Alesund that has released albums.

Tom: -Since I've moved, I've got more in touch with the "black metallers" as you call them. Garrn sometimes works at the mastering studio where I'm an apprentice. I occasionally hang out with those I feel comfortable with, such as "black metallers", "doom metallers" and so on. As long as they've got some integrity. New metal bands that I like? Humm, I don't know... None of the ones I listen to are very new. I'm a bit lazy, so I rarely notice a band until it has been active for a year or two. Which is just as well, as a band need that time to get tight and quality oriented. Some (metal) bands I like are FIELDS OF THE NEPHILIM (which nobody has heard of), MY DYING BRIDE (a totally unknown band from Bradford), ESOTERIC (Birmingham's nicest boys), etc. Some Norwegian bands I listen to are VED BUENS ENDE and OLD MAN'S CHILD...Did you notice that I only mentioned bands from Norway and the UK??

-That should mean something! Maybe Brits and Norse people have any

Tom: -Interesting line of thoughts... I personally draw much inspiration and experience different atmospheres thanks to our nature: landscapes, weather and seasons. Yet my mentality would have been the same wherever I lived. Because I create images and abstract atmospheres within my mind when composing, I find it likely to believe that our music would be more or less the same no matter where the band was located. After all, using nature is merely a way of helping myself through the creative process. I cannot write about the sun when the sun is not my mental realm.

KJ: -I think our music would have sounded different if we lived somewhere else, cause it's what you see and hear outside your door that reflects your personality. Not much maybe, but enough. I don't think I could write about winter if I hadn't experienced it myself.

Tom: -We obviously disagree. I think one's personality is set before the exterior, so therefore what's outside your door won't really matter in the end. Not to one's basic mentality. But I agree with you when talking about describing exterior events, like winter. Such things must be experienced.

-It was a bit strange for me to learn that you listen to various (Russian!) composers, while you didn't mention Edward Grieg or any other Norwegians! Don't you love their music? Or does it go without saying that you like them?

Tom: -Grieg, Halvorsen and the rest of the Norse pack were too romantic. I love "In the Hall of the Mountain King", "Ase's Death" and some of the other stuff from Grieg's "Peer Gynt", but that's it. I'm more into the Russian composers, yes. They had a more unpredictable, chaotic and depressive way of expressing themselves. Nothing, absolutely nothing is more absorbingly passionate for me than to indulge myself in a dimly lit room embraced by the bitter sweet tones from "Rite of Spring" or my favourite parts of "Romeo & Juliet". I've studied the works of, for instance, Stravinsky and

bigger label to handle things more widely or giving you better conditions to promote yourselves and tour?

Tom: -A next formality. We're signed on VOICES OF WONDER. Whether the next album should be out on VOW/HNF or just VOW, is up to us and the labels.

KJ: -We still have an album or two to do for VOICES. If we're given the right offer, we'll sign. As any other musicians, we want to sell records. Our goal is to make a living out of playing the music we love. So it's in our interest to be signed on a label that gives us the best conditions.

Tom: -The guys at VOICES OF WONDER and HEAD NOT FOUND know us well and are cool to work with. That's a great advantage, so we'll stick to them unless some bigger label with reliability makes an offer we can't refuse.

-What is your main idea for developing and continuing PARADIGMA? Are you sure you will have interest in it, say, 10 years from now?

KJ: -A lot can happen in ten years. It's impossible for me to know what the future will bring, but we all hope PARADIGMA will be alive in 2006.

Tom: -I believe PARADIGMA will survive. I doubt that all its present members will stick around for a whole ten years, but the band itself lives a life of its own. It won't yield without a hell of a struggle! Tom in half, ripped wide open, crippled, no matter what, PARADIGMA will overcome. Being a doom band it's bound to grow on hardship.

-Ok guys, thanks for your time and in depth answers explaining me and readers some things I was eager to learn!

Tom: -No problem. This interview was one of the more interesting ones we've received for some time.

To the end notice that PARADIGMA's T-shirts and longsleeves (colour print and poem on back) are available for \$16/\$23 from the band address, which is valid for THE LAIR distribution as well. You must ask about free colour posters too! Inquire.







# luciferion this life sucks-only the art counts!

If you really look for something deathly, LUCIFERION couldn't leave you indifferent - their brand of the style kicks ass no less than those established dm acts do! Those Swedes entered that league with an acclaimed "Demonication (The Manifest)" album of the last year. Only unfortunately, it has been done a little mistake in the CD layout: the titles "Christ Dethroned" and "Satan's Gift (The Crown Of Thorns)" have changed eachother's places. The order inside the booklet is yet right. Indeed their promo tape in 1993 was already awesome, so there's no wonder it didn't take a long time to get a deal, and it really works! The scene definitely took a serious listen to LUCIFERION - it isn't your next death metal outfit.

-Yes, all the response we get are just great. It feels superb as we have sacrificed a big part of our life creating this album. It wasn't any surprise as we are aware of the album's worth, but all the compliments feels great anyway. It's definite that the album has made a name for us, unfortunately some years too late but as time goes on I'm sure we shall reach the position we deserve.

Obviously Wojtek, who is responsible for those words, has in mind the fading of the genre, but as long as such devoted bands still exist, I'm sure it will be alive. LUCIFERION deserve that! Speaking about the release, it was done by Laurent and LISTENABLE Records, and OSMOSE distributes the album worldwide. I'm sure both labels have some influence in pushing the band, but which one helps them more knows only they themselves!

-From what I know OSMOSE didn't do any astounding services for us, I'm maybe wrong but I don't think they actually care. It's not strange by the way, as we are not OSMOSE band. Laurent of LISTENABLE was the one who did all the work concerning "Demonication..." album. He still does. OSMOSE is just a distributor and a "helping hand" sometimes. We don't want to be signed there cause there are too many bands involved in the company, and we need a special attention.

Next question was misinterpreted by Wojtek, yet I still print it to show how he defends his own creativity - that's the case man knows what he's doing... Actually I was asking about the monicker of the band, which seems to me quite typical and used, rather traditional - to keep it simple. The answer followed...

-You are the first one who considers our music being simple. You maybe listen to stuff like ATHEIST (yes!! - T), WATCHTOWER or LIERS IN WAIT? Who knows. The fact is that we play music that is easy to "consume", but I wish you luck with finding many of those who could be able to perform our songs technically. I often meet people who ask me why I'm playing this kind of music instead for use my skills in some more ambitious style, but my aim concerning this thing is to lit: the extreme music on qualitative level. I want to prove that the music of dark arts isn't just amateurish shit. Our dark nature makes it even more exciting and painful. It's first now when the trend at last died, death metal have a chance to keep developing and getting quality. Through us the spirit will return.

-I'm sure it will, and hellish bahhh - I never had an idea about LUCIFERION music being simple!!! No way - me knows what is high technical level! Monicker is not original! Okay, it's rather evil and antichristian anyway. I wonder what is band's position towards this god/satan thing and why it is so demonstratively presented in a monicker & lyrics.

-I agree that our image and theme are really hackneyed in the time of "evil" clowns, but we were among the first who represented it, long before LUCIFERION time. Now we are really tired of all that amateurish shit, and will concentrate on the quality and deeper meaning of our art. Our lyrics will definitely be different on the other album, and the whole thing will be much more personal and mature. Our lyrics on "Demonication..." were very immature, it's just a documentation of many rebellious uncontrolled thoughts collected through the years. Those lyrics don't reflect our present personality. The next album will probably show our true faces and position.

Thinking on the musical side, it's clear that both Wojtek (who handles guitar and sings) and Michael (guitar) used to play their instruments before LUCIFERION. I wonder how much it has taken to learn playing as perfect as guys do now.

-All the members in LUCIFERION are experienced musicians. All we have played our instruments in more than ten years. But that was many years ago someone of us practised at home. You don't have time and strength for practising, the creating of the songs and the problems concerning the band become the main occupying. Moreover, after such a long time of playing there is a risk that you start to consider yourself being Yngwie Malmsteen and that you don't need any education or technical development anymore, but it's total bullshit, there always are those who are better than you. For me personally it's a kick in the face seeing somebody who once was total amateur but through practising became my equal. But it happens very seldom as people don't have any big ambitious aims anymore, like they once had. Anyway, I feel now new fresh energy running through my body again and I think it's time to take care of my own person.

Mentioning the third band member besides guitar players, LUCIFERION hac changed their drummer just during the album recording. I'm surprised as Peter Weiner did a helluva job on both recordings, and now he left for another band... The new addition is Hasse Nilsson, known from his work with mysterious LIERS IN WAIT. Our heroes can't do anything with lousy player, you know...

-It has first to be cleared up that Peter Weiner never left (or should I say was forced to do it) the band during the recording session, even if I for some reason alluded it at some occasions. He was present at the whole session, even during the mixing, there were just bad vibrations between us as he is quite a margo sometimes.

But all the drumming on the album is performed by him. Peter was a very talented drummer (as you can hear), and could surely become one of the best in the genre, but he never understood the seriousness with LUCIFERION and that it was the biggest chance in his musical life - instead he preferred to play PANTERA boringness with SARCAZM (Gothenburg), which was actually a quite good project but without any professional attitude and main. (Can't stand PANTERA and all their clowns! - T) Now he don't play in any band, but we have some plans to start a side project in a techno metal way. Our new drummer Hasse Nilsson has registered himself in the underground's history as the fundament of the insane act LIERS IN WAIT ("Uncontrolled Spiritual Art" MCD on LISTENABLE Rec.), where he performs and presents a drum massacre and unique style. He is the only imaginable substitute for Peter with his incredible speed and technique.

Wojtek Lisicki is the whole name of LUCIFERION leader, and hell Polish is this name! He speaks himself what happened with appearance in Sverige land, and what (musical) sentiments Poland has to him:

-Yes, you are right, I'm born in Poland, and I moved to Sweden in 1984 cause of the fucking communistic regime in my home country. That was my destiny to leave, as my eventual inborn talent should never get a space, understanding and outflow there. I should never be who I am now. I thank my guardian spirits leading me and deciding for me at that time. But on the other hand I would be just a Swedish plastic robot not having that past. So everything is just as it have to be. My emotional misery I have went through banded with all the impulses of all kind, have finally built a creation, a personality which can easily pick up the inspiration and signals direct from the surrounding world of mystery - myself. Summarized, I can say that Poland gave me the soul and the spirit, while Sweden gave me the possibility to make the dreams materialized in form of music. About the Polish scene, I can't express myself as I am not too involved in that activity. One thing is for sure, that (based on my own experience and what I have listened to) except for VADER there is no quality in metal music in Poland, and then I mean things like: (mainly) production, performance and skills that are something that seems not to be cared about. But on the other hand it's not strange as it's still very difficult economical situation there. What can't be denied is a great art spirit there and some really good musicians and bands, but it's not enough. Anyway, it will surely change as the society there is in the progress with crawling out of the caves.

Those of you who still guess how LUCIFERION might sound, just relax and notice it ain't that Swedish as most local bands used to play in the past - they grind the pants in a more technical American way, but then again only few US bands can be so damn catchy and various. Maybe it's like an own way - it tends to that a bit...

-LUCIFERION do not, and will never have a Swedish sound. We are not belonging to any Swedish underground or something like that, we are LUCIFERION, the one and only and are totally independent. We do exactly what we want to. All the unwritten "rules" are just up to us, if we want to follow them or not, and only their right and worthy aspects of course. We have an American sound and style cause we consider it being the true and right death metal and as long we will continue to play this kind of music we shall do it the way we are doing it now. What you consider being right is right for the moment, future is an other history. Regarding the bands in Sweden everything is possible as there are a lot of very talented musicians here. The problem is that the death bands that were once big have been set aside by the black metalish domination in which by the way only a little part are representing some quality and own style, while the biggest part consists of totally amateurish shit.

Hey!! Ever heard "Blasphemer"? That's a song of SODOM (should I ask - ever heard of SODOM??) - one hell of unholy hymn, which was covered by Swedes we are describing meanwhile! And it worked fucking great! They should have some sentiments to it freaks. But why not DESTRUCTION or, let's say, POSSESSED?

-We have been playing that song since the beginning of LUCIFERION's existence, so it felt like a matter of course including it on the album. It's simple and primitive, but also contains the spirit that has only existed in 80's, the period we belong to and will always hail. The other bands you have mentioned are not among those we feel any sentiments to. POSSESSED by the way I consider being totally boring, I have never liked them. DESTRUCTION was

cool but still not worthy that honour.

People sometimes use to call LUCIFERION as black metal band, yet it's totally wrong. I guess it happens of the sound at times, and of that SODOM cover in particular. Wojtek adds:

-People who consider our music being black metal do it because of our lyrics and image. But we are not any black metal band, we are a pure death metal band.

-As being a three piece, the band must be quite special live. Moreover it ain't mentioned about any bass player in biography... I wonder how they managed to show up in tour which took part after the album release.

-We are not any three piece band since one year. Our bass player Martin Furangen is the one who was in a very first LUCIFERION line up. He was gone in USA in one year for studying at school for bass players. Now he is back in the band that is stronger than ever. During he was gone we had a lot of gigs without the bass. There were no problems, we had only to put the bass-buttons on max. We still do it when Martin can't join us sometimes. Our gigs as the whole band are like a steam-roller - total hellblast from the beginning to the end, then we are gone, remaining just a smoking battlefield. We are a real live band and we really enjoy it.

-In my opinion, some occasional keyboard parts involved on the album damn rule! Something what was probably laid by the hand of professional musician, and what should not be missed next time in the studio!

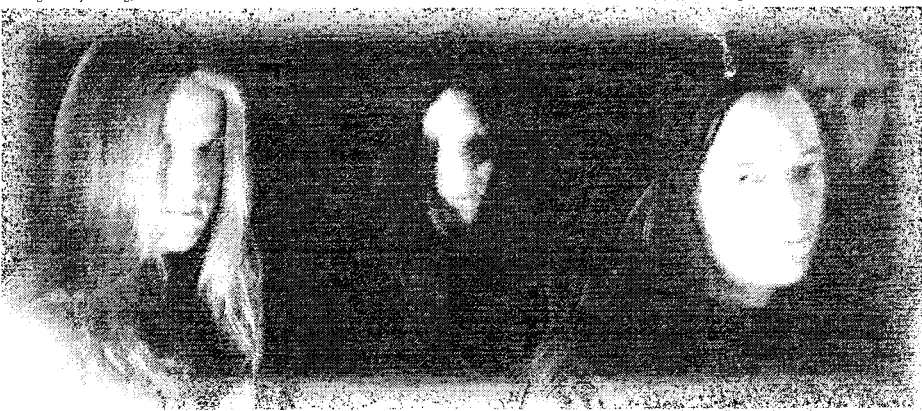
-It was me who created all the keyboard parts, but without Johan (the guy on the extra page in the booklet) it would be not possible, as all the equipment was his and he took care of all the samplings, sound and programming. It will definitely be more keyboards on the next album as all of us love synthesizers that are irreplaceable with their possibilities and perfection.

About any idols or just some sources of influence in musical scene Wojtek agreed to speak without any hesitation. Moreover he laughed at the idea to not have any influences at all, ignoring anything composed earlier. In my opinion, such statements are rather ridiculous, at least for metal music.

-Ridiculous isn't the right description here - it's total bullshit. Everybody is just copying each other nowadays, and even if there really are some bands that try to create their music in a unique way, they are influenced by the other music or bands anyway - and then I mean subconsciously. The bands we are influenced by are particularly selected on the album, all of them! But I can mention that for the "Demonication..." album bands like MORBID ANGEL, DECIDE, IMMOLATION, first BRUTAL TRUTH, NOCTURNUS, FORBIDDEN and some more were of a very big importance.

It seems time to start closing down, so I've rushed to take interest about latest happenings in LUCIFERION and possible new album ideas since the debut was recorded even back in early 1994! Hopefully guys will cover some brilliant antiquity once more! Wojtek ends this up:

-The next album will be much more intensive and technical... and definitely faster/slower at some parts (if we still have the same drummer of course - nobody is in condition to play faster in this country!). Some grind parts will be really fast! But on the other hand the slow parts will appear as a steam-roller caused by its heaviness. The songs in general will be very involved and morbid but still enjoyable and full of surprises. Many effects and synthesizer stuff will be used. Only three new songs are written so far (no serious titles yet), but we now are systematically working with new material that will totally blow you away. We have neither decided what title or cover the next album's gonna have, cause the spirit of it has not come forward yet. We are now pertractating with an American company about signing of two more albums. But I don't know where it's gonna lead. In the near future we will join "Tribute To SLAYER vol.1". In the end of '96 I will also record an album including material with mainly heavy/black metal influences, together with Varian (ex.DAMNATION - Poland) on drums and Snowy Shaw (ex.KING DIAMOND/MERCYFUL FATE) on bass (WOWWWW!! - T), but I don't want to mention more than that. Beside our album "Demonication (The Manifest)" there are also: "Tribute To METALLICA" with a morbid and ultra fast devastation of "Fight Fire With Fire", promo'94, OSMOSE's "World Demination" compilation with our version of "Blasphemer", and soon "Tribute To CELTIC FROST" with our "out of this world" version of "Circle Of The Tyrants". In September '96 "The Tribute To SLAYER vol.1" will see the light of day.



"Irreligious" is called a new album of Portuguese finest - MOONSPELL. They are pretty known with the debut "Wolfheart" and even earlier releases, though with this new album MOONSPELL try to enter the new crypts of dark emotion. We've caught Ares, a bass player during the recording session, so maybe he was a bit too busy to tell something more than he actually told us.

-Yeah, we're actually recording a new album with Waldemar again and also in the "Woodhouse" Studios again. It's called "Full Moon Madness".

Ares had in mind Waldemar Sorychta of course, talent of which fascinates - no less! Though you see the album title yet was changed after that. Anyway, the band toured a lot with such monsters as MORBID ANGEL, IMMORTAL... I wonder how MOONSPELL have got it actually.

-The MORBID ANGEL tour was very hard but very good too. I don't see that as a problem, most of the tours are done with 3 or even more bands signed to different labels. Our manager got us this tour - all the small details are up to him. The music is totally different indeed, but that gave us an opportunity to make a difference. MORBID ANGEL deserve our deep respect, as well as our pity - IMMORTAL are idiots.

Later on they had another tour, so Ares continues on that and a road life in general.

-After that tour we've toured with a real serious band: TIAMAT, and after that same tour we've toured with THE GATHERING and the ridiculous CREMATORY. I hate it! I despise the "road life", I can't stand it, I just do it because I've to, otherwise we wouldn't sell records or make any money.

Quite a firm argument (ha ha), though I doubt if tours only make the sells grow... It also should be some layout gems, as rereleased digipak of "Wolfheart", for example. It features one unreleased track and very impressive art! Was this band's idea or not?

-I really don't know, after the MORBID ANGEL tour we got to CENTURY's office and they presented us that. I was surprised but I love it!

Turning to the music I remind that MOONSPELL were the forerunners of black metal in Portugal, releasing "Anno Satanae" demo in 1993, then a 7"EP and MCD too... Music was changing, yet it influenced loads of local bands.

-I don't care, I don't think that what we've done in the past is that important, personally I adore our past stuff but I have legit reasons to. About other people I don't know what they see in that.

I'm sure they find there a "cool" attitude to follow the others, thus making a trend of elitist art. Probably it was the reason MOONSPELL decided to drift away from black metal origins... But what about claiming the band wimped out?

-It's one of the reasons, but the most important one is a natural thirst for newer things, for changing, not to stop in advance, progide and learn more. Nowadays I have real problems to take care of, I can't spend my time with childish bullshit like painting my face or screaming for Satan! People can say whatever they want to, once again I tell you that I don't



care! If these people would worry more about themselves instead of talking shit about something they don't know about... If wimping out means growing, then I'm wimp for sure!

Further on I try to learn if MOONSPELL are innovators, what could happen later... It's quite possible to see them leaving metal music at all! But what then would follow?

-As I already told you it's just a matter of wanting to move on, to try different fields and sounds, experimenting new ideas. Absolutely not! We're not innovators or pioneers or whatsoever, we're just a group of friends that enjoy our company and love music. Music is Art, it has no name or label, so yeah, I do think MOONSPELL's future (if we have a future) will pass through a totally different direction, but I can't tell you now what will be, perhaps we find that we want to become even more metal, perhaps we don't, I don't know about the future.

I still wanted to ask about earlier period of existence, and that were lyrics - pretty dark obscure tales... Are they still in Ares heart?

-I wrote all the lyrics for "Anno Satanae", I identify myself with those lines, I love them! Everything I've done so far with MOONSPELL I'm proud of, there is not a single piece of music which I'm ashamed of, so far my heart can't make a difference

between old, new and future MOONSPELL. MOONSPELL is right this, a world of changes, many in one!

So the band shouldn't have anything common with satanism nowadays. In my opinion line up changes might change the attitude as well - there were quite a few of them.

-Satanism is more related with literature, culture and thought. These are the points MOONSPELL can be called satanic. Line up changes always provided us a fresh breath of raw blood and ideas. It's undeniable that they're related with our musical direction.

Some paradoxical story took place with one of previous guitarists of the team (I haven't cleared if it was Mantue or Tangrisnir), when guy decided to get his part of band business after he was kicked out from the band. The game was over in the court and me interests how it ended.

-Both of them are out of MOONSPELL. Ricardo, the new guitar player, is good enough to replace those two. We didn't accept such situation and didn't answer to his lawyer's intimations, I don't know what will happen next. Of course it's ridiculous, when I fire someone is because we don't want to work with that person anymore. It means he's not welcome anymore, so why the hell should one beg or demand to be accepted where he's not wanted to? We don't have any deal signed, this is not a job!

It definitely isn't and Ares have some reason... I remember reading someone of the band wishing to bring 80 persons orchestra to the shows. How would it work nowadays?

-RAGE has just recorded an album with the Prague symphonic orchestra, GOREFEST played a show in the Dutch TV with a full orchestra, the same goes for THE GATHERING, so I think that's not impossible, time will tell.

"Wolfheart" included several tracks with firm national folkmusic influence. Surprisingly it was never practiced before by the band neither it appears on "Irreligious". Why so, and what kind of national patriotism it carries?

-I love this country, every natural and physical aspect of this land is a piece of me. Therefore that reflects in our music. But we also don't want to make that our fighting horse so we don't turn it obvious in our music. Nationality should be important but only in a private, personal level as a source of inspiration - nothing more.

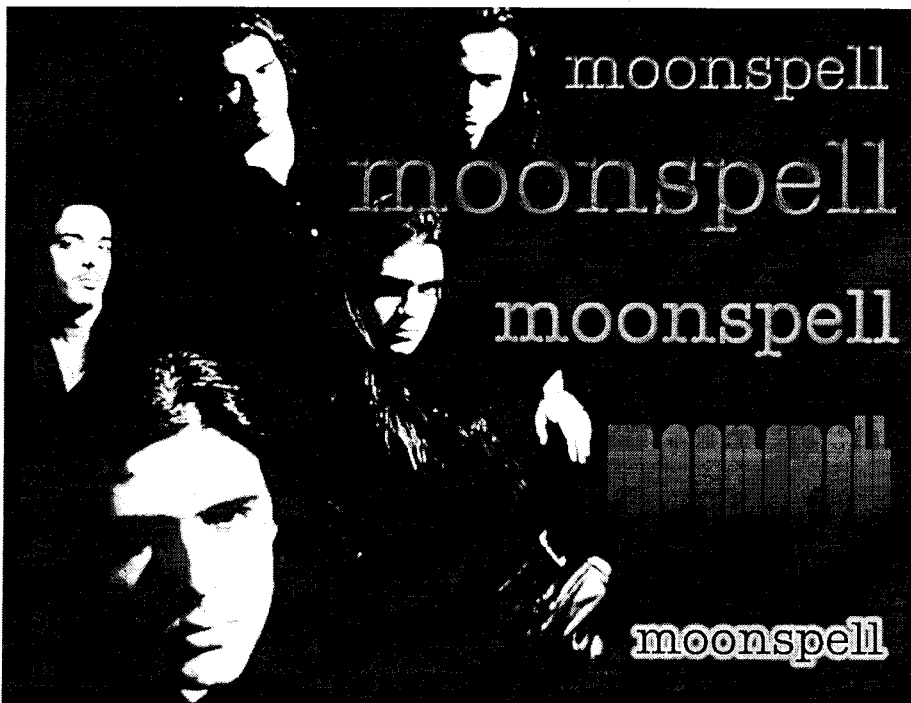
Going thru "Wolfheart" lyrics I can't stop thinking every concept, however strange or harsh it is, is about love and nothing else! Guys seem developing this topic really widely...

-We only write about women, sex, desires, sensuality, flesh, pleasure and pain. That sentence is correct as far as we're concerned.

Time to close down, but Ares must tell if he suppose to have many fans in Lithuania.

-I don't think we've any fans there, we're not that known. Anyway I also have no clue about what kind of underground movement can be found over there. I just wish that Lithuanian people can dive in our sea of madness - get our next album.

From my side I can assure MOONSPELL have some serious following down here - no less than in other parts of the world. So all ye faithful enjoy "Irreligious".



# demorgue

this pretty lady gave a chance to take a listen to the new material, recorded one year later. The ranks of NOVEMBER GRIEF were replenished by the second guitarist Chantal, and now the sound is much more heavy.

Moreover J. F. Dagenais is responsible for the production this time, and he definitely mastered the stuff in brutal way. He's blasting the grind out of KATAKLYSM. Alright, girls surely improved and at last got the point what they want to do. Death metal seems to be their fact, which is still spiced with grinding penalties, slower heaviness (reminding early FLESH+CRAWL, even DISEMBOWELMENT) as well as deathrash riffing.

NOVEMBER GRIEF starts not only learning to play but to construct their songs on the demo, and that's a change for the better. Let's hope the next stuff won't be of another kind (the band replaced a guitar player recently, Carole joined), and so far you can check reviewed demo in trade of \$\$\$\$.

## PAGAN

"Rehearsal Tape" '96

Fast chaotic black metal is displayed on this tape, arising from Turkey. PAGAN is a young band, forwarding this first recording - my approval to name it rehearsal as this is recorded live and the band didn't want to name it as a demo. Real demo can wait whilst you are not sure it's good music. It's like an insurance in case everyone starts to criticize material.

Well, for me PAGAN looks as a pretty amateurish standard bm outfit, having some thrash influences, what let them to outstand from the usual Norwegian style copying. In some places it sounds quite interesting, especially mentioning mystic keyboard line, but there are some parts which sound very primitively too. With time those extracts must be changed with better creation, that the mixture of bm tradition and (may be) Turkish influence would combine into one neat music.

Again don't be mistaken by the title - it's recorded live in studio, so the sound is bearable, only drums sound weak and too loud. Write for PAGAN they need more attention.

## PUISSANCE

"Obey, hate, die" demo '95

This gathering has just released a CD on COLD MFAT INDUSTRY, and that's a pure trademark for them. Pulsing vibrations, emotional horrors, infernal thunderstorms, negative energetic flashes violate the dreams by PUISSANCE.

This is the second tape in their three year experience, showing the darkest corners of the darkest place in hell. Wave orchestrations might easily be used for any horror movie as a soundtrack, or better - for any psychotic underground documentary. These lines evoke uncontrollable destruction, even it's anything like MZ 412 or likes. PUISSANCE do it in an intelligent way, burning your soul from within. Effective manipulation, and believe me, that's a pleasure to take it! Are you sure you'll dig the art created by a clinically insane? I recommend to try, especially that full-length! Both demos cost \$ 6/SKR 35. Industrial freaks might get some satisfaction from this music either.

## REINCREMATION

"Bathing in Blood" demo '95

Extreme brutal death metal suitable for taste of cremated dead bodies. That's written in the biography of Tallinn based four piece outfit. Estonian scene has several teams digging that heavy style, the most known of them are: RATTLER, but REINCREMATION are a bit more interesting and fresh formation, in spite of that heaviness flowing as if you listen American dmi music. Indeed it's in the same vein as ANNIBAL CORPSE (check out guitar riffs and get by "The Bleeding", then INCANTATION vocal simplicity and slow parts) and the rest of the death bands.

REINCREMATION are one great thing of the play as I've said, but variety is a strange word to describe them. However guys know how to handle the instruments, even showing guitar leads when the mood's right. Recorded at local studios it sounds ok, for such style (slightly down tuned and distorted).

REINCREMATION promised to record something new at the end of 1996, "with black/evil influences" according to drummer Andres. Let's wait a bit, and order this debut for \$4 only.

## RESURRECTURIS

"Evil Confronting Evil" demo '96

With two new members in addition and drum machine in programming Italian coathers return with a sophomore demo of old way death metal. Surely their skills have taken a higher level, the songwriting has grown as well. At last the compositions pulsate with a real death metal vibe, with firm classical hooks and real rhythm changes. I guess guys were working hard on giving the stuff this time. Jerry is obviously better than previous member, yet he doesn't make any tracks too. My opinion on (loopy programmed) drum machine is clear.

All in all adding Janos with his guitar lends enlarged the progression. Even acoustics did appeared, and quite a melody in "No dreams allowed" - my compliments to this stringer.

You can get this superior to the debut, but quite average to the better death metal demos release for \$5. Hopefully RESURRECTURIS will stand on their own and improve again.

## RETTALIATION

"Death From The Inside" demo '95

Obviously the first demo reviewed in this magazine being from the prison. I can't believe it was possible to complete it (with a help of friends), to record it, even to rehearse there! At least it'd be just a kidding idea in Lithuania.

But here we have an outfit from America, so it still can be possible. Four guys serve some longtime sentences, and two of them are destined to remain in prison till the end of their days... Those experienced guys (in musical scene too) believe it would be their contact with the world outside.

So, what kind of music was the connection? Music-wise RETTALIATION are quite typical American mid tempo death thrash, with some slower passages and low tempo recording. Definitely 8 track studio was the best and only choice, so it's possible to name it as a good recording. What still keeps this music interesting are the leads by P. J. Fredricks - he does it rather professionally and stands above the others. The band should think more over their own identity next time, and it might achieve better results. Thus far order this tape from: the band address for \$5 (USA)/\$6 (world).

## RUINATION

"Rests Of Beauty" demo '95

DANGLIS

It's not the new stuff by this Lithuanian band, but previous demo, professionally recorded and released by DANGLIS Productions. Quite outdated stuff, if you mind that RUINATION have changed three band members and the style as well. Meanwhile they are playing cheesy stuff like new PARADISE LOST, but much more poppy and commercial.

While this demo still represents what they were doing some time ago. Doomy songs with calm acoustic extracts, growling vocals, some flute effects and quite simple structures. Not that outstanding, but quite good for the lovers of this genre. Me remember earlier try-out of RUNATION with poor and lousy result, so "Rests Of Beauty" was a huge improvement.

Somebody will be interested to check this out - send 8 LI (Lietuvoje)/5 USD to our address.

## SANGUINARY

"Demo-1" '95

When someone names his music on demonstration tape like this, he's either 1) new born "metal", or 2) has very big expectations with his music and these songs seem to him as a passing stage. Well, sometimes both cases supplement each other, but guys in SANGUINARY, a young death metal outfit, have lucid ideas what they want from this severe experience. Yes, severe, as the style they're playing has been quite forgotten these days... Unfortunately.

EDGE OF SANITY (old), GRAVE (old), NECROPHOBIC (old) pop into my head, the era when those bands were shining due to their aggressive attitude to things.

SANGUINARY continue that, and they do it simply great! Neat and highly skillful performance, perfect recording (responsible: Dan Swanö), wonderful writing with all the catchiness characteristic to Swedish death metal. Bludgeoning massmurder! Four tracks are evaluated of 5 \$, and my suggestion is just to get it right now, before guys will achieve something big.

## SHINE IN DARKNESS

"Ancient Forgotten Presence" demo '96

A very attractive promo pack arrived from Italy - neat flyers, tape lay card, layout of it, etc... Cool band name and dark image also... I expected some high tech black metal.

Intro track still increased my guess - gloom atmospheric tune with keys and acoustics, but when the next track started I was totally surprised and... disappointed!! It's pure 80-ies thrash, and played quite lousy if not bad. I understand that it's only the first tape of 1993 year started formation, but this music really sucks. Thrash which is unlight, at the time mid tempo or slow, with no freshness at all. Beside intro I wanna except instrumental "Waiting The Lord Of Fog", which is different - with progressive and acoustic parts, riding off that thrashy cliché. This also means that vocals of Argyle are awful. Without him the band sounds much better.

I'm in trouble to recommend this tape, even it's released nicely. You'd better check out news of SHINE IN DARKNESS: they've already turned death/black with new material... Maybe to write them or what?

## SORATH

"Matache Chavala" demo '95

This is not old project of Baron Abaddon, but a Czech bm band with their third recording. It's available not only on tape (price: \$5/DM8), but also on CD format as a split with UNCLEAN (price: \$15/DM21). I haven't heard their earlier stuff, but this output is rather reasonable. Even the recording should be better for CD release, the music itself is worth of checking out. Though it's nothing original as usual with Czech bm, stuff is composed with neat thoughtful ideas plus flowing stream.

May be compared to Norwegians and IMPALED NAZARENE. No, SORATH do not have punk riffs nor their ideas in the music, but use the same extremely Finns are known for. So more of influences come from the more northern country, and it can be left without deeper comments. Vocals of Admirforestae impose on me - it's nothing special but hard to compare with anyone else. Riffs bludgeon into blackest darkness, rhythms balance from fast to mid tempos.

With better recording it would be a mean job - that's what I wish guys next time.

## SOULSET

promo '95

"SOULSET isn't just a side project of MORTAL GOD members as I'm the only contributing the band nowadays..." - says Tom, improving my review on this last time. As a proof of that this new tape of SOULSET is the strongest release of them, showing both cool writing and surely improved musicianship. Promo tape consists of raging ten tracks of deathrash and is meant to attract some serious attention.

Those songs are superior to the stuff done earlier due to a tight playing and structuring. I'm not sure if the aggressive death metal approach helped in that, or SOULSET have really started to play thoughtful music. Anyway, it still remains quite standard and easy listenable, that is - nothing superepica kicking. I wonder if any label picks them up, but they have a chance if not now, so after a short while. The only thing which should be totally kicked out is L. G. Petrov rip-off vocal style (used at times). Deeper grows sound much more convincing.

## TOMB

"Grave" demo '96

One American dark electronic music project from California, which is influenced (as members say) by such various artists as Brian Eno and RIZZUM, ORB and CELTIC FROST, DEATH, BATHORY, POSSESSED and APHEX TWIN, HAWKWIND... Check out that Cesar Betancourt (he performs music in TOMB together with David Ortiz) took part in CELTIC FROST tribute album with a band CLOSEDOWN making an ambient version of "Branza Macabra". So it's not a next try out to be evil/dark.

Quite a long tape, and music is pretty various ranging from fully ambient effect based minimalisms, going through dark techno mythical beats until reaching symph/mountail keyboard laden miniatures (like title track). I like later, the most, maybe due to their gloom and secret, but also multidimensional ambient. Vocals of Cesar agree with industrial, but sound weak, dirty and don't fit (gladly they are only in some tracks).

Inquire from the band how to obtain this tape. Guys call their experience black electronic death chamber music, though name can be easily reviewed as it's naturally impossible to frame that stuff. What will be released further on?

## THE TRAGEDIANS

"Kru" demo '96

Nihilistically named outfit outbursts from Wimbledon in England, and "Kru" is a debut recording of this young outfit. Sincerely I supposed it to be just another amateurish try out to sound either brutal or evil. Surprisingly THE TRAGEDIANS are much more interesting, thoughtful team with a strong attitude towards own stuff and some real name for what they are playing. For a young band it's nothing but a firm fundament to rise.

About 40 minutes of metal does not mark of tight techniques (and that's what give them away as being newcomers), but a blend of dramatic emotions, progressive arrangements, various experiments with clean vocals, flute and keyboards stands on its own. Those aggressive parts may remind AT THE

GATES, while calm intros breathe of medieval folk and misty landscapes Atmosphere takes presence through the entire demo, maybe reminding Greek scene. In general THE TRAGEDIANS mastered the art of mixing the ideas very well, so result speaks on its own. Add to the whole highly romantic lyrics (written by vocalist Mat and ex. keyboardist Andrew), and don't say this unity has no future. They will definitely grow big, and I can assure you about that. Fight for "Kru" mailing \$5 to the band address!!

## ULLER

reh. tape '96

Dark wave synth project from Vantaa, Finland is not any wonder as such type of music gets more and more various forms in different places of this earth. Originally this must include black metal vocals as one and only band member Iscar tells, yet the reviewed tape is of the beginning stage of this experience, so it has just a 4 tracked synth recording.

Of course, "Ino The Dreams" (title of only track) has much to do with nothing else but MORTIS, yet ULLER ain't that blind copy-machine. Those soundscapes include some brighter touches together with those melancholic lines, some effects as well... In any case, to wait and see how it will sound with a full equipment is the best way. This is not for sale, better ask about latest news from Iscar, who does an "icho" zine as well.

## UNSHROUDED BITTERNESS

"Medieval Crystals" demo '95

Three track (+ intro) debut tape of Dutch doom/death formation, recorded back in autumn '95. They started as MORTUARIUM and were more death metal oriented, but I guess the success of Dutch doom/death pioneers pushed them to change both the moniker and band name.

At least this demo is a nice surprise, because UNSHROUDED BITTERNESS do not clown blindly the others. They create rather own climate, using violin (Esther) and keyboard (Michael) together with traditional instruments, including seem to become great vocals of Paul. Yeah, such type of vocalist (like ones in LOVE HISTORY, German CREMATORI) fits those gloomy passages almost perfect, even Paul must work on still hard further on.

Order this tape for \$7, if you like those calm tranquil sounds mixed with powerful obscenity. Promo '96 should be recorded soon, and with better production it may sound really suggestive.

## V/A

"Dark Fire Dancing" comp. tape '96

DANGLIS

DANGLIS again managed to get some genial local bands for the next compilation of dark and experimental music, including the blackiest of the scene. First volume has surely gained a very positive response about Lithuanian avantgardists worldwide, so this is a next step and I bet it's 100% as better compiled and released.

Highly professional layout with all credits about 15 outfills and necessary info. Playing time is 90 minutes this time, so the range of music has increased...oo.

Yet don't expect to hear 15 masterpieces, as some bands aren't that great as others, or simply are boring. I'm speaking about LAUME, SALA, HA LELA, AKYS... definitely my taste is not the taste of the world, but you'll better check it out yourselves.

Surely black and pagan music is the best here: ANUBI, POCCOLUS, MERESSIN, not mentioning NAHASH and VALEFAR. Experiments highly raise GIRNI GIESMES, CADUCEUS and probably ZPOAN VTENZ - this music is new and innovative, but juicy as well. More folk based soundtracks are performed by WEJDAS, SOULJUS, EIRIME.

Doubtlessly "Dark Fire Dancing" will never die away, and the next compilation will be even stronger than this tasteful release, which goes for 9 LI (Lietuvoje)/6 USD (world).

## V/A

"NEAR DARK compilation vol.1" tape '96

NEAR DARK

The underground compilation cassette, featuring 14 (thrashy) black/melodic death outfills from all over Europe. Yet again, like with "Near Dark" zine, there are even half of them from Sweden, and that's the priority of editors. The main point to check this tape out is 8 never previously unreleased tracks, so that makes this a worthwhile item to obtain (for only 30 SKR/5 USD).

Though not all songs are equally good - I've found here some very weak compositions, not worth to go along with perfect death metal melodiousness of WITHERING SURFACE, A MIND CONFUSED, BESEECH, DISSOLVED (those last two don't discover new Americas, but display their creativity and fit the nowadays trendy style with slightly own ideas). It goes without saying that NAHASH shine among bm music here, but I was also surprised by THY SERPENT. First listens left no impression at all, but that's due to very bad production (rehearsal?) - this tune "In Blackened Dreams" is quite genius! Check this project out for sure! Not bad at all are CHAINED AND DESPERATE from Greece, Swedes FUNERAL FROST. But I was quite disappointed or at least expected more from THE MARBLE ICON, IMPERIAL, MELEK TALUS, GOTTERDAMMERUNG, and completely shitty stuff of CABARET FOR BEREAVED, CHAMBER NOIR.

Production still could be better, though covers and tape are ok. Enquire about compy at NEAR DARK Productions.

## V/A

"NORTHERN DARKNESS Records Advance" promo '96

NORTHERN DARKNESS

It's not your usual compilation tape, but just a promo cassette of young but raising Italian label. I guess it's the first of such kind as it includes both earlier and completely new NDR releases. Due to every band is represented by two tracks only, we decided to review this in demo section. Let's see what kind of darkness those musicians upbringing...

The Northern Side includes three Italian bands which have just released their debuts on the label GODFUCK 93 starts it up with two hard to define tracks. Definition might be done either as metal or as dark industrial. In any case this reminds only a poor DIABLOS RISING/IMPALED NAZARENE rip-off, and no bizarre effects can raise the band's actions. Those riffs sound more than poor, and Charles Rhapsometry, NECROMASS vocalist, can't stand on his name with that industrial voice gargling... GODFUCK "Godfuck" 3" MCD is available for \$8.

ENTIRETY is another name, and their cloning is much better. This time we have a deal with Gothenburg kind of death metal, so expect early DARK TRANQUILLITY riffs... Though not bad! ENTIRETY might grow into something bigger. Check out their "In Caelo Omnia Accidunt" MCD (price: \$11). The third and surely the best outfit is called HANDFUL OF HATE - quite heard name in the deeper scene, ain't it? "Olfiphoetic Supremacy" CD is out now with ten grim tracks of black/death, either in Swedish tradition, reminding maybe EUCHARIST and MARDUK or ALGAKON. Still wish guys more identity, but they



# demorgue

are the best among those three. Probably I'd buy their album - who knows?

The Darkness Side has two bands of earlier NDR releases. First of them is Czechs LOVE HISTORY - read a separate review on their MCD, next band - Italians NOVGOROD: two loonong tracks from their demo tape "In my eyes the black light of sun", which has only three songs. Slow heavy music, with keyboards, which can't give that charm for the rest... At times NOVGOROD are quite bearable, but when they start to use boring ideas, it's better to stop the player. The drummer can go practising his technics... Well, rather weak demo and price is too high: \$6. Why Italians adore so much Russian culture (see monicker)??

So far quite hard, but with help of LOVE HISTORY and HANDFUL OF HATE, NORTHERN DARKNESS will stand on their own. Ask about their mailorder list.

## VLADIMIR

"Lost In My Tears" demo '95

Professionally done tape upcomes from Milano area based five piece, and the band name is already controversial. I don't know where lads got that name, from (yet it should have been Mr. Dracula's surroundings), but I'd just say Vladimir is one of the most often male name in Russia.

Cutting with those discussions, this forty minutes tape is full of melancholic and some dramatic moods, dreamy musical lines, and also lots of effects. While female singing is pretty average, then keyboards make the whole picture quite special. Yet this instrument doesn't make the deal only, the rest is composed pretty smart, too. Patrik has a good chance to develop his black screams, but for instrumentalists I'd like to wish some newer ideas, as at times they start to repeat themselves. In general, acoustic and piano parts sound better.

Quite ordinary stuff, but maybe worth \$6 (\$7 - overseas). If VLADIMIR find some money to make better production, and will naturally progress, next material can be interesting.

## WEJDAS

"Dykra"

DANGUS

Who liked first two demos of this wave project will surely like the third effort. It's kinda concept release, consisting of the only track, yet in my eyes done a bit forced. Separate parts do not stick together in all cases and you can't get a neat view on the whole - it still seem as several tracks without a break.

Of course all the soundscapes breath of the Lithuanian ancient folk culture. I'd say, there are some mixed emotions, created by both pipe and ringbell. A calm mood sometimes is drowned in mystery, and otherwise progressive elements create a bit of avantgarde every now and then. Vocalsing is quite rare on this recording, seeming as a second rate thing, an effect. Piano part is convincing in the beginning, and that "techno" hint is surprising and out of place. It's not usual to WEJDAS, and I bet does not have anything to do with the concept. It would have better been missed off.

"Dykra" is available for 7 Lit.(Lietuwojcy)5 USD. Look out for a new project of guys EIRIME in a near future.

## WITHERED EARTH

"Abolish In Thorns" demo '95

Rochester, NY and traditional extremity flowing from the guts of five guys, gathered together in early 1995. They have recorded this debut demo in May '95 already, but you may wonder to hear not the crap at all. Four bludgeoning tracks bring forth straight forward aggression and heavy weight on the body of the average listener. By this word average I mean WITHERED EARTH will be acceptable for only the part of you, exactly for those who like death metal, its traditional form, obviously New York style.

Away those who detest this sound! And now I must admit WITHERED EARTH might have a perspective if they improve in writing some catchy riffs using Greg's exceptional bass lines and hard work of Adam (vocals). So far the demo with nice layout is worth of listen (for \$5), but future will tell if WITHERED EARTH drown in the sea of extremity

or survive.

## WITHERING SURFACE

"Unique" promo '95

"Unique" is the first and only tape of new born Scandinavian melodic death metal discovery, this time coming from Denmark. Their music is circa progressive neo-death metal, yet it's not a silly copy of DISSECTION or IN FLAMES.

On the contrary, lads try to get some original consonances out of that combining speed and crawling atmosphere, black metal riffing with strict death chopping, low tuned growls with hellish screams and narrative parts (performed by Michael H. Andersen of EMANZIPATION Prod.). Female singer and keyboards aren't forgotten, too. The main is that different ideas are put together rather tight, and they flow naturally. Michael has some decent ideas with his lyrics, too.

No wonder that WITHERING SURFACE were signed in May '96 (a cool result for a band formed in October '94!) by local EUPHONIOUS Records. Expecting much cooler production on the debut platter in February '97, you can get "Unique" for \$ 7/DM 10/DKR 40.

## XIBALBA/AVZHIA

"Ancient Blasphemies" tape '96

VISION D

Two Mexican unholy hordes join forces on this split release, presenting some unreleased tracks by both. Both bands have already full-length albums out, and it may mean they lead local black metal scene, yet of course there should be done heavy weights of work to get more attention. It's my first acquaintance with XIBALBA, and quite a pleasure to hear the old way of style guys are developing their skills on. Three tracks presented are written in various stages beginning with 1992, yet they do not differ that much. Take those faster tracks of CELTIC FROST, mix them with some thrashy attitude and add the distorted sound. Quite refreshing but not much than that.

AVZ ita upcome with two tracks (not featured on CD) of the same manner they perform on the album. Maybe those compositions are a bit more straight forward and primitive, yet hardly differ from the stuff reviewed elsewhere. Quite an enjoyment for black metal fan, especially if he likes something typical.

Ask about this tape for 5-6 USD from the label or STORM Productions.

# seven

## FULGOR

7"EP '95

MERCILESS

This German formation is already formed out, after three demo tapes and this 3 song EP which is pretty different from what the band done in the past. As my mind prompts they played something black/death oriented, at least on their third demo, and now I hear some experimenting near the atmospheric/industrial edge metal music. Vocal is still growling at times, but most of time put thru effect, drums are programmed, keyboards appear on the biggest part of EP.

Odd composing, even the opening "Silent Waters Leading Deep" is pretty metal and symphonic, especially from the middle. I liked that mid tempo swing and melody of joyful schizophrenic. Next song "A/I" is less impressive, and finally closing "The Fog" is like the outro, but done without any care - for noise's sake.

As the band state in info sheet, this was recorded back in 1993 and is kinda unreleased material. One more band to get some rare stuff of. And one more potentially interesting outfit to be splitted of... Prices: \$9 (Europe), \$14 (world).

## MANIAC BUTCHER/DARK STORM

"Black Horns of Saa?" 7"EP '95

VIEW BEYOND/PUSSY GOD

These two Czech black metal bands joined forces on this split release as they have some common members, and appear on the same label, formed by Barbarud Horn. He is responsible for screams in both bands, and Vlad Blasphemier is another person, playing in both bands (guitar and drums).

The music is quite similar on both sides. MANIAC BUTCHER present a title track from the debut album "Barbarians". A very simple structure, reminding old bands like DARKTHRONE or even VENOM. Though identity-wise they have some troubles.

The same can be said on DARK STORM, yet their music is a bit more various, with slower passages. Yet again typical Scandinavian manner doesn't let this outfit stand a bit higher.

Anyway, if you like black metal in a pure ancient way (that means, without any identity in this case), invest \$6 to either label's address.

## MASTER/EXCISION

split 7"EP '96

MOONLIGHT

Special back to the roots epee featuring one of the pioneers of deaththrash, and young promising Dutch band, which is near to release a debut album on the same MOONLIGHT Records. Well, it's quite enjoyable even nothing extraordinary is played on.

MASTER are back with these three tracks after some years hiatus. Their style hasn't changed, only the band took more thrashy way again. Even Paul's vocals are in pure SEPULTURA vein of '88. Straight forward music, and it's no chance to find any subtle element. Thrash!! Though the second track "Falso" is in pure MACABRE/DISRUPT way - punkcore oriented, lasting no more than half minute.

EXCISION have caught my attention with their appearance on couple comp. CDs, so I was expecting anything fresh again. Their music on "Hollow Fusion" is still kicking, fresh deaththrash with some slow melancholic breaks, as always! They mix both in an interesting way, I swear. Must be interesting to listen to their debut full length.

Deaththrash fans - grab this 7"! Prices are 8DM for Germany and 7\$ for the rest of planet.

## A MIND CONFUSED

"Out of Chaos Spawn" 7"EP '96

NEAR DARK

A 1000 copies limited follow up to A MIND CONFUSED's demo tape reviewed in demo section, with two brand new songs of the same Swedish raging speed, infernal melodies and masterful tightness. Though it's not exactly in DARK TRANQUILITY/IN FLAMES/EUCHARIST and friends style, the similarity is seen. Maybe more straight forward, with more sharpness, rage, savage energy.

That was about title track. Next is "Erchantress of the Dark", and the prologue is much D.T. alike. But then more deathly death metal starts to crawl, so it hard but all in all holds on an own line. High tech is felt, so this Stockholmian union must get on writing new better tunes with later growing into strong band. So far they are on the right way. If this EP is still on sale, you can get it from the label for SKR 35 or \$ 6.

## MORNINGSTAR

"Before The Dawn" 7"EP '96

MOONLIGHT

This seven incher features two unreleased songs of Finnish metalers. Actually they appeared on their 1993's demo "Inside The Circle Of Pentagram", but here we have a new version of title track. Well, it's quite boring as only simple thrashy riff is played along with typical growling vocals. Another song "Goddess of Witchcraft" is more various and better, because it has some more parts, slower and faster, has some mood, energy at last.

I see that music was created back in 1992, but why the hell it should be released now?! Even there are some fans who buy it, it's a lousy piece of vinyl... Nothing comparable with recent MORNINGSTAR album, which is stylish black/thrash, while this is grey thrashy release... Available from the label for DM8 (Germany)/\$7 (world).

## UNGOD/CABAL

7"EP '94

MERCILESS

This is the first MERCILESS seven incher in their series, presenting two German outfits of the old school. UNGOD plays black and CABAL - death metal. I suppose the first band is more known due to their infamous debut album and recently released new MCD, as well as due to arrogant action against UNGOD of "true" blackers. Here we go with an "Intro - Aeon of Sunless Dominion" and "Renaissance of

the Dark Arcade". Purely UNGOD sound, traditional black metal at its simplest, and a very raw production. Yeah, there's one cool riff down there, but in general - nothing special.

CABAL upcomes with an unreleased two tracks "Frozen Hell" and "Consume More Gore" (written in 1990) of straight forward death metal. Thrashy riffing, fast tempo and barking vocals. German bands like this simplicity, yet not always it's pleasant to listen to (over and over again). At least the production is much better, so that's a deal to spin it down.

This epee still has some listeners, so hurry up to mail \$9 (Europe)/\$14 (world) to MERCILESS or get three 7"s from the label for \$15 (Europe)/\$20 (world).

## UNGOD/DESASTER

7"EP '95

MERCILESS

Another epee featuring UNGOD. Actually it must had been split with MAYHEMIC TRUTH, but later on DESASTER were taken instead. That's obvious as their CD is marvelous. This track "The Hill Of A Thousand Souls" is earlier and not included on CD, so here is that rare chance to hear it. In the same vein, with speed bn parts and slight hint of thrashy metal. There are several better DESASTER songs on 1 P, but this is awesome nonetheless.

UNGOD don't deliver anything special. What was written in above review may be said on this track "Aeon Of Sunless Dominion" - very primitive bn the old way, only two riffs if I count right. If I were them I'd doubtlessly hire another guitarist to make sound thicker and supreme. But UNGOD don't agree and that's their problems. Also "Outro" finishes it up - just some bizarre sounds.

Want to mention nice artwork on both sides of EP (even DESASTER side looks better with apocalyptic visions painted in bloodred). 7" is for fans of both bands, especially whilst it costs pretty much (see the review above).

## ZEMIAL

"Sleeping Under Tartarus" 7"EP '94

GOthic/DARK REALM

Who doesn't know this black metal legend, nowadays deformed, unfortunately? Here we have a release of a three song 7"EP with an improved layout and quality of tracking. It's limited to 1300 copies, so hurry up to obtain this pink piece of vinyl for \$5 (USA)/\$7 (overseas).

ZEMIAL lead that old wave of black, with a majestic, medieval feel, filled up with keyboards and minor melodies. Mainly mid tempo they don't discover anything new, but the charm of it's creation convinces, lulls the listener till the frightening moment to catch the dust of Absu abysses...

This EP was recorded back in 1992, but when the music counts it doesn't matter. ZEMIAL belongs exactly to this type of legends. Order this from DARK REALM Records' address! By the way, many of today's black metal hordes draw influences of this supreme outfit.





*Autumnal rivers cowereth...  
as dreary Wellone awaketh!*



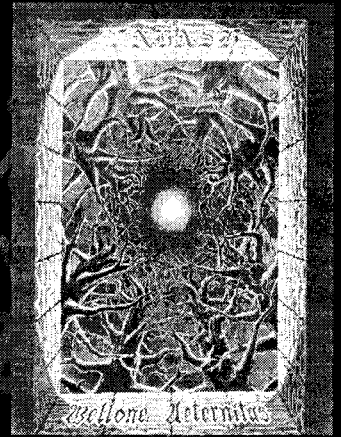
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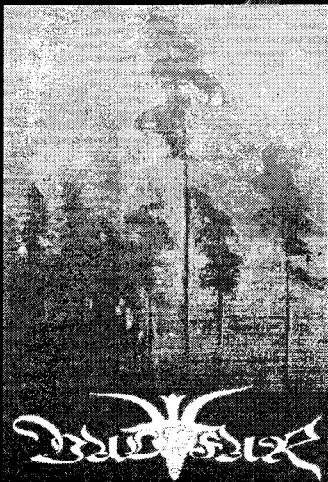
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