

TALES
of the
MAGICAL

5



TALES OF THE MACABRE

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- ISSUE

FIVE -

Greetings to all brothers and sisters who joined the pack,

It was again a pain in the arse to do this fifth issue of TALES OF THE MACABRE, and I hope that you'll appreciate the work that got offered this time. Nothing much changed since issue four... our scene is still rotten and corrupt like hell, stupid false bands still get hyped and celebrated, shitty commercial mags still earn mega-bucks and deceive the stupid readers, but the elite of real Metal mania still marches proud, an unstoppable force of warriors who fight for their beloved music.

Some people call this mag an "old-fashioned" one, but this is only because most of the popular stuff that gets released nowadays does not give me the feeling that I need when listening to this kind of music... By the way, talking about rough music... which bands made Thrash/ Death and Black Metal popular? Weren't it the early albums of hard striking forces like VENOM, SLAYER, HELLHAMMER, BATHORY, POSSESSED, SARCOFAGO, DEATH, etc. and later MORBID ANGEL, AUTOPSY, MAYHEM, DARKTHRONE, SAMAEAL, BEHERIT, etc...? If you don't agree, then you're bought the wrong magazine here, sorry. These are just the bands who built up the fundament of this publication.

And if there's talk about real Heavy Metal, then you should think of bands like old IRON MAIDEN, JUDAS PRIEST, MANOWAR, and so on... Music that forces you to bang your head and raise your fist high!

Having this in mind, you'll know why I've chosen certain bands to get interviewed this time. So, hope you enjoy reading this issue. Thanks for your support in these hard times of commercial overkill. Hope to see you all again when TALES OF THE MACABRE #6 is once again "at war with false Metal". Pre-orders (\$5) are of course welcome... Bye bye!

NO MERCY FOR THE POSERS!

Special thanks: all readers, all distributors (keep the faith!), all bands that got interviewed, Eva Maria Christ, my family, Hübi "Master of the raster", Frank Stöver, Markus Nick, Pavel Tusl, Traci Lords, Bitburger Pils, Al + Kelly Bundy (for giving my TV a reason to live), Richard (for residence), Reval mit Filter, Metaxa (*****), Gibson-Explorer 1986.

Thanks and greetings to: all bands/ labels that sent their stuff, OSMOSE, Daan/ DAMNATION, Masaki + Shinji Tachi, alle Hellbangers Moselfranken + Metal Guerilla, Ytong + magische Handschuh, Jörg "Maniac" Buko (Achtung, alle Mitglieder von deutschen Bands bitte weghören!!!), Popstar- Fickfrosch + Hellrider Mattin Krötz, Jörg L., Janne + Mikko (ISTEN), METALIZER Mag, Italian Stallion-Anderle, Jane/ SAMAPEST (where are you?), Janne + Mikko of great ISTEN Zine, hellhammering Krynojewski, Blanca (too much "Sex, Drinks and Metal"), King Wolle + Metalwiese (Granadasaufen in praller Sonne), Armin ("Eviler") Heas, Armin ("Devil Worsipp") Franzl, Sami T., the black Cath Folens, Wannes Gubbels, René van Mol, Smoking Schindler, Valentin + Todo Rock, José (DISTORTED HARMONY), Noe Rosales, brother in Metal Tann, Riccardo (FORGOTTEN JEWELS), Demonos Sova and his mighty BARATHRUM, Russ Smith, Schiekron ("Dess tuat quat!"), Olli, Dick, Vadder + Hodin, GODREAH-zine, Commander Björn, Jörg (FOLTER), Jeff Plagnard, Christoph Dobberstein (don't wimp out!), Ray, Mr. Cronberg, Lord "Metal Invader" Snapp, Werner "Nyar", Hähchen-Karl, H.M.F.C. Vellbert 1981 (Steif, Nicole, Michalis und Blitzkrieg-Sidi), Düak, Partic (DEFTONE), Russ Smith. Sorry to those I have forgotten...

Hail to all bands and headbangers who still keep the real Black/ Death/ Heavy Metal spirit alive. Fuck off to the bloody rest!!!

Absolutely no thanks to:...the postal service which still fucks things up, especially on the way to Malaysia and Chicago/U.S.A.!

Last Warnings to: All the distributors who haven't paid for what they got yet, especially CADLA (Sweden), OSIRIS (Norway), PULVERIZED (Singapore) and some others.

ALL PREVIOUS ISSUES ARE SOLD OUT
EXCEPT FOR TALES OF THE MACABRE #4
WHICH IS STILL AVAILABLE FOR \$5.

Additional thanks to METAL BLADE, OSMOSE, BLACK MARK, EVIL OMEN, INVASION and MERCILESS who sent me some of their stuff to give away for you readers who joined the POLL competition...

Readers' Poll in TALES OF THE MACABRE

All-time favebands...

1. SLAYER
2. BATHORY
3. MAYHEM
4. CELTIC FROST
DARKTHRONE
5. VENOM
6. MORBID ANGEL
SODOM
7. EMPEROR
KREATOR
8. HELLHAMMER
JUDAS PRIEST
MERCYFUL FATE
9. DESASTER
IRON MAIDEN
10. MANÖWAR
KING DIAMOND

all time favealbums

1. MAYHEM "De Mysteriis Dom Sathanas"
2. SLAYER "Reign In Blood"
(if all releases count, then SLAYER is No.1)
3. EMPEROR "In The Nightside Eclipse"
4. VENOM "Black Metal"
5. BATHORY "Under The Sign Of The Black Mark"
DARKTHRONE "Under A Funeral Moon"
HELLHAMMER "Apocalyptic Raids"
6. BATHORY "The Return..."
CELTIC FROST "Morbidity Tales"
7. EXODUS "Blooded By Blood"
MORBID ANGEL "Altars Of Madness"
8. BATHORY "Blood Fire Death"
9. VENOM "Welcome To Hell"
10. KING DIAMOND "Anigail"

surprises since issue 4

1. TALES OF THE MACABRE (thanks! -ed.)
2. ABSU
3. SEPULTURA Split
4. MAYHEMIC TRUTH
5. DESASTER's "Stormbringer"
6. SABBAT

News / Update

Decayed have signed to EVIL OMEN Records now, and their new album should be a crusher of dirty raw Black/ Death Metal the old way, so let's be ready for it! In the meantime, the band released a limited 7EP. To get hold of a copy, send \$5 to their address (see TALES OF THE MACABRE #4. If you don't have that one, buy it for \$4!!!). * Conqueror is the spiritual follower of Blasphemy... check out their album, also released on EVIL OMEN !!! Pure bestial cult! * Unlike it was said in the last issue, Root are not dead yet, at least not on stage as they still play gigs. But for new songs I don't know. Big Boss now has a new "haircut"... the same one as Acheron's Vincent Crowley (totally shaved)! He now looks like a wrestler, hehe. Nevermind, Jiri! * The A.B.M.S. crumbles to pieces... to me there's not much left of the glory that once ruled. * Rob Darken's Black Metal War continues.... a new Graveland MLP is planned to be released soon! * Praised is "None Shall Defy" by Infernal Majesty, but their return is not as great as expected as the devil is gone in their music. Musically it's still ok, but Chris Bailey's voice is totally different nowadays. If you guys want to be celebrated, then remember your early days!!! * The second album of Mortem from Peru is in progression, so fans of Possessed watch out for it! * It's a pity that old great bands like Varathron seem to become more and more forgotten, so I'm happy to say that this Greek force will release a MCD/ MLP on a new Australian label called "ORDER OF DEATH" soon. Cool! Talking about this new label: They have also released a live album by Japanese band Sigh, and will release Chicago's Pazuza's first LP strike somewhere in 1998. * Frank Stöver's VOICES FROM THE DARKSIDE mag is still dead, but not his VOICES label, because he managed to get Warhammer from Germany. Their debut LP crushes your skull somewhere in Spring/ Summer. Be ready for ultimate deathnoise!!! * Rumours say that Gospel of the Horns are back from the dead... cool to know, 'cause I really enjoyed their harsh demo!!! * Staying at Gospel of the Horns: Their old axeman now plays in Spear of Longinus, and I think that the old drummer joined Destroyer 666, his drumming can already be heard on "Unchain The Wolves" as far as I know. * Armoured Angel had some serious line-up problems, but are still alive. Real Death-Thrashers attention: Don't miss this band!!!! * Rotting Christ kissed the underground good-bye, in the name of commercialism. Thanks for all your old records, bye !!!! * Some people say that Hell-Born splitted up, others say they're still together... let's hope that the last rumour is true. * Dr.Fe of Amon Goeth says that his band is still alive, but they have lost their drummer, and their "The Worship" album is still not out although it's already recorded since more than two years now. * René "Cruelty" and Martyrdom (remember "Especially for the old Headbangers and thrashers!") are still alive, and are recording their first album right now for N.E.P. . René thinks he's Angel Ripper's brother, so beware... this here is going to be cool! * Old Black Metallars from Ungod recorded a new tune called "Phalix Cult", and are ready to release a split 7EP which was originally planned with Impending Doom, but was cancelled as the last mentioned new band wasn't interested anymore. However, the Split 7EP will be released someday, with Sadistic Intent (!) on the other side. * Talking about Sadistic Intent: Their long awaited "The



SLAYER.... still the all-time kings in extreme Metal music!!!

disappointments since issue 4

1. SATYRICON
2. IMMORTAL
3. CRADLE OF FILTH
4. VOICES FROM THE DARKSIDE (R.I.P.)
GEHENNAH
5. HECATE ENTHRONED
6. DIMMU BORGIR

Shitlist

1. CRADLE OF FILTH
2. BURZUM
3. METALLICA
4. False Metal bands
5. SATYRICON
6. ABLAZE Magazine



"Second Coming..." album will finally be released through NECROPOLIS this year, so prepare for those killer Death Metal. * The Black Metallars from Gorgoroth left MALICIOUS to sign to NUCLEAR BLAST Records who must be the trendiest label walking the earth. *



In previous issues of TALES OF THE MACABRE, I gave Mayhem Truth a bad name, but I was wrong with that as I didn't follow the band's development since 1994 when they toured with Marduk and Immortal. When I heard their latest demo last year, I was blown away.... It was real KILLER stuff, I didn't expect them to release such a strong demo! It's a perfect mixture of the old Black Metal spirit of Bathory ("The Return..." -period) and Quorthon's epic age ("Hammerheart"), with both high pierced (very original) vocals and a sung voice which sound like the sung Bathory voice crossed with Mercyful Fate-like singing (I'm talking about Mr. Diamond's usual instable voice, not the high one).

Their demo is surely my favourite tape of the last year, but the band splitted up unfortunately due to strange reasons. The demo isn't available anymore which is a pity, but don't panic.... I heard that it will be re-released together with the two songs from the sold out "Cythraw" 7"EP if N.E.P. has some money left to turn this idea into reality. This will be the final gift to all people who missed to check Mayhem Truth's great music. The band's drummer formed a new band, but no recordings are yet available. I guess that this won't be the same anymore anyway, but we'll see...

The final release by Mayhem Truth was a live-tape (Live in Bernhausen, limited to 50 copies) from a gig with Barathrum and Sabbat, but I don't think that this is available anymore as well.

If you ever see the CD release (move your ass, N.E.P.), then you have to check it out, because the music is just first class, still powerful, but with a great feeling and atmosphere. It's one of the very few great and impressive releases from Germany...



STARGAZER

Bizarre

Metal



STARGAZER from Australia, for most people still an unknown name... Of course it's obvious that their music (a mixture of Black/Death/Thrash, but always heavy) rules, otherwise they wouldn't be interviewed here.

As I am a lazy guy, I let the STARGAZER guys do the introduction of the band.

I could tell much of Stargazer, yet I shall only share what is necessary. We formed in early 1995, released a reh/demo in mid 1996 called "Gloat", before that time we had made numerous recordings of older tracks, which are subsequently featured on our 7"EP "Borne", now available.

Early 1997 we were blessed with a new lotus percussionist/ vocalist (Phoenix Chrysalis), whose wise spirit and strength of shell has enabled us to improve somewhat and reestablish the Stargazer faction as a trinitical power, aligned and luminescent one more. This alignment is of extreme importance considering the dimensional shift occurring this age of Aquarius. Fortunately, this year we have received quite a bit of overseas attention, which is very satisfying, this interview being some sort of pinnacle to that statement (You can thank the Australian scene-supporter Ian Harris for that, not me! -ed.). Fortunate in that we are also rehearsing heavily for an upcoming studio recording, whence we hope to secure a record deal!

Your style of music is very variable and doesn't get boring in my opinion... how do you see STARGAZER's style of writing songs with your own words?

'As a three-piece we have constructed music we best attribute "Extreme and Bizarre Metal", in wake of old and later, yet heard material. Only quality riffs are used, in that much sifting and work is done on any riff qualitative to a Stargazer hymn. Some are written under the inspiration of lyrical vedas. As we all listen to many types of music, mostly Metal and thus types of Metal, one can hear shuffles of Death/Black/Grind/Speed/Thrash and Heavy Metal!

Most Australian bands, except for AC/DC probably, haha, play very fast and destructive Metal (DESTROYER 666, BESTIAL WARLUST, NAZKUL, ...) and you also have a touch of this brutal sound. Why do so many bands play so aggressively? Do you feel my wrath and anger than others or is it just a chain reaction of influencing each other?

Yes, a popular observation of Australian Metal, also those bands, are the popular ones. A broad range of Metal actually exists here, which is truly admirable. For me, preferable.

A few of the songs on our rehearsaldemo "Gloat" are similar to the aforementioned style, yet many are surely not. In many cases, it may channel from the forefathers of a country's Metal. Australia had Slaughter Lord, Hobbs' Angel of Death (my kings! -ed.), AC/DC (!), Martire, etc., all of that aggressive style you quote. Scandinavia had Bathory, which is surely a notable influence in the majority of respectively located bands (but before any Scandinavian act sounded like Bathory, there were bands like Samael from Switzerland or Master's Hammer from Czechoslovakia playing this sort of music already. And, by the way, Bathory were influenced by Venom... and these guys are English! -ed.). Perhaps Germanic bands are greatly influenced by the Black/Thrash of Destruction and Kreator! Maybe not. (Beside Disaster probably, no! The Scandinavians are again the copycats, like Inferno, etc. -ed.) The harsh Australian climate surely be enough to irritate and aggravate any Australian band!

Yeah, that's an argument! What is your opinion on the Australian underground by the way? Good unknown bands?

The Australian scene has had no boom of new bands, which is good, Australian bands put good efforts into some sort of establishment. I could quote many "new" bands, yet it depends on what age one would accept as "new". Either way, here is some great bands: Oracle of the Void, Samain, Shatter Dark, Cauldron, Black Ram, Agatus, Dream Sovereign, Martire, Impact Winter, Lord of the Command, Zemial, Lord Kaos, Mournful Congregation, Nocturnal, Spear of Longinus....'

Puuuh, except for some names there are not many bands I already heard, so there's still quite some stuff to check out. Do you think you can manage to spread your name without having a big label/ management in your back? Or

will STARGAZER always remain as an "underground" band?

'Of course, that is what the underground is about! Sometimes I become so engrossed with underground bands, I lose foresight of "bigger" releases. If a band is true to its supporters despite success, a band to be admired and heraked is that, a goal of many I am sure.'

What about a STARGAZER album? Have you already been offered a deal or do you think you're not ready for that?

'We have chosen the tracks for an album, yet we don't wish to record nor release it for at least one year. As I hinted before, we are perfecting 6 tracks for a MCD release "Harbringer. A search for signing begins now. Strong hope we have for a label with the conviction to release our Metal classic (hopefully) in the works "The Scream That Tore The Sky". One must accept that the CD format is a common used medium nowadays, though that is no excuse for demo-rate bands to press full-length albums! If you are a demo standard band, then release demos, I personally love demos. If you yearn some officiality, then work towards a 7" piece of vinyl. The scene is flooded with second rate full-length releases, most go unnoticed, we still not allow Stargazer to become one of these statistics.'

I noticed that you covered a SODOM-song at a live gig. How important is old school Metal for STARGAZER?

'Old school Metal is no more, no less important than newer bands. I like new/ old style bands like Angel Corpse, Order From Chaos, Blood Storm, and the Metal genius of Argholent, etc. We also like old Metal bands as Merciful Fate/ King Diamond, Judas Priest, Candlemass, Watchtower, Iron Maiden, Accept, Rainbow, Dio, ... How antique a band is, is no matter to dispute, good Metal is all that matters (You're 100%ly right!! -ed.), and we extract influence from all eras. We've even covered a Grand Belial's Key song as opposed to elder compositions.' Please tell us about your gigs...which were the coolest/ worst ones? Are the Australian fans as wild as the bands sound!

'The live shows were successful, very extreme and the crowd has always gone away extremely impressed and yearning for more! We have no room for lesser effort, we are currently designing stage props to entrance visual presence and in the particulars, attract as much sacred energy to the stage perimeter, especially golden ley energy. As I know it, Australian crowds are very supportive and are not predisposed to refraining their emotions driven by good Metal! A crowd should appreciate a band accordingly, as a band does an audience through effort and a hard performance. In days of yore, before recording facilities were ever made available, a live performance was the only option for audience, so we stick that musical tradition on a priority list, as should more bands.'

Go ahead with some last words...

'I'll first commend you for this interview - I hope you and others gain somewhat of it. All powerful spirits write, and send no IRCs! Let me quote Stargazer text in honor and salute to you Costa and my human counterparts known and unknown, upon this grand earth (including those of Sirius), and to revere those, sacred races within. May you all pass safely into the folds;

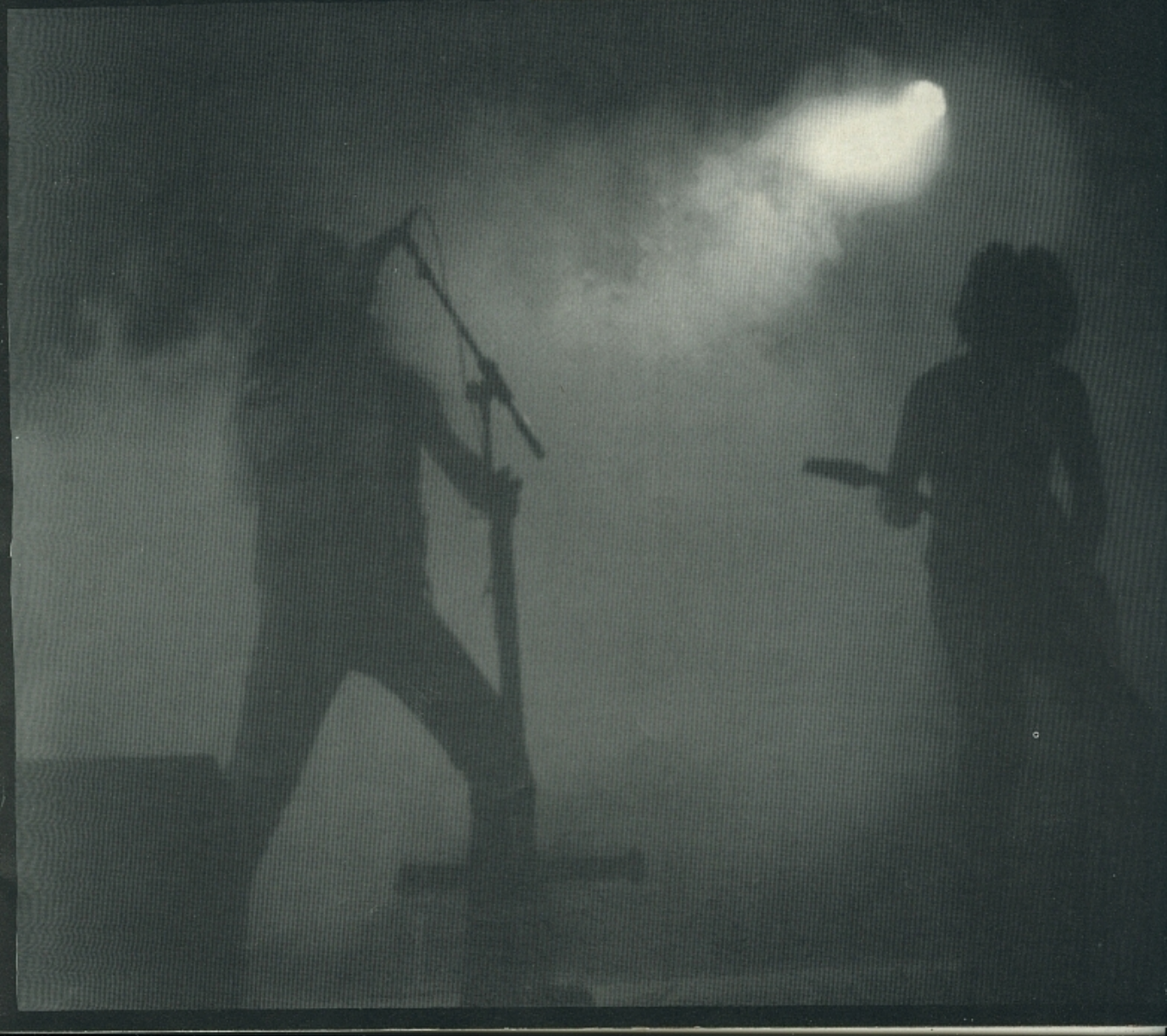
*'Impartion arouses, a revel in revelation
A sabres unveiling, knowledges bequeath
Look the scrolling waters
Churn in furies by our tainted blood*

*'Go' and bear witness, here by humane prodigals
Searchers of the great Barren Passages of Reversion.'
(From "Simulacrum" 1996*

post box 182
Ingle Farm
5098
South Australia

Their 7"EP "Borne" is still available for US\$7, but hurry up if you still want a copy, because it's out since quite some time now, so it might be sold out soon. Preper for some intense and heavy stuff, not for sweet keyboard-erotics!!

Some bands just play pure Black Metal, some pure Heavy Metal, some pure Thrash Metal, and so on... but **DESASTER** is a band that successfully combined all these different styles of Metal in their music, and it all still sounds well. This comes to my mind when I listen to their album "A Touch Of Medieval Darkness" and their "Stormbringer" EP, which both include these elements. Even if **DESASTER** have some northern-kind of riffs to offer here and then, we should see them as a band with traditional metallic roots from mid 80s until early 90s. Variety is without a doubt one of the strengths of this four-piece. They are still an underground band and far from being a mega-seller in this scene, so I thought I'd give them another feature in this magazine, especially because I'm sure that **DESASTER** is a band that will deliver the goods as well in future, they will not wimp out as these four cigarettes-eating maniacs still have that ugly rock'n'roll spirit.





How are you, Infernäl... I guess drunken like a pig (as always, hehe) ?!

Infernal: 'Hail Costa, poserkiller no.1! Fuck, today I'm not drunken like a pig, but I feel like swine as I have a terrible hangover due to a hard week-end. Saturday a usual alcoholic Metal excess took place until 8 o' clock in the morning. You know that I'm not going to surrender before the last bottle has been killed, different from a Dutch/Greek milk-drinker who I know, haha! (Who's that? -ed.) Remember the words of the most drunken hellbanger: Alcohol forever and, äh... in eternity!"

Sure I know these holy words of our mate Ytong! But let's just get into the DESASTER-shit: "Stormbringer" is a step back to the early days of DESASTER with its enormous (but good) Thrash influence... and I think you've done an impressive job, so will you continue to walk that path of old Metal when it comes to your next album? Do you already have any imaginations how your next release is going to be?

Infernal: 'We have only three new songs written for the next album, so it's hard to say how the whole thing will sound like. We don't "plan" our songs, sometimes I find a good Thrash riff and we create an old-school sing, and sometimes a very Black Metal-like tune or some medieval melodies appeal in my mind so that I have to write a song in that way. But no matter if it's an "old" or "new" Metal song, I think that we've found our style during the years, so that it's no problem to recognize that it is a Desaster-song with all kinds of variety. There will again be a good mixture of old-school Metal and newer Black Metal influences on our 2nd album, that's for sure, nobody who is into our previous stuff will be disappointed. That doesn't mean that we want to play "safe", to do the same all the time, to satisfy the listeners, no way! But we aren't going to change our style or do some stupid experiments to reach people with a different taste of music, many bands have done this before and we'll never betray Metal music! You know that we live the Metal lifestyle (in the Motörhead- AC/DC-drinking style, yes, haha! -ed.), so we're not going to take prisoners! Of course we always improve our songwriting abilities, just listen to the two songs on our picture 7"EP (which is out now! -ed.), I think they are much tighter and played with more heaviness than the "Stormbringer"-material. The more often we play together, rehearse and record in the studio, the more feeling you get to write good Metal songs where you can't sit quiet while listening to."

Your debutLP "A Touch of Medieval Darkness" received both very positive and negative reviews in the underground press... Why do you think are the opinions on DESASTER so different. Especially some of the Norwegian zines seem to be "at war with DESASTER" (DAWNRAZOR, NORDIC VISION, ...) what have you done to make them hate you so much?

Okkulto: 'I have neither thought about it, nor does it touch me in any way. Until now I haven't had the possibility to read the shit they wrote, but I guess it's not worth the paper. I don't want to waste too much words on it, 'cause everyone knows how high many Norwegian people keep their nose with having nothing behind it. We don't need good reviews from such people nor do we need their support. Why should I care for the worthless meaning of such unimportant people? Two bad reviews against so many great and honest articles says enough, it simply doesn't count. Beside that I never hungered for anyone's sympathy. We always said that first we play the music we like, so it's no surprise for me when someone says that he doesn't like our style. I know that people whose opinion I appreciate are with us and that is all that counts.'

Playing a thrashy style of music is quite popular again, and a lot of foreign bands hail old

German Thrash Metal forces like SODOM, KREATOR, DESTRUCTION, etc.... But when it comes to newer German bands, it seems that DESASTER is the only German outfit who continues where all the older bands stopped musically.... Why do you think are the of the German bands still influenced by foreign bands while the Foreign bands start to get influenced by old German Metal?

Okkulto: 'Yes, foreign bands claim to be influenced by old German bands and it seems that this has seemingly become a bit modern. Kreator, Destruction, Sodom are the names you always hear, but I ask myself if these people also know bands like Violent Force, Assassin, Deathrow, Darkness, Living Death, Exumer, Necronomicon, ... who were also great. I remember a while ago when everyone wrote that he's influenced by Venom, Hellhammer, Bathory. The German scene was really strong (and really weak as well... -ed.), probably the strongest (probably the weakest if you take bands like Risk, Tyrant, S.D.I., etc. -ed.), so it's natural that people who are into older sounds still remember these bands. It shows that these bands were something special. Now in days where original bands are hard to find, people remember (...or detect... -ed.) the old German Thrash force and search for the point which made most of them so special. But at least people will hear if there is really an influence or if it's just stolen.'



Well, to come to the Germans, I guess there must be a "hole" between the generations. I know there are still fans of the old sound, but they don't play instruments. On the other hand we have younger musicians, but they've grown up with the 90s Black Metal and sound in that way. Between that there isn't much I must confess and that's also annoying me. I wouldn't say that we are the only ones with this old touch, but, yes, other German acts don't have it that strong.'

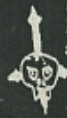
On your second demo "Lost in the Ages" you had quite some northern influences included in the songwriting, especially BURZUM... what do you think about your second demo now, compared to the other stuff you did, including the first demo? In which kind of mood were you when you created "Lost in the Ages"? It's the most "unviolent" DESASTER stuff for me...

Infernal: ' "Unviolent" -stuff? Well, yes, compared to the first tape which was very raw and aggressive, the second demo showed the more melancholic side of Desaster's music. Some die-hard fans even prefer the first tape although the "Lost In The Ages"-demo received much better reviews and was very successful (yes, because it was a real studiotape and sounding much more melodic in comparison to the debut-tape. -ed.)

When I wrote the songs for the second tape, I also wrote many drum parts back then because our drummer at that time was a lazy bastard and didn't appear on the rehearsals, I was in a very depressive and melancholic mood, whereas the "Fog Of Avalon"-tape included more aggressive and straight-forward songs. The time before "Lost In The Ages" was ruled by pain and sorrow due to some personal problems, and yes, especially the 2nd Burzum album "Det Som Engang Var" was the right soundtrack to this period. I mean, I didn't steal Burzum-riffs for Desaster's music, to steal riffs is for others if you know what I mean?! But there's no doubt about that Desaster's music is influenced by northern bands like Burzum, Dark Throne, Immortal etc, we don't deny that. Especially the 2nd demo had a "northern" touch. A few years ago everybody seemed to have forgotten the old Metal bands of the 80s and was praising the northern "gods", now many people seem to have "re-discovered" old-school Black Thrash Metal which was played by Destruction, Sodom, Kreator, Slayer, etc. in the 80s and those people now are insulting Black Metal of the 90s for being childish trend music. Of course it has become a big trend nowadays, there's no doubt about it, the scene has become nearly ridiculous, but there were some godly Black Metal albums made in the 90s, like "A Blaze In The Northern Sky", "Under A Funeral Moon", "Diabolical Fullmoon Mysticism", "Dark Medieval Times", ... But now the scene has nothing very special to offer anymore (well, that's your opinion... -ed.), the newer bands are just copying the "big" bands, and those "big" ones have lost their spirit, because they are only looking after how to make as much money out of the trend as long as possible. What I wanted to say is that Desaster's music, especially on the 2nd demo, is also inspired by Black Metal of the 90s, although one can also say that this newer Black Metal isn't that new either (Black Metal always has to be "ancient"-sounding to be real, in my opinion! -ed.). Some Swedish guy called Quorihon already played this now called "Northern Black Metal sound" and also the now famous viking-stuff even before some Black Metal kids knew how Beer tastes!'

Ha, you're fuckin' right, man. Please tell us about the days when you created DESASTER... how was the situation back then, and what did you make keeping DESASTER alive when the other members started to wimp out? I can imagine that it wasn't very easy to do a "band" on your very own until the newer members of DESASTER joined the pack...

Infernal: 'I think every young Heavy Metal fan has the dream to create his own band, so since I started to listen to Metal in 1986 at the age of 13 I had this dream, too. In this time the Metal scene in our area was very small, it was hard to get the LPs, Metal was not played on TV and we were too young to drive to concerts, so I remember that when we saw Venom's incredible "The 7th Date Of Hell"-video for the first time, we were so impressed that it was clear for us that we had to form a band of our own. Destruction's song "Total Desaster" was the inspiration for our name, it totally fitted to those chaotic Metal years, we were a bunch of crazy kids, banging through the streets every day and so on, really disastrous! We even had our name before we got our instruments together and started rehearsing in 1988. Our first drummer was only a friend who helped us out from time to time, it was impossible to find a permanent drummer, so we only had the chance to rehearse very seldom. But that didn't hinder us to play our first gig in 1989 which is still remembered as a cult-event! In this first part of the band's history we only recorded some tapes during the rehearsals, we never published them, they were only for ourselves and a few friends. The reason for that was because they were not good enough and it seems that at the end of the eighties nobody was any longer interested in



Black Metal anymore, so nobody liked the way and the "image" we had. To make a long story short, 1990 my companion Creator Cassie (vocals/ bass) really wimped out and then I also lost the contact to the session drummer. But Desaster was still alive in my heart, I improved my skills on the guitar and recorded many riffs and melodies on my own (some of them can be found on the 1st demo), but in our Metal-undeveloped area it was hard to find musicians until the new warriors took their weapons and joined in. One can't call it a "band" what I did between 1990 -1992, today every poser has a drum-computer and synths at home and releases another boring one-man-band CD, but I only collected inspirations and ideas and awaited the resurrection of Desaster.'

You still seem to be the only person in the band who is responsible for the songwriting (except for the lyrics)... Isn't it sometimes a pain in your ass that you are the one who is responsible for the way DESASTER sounds like? What about a second guitarist ?

Infemal: 'Yes, I'm still the songwriter, I think in most bands the guitarist takes over the part of creating new tunes and melodies which are later put together to a song in the rehearsal-room. Sometimes it's indeed a real pain to find new ideas and then another guitarist would be helpful, but on the other side I think that I'm not very open-minded when it comes to what I think how Desaster must sound like, you know, I'm not a dictator in the band or something like that when I come along with a new idea and the others say "That's not good!" I try to make it sound better, but when I'm totally convinced that an idea fits to our sound I make no compromises and at the end the other guys have to admit that I was right, what else could they do, haha! But nowadays the others are more and more involved in the process of songwriting, especially when it comes to the structure and the rhythms and breaks of a song. That's helpful, the more ideas there are, the better songs come out at the end.'

You managed to do a small tour with SVARTYSN (Swe) and BEHEMOTH. How was that experience to play every day in one week ? Any (un)cool happenings ?

Infemal: 'We had a great time with the Polish and Swedish guys, we drank like hell every day, of course the Polska had some Vodka with them, they drank it out a bottle of club soda. When our busdriver got up one morning he fetched the bottle because he was very thirsty. Well, he almost puked out of the window! Although the gigs weren't visited by that much people, the tour was a good experience for us, to play every evening is sometimes hard, but you meet a lot of people and have tons of Beer, I think my liver would die after touring some more months! Sometimes the conditions were very bad, backstage rooms that sucked, shitty food and the worst of all: Cheap beer that tastes like piss (yeah, I can't stand these cheap German "Headache Brew"-beers as well -ed.)! But we are no rockstars or little school kids that complain about everything, as long as we and the audience like the show it's ok.'

You played a lot of single gigs as well, ...can you still image with which kind of bands you had to share your evenings? Any cool or very ridiculous experiences you made with bands ? I know you played together with MYSTIC CIRCLE one night....right ?

Okkulto: 'Yes, we made a lot of gigs and I think this has given us strength and made us a unity on stage. All these single gigs have helped us becoming a good live act. I cannot name all the bands we played with, but some were Behemoth, Ancient Rites, Sabbat, Dark Funeral, Mayhem, Truth, Impending Doom, Atanatos, Marduk, Enslaved, Occult, Krisiun, Tha-Norr, Inquisitor, and many more. Ha, ridiculous is of course the rockstar behaviour of some bands and the way how the act just because they sell a few records. Also that what some people call a stage is

ridiculous. I remember the fuckin' "Schreinerei" in Schweinfurt (yeah, the beds looked like being old hospital beds from World War II, very dirty and pissed... -ed.) or the "Between" in Cologne where the backstage room is nothing but a small potatoe-cellar. Always cool and extreme are the drinking sessions after the show. Great nights we had with Ancient Rites ("mir egal"), Impending Doom ("Muuuuse") or Occult ("Wen interessiert's?"). What I like personally is that there are some great people, no matter if you meet them the first time, you feel like ever being in brotherhood with them. Mystic Cliché? Who's that? Never heard or seen them....'

What do you demand from a band to be a good live-act ? What is necessary ? And, by the way, have you ever been disappointed by a live gig of bands you really enjoyed on albums ?

Okkulto: 'A good live act needs a few things. At first it's important that the band is able to play the stuff from the record live as well. There the problems start for many, because in the studio they need so much technical shit and 20 guitars so that it sounds simply poor when they now play the stuff live. With all this modern High Tech Studios you are able to record every sound in every speed you want and no matter how bad the musicians are, in the end you can get a perfect sounding product. I know that there are more than just one band that betray with the double-bass, speed of the tape or work with 20 guitar-tracks. This is a shame and absolutely false, but let these bands come on stage...and then we'll see. So you'll understand now when I say that I wanted honesty. I don't care if the sound isn't perfect but I want to see musicians who make the best of it and give everything. Musicians don't want that the audience is just standing around, so they must also bang their heads and move, not just standing the whole time at the same place and trying to play as perfect as possible. That's not over all important, they have to build up a special realtion, a special magic between them and the audience. If I see that a band gives 100%, I'll always support them. The whole thing is nearly perfect when the band is a unity on stage. Hmmm, I can't remember the biggest disappointment at the moment!'

Quite a lot of your demos weren't used for your album/ MLP, so can we expect you to re-record some of the old tunes for a future release? What about "Witchcraft"? I think that especially this song would be cool, because it shows that Thrash Metal has always been a part of DESASTER.... don't you agree ?

Infemal: 'Well, I don't know if we ever use another old song again, we already used old songs on our debut: "Porter Of Hellgate" from 1992, "In A Winter Battle" from the 2nd demo, "Into A Magical Night" from the first demo, and also on the "Stormbringer" MCD we re-recorded a song of the first tape ("Face Of Darkness"). Some guys always request to hear old demos, but I think that songs often lose their original feeling, the spirit of the time when they were written and recorded when you use them again later. Of course "Witchcraft" is a cool song, I still like our old songs, especially this one shows where our roots lie, you are right. But we don't have to prove to anybody, if there are still some people around who think that we belong to those guys who believe Black Metal was invented in Norway I don't give a shit about what they say! We plan to do something special to celebrate Desaster's 10th anniversary somewhere in 1998, guess you'll find some old Desaster-tracks there.'

What do you think of all the new T(h)rash Metal bands that start to release CDs/LPs ? What do you think of them especially in comparison to the original bands that formed and created this style of music ?

Okkulto: 'I must say that I'm extremely pissed off by all these new wanna-be old sounding bands and especially by all these worthless projects. Seems that people create for each different

sounding riff a new project. The worst of all is this way of stealing riffs from the old heroes and presenting it as own ones. I don't think that it will become the big new trend, because most people don't have the background to sound really "old" and it gets boring to rip off Destruction for example the whole time, but it's worse enough as it is at the moment. The fact that every pseudo-old project gets a deal directly, shows how poor the taste of some people must be. The new in comparison to the old formers? Well, it's simply infame and I think people should have a bit more respect for the pioneers of this musical art. But no matter how many tons of worthless CDs are thrown on this overpopulated market, the old shapes will ever stand as monuments in the history of Metal. Unique in their magic, they can never be ruined by some stupid posers who only want to make some extra money. People can steal the riffs, but they will never reach the felling which is banned in this old vinyl masterpieces. Don't misunderstand me, I always like poor people have an old touch in their music, but if these people are really what they claim to be, they must combine the old style with own ideas and why the hell creating a fuckin' project? But in the end it's up to the fan if he buys a crap rip off or looks out for the original. At least I also want to say that I don't like all these reunions of old bands that much, 'cause the stench of money is always in the air. Better let the cult rest, guys!'

Are there any musical wishes you would like to try with DESASTER some day ? Could you imagine playing a sort of music which is totally different to Metal ?

Infemal: 'I can only agree! Metal unites so many different styles, who needs other music? Ok, if I could handle the violin it would be cool to play some Wagner-stuff in a symphony-orchestra, but I guess this will never happen! Desaster have found the typical Desaster sound, to try something different wouldn't be Desaster any longer.'

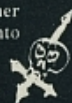
You always progress as a musician, so isn't there a temptation to write more and more technical songs ?

Infemal: 'No, because we are still very bad musicians compared to "heroes" like Dave Lombardo, Steve Harris, Angus Young or Paul Di'Anno, you know what I mean. I still can't play solos that good (Tom Warrior can't play solos as well... -ed.) and I don't think that I'll learn it in the future, I don't want it either. I think a Desaster-song with an Iron Maiden-solo would sound stupid, wouldn't it? Some people might think that you have to be very good musicians to write good songs, that a song must have 1000 riffs and 100 delays, shit! Just listen to Venom or Hellhammer songs, they are very simple but have more power and heaviness than a whole album from so-called heroes from Savatage or Dream Theatre.'

When should we expect the next real album to be out ? Do you already have any ideas for it ? There was talk of a special "hymn" to be included on it....

Okkulto: 'I can't tell exactly say when the next album will be out. We have no concrete date in mind, but I think it will be somewhere in Spring '98. We don't want to hurry with the songwriting, 'cause we want to publish only quality and stuff we're 100% into. We'll continue with our style that's for sure and everybody who wants something different can piss off. The "hymn", yes, there's a plan for an asskickin' track with some special ideas, but it's too early to tell something concrete and I don't want to talk about something that will not happen in the end. It's a surprise for all the older headbangers. Just expect a new strike of unholy bonecrushing German Metal.'

You received an offer to tour the United States with ACHERON and USURPER, but that didn't happen... what was or is the problem? Wouldn't it be a challenge for you to play on another continent??? Have there been other offers as well in the past that didn't turn into reality?





Okkulto: 'Yes, we got that offer to do that tour with Acheron and Usurper which didn't work out. At first I must say that it has nothing to do with the two other bands, 'cause they are really interesting. One main reason why we have refused is because parts of the band would have got problems in getting holidays for over two months from their work. On the other hand the conditions were good, but not good enough to survive two months (!) on the road which can be a fuckin' long time if you've to go on stage every evening. Beside that we are all not big friends of America as a country, with it's plastic lifestyle and plastic food, the whole mentality of this country and everything connected with it. So we didn't freak out when we heard "American Tour", 'cause it doesn't mean anything special to us. Some American friends who told us about the live-situation of smaller bands, said we are right not to do that tour. Yes, there were always plans and offers to tour with this and that band but I think it's senseless to mention it here 'cause it didn't work out in the end.'

You weren't too lucky with your drummers in the past.... what problems did you/ they have? Are you satisfied with your current beast "Tormentor" ?

Infernal: 'As I already told you, the first drummer was only a session-member, the one after the reunion of the band was this lazy bastard called Luggi, we always had to tell him what to play, he wasn't willing to do his part in the band, he hindered our work, so it was clear that he had to kick him out. Then, we found a young talented drummer called Thorim who recorded the split 7"EP with Ungod, and the debut LP. It was clear from the beginning that he won't stay for long, he simply didn't fit to the rest of the band. So, we now are very satisfied to have "Tormentor" in the band, because he's totally dedicated to what he's doing in the band, he shared our attitudes and and liked

our music even before he joined in, we knew him for quite a long time and he had already helped us out in the past from time to time. Now we are a real unity which in my opinion is the most important thing in a band.'

Could you imagine to have a band like DESASTER if you had a full-time job? I know that you're not a real busy man (except for your drinking orgies)...

Infernal: 'I think that I would need Desaster even more than now if I had a boring full-time job. To play in a band is great, because you can transform all your feelings into music, and if I had to work the whole day long, I would thrash all my aggressions out of my guitar in the evening, even more than I do now. You're right, I'm not a very busy man, the same goes out for you, man (you're wrong! -ed.)! I would have to reduce my alcohol-level if I had a full-time job because if I'm totally drunk I can't play the guitar very well, so I need some time when I'm sober to play!'

Would you stop with the band if you ever get out of ideas or will you continue, even if you start to copy yourself (Like AC/DC, or many others)?

Infernal: 'Well, we are not under pressure to release one CD after the other to earn our living, so when new songs are written and recorded, they will be released in any format. If the day comes when we are running out of ideas, we would definitely take a huge pause, because first of all we want to be satisfied with our music, and if our songs would become boring to ourselves we would definitely stop, that's for sure! It would also be my advice to a band like Motörhead to take a pause of some years, but I think Lemmy would miss all the groupies on tour, haha.'

This is all what guitarist Infernal and shouter Okkulto had to say. The band has released a new 7"inch (PicDisc) called "Ride On For

Revenge" which includes two new songs which sound very thrashy... it seems like the band sounds more old-fashioned but also more professional with every new release. These two songs are really cool, great riffs and rhythms, ... I like it when people know to thrash without making it sound like being a pure clone. However, I know that their next album will also include some medieval and fast Black Metal riffs again, so don't worry... they are not turning into a pure Thrash Metal band, at least I hope so. If you ever get the chance to catch them live, then don't miss them, 'cause they have developed to a great live force during all the years.

Thrash Metal



DEBASTER

Jahnstrasse 76
56218 Nülbeim-Kärlich
Germany

Sabbat

Far East Die-Hard Blacking Hamaguri Metal



SABBAT from Japan, probably the oldest still existing Black Metal band around which hasn't ever changed their style too radically or wimped out, has unfortunately always been ignored by most of the Black/Death Metal people outside from the Japanese borders due to several problems and lack of promotion from the mass (Metal) media.

But I think that the situation started to change for SABBAT now after several albums were licensed in Europe and some new limited 7" inches were (and will be) thrown on the international market. In addition, SABBAT toured through Netherlands and Germany, and they truly knew to convince the audience with their excellent live-performance. Those who missed to catch the band live have indeed missed a piece of "Black Metal history".

Talking about SABBAT's biography: Officially formed in 1984, some of the SABBAT members already played in several bands (like BLACKBEAST, EVIL, etc.) since 1981. The first SABBAT release was a 7" inch in 1985, and since that date, the band spreaded their Black thrashing Metal on 5 albums, one live album, and 4 more 7" inches (not including the "Harmageddon"-series).

The great thing is that SABBAT always were faithful to their roots. Still variable, their style can always be recognized as typical "Sabbatical"... their strong influences from VENOM, BATHORY, SLAYER, etc. never really disappeared (read about some of their releases in the review section). To me, SABBAT sounds like pure Black Metal should sound... dark, hellish, venomish, filthy, and so on. In addition, the production has always been rough, never too clean and "overproduced"... SABBAT fully carry the ancient Black/Thrash/Death Metal feeling and atmosphere in their music.

Some people might have problems with the different vocal styles due to the "not so good" English of these Japanese lunatics, ...just

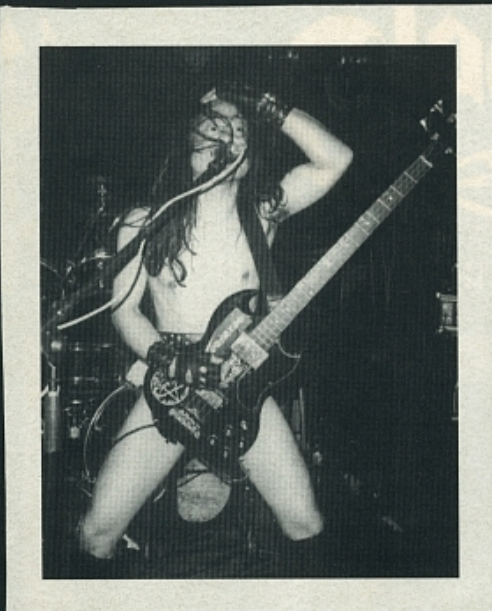
see it as a "special touch". By the way, most of the old German (like SODOM) and Brazilian bands (like SEPULTURA) didn't speak the best English as well, so what the hell should we care... Beside that it's impossible to understand even a word at a lot of Black Metal bands anyway (i.e. BURZUM, BEHERIT, ...), so where is the problem ??? The interview was done with "Gezol" (bass/ vocals) who's the only original member of SABBAT after guitarist "Elizaveat" decided to leave the band in 1989. His answers are sometimes a bit chaotic, but you should excuse this, you know, his English... However, enjoy reading what this old Black Metal warrior has to say....

You are in your 13th year, so what makes you keep the band alive during all those years? I think you never got the respect which you deserved... is this the reason?

"I only love Metal music..The respect, honour and money is a needless problem, and 13 years of existence is not so long, ah! "Die Hard" is the core of Metal I think. I never got too much respect like you say, but in Japan I am an evil god in the underground scene, a lot of young bands send letters with "best regards" to me. It's very seldom and hard that a band keeps alive in the underground for long time. But the Sabbatical situation is like "Kamikaze"!

I noticed that some "Harmageddon" 7" inches got released lately, and the idea of releasing such kind of live/studio -things in different versions in different countries reminds me a lot at VENOM's "Assaults"... am I right? Do you think that people start to get "hotter" for your material when they know that this stuff is strictly limited and not easy to get in every country?

"You're right! The idea was offered to me from ISTEN magazine's Janne Sarna. His original idea was to sing the old Sabbat song "Black Fire" in different languages for the specific countries. But my capacity



of studying language is very poor, I can't even speak Japanese too well, ah! (Well, the Japanese language must be a very difficult one anyway as I heard, right? -ed.) So I took the good part of this idea, similar to Venom's "Assault" series, I planned to do "Harmageddon"-bombs to every area on this earth. Sabbath's material are way more limited than Venom's "Assaults", so I enjoy to watch people hurrying up to get our releases. But it's no problem for you as you are already into the Sabbath mania. You know that this is Sabbath's way, and the limited "Harmageddon" editions are great and should be a delight for the true fans.'

VENOM still seems to be the number one influence at SABBAT, especially Gezol seems to be the "Cronos from Japan" when it comes to clothes (Cronos on "Black Metal" LP) and stageacting. What does VENOM mean for you? Have you ever met them or seen them live in Japan?

'Yes, I've seen Venom live in Japan about nine years ago, but it wasn't the original line-up, it was after Mantas left... and I've never met them personally. They are great for us, early Venom are special Black Metal gods for us, in the past and also in future. Venom are the most extreme and ultimate for all Black Metalers beside bands like Bathory, Sodom, Celtic Frost, Slayer... which all had a special original style. And I'm also influenced by a lot of Metal bands like Iron Maiden, Manowar, Angelwüch, etc... My dressing is from Manowar that you thought comes from Venom's Cronos, I'm not copying Cronos from the video "Wüchling Hour". It's my ancient Metal spirit which makes me act like the way I do.'

How do you think would Black Metal have developed if there wasn't a band like VENOM?

'I can imagine such a situation. I can't believe that anybody would have started to play a style like Venom... well, of course, it would have been Sabbath, haha. All musicians take influences from others for their music.'

A lot of record companies were/are responsible for SABBAT, like MERCILESS, EVIL, ENTROPY, HOLYCAUST, ORIENTAL ERUPTIONS, PRIMITIVE ART, etc... Isn't it a problem to work with all these labels? What experiences have you made with labels so far? I heard that you had some problems with LETHAL...true?!

'It's no problem for us at all to work with all of them, I enjoy all labels. They know my spirit very well, they're also Sabbath fans, it's no fuckin' business, it's just their Metal way. "Die Hard" is my way, I learned this! Kill the foolish and false guys. Sabbath made a contract with LETHAL Records, but they never released our material. I waited for an answer from this guy for very long time... it seemed that LETHAL already lost their interest to release Sabbath stuff, and then he send a cancelled contract paper back. He's just a fuckin' liar.'

Why weren't your old albums/7" inches released in Europe as well? Was it a lack of interest in SABBAT some years ago?

'Yes, of course it was. The chances for us were like zero some years ago, and I almost did not know the English language back then. Beside that, I didn't have much penfriends, traders, contacts to bands, labels some years ago. My dreams were a Sabbath LP/CD debut and a live-

tour through Europe, but some years ago the European scene was into Thrash and Death Metal, while Black Metal was still powerless over there. I think Sabbath should be more known in the world, you also think that way, right? (Of course! -ed.) It's hard to do this on my very own. Sabbath is for maniacs, but it wouldn't be bad if the number of maniacs increases. We have to kick the asses of the sleeping evil nations.'

You once called your music "Black Harakiri Metal"... what does this mean? Do you still call your music like that?

'The meaning of Harakiri is a "Samurai suicide", we're blacking Hamaguri Metal. Hamaguri is the monster of an old tale from my city. This monster was even stronger than Godzilla.'

What are your plans for SABBAT? Any new songs written? If yes, are they quite different to your old stuff?

'Yes, we already have written some tunes for the 7" inch series and for the new album. There are some old-sabbatical styled songs and some modern sabbatical, various and mixed tunes. I like Sabbath's music to be variable. I wanna play a lot of styles. We will do some live gigs in Japan plus some 7" inches ("North American" -Harmageddon) will be released. Our new album will be out in 1999. Of course I'd like to play again in Europe... I know that it will be connected with many problems, but we will try again.'

SABBAT must be one of the oldest still existing Black Metal bands beside VENOM, so what do you think of the Black Metal revival in the 90s?

'Trendy Black Metalers will soon fall into decay, Black Metal isn't true yet. I'm glad that some old style- Black Metal bands are born again, like Wizard, Morning Star... I always thought that the power of Metal was especially brilliant in the last decade, and this is really our root!!!'

What does a band need to call themselves and their music "Black Metal"? What must be "Black" in the music?

'Black Metal is a big trend in the world, and this rotten scene gives birth of false guys. But don't worry... these false suckers will be ruined soon, they have no basic sense for this music. Burn the false goats... Evil nations, this is our battle cry!'

The best selling Black Metal bands of today must be EMPEROR and CRADLE OF FILTH... what do you think of those "leading" bands?

'They are not leaders for us at all. They are trendy leaders, I would say. You know, blast beat (riffs), we can't do true headbanging to it as it comes from Grind-Core music. And if you can't do headbanging, then it's not Metal music. They have made some mistakes... I cannot feel the anger and wrath of hell when listening to their blast-beat (riffs), I only feel the commercial business (\$)'

Yeah, at least when it comes to CRADLE OF FILTH (featuring EXTREME NOISE TERROR members), I think so as well. How would you describe SABBAT's music? And how do you see the development of SABBAT from 1984 to 1997?

'Blackened Heavy Metal... we call it "Blacking Hamaguri Die Hard Sanuari Metal"! There is no repentance for Sabbath's past. These were excellent days. It is very hard for Japanese bands to get more known in the world. I was trying it on my very own, those were hellish days. And this hell still continues. I wish to do more live-shows.'

We all know that there was an English band with the name SABBAT around some years ago... have you ever contacted them and asked them to change their name?

'No, never! I don't like the British Sabbath, I hated their existence. In Japan we are more known than they are. Luckily they ceased to exist quite soon, they weren't true. I knew that, so I didn't feel no need to change our name, guys.'

I know that you, Gezol, are a record collector... please tell us about your collection. Any jewels (like VENOM's "Japanese Assault") that you have?

'Venom's rare material are not so important for me. I'm an 80s traditional Heavy Metal collector. Those records are not so expensive, but they are jewels for me. Ossian 1st LP, Satan 1st 7" inch, Voodoo (Poland) LP, O.S.S.Y. (Fin), Thor (Spain), etc...'

You managed to play some gigs in Germany and Holland. What experiences did you make? Weren't you a bit sad that not too much people came to see your tour?

'It was arranged by Opyros (N.E.P.), Volker (MERCILESS) and friends. In Japan it's us who arranges our gigs, but I did not know the way of booking Euro-gigs, so I left this matter to others. I just said "I wanna play live in Europe"....'

No, I wasn't sad that not too many people came to see us, I guessed this situation before I came to Europe, I only need maniacs at concerts anyway, and I love the underground scene. The low quantity of people is no problem for me, the problem is the people's quality. We had the possibility to meet a lot of true Sabbath fans, talked about several subjects with maniacs. I'm very satisfied. European guys were more

powerful headbanging than Japanese guys, I love it, excellent! I want to tour Europe again.

Japan seems to be a good place for Metal, but also Black/ Death Metal? I just know ABIGAIL, SIGH, and I heard about a new band called FUNERAL RITES... Please tell us about what's going on in your country.

"I don't like Abigail's new album, it sounds like Hardcore.... not a true release, not Metal. Right now there are some bands existing in Japan, like Funeral Rites. Sigh and Abigail are already known well in the world, but it's not a big thing. We hear cries from overseas, they say it's all not "original". I think we should create a more original music and scene. And Japanese people almost don't support Japanese bands. Japan's very commercial business magazines created this situation, they are eliminating Japanese bands in their pages. They are homos who just like foreign music. ...it's all just business hell."

Gezol, now a rather "different" question: On the "Born by Evil Blood" 7" inch I noticed that you had one of your "balls" looking out of your leather-pant on the one of the photos... Was it done on purpose back then ??? Are you a pervert, haha ?

"My ball? You mean "Sperm balls" ? They're called "Golden Balls" in Japan, haha. Yes, people call me a pervert sometimes. But I think I'm "normal", I'm a normal servant from hell. The purpose is world conquest."

Where do interested Metal fans have the chance to pick up old SABBAT /7" inches? Or are they no longer available ???

"I think it's possible to get them in Tokyo's second hand record stores if you ever come to Japan. You can catch traders as well which you can ask..."

Before Gezol left again into his very private hell he added that *"Sabbat will rape great Germany again".... I hope they'll manage to do this very soon. "Maniacs" over Europe should contact Gezol if they like to organize gigs and stuff (please include IRC), perhaps you can help SABBAT returning to European stages. All I can say is that this old Black Metal force is like a whirlwind on stage, instead of 10 kilogram spikes and chains you'll see a real Black Metal ritual on stage, it's indeed a pleasure to see those three creatures thrashing their asses off for their fans.*

True Black Metal people who still worship VENOM, BATHORY, etc. are advised to check out SABBAT stuffs if you haven't already done it.



SABBAT, possessed by the Black/Death Metal cult in 1985

7" inches

- "Sabbat" (1985)
- "Born By Evil Blood" (1987)
- "Desecration" (1988)
- "The Devil's Sperm is Cold" (1989)
- "The Seven Deadly Sins" (1990)
- "Scandinavian Harmageddon" (1997, Split by EVIL Rec./ ARCTIC STATE)
- "West European Harmageddon" (1997, Split PicEP by EVIL Rec./ MERCILESS)
- "East European Harmageddon" (1998, Split by EVIL Rec./ VIEW BEYOND)
- "North American Harmageddon" (1998, Split PicEP by EVIL Rec./ HOLYCAUST)

CDs

- "Envenom" (1991, EVIL Rec. version sold out. Re-released on ENTROPY in 1995, with Bonus)
- "Evoke" (1992, EVIL Rec. version sold out. Hopefully to be re-released somewhere in 1998)
- "Disembody" (1993, EVIL Rec. version sold out, to be re-released)
- "Fetishism" (1994, EVIL Rec. \$20)
- "Black Up Your Soul" (1994, EVIL Rec. special 10th anniversary album, Vol.1)
- "Sabbatical Devilucifer" (1994, MCD on HOLYCAUST/ U.S.A., sold out)
- "Live At Blokula" (1995, EVIL Rec. \$20)
- "...For Satan and Sacrifice" (1995, EVIL Rec. special 10th anniversary album, Vol.2, \$20)
- "The Dwelling" (1996, EVIL Rec. \$20)

LPs

- "Bloody Countess" (lim. to 100, HOLYCAUST, sold out)
- "Live 666 - Japanese Harmageddon" (1996, EVIL Rec. \$25)

EVIL Records, Hoshikawa, Kuwana, Mie, 511, Japan

Forgotten Jewels

... some more classical Metal albums you shouldn't get out of your mind!

MORTAL SIN "Mayhemic Destruction" (EMI)

Originally released on a small label in Australia, major label EMI in Europe soon realized that **Mortal Sin's** debut LP was not just another new album that got spit out of the underground, and immediately licensed all rights to re-release this great album. It's not Black/ Death or Thrash Metal (well, except for the titlesong probably) what **Mortal Sin** plays, it's more straight ahead powerful Speed Metal which sounded fresh and was full of ideas. This album had strong influences from old **Metallica**, and that was good as **Metallica** themselves released "And Justice For All" during that time, so that all disappointed fans who longed for another "Kill 'Em All" album were happy to pick up a release like "Mayhemic Destruction". I think songs like "Blood, Death, Hatred", "Into the Fire" or "Mayhemic Destruction" haven't lost any of their original magic, have they? This LP is not a rare item, so if you don't have it already, you might have good chances to get it for a fair price in your local 2nd hand shop.

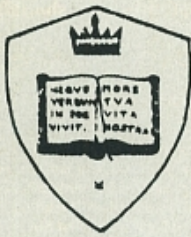
BLOOD FEAST "Kill For Pleasure" (New Renaissance)

Tasteless title, but even more tasteless is the coverartwork of this LP with its impalements, skulls, etc., a manifest of brutality. Yeah, and so is the music, a manifest of outrageous and brutal Thrash Metal. **Blood Feast** from the U.S.A. played real raw and fast thrashing Metal with an underground sound. It wasn't anything new what they banned on their debut LP in 1987, but it was the perfect footage for all die-hard Thrash Metal fans who still worshipped the old stuff of **Slayer**, **Exodus**, **Whiplash** and **Destructor**. Check out the aggressive track "Menacing Thunder" or the violent "Suicidal Mission", two songs that still can be seen as killers. It's not a perfect release, but certainly a jewel for all maniacs into raw thrashing mayhem.

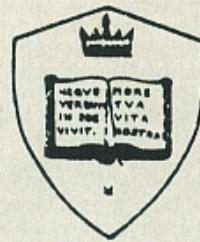


MESSIAH "Hymn To Abramein" / "Extreme Cold Weather" (Chainsaw Murder)

The three guys from **Messiah** labelled themselves as the "Messengers of Swiss Thrash" when they started to invade the underground with their raw music. After two cool demotapes ("Powertrash" + "The Infernal Thrashing") they signed to the very small underground-label **CHAINSAW MURDER** to release their debut album. "Hymn To Abramein" saw the light of day in 1986, and was a very raw offering compared to the stuff which was released by other Thrash bands during that time. Ignored by the mass media, the album got a cult status for die-hard Thrash lunatics, because even today you can not deny that songs like "Messiah", "Anarchus", "Future Aggressor", etc. still let heads circle around. The speed was very high, and the vocals just insane... Mr. Kühne was screaming like a maniac, very possessed and original. To describe their style, humm... very difficult, but I would say they sound like old **Death** (demo-age) and the tapping of **Destruction**. The first edition of this LP had a black/ white cover (edition: 2.000 copies?!), the second edition had a red/ white cover, just to remember the versions of this release. One year after the debut LP, **Messiah** released "Extreme Cold Weather", a sort of "Split LP", consisting of a studio and live-side. The studio-side has a very strange guitarsound, and the vocals sound as if my speakers are defect... and especially this gives the music a special touch and make the band sound like pure aggressors. Songs like "Enjoy Yourself", "Nero" or the slow but very intense "Extreme Cold Weather" are still great. The intros should be ignored, because they do not sound too professional, but you have to keep in mind that the band recorded the studio-side "live", and for a live-recording it's very very good. The real "live"-side of the LP consists of recordings from different places. Therefore the soundquality is different from song to song. Not only songs from the debut album but also demosongs and unreleased ones were put on the B-side, so this isn't just an ordinary live-offering. The record (together with the debut LP) was re-released on CD later in the beginning of this decade, but the live-stuff is missing, and the studio side seems to be remixed, because it doesn't sound so wild and untamed... so you have to get the Vinyl-version of (at least) "Extreme Cold Weather" to know what **Messiah** was all about when they released this record back in 1988. This was unfortunately the last record with the original vocalist. After he left, **Messiah** ceased to exist, and their guitarist found an unsuccessful band called **Cruise Missile**, before he reformed **Messiah** with some new members (and changed the band's style into cool but also ordinary **Death Metal**, just check out the "Choirs Of Horror" LP). Together with **Hellhammer/ Celtic Frost**, **Messiah** were the coolest and most original band Switzerland has spat out.



Bulldozer



"They came into this world with hatred... and with hatred they will depart!"

When people talk about Black/ Death and Thrash Metal cults of the eighties, they name bands like VENOM, BATHORY, HELLHAMMER, CELTIC FROST, SLAYER, all the German Thrash stuff like KREATOR, SODOM, even DEATHROW, etc... but mostly they forget one band that is certainly worth mentioning: BULLDOZER!

These three dark and perverse creatures from the catacombs of Milan are one of the few old uncommercial Black/ Thrash Metal forces who were always treated very badly by the mass media, but if you listen to BULLDOZER's LPs like "The Day Of Wrath", "The Final Separation" or any other album by the band, then you'll notice that the band always understood to play a dark style of extreme Metal music.

In contrary to other Thrash Metal bands, BULLDOZER never wimped out, and still knew to play harsh music with a morbid/sick background. This was a band for real die-hard Metal warriors only, and not for the ordinary masses.

As there weren't too many interviews with this trio in the past, I'm fuckin' proud to have some actual comments of madman A.C. Wild in this issue, even if most of you readers most likely do not care or know about this cool cult-act! But as TALES OF THE MACABRE is an underground magazine you should read about underground stuff, no matter if it's old or new underground.

Hello A.C. Wild ... how are things for you right now? How's your current situation?

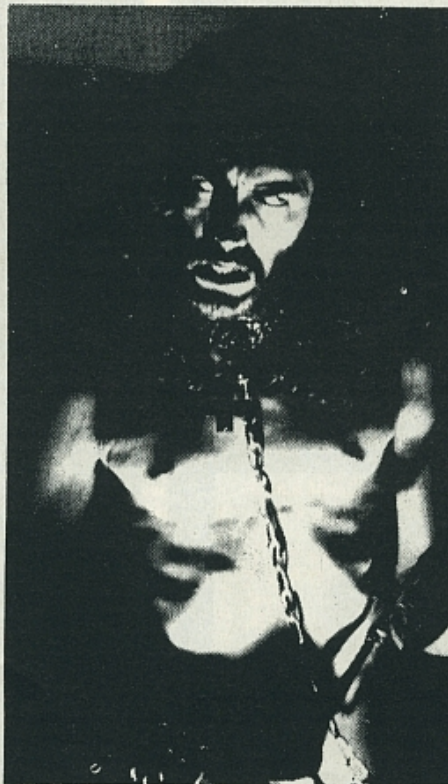
The band performed its last show in Milano on December 1st, 1990. In 1992 we produced in a studio an EP "Dance Got Sick" with a black rapper (?? -ed.), a mixture of Metal, rap and techno (!!!! -ed.). Now we are not doing anything, the band has basically retired.'

The latest sign of BULLDOZER life for me was your Live-LP "Alive in Poland"... what happened after this release? I heard that a limited MLP was released, but I never saw it or read about it in magazines/ mailorder lists...

"Dance Got Sick" had been distributed only in Italy (By DIG INTERNATIONAL) and Japan (by AVEX). The techno version influenced for two years the Japanese (and not only) techno scene. This EP was totally experimental, a total new concept, but nothing to propose to our fans, just an experiment (thank god! -ed.). Parallely I thought it was time to retire.'

Are there any ideas existing for a new album?

At the moment we don't have any plan for the future. Rob would like to make a return, but I wouldn't like to re-create something inferior to



original Bulldozer, like many bands which look like zombies when they return and can't play.

Haha, you're probably right with this... BULLDOZER is one of the very few bands that got ridiculed and even boycotted by the major press, I hardly remember interviews in mags,.... how are your feelings about this?

'Obtaining zero K in KERRANG or Zero in METAL HAMMER, the very first time in the history of those magazines, made me proud. I never pretended to make a lot of money with Bulldozer, therefore I really don't care. Few people appreciated Bulldozer, and that's enough.'

Why do you think has BULLDOZER been treated so badly by most of the critics? I mean, it was very seldom that one of your records got a positive review...

'Some people hated Bulldozer, some other really liked us: It means we were original. "IX" had been criticized for the lyrics: It's simply ridiculous, perhaps our lyrics were really sick for them even though they were not violent in their perversion. I always hated any kind of violence made to innocent people including sex with children. Evidently, for me, my lyrics were full of irony, but few people understood that.'

How many copies have you sold of each album as far as you know? Would be interesting to know...

'Not much, few thousands each, just enough to cover the recording costs.'

BULLDOZER has always been labelled as the "Italian VENOM"... what do you think about this now after almost 11 years went into the land after the release of "The Day of Wrath"? How important was VENOM for BULLDOZER's early days? And what do you think of VENOM's return?

'Bulldozer as well as many bands (including Slayer) were influenced by Venom, especially in the early days. I saw the video of Venom's return. Cronos was still in good condition, congratulations! Have you ever talked to the VENOM guys? I assume they heard about BULLDOZER...'

'Yes, in 1984 and 1985. They might remember us, but a long time has passed.'

In an old interview I read a statement of you that "The owner of the studio had to call a priest to bless the room after we recorded our album ("The Day of Wrath")"... this was meant to be a joke of you, or am I wrong?

How seriously have you been into the dark side (satanism) of life back then, and how do you see these things nowadays?

'That's true, but I never made any kind of activity into satanism. I just talked about some real experiences. However, I never called or worshipped any idol, demon, etc. I think that evil spirits as well as god and angels are very powerful and it's extremely dangerous to joke or make fun of them. I think we better respect and watch carefully the reality which surrounds us.'

"Neurodeliri", your last (official) studioalbum, was dedicated to an old BULLDOZER member who committed suicide... this is quite a macabre story when I read your statement on the LP. What kind of person was he? Was his band really so worse, or was it a kind of band like BULLDOZER, which never got what they really deserved?

'It's hard to know why he committed suicide. He was an original person; at 13 he was full of tattoos (late seventies) when nobody used to do it in our city. Regarding Neurodeliri, the band, it was a good band, sometimes funny.'

Talking about "Neurodeliri": For me, the titletrack is one of the best songs you ever did, and when listening to it, I detect a lot of sounds that can also be found in some of today's Black Metal's music (like GRAVELAND)... do you think that BULLDOZER was a band ahead of its time?

'"Neurodeliri" as well as "The Derby", "XI" and "Iona the very best" are my favourite songs. It's possible that "Neurodeliri" is ahead of its time, we just invented this concept and we liked it from the very beginning. I'm glad that someone else is following this way to compose.'

What do you think about this Black Metal revival? Have you listened to some of the new bands? Do you follow this new scene?

'I always liked the Black Metal style, especially very

first Venom and Slayer. I heard some of the new bands with interest. It means there are still some people liking this stuff.'

Which bands do you like to nowadays?

'Slayer, Suicidal Tendencies, very first Venom, very first Bathory, Grip Inc., ...'

Italian bands always had and still have problems to establish their names in the international underground, I just think of SCHIZO, DEATH SS, ASTAROTH, NECRODEATH, etc...

What's the reason for this in your opinion?

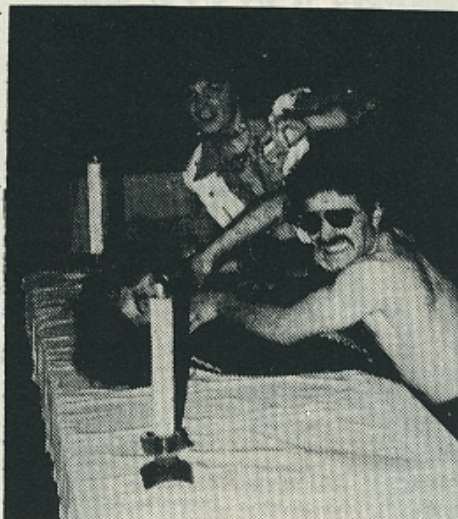
'I think that the main reason is the time available to dedicate to the band and generally investments. In Italy no one of us could have the possibility to dedicate full-time to the band, since there was not the possibility to make money with the band, it was much easier to lose than make money. Therefore most of those bands' members had to do another work, and we could dedicate our time to our bands only during week-ends or at evening time. Astaroth tried to move to L.A., but, L.A.!!!! What can you do in L.A.!!!! (Fuck sexy blond bitches with big silicon tits, for example, hehe. -ed.)'

Which are the best/worst things you remember in all the years you were busy with BULLDOZER? I mean, having a band is not like having a usual 8 hours-job in a closed room...

'Unfortunately Bulldozer could only be a hobby: All of us were working full time. We tried to be professionals but the few money we made was just for covering our expenses. We could record five albums only because we really liked that music and we dedicated to it all our spare time. I remember that we had good times, especially when making concerts, but I remember mostly the frustration for being too busy and not too lucky.'

How were/are BULLDOZER gigs. I can imagine that you are a kind of band that has some special effects/show to offer at a live-gig...

'Especially at the beginning our stage show was similar to a graveyard, and people were sometimes shocked to see the show and listen to the tracks like "The Exorcism" (also the Death SS show was really shocking people at that time). Our stage turned into



normal in 1987: At that time we decided to concentrate our efforts only on the quality of performance and sound. I don't know if it was a good decision, but there were too many bands in Italy and abroad using the same effects, and therefore we decided to dedicate our attention to the playing.'

Your front- and/or backcovers have always been a bit "different"... I think they always expressed the band's extremity... How came up with all the ideas for it (like the backcover of "The Day..." or the innersleeve of "The 9th Circle...")? Do you still like the old covers?

'I really like the backcover of "The Day Of Wrath", as well as the innersleeve of "IX". They are funny and they are not just sick as it seems. We were making fun of people. I still really like them, except for "The Final Separation" which is not our concept

but creation of ROADRUNNER with some pictures that a photographer made for them.'

You call yourself "A.C. Wild"... is it true that "A.C." is because you are a big fan of A.C. Milano, the football team?

'No, A.C. are the first letters of my real name, it's not AC Milano (our favourite team) or Anti Christ.'

Why are so many old underground Metal bands still (or again) alive? I just think of RAZOR, SODOM, NECRONOMICON, and many more. What do you think is the reason for not stopping to play this kind of rebellious music? Is it like "once you tasted blood, you always want more"?

'If they still like this music they have no reason to stop, if they have the time to dedicate to the band. Unfortunately, right now, I don't have enough time to re-generate Bulldozer, but I'd like to do it. Who knows, perhaps later...'

Alright, I give you three single words, and I would like you to give us your thoughts about it...

Milan

: 'A city like any other'

"Ilona"

: 'A half retired pornstar, getting older and older'

Don "Car Breaker" Andras

: 'Perhaps in prison'

Is there a final message from you to your faithful BULLDOZER fans?

'Do what you like and enjoy your life, if you can. If you still like Bulldozer, it means you're not normal, like me. All the best...'

That's the actual state at BULLDOZER, a band - alive but dead. It would be cool if AC Wild, still liking old SLAYER, BATHORY and VENOM, gets up his lazy ass and write some new songs for BULLDOZER, because I think it won't be a disappointment... I feel it!

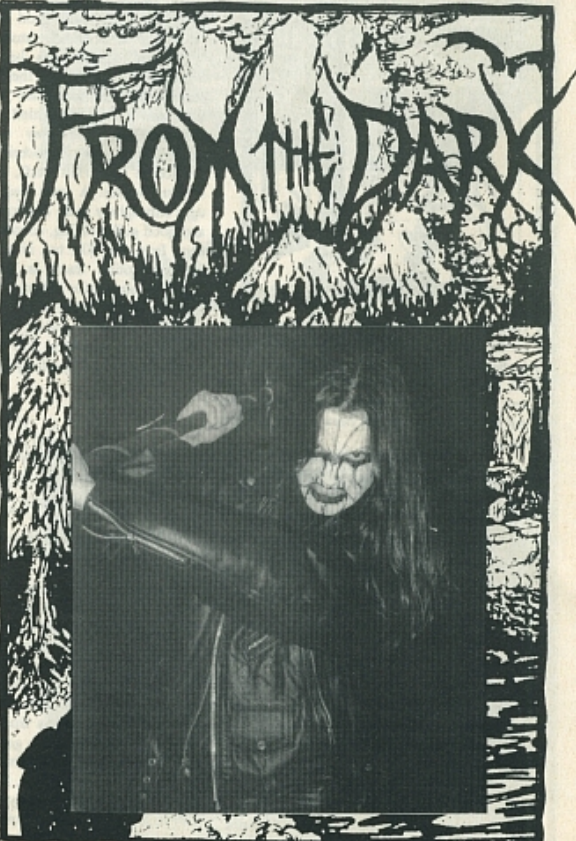
Except for DEMONIAK I did not know about any other band from New Zealand, not until I got a cool tape from a horde called FROM THE DARK. The tape contains both cold and aggressive but still not unmelodical Black/Death Metal in the vein of DARKTHRONE, DESTROYER 666, old Death and Thrash Metal, with both dark and great high piercing vocals. Cool is the fact that those guys know to play well, even some soli can be heard which has become a seldom happening in today's Black stuff...

What about a description of the music and FROM THE DARK by the band themselves? Tane's opinion to this... "In answer to this we are inspired by lots of different bands, too many to mention, although most are of the Black/Death Metal style, there are also some classical, medieval influences within our songs which is more obvious on our new material that unfortunately is still to be recorded. Bandwise myself and the singer Jason usually work on our own songs and ideas, and this shows in how our songs contrast so much. Jason's philosophies reflect on the secrets of the occult and the powers of magick and the third eye... Whereas my ideas focus on darker themes, hate, lust, revenge and my own satanic belief mixing the two styles together creates the perfect mix of positive and negative energy, the way it should be." But where lies the band's strength? Tane once again comments: "It lies in each band members' individuality and our ability to bring each others ideas together, we can also play live which is something we take pride in doing well. Those are our main strengths." As already said, I only knew about DEMONIAK until FROM THE DARK crossed my path with their demo. But what about other Metal happenings in New Zealand? "New Zealand's scene is still small for Metal bands (of any style), and Black Metal is virtually unknown except to the hardcore fans. Occasionally we get a live-gig, usually here in Tauranga where we live, or in Auckland, but hardly any major Black Metal bands tour here at all, so it's pretty uninspiring. There are also a lot of Death Metal bands here in Zew Zealand, but hardly any Black Metal bands of any significance other than Demoniac who have now relocated to the U.K." replies Tane. So we should believe that FROM THE DARK is the only blackened force on this hot Island. To stay at the band, what about their new songs? What kind of path will the band walk in future? Tane again: We have written quite a few songs since the demo which are much better than anything else we have done so far. Hopefully you'll see some new recordings and perhaps even a full-length debut album. We also have some more gigs lined up and might look at some overseas gigs in future, as time and money allows. Musically we will continue to develop our unique New Zealand sound and draw inspiration from all the ideologies of the occult and the ancient Deity's that the christian fikh demonized and slandered." Let's hope that the band does not change their style into something more commercial, because I don't want to be ashamed of once having featured FROM THE DARK, haha.

Those who can't wait for the debut album (in case there is one planned anyway...) can obtain the cool "In The Last Days of The Sun" 6-song demo for just \$5 (world-wide). You'll have to listen to it a couple of times until you know about FROM THE DARK's quality.

Here's the band's address...

Tane Baylis, P.O. Box 24 03, Tauranga, New Zealand



WINDS

7 Inches

ANGEL CORPSE "Wolfust"

One new killer song ("Wolfust"), and one aggressive coverversion of Possessed's "Burning In Hell" can be found on this great 7"EP. "Wolfust" is a very intense Death Metal hammer with hard drumming and very violent vocals... I think Angel Corpse sound more extreme than ever. The sound quality is very good, so if you like to support this honest band (featuring Ex-Order From Chaos warrior Pete Helmkamp), then order this 7"EP for \$6 (USA) or \$7 (World). It's a bit pricy, yes, but this vinyl is worth the money. Sons Of Vengeance, P.O. Box 7019, Kansas City, MO. 64113 U.S.A.

BARATHRUM

"Jetblack" (Frozen Lands)

Demonos Sova and his brothers in Barathrum managed to release their first vinyl after having thrown three full-length CDs onto the market. This 7"EP includes two new tunes ("Jetblack", "Hellbred") which are in the typical uncommercial Barathrum style, with a lot of bass-sounds and dirty vocals. The music is mid-tempo and simple but effective, and appeals to all supporters of the band. This is original Black Metal art with the right feeling, and is played only for people into perverse demonic cults. To get "Jetblack" (lim. on 666 copies), you'll have to send \$6 (\$7 outside Europe) to Frozen Lands, PL 66, 24101 Salo, Finland

HEADBANGERS AGAINST DISCO

I don't know why headbangers still fight against disco as real "disco" is almost dead anyway, but I suppose this is a "revival" of the anti-disco attitude of the 80s. There are three volumes of this series released, so let's get into the reviews...



Four bands are expressing their hatred against Disco here... the suckers from Inferno and Gehennah with their recycling Metal-stuff as the losers on one side, and Bestial Warlust and Sabbat as the winners on the other side. All songs are unreleased ones except for the song by Gehennah.



More bands to celebrate the old anti-disco cult... Nifelheim with the Vulcano-coverversion of "Witches Sabbat", Unpure with "Metal Night", and Usurper with "Anno

Sathanas" (incl. an anti-disco intro by Paul Balloff). All three tracks are really cool and are worth checking out.



The third 7"EP brings us songs by Japanese thrashers Terrorsquad, American 70s Hard Rock-fans Iron Rainbow, Chicago old-school heavy Death Metalers Cianide and Swedish old-school Hardcore-hooligans Loud Pipes (feat. Ex-Merciless members). Four completely different sounding but cool bands!

One 7EP costs \$5, all three EP just \$10. Write to: P.A.R., P.O. Box 4049, SE-300 04 Halmstad, Sweden.

MERCILESS

"Behind The Black Door" (Iron Fists)

The first demo of Swedish Death-Thrashers Merciless here finally on good old vinyl. If you like old Kreator/ Poison (Ger), then check out this 7EP, simple as that. \$5 to: Tomas Nyqvist, Finningev. 72 D. 64542 Strängnäs, Sweden

SABBAT

"Scandinavian Harmageddon" (Evil Rec./ Primitive Art)

Two new songs and a good live-recording of "Reek of Cremation" (studio version on "Evenom" album) can be heard on the Scandinavian version of the "Harmageddon" series. The new songs are "Bleeding From Ear" and a Japanese titled one. The first mentioned one is very old-sounding, a mixture of Slayer's "Antichrist" and Venom's "Welcome To Hell"-stuff, all with dirty screamy vocals. A great song with a special ugly atmosphere (also due to the production) and good guitar-riffing, sounds like a Sabbat song from the 80s, but is a new tune. The Japanese titled track is more mid-paced mayhem, also quite old-sounding, but not as furious as "Bleeding From Ear". All three songs are of good quality, and knowing that this single is limited to 500 copies only, you have to fight to get one for your collection.



"East European Harmageddon" (Evil Records/ View Beyond)

The fourth "Harmageddon"-vinyl here, including two tunes with "Sabbat" and "Woman". It seems that Sabbat are sounding more primitive and underground than ever with every new 7EP. These two songs have a very raw production and although they sound typical sabbatical in their style, they sound like some of the songs from the band's old singles ('87). You have to get used to the new songs due to the vocals, but it's great stuff after you got used to them. I think it's a good sign for the band that they don't play "easy listening" music like many other bands do, and it's a sign for Sabbat's originality in this

commercial scene. "East European Harmageddon" (limited to 300 copies, white vinyl) is definitely not a single for ordinary Black/Thrash Metal people, especially not for people who can't accept dirty and exotic sounds. Sabbat is only a band for maniacs! P.S.: German readers can get this 7"EP from my address as I have some copies of it, but please write first.

MAGNESIUM / GORGON (Street Light Records)

Not only Metalucifer keep up the sound of traditional, NWOBHM-styled Metal, but also their landmates from Magnesium and Gorgon. Both bands play very old sounding Heavy Rock à la ancient Iron Maiden/ Angel Witch, it's almost 70s-sounding, but very cool and with know-how. Magnesium's "Tell Me" is this singles' highlight, as, in contrary to Gorgon, the vocals are not typical Japanese sounding and quite original. It's great to hear such a song in 1997, because it's absolutely transmitting me into the past... and believe me, both bands here are not recycling old bands' riffs, it all sounds as if it comes from their hearts. Gorgon's side ("Cold Hearted Woman") is musically first class stuff, but the vocalist has to improve his English pronunciation, at least a bit. Real NWOBHM fans shouldn't hesitate to buy this cool 7"inch anyway, because it contains the true sound of old British steel, even if those two bands on this black vinyl come from Japan (someone has to do the job if the English bastards don't deliver the goods anymore). P.S.: German readers can get this 7"EP from my address, but write first.



GRIM

No Metal stuff but Mortiiis-like sounds (and images) can be found on this 7"EP. It's so called "dungeon" music, based on simple melodies and atmospheres. For those who like such music it's an interesting offer. It's available by airmail for \$8. Profane Elite Prod., S.R. 022, Correo San Roque, Lima 33, Peru

Gorgon

(Street Lights Records)

Just before I finished this issue, I found Gorgon's new 7"EP in my letterbox, cool! The cover wasn't done yet, so I got the vinyl only, but his should be enough to do a review anyway. The band offers us four new powerful songs, all again in the pure NWOBHM-style, and I can say that the music is nothing but excellent and hard rocking, with great riffs and rhythms. These guys do a perfect job, if there weren't the very bad vocals. I know that many Japanese bands have problems with the English language, but Gorgon's singer just can't sing at all... he does his best, but he fails. So, this 7"EP is a hard one to review, I can tell you. On one side you have great music, on the other side horrible vocals. So, I don't know whether to recommend this 7"EP or not. The band should try to look for a new vocalist, because I'm sure that with better vocals, this band will be loved by a lot of Heavy Metal fans. This 7"EP (and the old Gorgon EP "Cold Hearted Woman") is available for \$5 (each). Shigeyuki Koide, 4-12-7-16 Matsunomi, Chuo-Ku, Chiba-City 260 Japan

Full Length albums

GRAND BELIAL'S KEY "Mocking..." (Wood Nymph)

I picked up this great DoLP as I already liked the 7EP -release and some old demos, but I didn't expect this debut album here to be that great. Grand Belial's Key play pure Black Heavy Metal which has nothing in common with "northern" stuff. Variety is the band's strength and the ability to write good quality-riffs that are more than just noisy "bzzzzz..."-kind of stringratures. I just appreciate this band for creating a style of dirty Black Metal that can be taken as an original one, which is still dark and still with an ancient Black/ Death Metal feeling (without being a retro Metal band). I just can advise all real untrendy and synth-hating Black Metal warriors to check out this cool Double-album, and to prepare for some headbanging mania. There are not many bands around like this one!

IMPERATOR "The Time Before Time"

It's an old LP, I know, but as it got re-released through PAGAN Records, here's a short review: Imperator play brutal Death Thrashing Metal in its rawest form. Euronymous planned to release this band on his DEATHLIKE SILENCE PRODUCTIONS, but shit happened in 1993 when a certain person killed the Mayhem-deathsawer. Now you have the chance to check out this old album, and as far as I know, Tomasz of PAGAN still has some original Vinyl-copies left, so ask for it.

ORDOG "Stage One"

A distributor (I don't mention his name to not make him calling me an asshole) said "I have a real great record for you, a mixture of Hellhammer and Darkthrone... very obscure stuff" when I asked about new vinyls that he got for sale, and I was really excited about this LP from Scottish band Ordog. The first impression of the album when I received it was "Hey, what's this? Where's the cover?.. there wasn't any, quite strange and indeed a stupid thing to do when releasing an LP-album. When I played the record, I heard some Darkthrone, some (but very little) Hellhammer, but also some Burzum, but all not with the original might and power of those bands. Ordog did some good work on this album, and some songs (with a sung voice) sound very interesting, but it's not a killer-album, just somewhere between cool and good. But the band at least managed to record an album which doesn't sound too trendy which is a good sign for the band being not a typical trendy Black Metal of today.

POSSESSED

"Live In San Francisco 1984" (Anonyme Society)

A bootleg LP here, but not one from 1984, no, this one here was made in 1997. It just includes a live-concert of the band from 1984, and even if the sound is messy, it's great to hear how brutal Jeff roared into the microphone. Hey, you wanna-be Death Metalers reading this review: This is how Death Metal vocals (and music) should sound!!! If you don't agree... then please stop labelling your music as "Death Metal"! Ok, continuing with the review: The coverlayout could have been much better... it just looks like "Seven Churches" did. The same logo (not the one from the demo), same photos. Some rare and older shots would have been much cooler, but I suppose you "anonyme" guys (some say that the LP was done by W.A.R. from Sweden) didn't have any... not really a proof for being die-hard Possessed maniacs. But anyway, it's a damn-cool release, even if it smells like one more attempt to make some quick extra money.

Here a short chat with MERCYFUL FATE's axeman Hank Sherman... For me, MERCYFUL FATE is one of the few old bands who hasn't betrayed their old style, so I salute them for being faithful to their roots. This interview is not really in depth as time was short, but anyway,... I couldn't resist to include it in this issue.



When MERCYFUL FATE reformed, people expected to hear an album like "Don't Break The Oath", so was it difficult to write "In The Shadows"? Were you under pressure back then?

'Of course, it wasn't easy to write for Mercyful Fate again after all those years, but when I met King to reform the band, there we had a good feeling and good pressure to compose the album. I think that made "In The Shadows" a strong release with good songs included. Some people wanted to hear a second "Don't Break The Oath" album, but that's not what it is. Anyway, our comeback album definitely sounds like Mercyful Fate in my opinion.'

Is it a problem for you that when a MERCYFUL FATE album gets released, people compare the music to KING DIAMOND's solo-stuff?

'No no, I think that's a difference... for me there's a big difference between Mercyful Fate and King Diamond-songs. Ok, the vocals are similar of course, and the first impression of both bands might be the same one, but Mercyful Fate is more Heavy Rock, and King's solo stuff is more furious...'

... MERCYFUL FATE is more like Bach, while KING DIAMOND more Beethoven-like, to compare it with classical componists...

'...Yes, we have an older sound, more tamed, more rocking, with more calm classical elements.'

What did you think about the KING DIAMOND solo-stuff after MERCYFUL FATE splitted up, when King came up with "No Presents For Christmas" and "Fatal Portrait"?

'To say the truth, I never heard the albums, I just knew some songs as I never got a copy of the first albums from King. I never really heard the whole stuff, but I think that "Fatal Portrait" and "Abigail" are probably the best ones,

It seems that the spotlight is always on Mr. Diamond, even in MERCYFUL FATE.... doesn't it pester you as not only King but also you are writing songs for the band?

'I don't care about that. When Mercyful Fate started, it started as a band, while King Diamond's solo-thing was more based on his person, using his name for the band, etc. I don't see any problems that King is more in the spotlight that we are, because interested fans know who writes the songs and that's fine.'

You covered "The Ripper" for the JUDAS PRIEST Tribute album... do you know what the guys think about your version? By the way, have you ever met and talked to them?

'I didn't talk with them, but I heard that they liked the record.... I do not know about the details. Hopefully they'll like our version, ...I guess they will like it. I never met the guys, ...I just saw them three times, one time in Hamburg, Markthalle, back in 1979. Really cool. I saw them with AC/DC in Berlin and with Saxon in Kiel. Unfortunately I never talked to them.'

What are you favourite Metal bands anyway?

'If there a band that means something special to me, then it must be Judas Priest, especially their stuff from the 70s. This stuff has influenced my early songwriting I must say.'

What about a real Live album of MERCYFUL FATE!

'We have talked about it, but it's not sure yet... we will record some of our shows, all in all 25 songs, to get an imagination of such an album...May be it will happen, maybe not...'

There are quite some live-bootlegs existing... what's your opinion about that?

'Well, it proves that your band is popular, and that's fine. The bad part is that people are making money with your

Mercyful Fate

they are good...'

The old MERCYFUL FATE albums were very satanic, so did you ever care about what King wrote when it comes to the lyrics? Or are you just a guitarists, a musician, and nothing more?

'Yes, we are basically a band to play music, but King writes the lyrics and arranges all the stuff... I myself am not too interested in lyrics, I don't care about them. King can sing about whatever he likes to. I do not always understand all of his lyrics and I do not analyse them. I'm more into the musical side of things, like the vocal-lines, the moods, performances, and so on.'

Did you ever had problems with the band's image?

'No, not really. Of course there always were discussions with christians, King had to explain his lyrics, his views on satanism. In some medias things were made really big, but for the rest... no problems.'



work. But it's fine for me that it's existing, at least some of them, because when I was younger, I remember that I was really excited when I saw a Kiss-bootleg, this was great for me. I myself also have some Mercyful Fate bootlegs at home like "Curse Of The Pharoas" and stuff like that... But watch out for our new album, that one is more interesting!'

Let's pray that Hank will not disappoint us with the new MERCYFUL FATE album... we will find out soon hopefully!

Soulburn



DON'T FORGET THE ANCIENT
FEELING..IT STILL RULES.



UNGod's pervert "Schiekron" was so kind and recorded me SOULBURN's promotape, and when I heard it, it blew me out of my shoes.

Wow, this was stuff that I haven't heard for long time now... very fuckin' heavy and just deadly as hell.

The first song on this 3-track-promo has a simple but heavy opening riff which has a slow double-bass fundament like in some of ASPHYX's songs. The vocals are almost like the ones from Martin van Drunen (not as sick though, which is better in my opinion) and fit perfectly to SOULBURN's dark sound. The other two songs of the promo are also in the same vein, sometimes slow, sometimes fast, but always very intense, heavy, brutal and dark. I love it!

SOULBURN is a three-piece featuring Bob (EX-ASPHYX) on drums, Eric (EX-ASPHYX) on guitar/bass, and Wannas (PENTACLE) on vocals.

I chose Bob and Wannas as my interview-victims (Eric has already been interviewed about ASPHYX in TALES OF THE MACABRE #2), so that it was possible to pack three great bands into one feature...

How did it come that the powers of ASPHYX and PENTACLE collided to form a band

heavier than anything else, SOULBURN?

Bob: I know Wannas (Pentacle) for 8 years now, and we always had the same musical interests. We already had plans for doing something heavy together for quite a while now, and here we are. You can see Soulburn as a more primitive, underground version of old Asphyx. The songs are more in the vein of the old Asphyx songs on "Embrace The Death". Soulburn is risen from the ashes from Asphyx. Only Soulburn is meant to stay very obscure and underground, that's also why we signed with such a small obscure label like DAMNATION.

Since we all are old Death Metallers, it's of course a fact that Soulburn, just like Asphyx, plays good old dark, obscure Death Metal like old Slaughter, Sodom, Destruction, Necrophagia, etc. (Well, I agree on Slaughter, perhaps slow old Sodom as well, but not on the rest - ed.). The line - up is...

Bob Bagchus - Drums
Theo Lopmans - guitar/ bass
Wannas Gubbels - Vocals
But Theo recently got replaced by Eric who's back again now in Soulburn. Asphyx is no more. It ended with the final release of "Embrace the Death". This time it's really final. Soulburn goes further were Asphyx stopped. We need to play music, express ourselves, so

that's why Soulburn is formed.'

Wannas: I know Bob for quite some time already. Since I ordered the first Asphyx release, the "Enter the Domain" demo, we stayed in contact with eachother. Even when he didn't play in Asphyx anymore we wrote letters and talked on the phone. Bob and I have similar tastes concerning old bands. We have some differences concerning today's scene, but when we're talking about the good old 80s, we always have to weep, haha! Especially the ultimate demo -years. You know, the late 80s. In one way we're always start talking about those years and certain bands always on our lips like Mayhem, Obscurity, Necrophagia, Treblinka, Nihilist, Rigor Mortis/ Immolation, Mortem, Infernal Mäjesty, Sodom, Celtic Frost, Venom, Necrovore, DesExult, Possessed, Grottesque, Majesty and many more. We always talked about doing something together, something like a project. There was talking about doing a demo with Thy Infernal. Some days ago I heard the advance tape again. I was supposed to do the vocals, but due to some obscure reasons, the tape got never released. A few people know this, but back in 1994 we had some serious drummer problems in Pentacle. The band was taking too much of his time and he wanted to quit. Mike and I didn't want to end the band of course, and at that time Bob didn't play in Asphyx anymore.

Soulburn

so I asked him. He agreed. He came to some gigs of us and we talked about it, but when we wanted to rehearse for the first time, he didn't show up. Due to some personal reasons he couldn't do it. At that time I was quite pissed, but now I understand his reasons. He was just fed up with playing in a band, so this cooperation ended. As we all know Pentacle went further with Marc and after some time of letting steam off, I contacted Bob again because of his new band Throne. I ordered a tape and a shirt and the contact was established again. I saw Throne changing in Asphyx again and was in the studio when they recorded "God Cries". I was really happy to see Holland's best Death Metal band back on the road again. Anyway, after some trouble Asphyx died an obscure death with "Embrace The Death", but Bob wanted to do something else. So he asked Eric and me to record a demo together. For this purpose we recorded the "Promo'96" at Harrow Productions, and after some minor changes, we are back with the same line-up.

So far you've recorded a very professional and good sounding demotape, so I guess this was only the beginning, so tell us what will happen next. Is SOULBURN just a "side-band" for fun or are you willing to conquer the Black/ Death Metal scene with all the weapons and arms you have to offer?

Bob: 'We'll do a 12" inch (Vinyl + CD) for DAMNATION. Recording session was planned for last November, but Theo, our guitarist, didn't show up for unknown reasons, and he now got replaced by Eric, with whom we already recorded the promotape. It will probably feature a cover of Necrophagia's "Autopsy of the living Dead", but that is not for sure yet. Soulburn is a project which will be kept strictly underground. But we also have plans for a full-length LP/CD, but first we'll release the 12" inch which will be heavier than the 3 track promo. This sounds like a cliché, but that's the way it is. It all will be very dark, like it always was.'

Wannes: 'For me, Soulburn is a side band. Although I like its sound very, very much, my heart goes out to Pentacle. I have so many feelings connected with this band. I couldn't give it up. So yes, it's a side band, but a very serious one. It's not a joke band, because the topics I use for Soulburn are even more blacker than the ones I use for Pentacle. In my opinion primitive lyrics fit Soulburn very well. Our intention was and is to go back to the late 80s and release some stuff which could have been recorded back then. I think we succeeded very well with the promo (it's a KILLER!!! -ed.). About conquering the scene, we would rather be the Dutch Necrovore than a new Gorefest. So better a cult band than a famous band. It certainly fits Soulburn's concept. In a way it's the same as Pentacle's, but with other musicians. This kind of music is for a selected kind of people and not for the jumping masses!!! It's for those who have the right background and feeling. Don't forget the ancient feeling, right?'

SOULBURN sounds like a primitive but heavier bastard version of PENTACLE/ ASPHYX with a touch of HELLHAMMER

and SLAUGHTER and modern Black Metal mayhem... how did the demosongs come into being? Just by rehearsing the stuff or by careful songwriting at home? Do you want to remind people at any old cults with SOULBURN ??? It's a fact that you're not just "another new Death Metal" band...

Bob: 'Just by jamming together. We all grew up with bands like Hellhammer, Slaughter, Venom, Celtic Frost, Possessed, Sodom, etc... so it's just natural. We just go into the rehearsal room and start jamming. We do not want to remind people of anything, this is just us. Old school Death Metal played by old fans, like us. We did our stuff with Asphyx and we do it now with Soulburn.'

And yes, Soulburn isn't just "a new Death Metal band", because we already deserved our credibility with Asphyx, and Soulburn is the new Asphyx on underground level. The story just goes on... We just need to play this kind of music. It never stops!'

Wannes: 'Bob and Eric wrote the songs together at their rehearsalplace, so I didn't have anything to do with the actual writing of music. It's rather strange to hear people say the songs would fit in Pentacle's repertoire. My good friend Chuck Keller (Ex-Order From Chaos, now in Vulpecula) asked me why we didn't call it Pentacle instead of Soulburn?! Ok, the vocals are almost the same, but that's not strange with me doing the vocal job. I just wrote the lyrics, checked them out with a rehearsal-tape Bob sent me and went into the studio. Strange enough, I like my vocals on the promo more than on our last Pentacle studio effort (me, too! -ed.). About those influences: Well, hehe, we know about those influences, but instead of being ashamed of having them, we worship them!!! No, we're certainly not another new Black/ Death Metal band. We're totally into what we're doing. It's not only the music, it's also a lifestyle and although Bob now lives in a nice house with a warm cup of tea and his girl friend and cut off his hair, he's still hungry for some ancient Death Metal! He still has the right feeling and attitude (Hail mate!). Together with Eric we have a huge experience and the right musical background. We're not teenagers anymore and we know what we want. Death, Doom and Destruction.'

Where do you see the differences between SOULBURN and PENTACLE in your opinion?

Wannes: 'I don't see that much differences between Soulburn and Pentacle. Of course, the music sounds a bit different, but that's natural with other musicians. The concept is the same, Death... the brutal ancient way! The lyrics are more primitive, more hell, haha. As far as layout concerns, yes, Soulburn is definitely more primitive, ha! Just look at the cover of the promo (I wish I could, but I haven't one... just the recordings thanks to Mr. Schiekron! -ed.) and one of Pentacle's releases. Even our "Caressed..." tape had a better cover, but in a way it fits Soulburn's concept, you know. No talking, just Death Metal all the way. The cover looks like it has been made by Dead, and he wasn't famous for his professional designs, but they had the right atmosphere.'

Bob, I heard that you had some heavy problems with your old ASPHYX singer Ron with whom you recorded "Asphyx", so please tell us about it. It seems that ASPHYX always used to have problems with their "frontmen", I just think of Mr. van Drunen, right? Too strong egos?

Bob: 'Ron didn't fit in Asphyx too good after all. Strange, of course, because I took him in the band in the first place. I knew him for quite a while, so I asked him to join the band when Martin van Drunen was fired. But soon already after he joined us, his ego was getting too big. He thought he was Tom Araya or something. We did some gigs with him, but then I left the band, because I thought Asphyx was on a dead trail. We started to repeat ourselves, it was a sinking ship. Just listen to the "Asphyx" album, I think it's just a rip-off version of "The Rack" and "Last One on Earth" (I think "Asphyx" is a masterpiece of "Death, the fuckin' brutal way", as you said back then, plus Ron's vocals were better than Martin's, in my opinion. -ed.). I don't know why we always had problems with frontmen, I think it was their egos, they always changed the negative way.'

You're seriously into old Metal cults, ... I mean, you're not 14-year-old kids, but what do you think about the new old Metal stuff? Do you see SOULBURN as a part of this new movement?

Bob: 'I don't like this "new" trendy movement at all! To me it all looks very forced and unreal. I mean, we never heard of those guys' bands before and suddenly they're here (...and if we heard about those guys before, then we know them from modern Death/Grind/Black Metal bands! -ed.)! Playing old Venom! Motörhead stuff with a silly "would be old" production. The one is trying even harder to sound "old" than the other! I'm surprised that there still isn't a "Metal" band who's trying to sound even older than The Beatles!

But there are also great bands like Usurper, Crimson Relic, Sadistic Intent, etc. They are real and excellent! Those bands really believe in what they're doing and that really shows, unlike some others... Asphyx/ Soulburn is not a part of this new old-movement! We are real, and we have a real past with Asphyx, we already deserved our credibility in the late 80s, being one of the first Death Metal bands in the second Death Metal generation of the late 80s. Also, I'm more than tired of the "evil" Black Metal 12-year-old kids who think they are feared demons from hell itself. They try to look as evil as it can be and produce shitty wimpy music as well! They don't even know who Venom was!!! And they claim to be evil and true. I say, if you don't know the first two albums of the mighty Venom or the first Mayhem demo, then FUCK OFF! Then you are, in my eyes, NOT evil and not true, just silly and stupid. They obviously didn't understand a bit of it!'

Wannes: 'I can be very straight with you. I certainly don't like this movement. In fact I really hate it!!! As I already told in several other interviews, if you want to play old fashioned music, you start with it directly. You don't discover it after some years playing in another band. I never thought about being the new

Morbid Angel. Although I really like this band and respect them very much, I would never want to play something like that. It's not in my blood. I'm more into the 80s (isn't Morbid Angel a band from the 80s as well?!? -ed.). I must admit there are some really cool bands out there today. I just think about Desaster, Sadistic Intent, Equinox, Ancient Rites, Shub Niggurath, Destroyer 666, Vader, Warhammer, Cianide, Mayhem, Ungod and many more. They all sound different, but their roots are in the 80s and you can still hear that. I respect these bands very much and I'll support them with all my might.

We are certainly no part of this movement with Pentacle, 'cause when we started in winter 89/90, we never thought about being a part of a kind of movement. We just did our own thing, just like we do today. At that time we were old fashioned and now we're "Part" of a new movement... Strange, isn't it? Time caught up with us, that's the truth! I definitely don't feel any ties between us and those other called old fashioned Thrash, Death or Black Metal bands. Where were they when people said Pentacle was way too ancient for the current scene? There were only bands like Sabbat (Japan), Samael, Delirium, Ancient Rites, Order From Chaos and some others doing this thing. Now one after another you get albums with Thrash Metal. Especially in Norway they seem to "discover" their roots. Very strange indeed...'

About PENTACLE: Although your style has always been CELTIC FROST-like, there's been a change of style from you demo/ 7"EP and the "The Fifth Moon" PicDisc. Your music is more aggressive and thrashy (= drumrhythms) than before... how do you see your development with your own eyes?

Wannes: 'In a way you are right, but I don't believe we changed a lot. We definitely matured as musicians, but the concept stayed the same. The reason why the 12"inch became like it is today are the following. Because we've matured a lot, we can and do play more technical than in the early days of Pentacle. Yes, the sound is not as doomy anymore. Things are going a bit faster, but it's definitely not a thought-about change. It's also not because we had a second guitarist for some time. No! The songs are written by all three of us, Mike, Marc and me. I really think it's still 100% Pentacle what you can hear on "The Fifth Moon". A lot of people didn't expect the 12"inch to be that aggressive, because the "Exalted Journey" 7"EP was not very fast. Perhaps they thought it would be in the same direction, but they were wrong. It was just a coincidence the material on the 7"inch was pretty slow/ mid tempo.

About the drums, Marc really progressed a lot during the last years. He's definitely the best musician in the band and you can notice that on the 12"inch. I'm very happy with the sound and direction the band is going today. With "The Fifth Moon" as a starting point our next release will have a good position to move a bit further towards aggression, technics and ancient feeling.'

Any new tunes written? I know that you are no lazy asses..

...Wannes: 'As always the songs are taking time. For the next release we'll record 6 new tracks, an old song and a cool cover of an old undergroundband. The new songs are better than our older material. It's a continuation of the material of "The Fifth Moon", but more technical, faster, heavier and also slower. The same as all the other bands say, but that's the



only way to describe the new songs. People who heard them are very positive about the new material. I guess you can better wait and hear the new songs on our upcoming release. It will be a full-length one and we'll do our best to make it the best we can!'

Black Death Metal has changed a lot during the last couple of years... which bands of today do you still regard as good ones, which bands as absolutely "unblack/ undeathly"?

Wannes: 'When I want to behave as a professional, I won't mention any names here, but as I'm still part of the underground... here we go! For bands I really don't like: Infernöl! I totally hate this band (me,too! -ed.) Their album is really shit and live they suck as well. I really can't understand why a label like OSMOSE did sign such a band(now as they signed Exciter they should drop Infernöl! -ed.). There are much, much better bands in this genre. And they have the Swedish Gehennah! Even though I believe they are sincere in their beliefs, they overdo it in my opinion (some Swedish TALES... readers told me bad things about the band, but I can't write down the details here as they might be rumours!? -ed.). It's certainly their purpose, but I can't take them serious. It's more a joke, but if they want to be this way, so let it be. Then you have some of these new Black Metal hordes who played Deicide-kind of stuff some "months" ago. It's just like if they discovered Black Metal some days ago and made up their mind to do something else. Just look in ABLAZE magazine and you'll see so many of them. It's just pathetic!

Now it's time for some true stuff! one band that comes in my mind is Ancient Rites. They really believe in what they are doing and they are a very honest band. Hmm, and what about Sadistic Intent? Their last promo fuckin' kills! I hope they'll get a proper deal soon! Another American band is Immolation... still Death Metal. The Japanese Sabbat is a very honest band I think. They keep on doing their own stuff and I still like it very much. Also Morbid Angel, Order From Chaos, Eternal Solstice from Holland (great stuff à la old Massacre/ Death), Vader and Vital Remains.'

Now some Black Metal bands: Which band is more true like the true Mayhem? (Perhaps Sabbat or Mortuary Drape! -ed.) I really like their new releases. I agree it's a strange idea, Mayhem without Euronymous, but the new

material sounds good. I don't want to mention those typical new Black Metal bands like Satyricon or Dimmu Borgir. Perhaps they're honest towards themselves, but I would rather mention a band like Bestial Warlust. That's great stuff! It's not typical Black Metal, but anyway. I believe that a band like Emperor is a honest one. They are one of the bigger ones today and they bring intelligent music with the right attitude.'

Bob, as most of the old Death Metal bands (like ENTOMBED, MORGOTH, TIAMAT, etc.) wimped out, don't you sometimes feel like being "the last one on Earth" when it comes to being old Death Metallers ?

Bob: 'I sometimes feel like one of the last old Death Metallers, when I see quite a few people around me changing, and not being into old Death Metal anymore, that's sad. It makes you realize that time really goes fast, too fast (You're absolutely right! Time is the No.1 enemy of the faithful Metal maniac! -ed.). Where are the good old times? Luckily I still have all my demotapes, LPs and CDs. They make life worth living. But we're still re-living the good old times ourselves with SOULBURN. That feels good!'

Yeah, and not only to you! Give some last words...

Bob: 'Thanks for doing this interview. Beware of the Soulburn attack !!!'

Wannes: 'I greet those who deserve my hails. Till we meet again... keep the flame burning! Don't forget the ancient feeling.. it still rules!!!!'

Wannes told me (when I came to Eindhoven after this interview.... thanks for being our guide, Wannes!) that there won't be a 12"inch but a real album of SOULBURN released, and that the band Eric and Bob are very busy with writing new heavy tunes for it. I'm fuckin' excited to blow all the dirt out of my ears with this album!

I salute SOULBURN for bringing back the feeling of true dark Death Metal. Posers and keyboard-loving creatures should better stay away, because this band will be too heavy for you.

About PENTACLE: These guys have completed all new songs, and the album will be recorded very soon. If I had to believe some rumours, the new stuff will be great... some people already have heard some new tunes at PENTACLE-gigs, and are very satisfied.

I just can't get rid of the feeling that their upcoming album will be killer, just like SOULBURN... I can't wait to hear those masterpieces.

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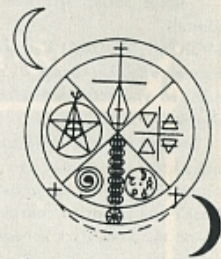
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Latest news:

I got some bad news from SOULBURN: They cancelled the contract with DAMNATION Records to (once again) sign to the commercial realms of CENTURY MEDIA.... I can't understand this as ASPHYX weren't too happy with them in the past. SOULBURN claims to be an underground band, but the temptation of making some more money seems to be too strong, unfortunately. I'm disappointed, guys...



MORTUARY DRAPE



Evil Necromantical Black Metal



Trends come, trends go... but Mortuary Drape remains! There're only very few bands such as this Italian one existing that totally isolates from any new (or old) influences and happenings in the scene. Mortuary Drape's "Secret Sudaria", their latest album, offers nothing but pure Necromantical Black Metal art the way the band has always been known for. .

Frontman "Wildness Perversion" (also known as Maini Walter) is still the leading force and the man with the deep grunts in the drape, and was (like in Tales Of The Macabre #1) the guy to reveal the secrets of the cult for you readers and myself. Due to his ugly handwriting and his "not so good" English it wasn't an easy job to type his comments, so I hope that I didn't twist too much of his words...





Mexican Hardwares

GENITAL RETROPLASMA "Mechanism Of Vomit"

Ughh.... total grinding mayhem here! Ultra deep and distorted vocals meet disharmonic Gut 'n' Cannibal Corpse 'n' Dead Infection riffs. But Genital Retroplasma often slow down their tempo, so there's a bit of variety in their music. A perfect release for slaves of morbid and sick Death/Grind.

NEFROPTOSIS "The Last Days In The Abyss"

This is straight ahead Death Metal with aggressive deep vocals. Sometimes it even sounds "Brazilian" when they speed up. 8 songs are included, all with a good sound. Not too well to the music are the deepvocals, there's a strange effect used, and it doesn't sound too well. It's hard to compare this band, perhaps it sounds like a slower and more abrupt version of last

MICTLAN "Donde Habitan Los Muertos"

Here we have a Mexican band with Spanish lyrics. So I can't read what the booklet tries to tell me, but relating to the symbols 'n' stuff, this band signs about pagan roots. Musically they confirm this, because I hear jungle-like tones, bush-drums, etc. Suddenly the opening song starts, and all I hear is straight ahead aggressive Death/Thrash Metal. I didn't expect Mictlan to sound like this, so I'm surprised. It sounds like typical South/Middle-American bands, you feel the anger and wrath inside the music. Your head has to stand the power of eight songs, but it's a pleasure to listen to this! More of Mictlan, please!

THE ZEPHYR "Celestial Evil God"

4 songs of melodic mid tempo Black/Death Metal, not bad, but not very good either, just ordinary stuff. For a 4 song demo it's a good and professional start. Anyway, there's still something to do until you guys got more popular.

DISTORTED HARMONY Compilation '97

Some bands are known, some are still unknown to me. Names like Sacrilegium, Behemoth, Hellborn, Martyrdom, Witchunt, Funereal Moon, Anarchus, Bethel, Inhumate, Goetya are on this tape, 12 songs. To check it out, send \$5 to Jose Adolfo, Apdo Postal 19-648, C.P. 03901, Mexico 19, D.F., Mexico. This is also the address where you can ask for the other Mexican stuff's prices (except for Satan and Sepulcro)).

SATAN "Opera De Muertos"

I would feel myself ashamed to call my band "Satan" as there was a cool British band with that name around in the last decade. Satan from Mexico play violent and dark Black/Death with deep and screaming vocals on their LP-tape. Sometimes it reminds me at old Brazilian hordes, and this should be a compliment for the band. No unimportant technical playing here, just straight ahead rhythms and riffs. That's what I appreciate...

SEPULCRO "Descanso Eterno"

This band plays mid-tempo Death Metal with some Thrash riffs, but all is very tamed, not very brutal. Well, it's an acceptable LP-tape, but it could have been a touch heavier. Both Satan and Sepulcro get sold for \$7. Write to: Jose Cisneros, Constitucion 1-3, M 152, Col. Amp. M. Hidalgo, C.P. 14250, D.F., Mexico.

Hello Maini, how are things in your catacomba tonight?

'Things proceed very well from the catacomb of the drape!'

MORTUARY DRAPE returned with their original line-up...why this change of musicians? Was the band dead, so you reformed it, or was it just a line-up change?

'All guys who played the act in the drape before left it, because they told me that they would like to play an own style of music, created by themselves.'

Wasn't it difficult to convince your old members to re-join the band after so many years? How did you manage it?

'I've searched the old members who live in different towns. When I found them, I asked them if they want to be part once again in the drape. They answered with very much enthusiasm, so that now we're proceeding together into the drape to create a new chapter delivering a taste of Mortuary Drape!!'

Other ex-members of MORTUARY DRAPE formed a new band called THE MAGICCK WAY, right? It was said that they will play a similar style to your "Into The Drape" MLP... What can you tell us? Are you still friends with them?

'We have neither luck nor envy for all those guys. They choose to play together forming another band. We don't matter what they do, because Mortuary Drape goes forward anyway.'

All current bandmembers have names that start with a "W"... why this? Is there a special meaning behind it?

'The "W" of each one's name is the direction of a particular vibration. Like an instrument expands music (the harmonical scale in a different way by pure noise), the musician has to understand how much of his music expands the meaning of the lyrics and to search to collide most possible with the vibration of the song. Therefore the "W" is the solution of the music (???) ed.'

"Secret Sudaria" is more straight ahead than your old songmaterial... how has the band developed? How will it be in future? Any new tunes?

'With "Secret Sudaria" we have a final cut to all old material composed between 1985 and 1989. This record results very black and speedy, because it has been played with the devastating power which we played ten years ago. The new songs will be based on d mid-time associating to a particular way to compose. You'll hear it! For now we are hard working to create about 15 new songs of which 11 will be recorded for the new album this year.'

The new album-cover got censored while "All The Witches Dance", which is way more extreme (cult), is still untouched by the wimpy authorities. Why this? Who said "No!" to "Secret Sudaria"?

'Like every censor, he is only an opinionist destined to opinionists-people, this is what the censorer thinks. Obviously censoring damages the complete work of the artists who have done it. But beyond of all, the listeners and fans buy a record because of the music and send out a fuck off to all the rest with their censoring shit.'

Who is responsible for the frontcover-photos? What is so fascinating at human corpses, bones, undefined dead bodies? What makes you so "Possessed by necromancy and necromantic"?

'Each front-cover of Mortuary Drape represents a chapter of a long career. Like I said before, it's a synthesis of what we are searching through the years. Everyone of the members has got an own personality and an own style of

living. We don't depend on eachother. Obviously there are some common interests among these, the art of necromancy for example.'

Do you collect bones? What was your wildest and most extreme experience with the dead?

'Dead, bones, corpses, cemeteries, astral plane, etc., are real things (the most real things!), because these will be the experiences of us when we are dead. Things that surround those real things, like religion, priests, philosophy, ... are not a part of a real experience. In sight of death they haven't any value, it's a simple point of view. Therefore (as you ask) the most extreme experience will be the final experience each one of us will make.'

That's why you call your style "Necromantical Black Metal"?

'I think that the term is important for a band to have a tie between the meanings mentioned in the previous answer.'

Your old labels (UNISOUND/SHIVADARSHANA) are not too beloved ones... what can you tell us? Do you think they did their best for MORTUARY DRAPE? Is your situation better nowadays?

'Our old labels didn't do what we requested, about problems with frontcover and inner sleeve of "All The Witches Dance". There was also a missed payment of the distribution of the album and other things, which was not very nice. Therefore we have decided to send big fuck off to all these unpleasant facts. However, we have to apply to the law to require justice. For that concern our new label **WITCHES & WYRMS** has shorn to be very interested for Mortuary Drape.'

Your tour with DECAYED and UNPURE was cancelled unfortunately, but can we still hope to catch you live, at least here in Europe?

'Unfortunately, as you say, this tour was cancelled. However, we are already looking to organize a tour crushing the main towns in Europe. Meet us on this long tour of the drape!!'

I wish I would, but I doubt that you'll manage to come on your own! Talking about playing live: You talked about a "particular show with professionalism" in your biography... what kind of show is this?

'With the word "professionalism" we want to say: To use a severe disciple to play; to refuse every silly purpose; to ignore people who creed to be what in reality they aren't (music business is full of it)... these things we think are professional.'

Some comments on following topics...

- **Bulldozer:** 'Bulldozer, a name, a trade, a chapter of what has been extreme music along the eighties'

- **Vampirism (in Black Metal):** 'Man talks about evil, when evil is far away from him'

- **Italian scene:** 'Actually there are too many bands who play the same style... it will collapse!'

- **Beherit's/ Blasphemy's cult...** 'A contagious manner to stay together in the same group; fear to stay alone.'

Do you think that a revelation in Black Metal is still possible which will bring back the real dark feeling into this music?

'What made things so great is because it happens only one time. Therefore I think a revelation in Black Metal is impossible. Look around, ... I can say that people and fans are very tired of listening, so we have alternative, grunge, crossover and other shit.'

Last message?

'The last word is to the **SOURCE**... in silence Mortuary Drape!'

Maini Walter, Via Del Coniaglio, 98, 15100
Alessandria, Italy (NO RIP OFF)

IMPIETY

Black Metal Terrorists From The East



Real Black Metal was always meant to sound dark, obscure and uncommercial, but many new bands do not seem to remember this, so let's just concentrate on those bands who still know to deliver the kind of Black Metal that will make you raise your hand and do the sign of evil.

IMPIETY are exactly such a kind of band which contains this typical wicked and dirty Black Metal feeling which wimpy asses fear.

This Singaporean Black/Death Metal terror began in 1988 with bands like SEXFAGO and TOMBCRUSHER (now known as ABHORER), but IMPIETY's official birth was in 1990 when Shyaithan (g/v) and Iblyss (d) decided to unite their powers. Xul came in 1992 to torment the six string axe (Shyaithan changed to play the bass), and with this line-up IMPIETY recorded their 5-track demo "Ceremonial NecroChrist Redesecration".

In 1994, after line-up changes, the band released their 7"inch "Salve the Goat...Iblis Exelsi", which sold 3.000 (!) copies up to date. The music back then was a sort of unholy dark Death Metal, with dark deep vocals, which was similar to ABHORER's style (on their 7"inch).

After the 7"inch release, IMPIETY attacked the scene with their debut CD "Asateerul Awaleen" in 1996, which brought a change of style. This time the band came up with a more Black Metal kind of sound, ...raw, primitive and dirty, it sounds like the styles of old SARCOFAGO and old BURZUM/EMPEROR were mixed, all with a typical desecrating manner of IMPIETY.

But not enough, the band plans to invade with a new MCD called "Funeralight"... so be warned. As Shyaithan is the only original member left of the band after he kicked out Iblyss shortly after the recordings of the MCD, he was the one to talk about IMPIETY in this interview....

First up...why the change of style on your first full-length CD/tape ? It sounds a lot different from your 7"inch release..., I would say it's more "Black Metallic" than before.

Yeah, you're right Costa... "Asateerul Awaleen" sounds much blacker than the previous "Salve the Goat..." 7"inch. To tell you the truth, we really wanted a similar but much darker production to that classic 7"inch and that was why we recorded at the same studio. But fuck, this time the engeneer who had worked with us previously had left and in came a feeble,

unexperienced fuckhead who knew a shit about METAL. We wasted a lot of time and cash thanks to this asshole. Nothing seemed to satisfy us. The final mixing to "Asateerul Awaleen" also had to be cut-short as we were running out of cash. All in all, the album doesn't appeal to us very much, thanks to its production. However, to only a certain degree we are satisfied with this release!

IMPIETY are no big friends of Norwegian bands, if I have to believe the statement on your single-release... What makes you hate them so much?

'That statement is actually directed to one racist motherfucker and all his balls-carriers... Mortiiis. Let me clarify the story with you. Back in 1992, when we first receive news of the release of Emperor's demo, I wrote them saying that I was interested in obtaining the demo. Mortiiis, then in Emperor replied me, quoting the price and also saying that we could do a trade. So, I sent our promo'92 tape and in ex-change he sent me the classic "Wrath of the Tyrant" demo and also a few "great" comments. He said that "Asians and Niggers have no right playing Black Metal", and that the Nords stand as the kings of Black Metal. I lost my coolness after reading this load of crap, wrote him back, fucked his dear parents, those "elite" ones that bore this Aryan mega-bastard child, and told him to go back to school to study his teacher's pussy before making such bold and ridiculous statements. What really enraged us was that he said "all shall bow before my elite race"... it was clear that the 7"inch single "Salve the Goat" bore a beautiful statement in response to him and all his ball-carriers. At that time, we thought that all of Emperor shared the same principle, but it was only at the beginning of 1995 when I wrote to Bard Faust to inquire about the "King" thing the media had labeled him, that I found that Mortiiis was a real asshole to have started this incident with us. The others in Emperor never did share his "principles". No wonder they kicked his royal ass out of the band. Bard is one great individual, and in any case, we shall await his release for more terror! Hail Faust!!!

Is IMPIETY a parody on "True" Black/Death Metal? Just looking at your songtitles makes me think so...

'Hmmm... this true or false thing never bothered us in any way... nor do we care. Whether true or false, you have to agree METAL is METAL... but as for or songtitles and lyrics, haha, they forever will be focused on the sickest direct approach to destroying all of the light... especially fuckin' Christianity.'

Your extreme outfit and music reminds me of old bands from Brazil, like SARCOFAGO, MYSTIFIER, SEXTRASH, (and of course ABHORER) etc. Do you try to keep the old "exotic" "eliché" (is it one by the way?) alive in your band? Is it a kind of tradition that you like to follow?

'Aarrggggghhhhhhh...spikes, bullets, leather, blood, nails, spandex, chains, boots... Yeah, call it exotic "eliché", these are our prized possessions!!! We have been die hard (and still are!) Destruction, Possessed, Sarcófago fans for fuckin' long time. We are insanely obsessed by all these hellish treasure of hate!!!'

Which musical influences do you admit for your desecrating blasphemous sound? I guess not SATYRICON; haha...

'Heh heh... Satyr is one hell of a creative individual, Satyricon is cool but definitely not these dudes... But 100% Possessed, Abattoir, Destruction, Sarcófago, Motörhead, old Kreator, Necrovore, Angelwitch, Iron Maiden, Sacrifice, Bathory, Darkness (Ger), old Sodom, Iron Angel, Blitzkrieg (Ger), Poison (Ger), Vacant Grave, Incubus (Florida), Numskull, Blood Feast, Malfektor, Dead Conspiracy, old Sorcery (Swe), Grotosque, Mefisto, Obscurity, old Sadus (attack!!!), Soothsayer, Cronos, Axewitch, Aggressor.... endless 80s list of Speed Death Metal!!! (I think you've forgotten to mention Burzum's "Aske" 12"inch as a source of influence, this influence is obvious at paris! -ed.)'

Don't you get any problems with the Church/state, (or other bands), etc. because of your band? Don't you fear any religious fundamentalists or servers of your state to stop IMPIETY with the help of violence? I heard that Singapore can be a raw place to live...

'No problems with these pussies. Let them try to stop us... they're too busy making money to notice our diabolical shadowed acts of terrorism! So much for Singapore's strict laws, people still traffic drugs, weapons and murder/ rape are a daily bliss on this small fuckin' island of sin. Anyway, fuck the local laws... they have no impact what-so-ever on us. Never have, never will!'

From where did you get your cover (for the CD)? Why did you decide to use it and what is the meaning of the cover?

'Iblyss came up with the cover-art. Hell knows where he gets such crooked shit but as the title "Asateerul Awaleen" (in pagan Arabic) means "Tales of the Ancient", we thought that it would perfectly match the cover art and also it was a perfect title for the debut.'

Is IMPIETY able to play your recorded stuff on stage in front of an audience? I can imagine that it's not so easy to play properly with all those spikes and nails on you body...

'Well, "Asateerul Awaleen" would be easy to play on stage.... check out "Funeralight" MCD... now that's a real challenge. TOTAL CHAOS!!! Still we enjoy playing all "Funeralight" tracks live. Spikes, bullets, nails, blood are part and parcel of Impiety. We will never play without these, ever!'

The production for your CD sounds very dry... was this done on

purpose? How much money did you spent on the production, and did your labels pay all the album costs?

'Like I told you earlier, fuck the sound engineer. A total of US\$3000 (Ugh! -ed.) was spent. SHIVADARSHANA paid only \$900... pretty shitty as we had to bust our asses to come up with the rest. As for the new MCD tracks, we spent the same amount and this time the SHIVADARSHANA label boss was more than generous.'

Do you care about the sales? How many IMPIETY releases are still planned to be released on SHIVADARSHANA? What are your plans for IMPIETY in general?

'We already have screwed SHIVADARSHANA up for lack of promotion. Hopefully all of this will change soon. The MCD "Funeralight" 's production kicks ass this time, pure barbaric brutality. We are working on the 2nd release already and is nearly done. We hope to record this in Europe, Spring'98. Total hell...aarrgghh!!!'

Your album is also released in Asia through ULTRA HINGAX... Is it true that they are ripping you and your mother-label off? How has the album sold by the way? You didn't get very good reviews for "Asateerul Awaleen" in the bigger press...

'Not us... perhaps SHIVADARSHANA. All in all, we are grateful to ULTRA HINGAX for doing us full-promotion throughout the Eastern Realms. The album "Asateerul Awaleen" has sold 4.000 as confirmed by our label boss. Yeah, I'm fully aware of all the reviews.... all we can do now is to cruelly work 200% harder on the 2nd album and other future releases.'

So, at the end, just explain what people have to fear when they get in touch with the unholy sound of IMPIETY, for the first time!

'Fear the East enflames with such a hateful and terroristic Hellforce that delivers Metal with such wicked and barbaric might!!! Infernal hails to you always - Costa! I've always enjoyed your mag ... (And I enjoy banging my head to Impiety's infernal sounds. -ed.). A thousand hails to the gods Destruction!!! Forever SEX, DRINKS and METAL!!!!'

Well, my dear Shyaithan, I think you haven't followed DESTRUCTION's way since "Cracked Brain", because their new stuff is really really awful.

However, thanks for this interview...it's cool to have you sick guys included here.

After this interview Shyaithan said that IMPIETY don't deal with SHIVADARSHANA anymore, the label worked too slow for the band... so I think that IMPIETY needs a new but good and professional label to work with. Hope some "label bosses" now noticed the band's cry for a new deal!!!

They have composed new songs for their second full-length assault of Black/ Death Metal terror, ...beware!

If you want to contact these unholy servants of darkness, write to...

Impiety, P.O. Box 544, Bedok Central, 914605,
Republic of Singapore





In the review for WIZARD's debut CD in TALES OF THE MACABRE #4 I wrote that readers should expect me to include an interview with this cool Finnish newcomers in the upcoming issue, and here it is! In the meantime I got to know that it's the band of a guy called Teemu, who also played (and still plays) in other bands as well. But read for yourself...

Before we start to get into the conversation, here's a short description of WIZARD's music (for all those who missed TALES OF THE MACABRE #4): Straight ahead, simple and powerful Thrash/ Heavy Metal with deep but still natural vocals which sound a bit like the ones from Canadian band EXORCIST. Musically I see parallels to "The Massacre" LP from THE EXPLOITED, but hey, before you are making a stupid face like after biting into a lemon... this LP of these old English Punks is very heavy and Metal-sounding, so keep cool!

WIZARD is one of the few bands of today that I fully enjoy listening to... it's honest and untrendy in its sound.

Teemu, please give us some background about WIZARD. You released a demo before you recorded the album, right?

"Wizard started by an accident in August 1995. I was playing all kinds of shit, aiming to do a new Nattvinder's Grat song. Frustrated with poor success, I began to play something more brutal. That's how "I Am The King" was born. It sounded so cool that I decided to carry out a project for fun (fun! -ed.). I wrote two more songs in that session. It took me half a year to drag my ass to a studio, I was busy with other bands (leave all your other bands in the dust, ehmm, 'cause they suck! Sorry, but that's how I think -ed.). A mate had bought an 8-tracker, so I recalled I had those songs, and asked if he could record 'em for me. I paid a bottle of Vodka and 50

FIM (about 17 DM/ \$10) for the two day session. I played everything myself, including drums that I hadn't touched for five years. It was supposed to be a promo only, but another mate liked it so much that I let him to release it as "I Am The King" 4-track demo on his EERIE Production. The 300 pressed copies are sold out for ages. Later I made a few 4-tracker promo which got Opyros to grant me a deal.

The line-up in the band is changing depending on where I reside at the moment. On the debut I had a guitarist called "Hellbooser" and before that a drummer named "Ville". After the album sessions I got a new drummer called "Sadistic Bitchfucker" (what an original and tough name... -ed.). None of them is in the band anymore, I have a session line-up with Daniel on guitar and Grobi on drums, and when I return to Finland, I'll have Wikka (Natt. Grad) on guitar and Mr. Janne Mannonen on drums. The latter is very famous in Finland for playing in Y.U.P., so I'm bloody lucky to get him. In other words: The drumming on "Devilmusic", the 2nd album, will kick some serious ass. I guess it's pretty pointless to list down the ages of all these dudes, so I just say they are 17- 28 years-old, and I am 21-years-old (-young). People might call WIZARD another band that joined the trend to play old-fashioned Metal... how would you react to such a statement? Why do you play in an old Metal way?

"My reaction would be "Tuck Off!" As I already told, founding the band wasn't planned but happened spontaneously. Also we are on N.E.P. where no poser can enter (...that's your opinion! -ed.). Moreover, we mix a variety of styles tastefully, whereas 90% of the others copy the golden oldies tastelessly, I don't even listen to Speed/Death Metal so much, which means that our music is more Heavy Metal based, whereas the others play Thrash or Speed/Death Metal. Just listen to it yourself. I'm sure you can make a difference (Yes, I do! -ed.). Why I play old-styled Metal? Because that's what I like, god-damned, haha... what else do you need?"

You also played in DARKWOODS MY BETROTHED and NATT. GRAD, but you left both bands as I was told. Why? Sick of playing that style of music anymore? Do you still like the stuff that you have done in the past with these bands?

"I only left Darkwoods My Betrothed about a year ago. Nattvinder's Grat is still alive and the second album is available. I stucked around in Darkwoods My Betrothed for the epic material only since the demo. You can hear a "Little" difference between mine and Jouni's material. The Norwegian stuff was cool when it first came and I still enjoy the first of that wave's stuff.

After the second Darkwoods My Betrothed CD I decided to split the band into two: Darkwoods My Betrothed left with Norsecore and Furthest Shore (= me and Pasi) keeps on holding the epic banner high. That's when I left the band. I'll still help them out on lyrics, but nothing else. They are still my good mates.

Nattvinder's Grat is a band I still do when I have the feeling to make something different. The new album for instance, is a mixture of Heavy Metal, gothic and ordinary Rock. And yes, I still enjoy all the stuff those bands have done in the past."

The vocals of WIZARD sound quite dark and original, reminding me sometimes at EXORCIST/ PILEDRIIVER from Canada... is this your intention? Do you use any effects? What are the main influences for WIZARD?

"To sound dark and original is my very intention. I have heard Piledriver very little and Exorcist not at all. I think. The only vocal effects I use are reverb and delay - nothing more. The vocals just come more or less naturally, they are mainly low, just like my natural voice scale is.

Main influences... shit... very tough. Well, I try to list some down that I think mainly influence Wizard: Bathory, Venom, Barathrum, Motörhead, Morningstar, The Hellcopters, Iron Maiden, King Diamond/ Mercyful Fate, Demon, Witchfynde, Metalucifer, Candlemass, etc...."

Your debut-album will be out soon, so please tell the readers about it (songs, production, etc.) with your own words...

"The self-titled album is recorded at the infamous studio perke (known as the battlefield of Barathrum). The sound is quite clear and fucking HEAVY. There are 15 songs in circa 53 minutes, of which 4 are Speed/Death Metal, 3 slow and dark (as always), and the rest more or less straight forward rockin' Metal. It simply is something no true Metal maniac should miss!"

How many offers did you get for an album deal? What labels were interested?

"When I signed to N.E.P., I had three offers. Afterwards I've got 4- 5 more. Among the interested ones were MAJESTIC UNION, MOONLIGHT, HAMMERHEART, MORIBUND, and it seems SPINEFARM as well. There were one or two small ones more, I think."

Would you see WIZARD as a Black metal band? How important is "image" for the band?

"Wizard definitely is a band with a satanic image, but surely not dead serious, i.e. I still smile and laugh unlike some others. Dark twisted humour, is a part of me, so it's

Picture Disc Attack - Cult or Fashion?

a part of Wizard as well. For this band the image is pretty important, so you don't see us in jeans on stage or on photos. The image is a bit exaggeratedly what I am. Most Metal clichés are used in the image and surely are and will be used live. That's why we kick ass on stage.' People often say that a real Black/ Death Metal underground doesn't exist anymore... do you agree? What are the current bands you really like, beside the old ones of course.... ?

It depends solely on how you define "real" underground. There are still a few good fanzines with attitude, one real underground label (guess which) and some bands. Personally I don't care that much. If I can play what I want, I don't mind to sell some thousand CDs, earn some money to buy lights, amps, etc. hand-shit with. And most important, getting enough audience to our gigs. It's much more enjoyable to play to 300 than to 30 people though even 30 people can make a good audience if they want.

The current bands I really enjoy are Barathrum, Countess, Sabbat, Morningstar, Metalucifer, Benighted Leams, Waterfront, Weirdos, Duke, and then many non-Metal and bigger bands.'

You played live at the SABBAT/ BARATHRUM tour here in Germany... what kind of feeling do you have when standing on stage, especially when you play in front of a foreign crowd ?

I always feel great on stage, except for the last 2 - 3 songs during which I already am almost lethally exhausted and short of breath for screaming like a maniac, haha... In general is the German audience a lot better than the Finnish one. They should just learn our music first.'

Every band nowadays seems to cover old songs what about WIZARD ?

If we did a cover, it'd only be a live one or appear on a special release - never on an album. Possible covers might be Jim Pembroke's "Hardtop Lincoln" or The Mentors' "Sandwich of Love", but I still think Wizard will stick with its own songs. They're good enough.'

I detected a lot of Punk-riffs in your music, comparisons to EXPLOITED's "The Massacre" are obvious in my opinion... do you agree or are you shocked now? What do you think about raw Punk music anyway?

Let's say I'm surprised. I've heard 2 - 3 songs from "The Massacre" 5 - 6 years ago and don't listen to Punk at all. I don't like it that much, really. If you see resemblances between Wizard and punk, it's your damn right to do so.'

You should check out "The Massacre" again, then you'll know what I mean, Teemu. If not, then you must be a deaf fucker, haha. But back to the questionnaire: I hardly know any real old Finnish Metal bands...beside probably OZ... were there any by the way? Perhaps we missed something good ???

There have been two (in Metal) that I sincerely recommend: Tarot and Sarcophagus. Both are pure Heavy Metal and the first mentioned is still alive and well, if you missed those bands, you sure as hell missed something good.'

What about your new songs after you recorded your album? How do they sound in comparison to the album-tracks ? Have you tried or will you try something new or different?

I have eight songs already, I'm ready to record the new album. The new shit is even more Heavy Metal and dirty rock oriented than before, though no drastic changes have taken place. There'll be two a bit experimental tracks: One long epic track and "Satan's Blues" which is metalized blues. It's heavy as hell. Some new titles are: "Rock'n'Roll Is The Music Of The Devil", "One Way Ticket To Hell", "Feathers Burn, Leather Doesn't" (What! Don't you know Bathory's "Burning Leather" ??? -ed.), and so on. The new material is so good that I regularly wank over my 4-tracker recordings. Oh, an experimental track is also "The Legend of Warhammer", which is sung in clean voice, but I spare that for a 7"inch or a MCD.'

The Wizard should cast his final spell....

Thanks a lot for the intie, mate! For band contact please write/fax N.E.P., I'm changing towns and countries like socks, so there's no point in giving an address. Metal maniacs must have the CD when it's out. Cheers again !'

Vinyl simply doesn't seem to cease to exist in Heavy Metal music, a lot of albums still get thrown onto the market on Vinyl version, and the maniacs seem to appreciate it... It's without a doubt a kind of "cult" to buy and collect Vinyls. I'm also one of the slaves to vinyl, it's my personal tradition to not buy CDs but LPs.

Therefore it's no big surprise that some people pay a hell lot of money to get their favourite and most wanted albums on Vinyl. Some Examples? BURZUM's "Aske" \$100, EMPEROR MLP \$70, DARKTHRONE's "Transilvanian Hunger" LP \$90, and so on. I shouldn't forget to mention that people who pay such high prices must be die-hard maniacs (or children of rich parents), but I'm sure that there are quite some of those fans out there hunting for their beloved records.

A lot of people say that there's more feeling (and not only the nostalgic one) at LPs, and it's nothing new that some records increase in its worth during the years, depending of course on the band's popularity. It's better to invest your money in Vinyl than in CDs (ignoring the discussion which format is "better") when it comes to the collection's worth, because LPs are much harder to "bootleg" than a CD.

If you take real old Heavy Metal LPs, then you'll notice that (in most cases) the Picture Disc version of a certain album is much more worthier than the standard LP-version with black vinyl and the standard cover. So... having this in mind, you always have the feeling that have something "special" in your hand when you hold a Picture Disc.

Generally a Picture Disc was a special limited vinyl version beside the regular (unlimited) LP-version, and it wasn't seldom that a Pic Disc came out after the standard LP was already released for some time. See old Pic Discs as a special gift for real fans and collectors who were forced to buy everything that featured the logo of their favourite bands.

Examples? KREATOR's "After The Attack" (which is the "Pleasure to Kill" Album with a newer bonus track), SLAYER's "Show No Mercy" (released on PicDisc in 1987), and so on. Those maniacs can be very lucky when they bought a Picture Disc in a time when the specific band still was small and not so famous, because especially these PicDiscs are very hard to get and fuckin' expensive, like RUNNING WILD's "Gates to Purgatory", MERCYFUL FATE's "Black Masses" 7"EP, VENOM's "Die Hard" 7"EP, etc....

Pic Discs always were more expensive than the usual LP, and they were often released only in one country, so that i.e. European people had to pay high import prices for U.S. PicDiscs from bands like METALLICA, SLAYER, etc., and, as the PicDisc has usually been released as a limited edition, you had to hurry up in order to get your copy before it was too late. It was obvious that having a certain PicDisc means you have something special in your collection with which you cause feelings of envy when your friends see it, haha.

Also bootleg LPs soon were available on PicDisc-format (like MERCYFUL FATE's "Curse of the Pharaoh", SLAYER's "Final Command"), and are very rare items nowadays.

When Death Metal returned to reign in late 80s/ early 90s, the tradition of releasing PicDiscs was kept alive by labels like Earache (MORBID ANGEL, CARCASS, ENTOMBED,...), Peaceville (AUTOPSY, DARK THRONE,...), later Nuclear Blast (MASTER, DISMEMBER, etc... but as the edition was too big, these vinyls weren't hard to get and are therefore not too expensive nowadays) and some smaller companies. Not only 12"inch PicDisc but also 7"EP were still made on PicDisc format, just remember BEHERIT's first vinyl release or DISMEMBER's "Skin Her Alive", but this didn't happen very often.

It was the time when vinyl-sales started to decrease, record shops didn't sell records anymore and the real CD age begun. So, fans were lucky to get their stuff on standard Vinyl, there wasn't a need to release a special PicDisc edition for smaller bands when the standard LP version was released as a limited edition anyway... so why releasing two limited Vinyl editions? Only real popular bands had their albums released on PicDiscs as well... But to honour the faith of the vinyl-lovers, a lot of labels started to press the LPs in coloured vinyls which was a cool thing for the headbanging customers. It was like "if you still buy LPs, then you should have something special".

I think this way of thinking was the first step to the current "Pic Disc"-revival nowadays... if you release something limited, then it must be really cool and special.

It was the year 1996/97 when labels started to release stuff in a massive way on PicDisc format, with GORGOROTH, KATATONIA, BEHEMOTH, PENTACLE, DESASTER, etc. which was great as most of these releases hasn't been released on any other Vinyl format, but lately there are a lot of strictly limited re-releases of sold out LPs on Pic Disc... just take a look at the list....

MAYHEM "De Mysteriis Dom Sathanas" / "Dawn of the Black Hearts" / "Live In Leipzig" / "Carnage / Freezing Moon", DARK THRONE "A Blaze In The Northern Sky" / "Under A Funeral Moon" / "Transilvanian Hunger", now a re-edition of "Soulside Journey" should (or is already) made, EMPEROR "Wrath of the Tyrant" / SAMAEL "Blood Ritual", TORMENTOR "Anno Domini", ROTTING CHRIST "Thy Mighty Contract", etc... even old records like CANDLEMASS "Nightfall" and HELLHAMMER's "Apocalyptic Raids" (I guess these Swedish pressings are bootlegs, aren't they?), the ABRUPRUM stuff, and so on. And more stuff on PicDisc will surely follow. Also, OSMOSE have started to release stuff (like IMMORTAL, ABSU, etc.) on limited PicDisc since 1997 and sell it for quite high prices, and MERCELESS RECORDS started to release 7"EP PicDiscs which seems to become popular again right now as well. Labels like W.A.R., CENTURY MEDIA, EVIL OMEN, DOLORES, and some more are also started or will start to release stuff on PicDisc, so it seems that there will be more PicDiscs available than usual LPs in the future.

PicDiscs still sell for higher prices than usual LPs, and the Vinyl-freaks still seem to be hot for the beautiful records with the picture on it

Is it still a cult or is it nothing but a fashion nowadays? Why are so many labels releasing stuff on PicDisc nowadays? Because they love to see their products on a cool LP-format, to honour customer, or is it just to make some extra cash with this new "trend" to sell a certain vinyl-format that once was meant to be a cult?

My personal opinion is that PicDiscs look great if the coverartwork rules, and it's a great decoration for your wall. I don't know if all the new PicDiscs will be as much searched as the old rare ones of the 80s, but I'm sure that the original, first regular neo- Black Metal LPs of SAMAEL, DARK THRONE, MAYHEM, etc... will be more expensive than the re-releases, they also were limited back then but the first and original version to reach the fans' record player. And, in addition, I think the magic is gone when you release something that was meant to be special when everybody does it. I just wonder with which re-releases of old Black/ Death Metal albums people try to conquer the market in 1998!... Perhaps BEHERIT, CARNAGE, ACHERON, MERCILESS, etc...so that we'll have every old record on PicDisc as well!!!!

If yes, then I'll be happy that I have all the usual LPs, 'cause those will be the rarities of the next decade, like the old PicDiscs of the 80s were the rarities in the 90s. Special are only the things that are really special!!! And remember that the usual LP has a better sound than the PicDisc.

I'm also sure that soon a lot of bootleg LPs/ PicDiscs with demo- and live recordings of old bands will be made in future, 'cause labels are running out of good new bands... people need money, and a bootleg always makes the customer think like having something special in his hands.

To end this article, I wanna ask you a question: Isn't music all that matters when it comes to buying an album, or is it just the "limited edition" of a certain album which forces you to buy it??? Think about it (but be honest to yourself....)

Secrets Of The Moon

MARTYRIUM was one of the first German Neo-Black Metal bands to release an album, but the band is buried (and almost forgotten) for long time now.

While the two of the three bandmembers retired from Metal, the bassist/vocalist Daevas formed a new band in 1996 called SECRETS OF THE MOON with two other maniacs.

Two demotapes have been released until now, and especially the second rehearsaldemo ("Vanitas") is very good. It contains cool Black Metal with some serious Thrash Metal influences, and variety is not an unknown word for those three Germans. In contrary to some other (not all, of course) landmates in Black Metal, this band knows to play very well, and is not just a clone-thing of their northern idols.

Commander "Frazer", the wild lunatic behind the drumkit, gave answers to my questions.

"First of all, a word on "Vanitas", it's our latest rehearsal demotape which contains four typical Secret Of The Moon tracks, plus a Beherit ("Sodomatic Rites")-coverversion. Moreover, you'll find seven live songs which were recorded at our "A Black Winter Night"-gig, on December 28th, 1996. This particular tape substantiates what Secrets Of The Moon is all about - that means during the rehearsals and live.

In a figurative sense, we call it very honest, just because there are no intros, outros, keyboards, female vocals and such items. It's just the pureness of our musical creations/ doings-, just as simple as that. Besides, and that's a very important fact, we've deepened our own style and extended the lyrical possibilities. So you can say that "Unearthed Arcana", our first demo, is quite good (when you see it as a debut), with some cool different styles. "Vanitas" goes the same way, but in a more typical and significant Secrets Of The Moon direction. I must confess, it's a progress for us as a unity.

Not only SECRETS OF THE MOON but many other bands as well started to use lesser of those Nordic riffs in their songwriting... why this development? Have you got tired of capturing those nordic-styled influences? Or is it because you have developed as musicians?

"We practise our music the way it comes. We follow our inner directions and personal moods. When we like to do a fast song - we do it, and vice versa. But there must always be a deeper feeling in it. Secret Of The Moon try to express themselves through songs, even though they sound more "nordic" or "old-fashioned". Practise makes perfect, ...the longer you play your beloved instrument the better you get, sure, that's an accepted fact."



Variety is one of the strengths of "Vanitas"... is this just a result of all the different sounding influences that you have?

"Hohohoho, yezzzz, variety is our strength, thanks for that praise, Costa! But believe me, these elements of our songs come really naturally by composing and transposing them. Surely, I can imagine that this is a result of having many-sided influences. Me for myself, I think variety gives the whole concept more tension and power."

You hail the cults of BLASPHEMY/ BEHERIT ... quite unusual for these days I must say, especially as only Black Metal bands with tons of keyboards (like CRADLE OF TREND,...) seem to rule... What's so cool at BLASPHEMY/ BEHERIT for you? Are there any other bands you cover songs from?

Daevas already had some band-experiences in MARTYRIUM. Do you want to keep a part of this spirit alive in your band or is MARTYRIUM dead and buried?

"Martyrium is dead and buried, we have nothing in common with that particular band anymore. It's past and we won't keep any spirits alive from that time. So please, understand that we don't want to get too deep into this subject. It's simply over, let it rest in peace."

There was talk of a split 7"EP with SECRETS OF THE MOON...

"Yes, fact is that (when things go well) we are going to enter a studio to record our songs. We would like to release a 7"EP, or probably even more. It's time! We've got a lot of cool songs which kick false asses. So keep your ears and eyes

open, something will happen soon, bet your unholy ass!

It is often said that German bands only try to copy their their Scandinavian heroes, I personally agree to this, but how do you see this? I guess you're in touch with some German Black Metalers...

"Noooo, I don't agree with you at this point! In my opinion, most of the Scandinavian bands copy their German heroes, hohoho (well, perhaps some retro-bands, but not the Black Metal-hordes! - ed.)! No, really, look at those bands in our country... most of them have enormous musical potential. They are really worth listening to. We got in contact with fantastic individuals like Lunar Aurora (hail brothers!), Mosu Quma, Embedded, Mightiest, Vanitas, Impending Doom, Nagelfar, Nordwind, Pest, ... I also admire Desaster for their incredible old Black Thrash spirit and their very strong songs (hail to the Moselfranken Hellbangers!). It's important that a band has got a strong attitude towards their own musical doings. Generally speaking, most of the German Metal forces take this case serious and not superficial. There are a lot of brilliant metallions here in Deutschland."

Hmm, opinions are different... Schizo, your old axeman, left the band due to personal problems, but could you imagine his return as your second guitarist? By the way, are you still in touch with him?

"Schizo, yes, sometimes we meet him and have a talk together, but that's all. He surely was and still is a great guitarist, but to be honest, I can't imagine to have him back in the band again. There were too many battles of wits about the attitudes and subjects within our musical creations. He has been too unreliable and uncertain, so that it obliterated/ destroyed the whole atmosphere, and Daevas and myself suffered from this aspect. Boy, are we glad to have the ambitious "Golden" as our fantastic new member."

Some secrets to reveal at the end!

"If the moon is right, we will sound like a "walking in silver space, on coffins full of blood (from the doomed souls)." But we don't give a secret away...!"

"Any one of the bodies seen in the sky at night-as distant points of light!"

Latest news: A split 7"EP with German Black Metalers Lunar Aurora is in sight, to be out soon. Also, SECRETS OF THE MOON wrote and still write new tunes for a future release, ... we should be warned!

The "Vanitas"-rehearsaldemo (4 songs, a cover, + live-stuff) is still for sale (10DM/\$7).

Jewels Of Tomorrow?!

"Here are the releases that I regard as the best ones in TALES OF THE MACABRE #5, so to part them from the others you'll have a new special review-column called "Jewels of Tomorrow?!"

AMON GOETH

"The Worship"

(Nazgul's Eyrie Productions?)

Now after Master's Hammer, Törr and Root changed their style of music, it is Amon Goeth's job to defend the Czech Black/ Death Metal glory that once ruled supreme. And they succeeded (musically), because "The Worship" is a very dark and original Black/Death/Thrash opus with good riffs (also acoustic guitars), dark feelings and a lot of black power. I know that not everybody will enjoy the vocals, but I think they are great... better than the screamed shit that most of Black Metal throats produce without any feeling for the "black" atmosphere. It's old styled music, but far from this "Let's revive the 80s" movement, a perfect mixture of Black/ Death/ Thrash Metal, and even Rock 'n' Roll, all possessed by darkness. Give yourself a kick into your lazy ass, motherfuckers, and give Amon Goeth a chance, because they have already been treated to badly by the critics in the past. Just don't listen to the bad reviews other incompetent zine-editors gave. This album here is made for people who are seriously into darkest Metal only, so decide for yourself now whether you are one of them or not !!! I for myself keep on banging wild on "The Worship"....

ANGEL CORPSE "Exterminate"

(Osmose)

For some people Angel Corpse is just a cheap Morbid Angel-clone, for me they've opened a new dimension of Death Metal the violent way, at least with this new album called "Exterminate". It's of course no doubt at all that this U.S. horde is heavily influenced by Morbid Angel, but hey... what's so wrong about it? Beside that, Angel Corpse are not as "morbid" sounding and more violent instead of dark, and this is not only due to Pete's aggressive and screamy vocals. Anyway, fact is that songs like "Christhammer", "Into The Storm Of Steel", etc. rage hard and can be considered as potential killers! The band has improved a lot and definitely belongs to the elite of wimpering Death Metal. Check it if you can stand this ritual of violence.



"Bloodlust and Perversion"

(Avantgarde)

It's old news from Carpathian Forest here as the (demo/rehearsal) recordings are about 5 years and more old, but it's great old news. This bad sounding but absolutely cultic CD/LP is made "only for true Black Metal worshippers" (as the info says), and hell yes, this is cold grim and dirty Black Metal in its purest form. It has the old spirit of Venom, Bathory, Hellhammer /Celtic Frost which is mixed with the early cults of old Darkthrone, Immortal, Burzum and the intro-stuff of ancient Beherit. Black Metal heart, what more do you need? But don't expect fast stuff here, these Norwegians play a more tamed and doomy sort of Black Metal mayhem. For some people this release

is pure waste (due to the bad sound), for others it's a feast. I'm lucky that this release was made as today's Black Metal has become quite "un-black" in my opinion (yes, I know that some of you are yelling at me now, but that's just the way I feel).

VADER

(Hammerheart)

If you are into real violent and raging Death Metal, this CD will erect you sexually! This album contains the old Vader demos "Morbid Reich" and "Necroblast", and the songs are just fantastic, they are certainly jewels of Death Metal. I like Vader's strong influence from Slayer and the powerful drumwork which has always been a part of the band's style until now, just great. Also the vocals are great and sound much better than the ones Peter does today (sorry man!). HAMMERHEART should be damn lucky to have this CD out, because usually they just come up with ordinary and boring stuff.

DESTROYER 666

"Unchain The Wolves"
(Modern Invasion/Merciless)

When the wolves are unchained, you better run and hide... yeah, Destroyer 666 released another aggressive, dangerous, bloodthirsty album with "Unchain The Wolves", and to me it's a genius of Black/ Death/ Thrash Metal. It's not as fast as "Violence is the Prince of this World", the band's debut album, which was more influenced by Bestial Warlust's sheer sound, but that's absolutely ok, because I think that the slow hymns are best anyway. Just take the opener, "Genesis To Genocide", which has the atmosphere and cold harmonies of old Burzum, but with dark and powerful vocals and much thicker and darker sound. This is probably the strongest song on this album, but I shouldn't forget to mention "Australian and Antichrist" which shows the band from their aggressive side. The band captures the feeling of real raw Black/ Death Metal with the necessary atmosphere and energy, and variety isn't a strange word for those "Dreamers of endless bombers". This album is recommended to those who like to hear a mixture of 80s and 90s Black Death Metal with class. It's both available on CD and limited LP version, so everyone should be satisfied.

SABBAT

"Envenom"
(Entropy)

"Envenom" was originally released back in 1991, but as the distribution of this CD was bad, ENTROPY from Italy re-released it back in 1995, and supplied me with a copy. So here, with seven years of delay, is the review: "Envenom" is true Black/Death/ Heavy Metal!!! It has everything a real Black/ Death Metal needs, like good riffs, evil vocals, rhythms to bang your head to, ... simply music that is deeply rooted in the mid-80s, but without sounding as if it was recorded in 1985. Listen to "Satan Bless You", "Evil Nations", "Devil Worship" or the old tune "Black Fire", and you'll know how real mayhem music is all about. The main influences (as far as I can hear it) must be old Venom, old Slayer, Possessed, Celtic Frost, and all those bands which are called "Cult". The only "strange" tunes on this CD are "Carcassvoice" and "The Sixth Candle - Eviler" which feature high screaming vocals (Japanese-styled), but they are great after a few listenings. You have to have Sabbath's "Envenom" if you call yourself a Die Hard Black/Death Metal... it hasn't lost any of its magic during the years, and certainly is Sabbath's best album!!!

Nazgul's Eyrie Productions

The following abominations have been bred in the NAZGUL'S EYRIE in the past years and are still available to those who dare listen....

NEP 001 DAWNFALL "Dominance of Darkness" CD (Deutschland)
40 minutes of extremely raw and brutal Black Metal with the most likely most brutal and violent production EVER printed on a CD!! A classic already!!! Limited to 500 hand numbered copies. Sold out....

NEP 002 BEHEMOTH "...From the Pagan Vastlands" CD (Polska)
36 minutes; The first CD output of this meanwhile quite well known band from Poland. Raw and epic Black Metal including a coversong of MAYHEM ("Deathcrush").

NEP 003 COUNTESS "The Return of the Horned One" CD (Nederland)
44 minutes of brutal and orthodox Black Metal in the vein the ancients used to play... Very extreme production that is bound to piss off every trendy kid for sure!!!

NEP 004 BIFROST "Pagan Reality" (Nederland)
56 minutes of Pagan Heavy Metal for the glory of the elder gods!! Musically they resemble old Thrash Metal bands like CELTIC FROST and SABBAT (UK)...

NEP 005 CRUACHAN "Tuatha na Gael" (Eireann)
56 minutes of Pagan Folk Metal. The perfect cross of Irish Folk and grim hymns to the night... This band is bound to be BIG in future!!! Remember where you heard it first!!!

NEP 006 BARATHRUM "Hailstorm" CD (Suomi Finland)
60 minutes of truly jetblack art for HIS glory. The debut of one of the most extreme bands in existence... Three bassplayers and a drummer using human bones will shatter your soul to the core!!!

NEP 007 THIA-NORR "Wolfenzeitalter" CD (Deutschland)
61 minutes of German Black Metal. Soundwise they resemble HELLHAMMER on speed but they are doing their own thing for sure!!! Watch out for a new CD on NOISEV. sometime in 1998 CE!!!!

NEP 008 AMON GOETH "Call the Master" CD (Ceska Republika)
44 minutes of unique Czech Black Metal. After the sad decline of one of the most original scenes in the world, AMON GOETH are the last ones to uphold the banner... It includes a coverversion of CELTIC FROST ("Into the Crypts of Rays")

NEP 009 COUNTESS "Ad Maiorem Sathanae Gloriam" CD (Nederland)
49 minutes; Orthodox Black Metal returns with a vengeance!!! Progressed in production they mercilessly stick to their concept of raw and brutal Metal. Wimps and Posers, leave the Hall!!!!!! Includes a coversong of SAINT VITUS ("Born Too Late").

NEP 010 BARATHRUM "Eerie" CD (Suomi Finland)
65 minutes that are bound to freeze your soul!!! With releases like this the boundaries of Black Metal are yet undefined... Satanic art with utter heaviness and brutality!!!! If you want the REAL thing, check this if you dare!!!!

NEP 011 BIFROST "The Wildest Fire" CD (Nederland)
54 minutes; Another orgy of Pagan Heavy Metal in the vein of the elder Thrash gods!!! New CD out soon.

NEP 013 MORTUARY DRAPE "Secret Sudaria" CD (Italia)
48 minutes of purest Black Metal art from this legend from Italia!!! After many setbacks due to unprofessional labels one of the oldest acts in existence finally can present their music in all unholy glory it deserves!!!!

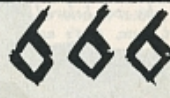
NEP 014 COUNTESS "The Book of the Heretic" CD (Nederland)
70 minutes of orthodox Black Metal blend into a grotesque concept story. If you ever wondered about the ideas behind COUNTESS you should make yourself familiar with Watch out for their new MiniCD "Hell's Rock'n'Roll" as well!!!!

NEP 015 BARATHRUM "Infernal" CD (Suomi Finland)
66 minutes of truly infernal music... this is the most destructive Metal album EVER to be recorded!!!! And they stand their ground as everyone who survived the tour in May 1997 CE must bear witness... THIS is the true soundtrack to Hell!!!!

Soon WIZARD (Suomi Finland), AMON GOETH (Ceska Republika) and MAYHEMIC TRUTH (Deutschland) will release their debut CDs through NAZGUL'S EYRIE!!!! So better be ready for this metallic overkill.

1 CD for 25 DM/ US\$15 incl. postage, 4 CDs (your choice) for 70 DM/ US\$45 incl. postage. Always list alternatives. Send well-hidden cash, no coins please.

NAZGUL'S EYRIE PRODUCTION, P.O.Box 100710, 93007 REGENSBURG, GERMANY, Fax: +49 (0)941 48042





REVIEWS



Some LP/CDs are new, some aren't that new, but I reviewed them anyway

as we all know that great Metal stuff is timeless, isn't it?

A CANOROUS QUINTETT "Silence Of The World" (No Fashion)

It's a pure Swedish-sounding album here... a mixture of old and new Swedish hardware, like old **Disember**, **Dissection**, **In Flames**, etc. with both very aggressive and harmonical playing. The production of the CD is good, the musicianship, too. Now it's just a matter of taste whether you go for this release or not.

ABIGAIL "Intercourse And Lust" (Modern Invasion)

After some cool 7"EPs we got the debut CD of these Japanese primitive Black Thrashers. I don't know what went wrong, but **Abigail** sound more primitive than ever, they sound like a real garage band, not professional at all, on this CD. I expected more from this band. "Intercourse And Lust" has some cool tunes, but if you see the whole album, then it's not enough to convince me. The slower parts are really cool, but when they attack with their speed, then it's just amateurish noise. I like primitive bands, but not that primitive like **Abigail** here.

ABIGOR "Supreme Immortal Art" (Napalm)

Abigor from Austria must be the Black Metal band with the most CDs out since their MCD in 19495 (I don't remember the exact year). Qualitywise they still know to offer Black Metal with a cold atmospheric feeling. "Supreme Northern Art" sounds like an album made in 1997, so **Abigor** followed the spirit of the time, followed the development of popular Black Metal, like playing fast, harsh, nordic with keyboards and a good (not messy) production. It's all very well-played, but for me this stuff isn't really what I need when it comes to Black Metal.

ABLAZE MY SORROW "The Plague" (No Fashion)

The style is Death Metal, but one that is based on melodic riffs. Most Swedish bands do not know to combine energy with melodies that sounds serious, but **Ablaze My Sorrow** fortunately do not belong to those bands. Their well-played and sometimes fast Death Metal is melodic, as already said, but it still has some power to offer. The production is brilliant as well and this makes "The Plague" one of the better CDs from Sweden.

ABOMINATOR/MOURNLAND "Prelude To The World" (Ptc)

Abominator from Australia, featuring **Ex-Bestial Warlust** warmonger **Bloodstorm**, are great with their ultrafast and uncommercial dark Death Metal style which is comparable to old **Blasphemy** and **Bestial Warlust**, just sounding more Death Metal-like. I intended to include an interview with this brutal Australian band, but I got no answer unfortunately. The band now signed to **NECROPOLIS** records, so we should expect a real album to be released soon. **Mornland** plays Black Metal, grim and melancholic in one, but it's just average stuff.

ACHERON "Anti-God, Anti-Christ" (Merciless)

The high priest Mr. Vincent Crowley returns to conquer more innocent souls with his satanic mission. He has assembled a new line-up behind **Acheron**, and with these new people came a little change of style. The music features keyboards now, I think they should make the music more dark and evil, but the songs are far away from the class of "The Rites Of The Black Mass", the debut album, which is still an absolute highlight of satanic Death Metal. "Anti-God, Anti-Christ" is still **Acheron** styled, just less "deathlier" with more slogan like refrains... It seems that he likes to convince the listeners for his sect with all the slogan he growls into the microphone with his deep grunts. It's an album I can listen to, there are some highlights included, and I think it's unnecessary to say that **Acheron** work really professional (great guitarsoli, drums, etc.). What I don't like is the song "Total War"... hey, I'm not in the army, Vincent! Next time I'd like hear songs like "Legions of Hatred" again, that's better! Let's see, eh, hear what the next **Acheron** album (to be out soon) will bring us except for a new guitarist called **Ben Meyer** (Ex-Nasty Savage). P.S.: The Vinyl-version on **MERCILESS** Records has bonus tracks.

ALGAION "General Enmity" (Wounded Love)

This new album has not much in common with the old stuff... **Algaion** used to be a Black Metal band, but there's not much left of this music on "General Enmity" which is more like tamed Metal, a combination of modern and traditional Heavy Metal stuff. It's cool to listen to it as it is seriously done and not a "back to the 80s Metal"-thing. But I personally would not buy this album if I didn't already receive a promo-copy of it. The spectacular spirit is missing for me. But perhaps this is something for you, especially if you're looking for stuff that doesn't sound as cliché and too melodic as all those other Swedish bands but still with a slightly Swedish sound and some power.

AMON AMARTH "Once Bent From The Golden Hall" (Metal Blade)

You'll get two different sounding moods in one with this album. The vocals on one side are aggressive Black/Death, the music on the other side is speedy melodic Swedish-styled Metal. In contrary to wimps like **In Flames**, this band here doesn't sound too kitschy, even if it's sometimes at and over the edge of sounding like that. **Amon Amarth** understand to come up with intelligent arrangements and some cool soli. It's not an album which I makes my metallic blood run faster, but I can accept this offering as it's one of the better releases for this type of music. Anyway, for me this is NOT Death Metal!

Ancient Ceremony "Under The Moonlight We Kiss" (Cacophonous)

It took about 4 years until **Ancient Ceremony** managed to release their

debut CD after their cool "Cemetery Visions" MCD. And a lot changed during that long time in the band's style, 'cause they have almost lost all Death Metal roots, and have added tons of keyboard-elements, gothic sounds and melodic guitars instead. This new album is a very complex and technical one, and what is missing for me is a real identity of each song, 'cause there are too many breaks, too many different sounding melodies and riffs included in each tune. All bandmembers are excellent musicians, but they just lost the ability to write real songs that can be recognized after hearing them. So it's no wonder that I soon lose the interest in that CD after listening to a couple of tracks. To describe their style I got to say that **Ancient Ceremony** now sound exactly like the stuff that is hype nowadays, like **Cradle Of Filth**, etc. (with all the different vocal-styles and keyboards... even the vampyric coverlayout looks like that) and some Gothic Metal bands. But all is more complex and less powerful and fast here. Perhaps things will soon change again to something more powerful as both guitarists left the band and got replaced by guys that long for something heavier again.



"The Calling" (Avantgarde Music)

Nothing much has changed at **Ancient Wisdom's** style. It's still emotional but cold Black Metal what they perform. It's like **Katatonika** meets old **Burzum**. If you like these bands, then you'll like "The Calling". I at least do...

ANDRAS "Die Rückkehr der dunklen Ritter" (Last Epitaph)

In English the title means "The Return of the dark Knights", and this album features members from **Eminenz**, and I think you can hear this in **Andras'** music. They also play this doom style, but they also know to speed up. To me **Andras** sound like a mixture of **Eminenz**, old **Burzum** (due to the simplicity), Norse standard shit and some old stuff (like old slow **Kreator** -riffs). The vocals are in the vein of old **Summoning**, quite perverse and over the top. This CD is average, not good, not bad, at least it's not another clone-project of Norse sounds. But what I really dislike is the theatrical, pathetic and ridiculous presentation of this band on the CD and the label-info, ... this is something that makes only fools, little kids or bloody wimps enthusiastic, totally unserious. But, better let the music do the talking, at least this part isn't too ridiculous.

Antichristis "Gantara Anachoreta" (Ars Metall)

Imagine a deathlier, doomier but also more harmonical version of old **Paradise Lost**, that would be the sound of **Antichristis**. It's all structured like a concept album in my opinion, like a story with high and lows. I

think this is music which people into Gothic stuff will enjoy for it contains a lot of good sounding atmospheres and feelings which seem to be the most important thing at this band.

ASHES "Death Has Made Its Call" (Necropolis)

A new Swedish band from the unknown, featuring an axman from **Panthyonium**. They play a kind of mid-tempo Metal that seem to be influenced by **Black Sabbath**, **Paradise Lost**, **Tiamat**, epic **Bathory**, sometimes even **Countess** (listen to the riffing in "Crucified Mirror Of Me"), Rock music and typical Swedish wimp-melodies. So, **Ashes'** style is not an ordinary one, but this does not mean that their music kills. To me, it's just usual, sometimes even boring music with riffs that are too simple and unspectacular, and the vocals are just boring screams.

ATANATOS "The Oath Of Revenge" (Last Episode)

These Germans with the Greek bandname returned to bring us their first full-length album. Combine melodic (so-called) Black Metal in the Norwegian/Swedish style with simple Thrash Metal riffs and drums, a dark voice and keyboard-sounds... that's **Atanatos'** definition of dark music. Some parts sound really cool, some others make me fall into deep sleep. The band is not as aggressive-sounding as they used to, perhaps they try to reach a wider audience with this new album, I don't know! The LP-version will feature a bonus song, a coverversion of **Sodom's** "Outbreak Of Evil". But even this will not force me to spend my money into this release... P.S.: **LAST EPISODE** should stop writing such cliché biographies... it sounds stupid with its heroic kind of language plus it shows the label's incompetence when it comes to Black/Death Metal (there's a talk about a "Norwegian Beherit"... I think Mr. **Holocausto** will hang himself if this was really true.)

AURA NOIR "Black Thrash Attack" (Malicious)

To be honest with you, I expected another crap-band like **Infernö** with **Aura Noir**, because this is another Norwegian project with members from other bands. **Aura Noir** are not as heavily ripping off countless old riffs from countless old bands the way the fuckers from **Infernö** do, even if some riffs remind me a lot at old **Sodom** ("Obsessed by Cruelty"-period), **Slayer** ("Reign In Blood"). But there are also some individual-sounding riffs that are not bad, even a bit technical at parts. After listening to the album 4/5 times, you can say that it's an "ok" release, even though a bit more originality is really needed here in order not to fool around with the old fans. Just take a look at the titles... we almost heard all of them before on other records. The thing that really pisses me off is that some musicians need five different bands to play in (for financial reasons ??? Who knows...), and that's really not a sign for musical honesty.

ARCKANUM "Kostogher"
(Necropolis)

"Kostogher" is better than the debut CD was, and it's more aggressive and faster than it used to be. It's all very straight ahead, and the speed is high... but what is missing is variety, it's all too monotonous if you take the whole album. This is stuff for all Northern Black Metal fetishists.

AZAZEL "The Night Of Satanschia"
(Holocaust)

This MCD of primitive and raw Black Metal wouldn't be uninteresting if the quality of the songwriting was better. It's all not well-developed yet. You need more than three or four good riffs to make a release worth its money. Better songwriting next time, please!

BEHEMOTH

"Pandemonic Incantations"
(Solistation)

"Pandemonic Incantations" continues where "Grom" ended... still fast and outrageous Black Metal in the typical Behemoth-vein. But quality-wise this new opus isn't as strong as "Grom" was which had better riffs and a better general feeling. But Behemoth-fans shouldn't start to panic as you will like this new stuff anyway, there are no major changes.

BELPHEGOR "Blutsabbath"
(Last Episode)

All who already know "The Last Supper" CD know how to handle this extreme Austrian band. All others should know that Belphegor were famous for mixing brutal Cannibal Corpse/ Morbid Angel-Death Metal with violent Black Metal and some epic atmospheres. This hasn't changed that much on "Blutsabbath", just the Black Metal-part has increased a bit, and the band has lost a piece of their gory side, compared to the old stuff. All in all it's still a brutal and violent CD. LAST EPISODE's strongest release that will not be appreciated by people into harmonic sounds.

BERGTRON
"Verloren in den Tiefen der Wälder"
(Perverted Taste)

Translated into English, the title means "Lost in the depths of the forests", so you might have a better idea what this German band is about. Yes, pathetic Black Metal, with keyboards... a bit of Satyricon (flutes), Emperor (vocals), Burzum (simple riffs), etc. It's an attempt to sound like the Bergtron's Norwegian heroes. It's ok, some parts are good and some are bad, so that in the end we have another album not above average.

BEWITCHED "Pentagram Prayer"
(Osmose)

The old 80s-riff-recycling factory Bewitched from Sweden here with their second album. This time they tried to write music that shouldn't sound as "rip off" -like as it was on the debut album. Well, they've succeeded with that, but they are still a band that I can't take for serious with members that have played arrogant and elitarian pure northern Black Metal before. Music-wise the band continues to walk the Venom, Bathory, Motörhead, Judas Priest, etc-path, but this time it's not as thrashy than it used to be, it's more NWoBHM-sounding now (except for the vocals which are still typical screamy ones). It's an acceptable album with high and lows (if you ignore the fact that it all doesn't sound too honestly), but it's definitely far away from being cult.

BISHOP OF HEXEN
"Archives Of An Exhanted Philosophy"
(Hammerheart Productions)

I heard a lot of negative things about this release, so I was quite curious to hear this album when I found it in my mail. But I don't know what these people who ridiculed

Bishop Of Hexen have disliked so much... ok, one of the members calls himself "Dr. von Helsing" which is indeed quite amusing me, but the music of the band is ok. Bishop Of Hexen is one of the very few synth-Metal bands that I can enjoy without thinking about throwing my CD-player out of the window. They know to combine Black Metal sounds with keyboards without making it all sound too pathetic or without losing the expression of their music. Also, they worked professional and managed to create good-sounding atmospheres, both dark and melancholic ones. But next time they should try to have a thicker sound... then it would be even better.

BLACK FUNERAL "Empire of Blood"
(Full Moon)

If you like Darkthrone's "Transylvanian Hunger", then I think you'll get into Black Funeral's second album as well. Harsh 'n' wicked Black Metal with an underground production and a dirty voice. A cool surprise... I like it!

Blitzkrieg

"Unholy Trinity" + "Ten"
(Neat Metal)

Not brandnew anymore, but still very enjoyable are the two last offerings from English legend Blitzkrieg. Good British Metal Rock with the great voice of Brian Ross (ex-Lone Wolf/ Satan). "Unholy Trinity" has some highlights such as "Hair Trigger", "Calming The Savage Beast" and "Crazy For You", "Take A Look Around", "Unholy Trinity", but also the cool coverversion of Venom's "Countess Bathory" (with Cronos and Brian on vocals). "Ten" features some old and new tunes, all in the typical and simple Blitzkrieg-style. The best songs here must be "Power Of The King" and "I'm not Insane". Oh, there's also a new version of "Blitzkrieg" recorded for this CD. If you like to check out one of Metallica's old roots, then check out Blitzkrieg. After you heard those CD a couple of times, the music won't leave your mind again!

BLOODTHORN

"In The Shadow Of Your Black Wings"
(Season Of Mist)

I never heard of this new Norwegian band before, and I was surprised to hear their album which is well-done and variable in its style. The influences which I can hear reach from epic sounds and pounding stuff like old Alastis, slow Gehenna, and very fast stuff like Darkthrone and even Burzum. Keyboards and female vocals can be heard as well, but it's done in a bearable way. Bloodthorn, featuring an (ex?) Manes-member, offered us a cool album with "In The Shadow Of Your Black Wings".

BRISSEN "Shades Of Soul"
(Holocaust)

Rome-based Brisen (featuring ex-Dungeon members) is one of the older Black Metal hordes (an interview can be found in TALES OF THE MACABRE #1), but they are still rooted in the deepest underground and are not very well-known. This CD is the first professional release of these maniacs, and it contains very cold Black Metal with a grim but melancholic touch which can be compared to ancient Burzum (debutalbum), old Samsel, and old bands like Bathory. The production is quite weak unfortunately (very thin guitarsound), but the album is still good, in case you like Black Metal the traditional way without female vocals, keyboard-orgies, blast-beats, etc... This is music for underground Black Metallers exclusively.

CIANIDE "Death, Doom & Destruction"

Do you like Deathstrike, Celtic Frost, Funeral Nation, and old-school Death

Metal? If yes, then you should check out Cianide's new CD, because this band sounds like a mixture of the forementioned forces. It's pretty heavy music I must say, and it sounds beyond any trends. Just some rhythms could be more "straight-ahead"...

COUNTESS

"Hell's Rock'n'Roll"
(Prowler)

Original bands like Countess are very rare in today's Metal scene, and it seems that originality is a handicap for the popularity of a band, or why are so many original bands (like Countess, Barathrum, Mortuary Drape, Sabbat, etc.) still rooted in the deepest underground?? But let's talk about "Hell's Rock'n'Roll" instead of starting a new discussion... Die hard Countess-fans will be very happy with this MCD, 'cause the band (yeah, this time with a real drummer!!!) offers three great new tunes and one live-song ("On The Wings Of Azazel"). Talking about the new songs, the band has surprised me with the titletrack which is almost 70s-like (Venom-like, but not that dark), and "Son Of A Dragon" which almost sounds like an East-European song with its cool melodies. Countess have changed their style on this MCD, but they are still recognizable as Countess, don't be afraid. This MCD offers songs that can easily be remembered after you heard them, and that's something that doesn't happen too often nowadays (at least to me). A cool offering, guys!

COVENANT

"In Times Before The Light"
(Mordgrimm)

Old Satyricon meets Gehenna... these are the best words to describe Covenant's debut CD. It's very Norwegian-sounding and is good footage for people into well-played atmospheric but still grim Black Metal.

DECUBITUS "Codex Sinaiteus"
(Seven Art Music)

Boring mid-tempo Death Metal... some rhythms suck while others are really cool. But for me, this music has no spirit.

DEFLESHED "Under The Blade"
(Invasion)

It's good brutal Death thrashing Metal stuff what Defleshed, an old Swedish force, play. It's fast raging music with influences from Morbid Angel, Order From Chaos, Deicide and even Kreator (when it comes to the riffs). Defleshed's advantage is their variety which doesn't make "Under The Blade" a boring album. There's also a cool coverversion of an old Destruction tune ("Curse The Gods") included.

DEINONYCHUS

"After The Rain Falls..."
(Guttur)

If I remember it right, I reviewed this old demo in TALES.#1, but I don't exactly know (I'm too lazy to look for it now). Anyway, Deinonychus were a damn cool band back then as the demo proves. Simple, harsh but effective atmospheric Black Metal with grim vocals gets offered on this CD. You can clearly hear that this music was recorded in 1993 as it fully carries the raw Black Metal spirit of that particular time. The sound is a little bit messy, but it's still ok, so don't worry. Everyone who likes Black Metal which sounds as if Burzum, Bestial Summoning and the atmospheric part of ancient Rotting Christ mixed up their sounds, should check this CD. It's a pity that this CD's running time is just 27 minutes, but what the hell... if the music's cool we shouldn't bother.

DEMONIC

"The Empire Of Agony"
(Necropolis)

Friends of Marduk and Dark Funeral will not be at war with this album. But Demonic

also know to calm down their sound as well. Compared to the band's MCD this full-length here doesn't sound as powerful as it used to be.

DENIAL OF GOD
"The Ghouls Of Dog"
(Dark Trinity)

Through other zines I knew about Denial Of God, but never heard any of their songs until "The Ghouls of DOG" came into my house. And I must say I'm very satisfied with the band's music... it's nothing very original, but it's good, powerful and straight ahead Black Metal with Death and Thrash influences. Some good riffs always help making music more interesting, and Denial of God know to do this. Watch out for a new 7"EP by the band, to be released soon.

DEVILYN "Anger"
(Listenable)

Devilyn from Poland walk in the shadow of great acts such as Vader and Morbid Angel. Death Metal the hard, dark and aggressive way. The vocals sound like Dave Vincent ("Covenant"), bloody brutal. The biggest difference between the bands is that Devilyn aren't as ultrafast as their masters are when they hit the gas. Also the productions isn't as perfect, but this does not mean that you have to miss this cool album if you still like music that beats the shit out of your amps.

DIABOLI "Towards Damnation"
(Full Moon)

After a disappointing debut CD on rip off-label UNISOUND, Diaboli strike with an improved second album. It's still harsh, primitive nordic Black Metal with simple drumming, but it's not as monotonous as it used to be, except for the fast songs. Quality-wise it's ok (somewhere between great and boring) what Pete (who's the only member left) created here. Best tune is "Saatanan Viha" which lives up the old Venom-spirit of "Seven Gates Of Hell", very cool and much better than the nordic-styled stuff. I want to hear more songs like this one next time, Pete!

DIE APOKALYPTISCHEN REITER
"Soft and Strong"
(Ars Metallii)

What a bizarre new band! They play almost every kind of 90s Metal, be it new Death Metal, Folklore, Grind, even Punk, Gothic and Pussy Metal (= music like Cradle of Filth/ Dimmu Borgir with sweet keyboards) and more. They sometimes sound like Impaled Nazarene when they speed up, then you hear death grunts, then something totally different again, etc. It's music that is spontaneously changing in its style, but it's not done in a chaotic way. When it comes to the music's quality, I think it's average and below, somewhere between good/ acceptable and total shit. But what is for sure is that this band can not be labelled as Black Metal, it's more an experimental band which tries to unite all Metal sounds of the 90s. This finally means that this CD is not recommendable to any traditional Black/ Death/ Heavy Metallers, so only people into modern stuff should dare to check this.

DISABLED "Faith Ablation"
(Embassy)

Footage for gory Death Metallers here! Disabled from France play an traditional style of dark and obscure Death Metal with deep, almost Cannibal Corpse-like, vocals and typical kind of riffs for this type of music. It's like a mixture of old Swedish Death Metal (but without the Sunlight sound thought!) crossed with old Florida Death Metal. The production isn't too heavy unfortunately, just average, so a bit of the energy is lost here. The quality of the songwriting is acceptable, at least these guys know to sound aggressive and have the right feeling. 20 minutes of brutality are banned on this MCD, and the coverartwork is drawn

by our French maniac Chris "Thorncross" Møyen, so be sure that it looks extreme and sick.

DRAWN

There aren't many Norwegian bands around that sound like this one here, 'cause **Drawn** have nothing in common with this typical Norse sound. It's even worse, they play experimental avantgarde stuff, probably comparable to **Beyond Dawn**, but much more complex and modern-sounding. Not my music at all, but here is the price and address anyway. \$16 to: **Per Kristian Stoveland, Klippervn 72, 4624 Kristiansand S., Norway.**

DRILLER KILLER "Fuck The World" (Kron H)

Raw old-school Hardcore Punk, very straight ahead and aggressive. The vocals are deep, almost Death Metal-like. The perfect music for the CD's title.

DUNKELGRAFEN (Last Episode)

How in the world can a band decide to have such a stupid bandname like "Dunkelgrafen"... I can only shake my head and laugh about it. Musically it's Black Metal (of course) which sounds average. At least they try to sound dark and aggressive, and it's all ok unless they play faster (which is just boring as hell). This is certainly not an album you'll miss, but it's not a shit-release though...just stuff that gets released every day.

EMPEROR "Anthems to The Welkin at Dusk" (Candlelight)

One of the best selling Black Metal bands is back with their second full-length, and I'm sure that this album will again sell like hell, because **Emperor** play the kind of Black Metal that is popular and sells best nowadays. The production is mighty, the atmosphere impressive, the songs are very well-arranged and played, etc. It's a bit more weird and technical in comparison to "In The Nightside Eclipse", but the music is still in the same vein. The new album is the logical continuation of the debut-full-length. The cover and CD booklet is also done with absolute perfection. I think those Norwegians want to prove that they still belong to the ruling class. My personal opinion of the music? Well, it's good stuff, very professional and absolutely well-done, and I'm sure that a lot of young bands will try to imitate this album, but compared to **Emperor's** early recordings (especially the demo "Wrath of the Tyrant") the band has lost a lot of their rough sound and style of songwriting. The heavy old influences from **Bathory** and **Celtic Frost/Hellhammer** are almost gone, which is a pity (for me) while other maniacs welcome this development as it makes the band sound more original. A truly great track is the opener I must admit, it's quite extreme. At the end I'm sure that this album will be an important influence for a lot of new bands, trust me.

ETERNAL SOLSTICE (Displeased)

This here is an old band from the Netherlands, and they play old-styled Death Metal with deep vocals. Their style reminds me of **Massacre** and **Decide**, but it's not that powerful and not of the same quality. But it's good stuff though.

EWIGKEIT "Battle Furies" (Eldethorn)

To describe this new and unknown band's music is very difficult, but I can say that they succeeded in playing a symphonic and atmospheric, mid-paced (pagan) Metal style in a real professional way. It sounds like being inspired by old **Crematory/Hell**

Gathering (vocals/guitars), **Emperor** (atmosphere), **Tiamat** (emotional parts), etc... there's much variety in the music and it's original-sounding. For this genre of music it's first class stuff.

EXCITER "The Dark Command" (Osmose)

Canadian legend **Exciter** are back from the dead, and their new album must be the most aggressive and powerful one they have ever recorded. The music is still played in the typical **Exciter**-style, just the vocals are different as the new singer has a voice like **Judas Priest/Hallows Eve** and old **Overkill**. The album contains nothing but merciless **Heavy Power/Speed Metal** with a lot of doublebass doses. I think everyone into traditional but extreme Metal arts will fully enjoy this great comeback album.

FALKENBACH "...magn! blandinn..." (Napalm)

I heard a lot of positive things about **Falkenbach's** music, and was often advised to check it out. Therefore I was quite curious when I got this album here to review. To be directly with you after I heard it: I honestly expected a bit more from this band. **Falkenbach** plays good epic Metal hymns which are roughly comparable to late **Bathory** stuff, but it's more primitive and by far less guitar-dominated. It's more music which is lead by keyboards instead of guitariffs, and that's why I say that this band is "just" good but not great. It's "easy listening" music that I can even hear when I clean my dishes, music that even my old mother can enjoy. People into atmospheric Metal music will love **Falkenbach**, they do their job in a real good way, and even the (sung) vocals sound very well, surely above average. So at the end, no one will be disappointed with this CD.

FAXED HEAD "Exhumed At Birth" (Amarillo)

Wow, this new U.S.-band is really extreme. Darkest insane Gore Metal, in doomy, fast, etc. disguises, but always pretty heavy. Almost every song sounds different, and that's interesting. **Heavy/Speed/Death**, even nordic Black Metal riffs can be heard, very variable stuff. Just the vocals aren't always great, I don't like some of the strange effects that were used here and then. "Exhumed at Birth" is very hard to describe, at least it's very different to most of the stuff that you can get in the shops!

FINAL BREATH

A self-financed MCD here from a German band who play a sort of early 90s Death/Thrash with deep (**Crematory**-like) vocals. The band has some cool riffs to offer, but some musical parts are just average as well. Anyway, it's honest music, and the band has potential. This MCD is a good start for **Final Breath**. Write to: **Michael Imhof, Schwarze Brücke 2, 97737 Gemünden, Germany.**

FORLORN "I" (Head Not Found)

This sounds like **Isengard** meets **In The Woods**, meets **Angizia**, meets the flutes of **Satyricon**, meets folkloric music. But **Forlorn** is less Metal than all those bands, real electric guitars are hard to find. Therefore, it's not stuff I really like, even if it's very professional sounding, no doubt about that, ... but for me this kind of music is just sounding too kitschy. Great is the impressive front and backcover artwork, vikings at battle.

FORSTH "Helvetic War" (Last Episode)

Swiss **Forsth** returned with their second album. Many people say this band is shit, but

I think they have talent, because they sometimes have a very good feeling for the Black Metal atmosphere, even if there are also many weak parts on this album. "Helvetic War" 's biggest disadvantage must be the production (recorded at the "Schweinsound"-studio...), which let the guitars perish in this messy sound, and the strong use of keyboards. Musically it's still harsh Black Metal with dirty vocals, played very fast, and I have to admit that I like the melodies of the opening song. **Forsth** are not really recommendable yet, but if they try to get a better (but not a perfect) production next time and reduce the use of synths, then we could expect them to come up with a good third album.

GARDENIAN "Two Feet Stand" (Listenable)

This here is a combination of old ad new Swedish Death Metal, so it's an album with both a good and a negative aspect (for me). The production is really powerful and the vocals are aggressive, so at least this is very cool. If you don't mind an album where melodies are sometimes used in a too massive (typical Swedish) way, then **Gardenian** might be something for you.

GARDENS OF GEHENNA "Mortem Saluta" (Shiver Records)

Doomy Death Metal with riffs that we have heard many times before on other albums. It's a heavy, but not very original CD. The vocals are very deep and brutal, and help the band getting an intense expression. But for the rest... it's just old news.

GATES OF ISHTAR "The Dawn of Flames" (Invasion)

Metal made in Sweden, with the typical melodic riffs ... it's ok what the band offers, if you ignore the fast parts which sound ridiculous due to the crappy drumsound. These guys can play, yes, but ... it's not my kind of Metal. It has no power at all!!! Very unoriginal is the front-cover, because the heroic warrior with the sword was already used for **Exciter's** "Long Live The Loud" LP... and I'm sure that a lot of people still remember that release, don't they?

GOD DETHRONED "The Grand Grimoire" (Metal Blade)

A band that got hyped by many magazines ... but now it's my turn to say some words about 'em. First of all, they sound 100% professional and know to play very well. The production of this album is great as well, and spreads a lot of energy. Musically they play Death Metal with U.S. and Swedish influences (both old and new ones), blast parts and even some thrashy elements when it comes to some of the riffs. But for "Death Metal" they sometimes use too many melodies which sucks a lot of energy out of their songs. Musically they sound like a cocktail of old **Vader** (the Death Metal side), **Dissection** (the melodic side) and **Desaster** (the thrashy side), so **God Dethroned** has different faces. It's a good album, but it would have been a lot better if the **Dissection** influence didn't exist at all.

GODDESS OF DESIRE "Let Us Win This War" (Shivadarshana)

The 80s rule again (again? They always ruled !!!), and **Goddess of Desire** is another band to celebrate our last decade in their music. Their biggest influence must be **Celtic Frost**, but image and vocal-wise they try to have this dirty-fun expression, but the result is pathetic and amateurish, it really sounds like "Cmon, let's be dirty, let's sound old"... What I really hate at most of these new "old Metal" bands is the fact that they pose in the 80s-way without the convincing honesty. You really feel when a band really

means it or not. Some good riffs can be heard, and I think that this Dutch band has potential, but it's still all too unserious and embarrassing, this is no fun anymore. A real cool thing at this record are the two females... they look hot! If you guys ever do another album, then show us some naked shots of them next time, please!

GORGOROTH "Under The Sign Of Hell" (Malicious)

We can't blame **Gorgoroth** for wimping out, no way. "Under The Sign Of Hell" is very roughly produced and contains very raw and straight ahead distorted Norwegian Black Metal which sounds very uncommercial. It's the first album with the band's new singer, and he tries to sing more variable than **Hat** did. Sometimes he even tries to sound like **Tormentor/Mayhem's** **Attila**. The songwriting is not as strong as on "Antichrist" which I regard as a good album (in contrary to the band's live-appearance which is really horrible and fuckin' poser-like), but "Under The Sign Of Hell" is still an album that all people into harsh Norwegian old-school Black Metal will enjoy.

P.S.: It's a pity that **MALICIOUS** released such a poor LP-version... there is no info, no lyrics, nothing ... just the songtitles and the logo.

GUILLOTINE UNDER THE GUILLOTINE (Necropolis)

Fuck, this is a very difficult one! I don't like all these (Scandinavian) rip off bands like **Infernö** at all, I really hate them for their posing and for their trendy behaviour, 'cause if you really always liked old fast and aggressive 80s Thrash Metal, then you wouldn't have realized it in 1997/1998. **Guillotine** is one of those rip off bands, and everyone who has a bit of knowledge about old bands, has noticed that **Guillotine** must be a **Kreator**-rip off, and that's exactly what they are. But even if **Guillotine** is heavily using the same arrangements and almost the same riffs from **Kreator's** "Endless Pain" (and sometimes also "Pleasure To Kill") album, I think they are not as worse as most of the other rip off bands. I don't know why, it's hard to say... perhaps it's because they just try to be nothing but a pure second **Kreator** as there are no other influences (beside one song that sounds like old **Bathory**, and beside the **Slayer**-influence of course as **Kreator** was a simple **Slayer**-clone in their early days as well). You should decide if you still can accept such unashamedly stolen music or not. I still don't know if I should like or damn this album or not... but I can surely say that this band would be a great one if they try to write riffs that are more original and not so stolen that makes you think "Oh, this sounds like the riff from 'Tormentor', or 'Living In Fear' etc." What I like is the straight pounding speed and rhythm of this album, no wonder as I worship old **Slayer** and **Kreator** much more than **Dissection**, **Deathrow**, etc. which are copied by many other new bands.

HADES "The Dawn Of The Dying Sun" (Full Moon)

Norwegian **Hades** are still faithful to their style, and that's great. Black Metal with a heavy and epical atmosphere, the perfect stuff for people into **Bathory**, **Enslaved** and (old) **Burzum**.

HA LELA "Padudimas" (Eldethorn)

"Quality instead of quantity" seems to be the motto of the **ELDETHORN** label, 'cause all their releases so far were nothing but professional quality stuff. The album contains seven epic, emotional but still very

dark hymns with an intelligent (not cliché!) use of keyboards with cool melodies and atmospheres. The influences are from traditional folk and mid-paced Dark Metal, a cool combination. Eight musicians are responsible for the recording of this album, and everybody into such kind of music is advised to check out this album as it's definitely a strong and original one.

HEIDENREICH "A Death Gate Cycle"
(Napalm)

A new band (project?) by members of Abigor and Amestigon that brings us another Black Metal album that should create new spheres in this music. Well, I wouldn't say that Heidenreich (in English: Realm Of Heathens) opened new gates for Black Metal, but at least they tried to vary their style with their experimental kind of playing. It's nordic Black Metal in the Abigor style, combined with sung vocals, epic and avantgardistic sounds. They succeeded with that as the music doesn't sound bad, but there are still things to improve (like the instable sung vocals). Also, real drums would have sounded better than the programming. Perhaps next time? People who can't get enough of this sharp, grim but still melodic Austrian Black Metal sound will most likely enjoy this new band.

HELHEIM "Av Norrou Aett"
(Solistitium)

I never liked Helheim, and I still don't do it. Spiritless Black Metal that doesn't move me at all. Just fuckin' boring stuff.

**HEMLOCK
"Crush The Race Of God"**
(Head Not Found)

Sick'n' powerful but very primitive Death/Black Metal with primitive vocals (which are the weak point of Hemlock to be directly with you). Musically it's cool stuff with a touch of doom here and then... it's certainly music only very few maniacs can appreciate as Hemlock sound harsh and very underground. I think that's just the way the band likes to play, they just sound honest to me, beyond the current trends. Cool is the statement on the backcover: "No synth wings!" Think this needs no extra comments...

HORNA "Hiddentormi"
(Solistitium)

A new band from the fourth/fifth (I don't know what) Black Metal generation, and that's exactly like the way they sound. Fast, grim but modern Black Metal.

**INDUNGEON
(Full Moon)**

I find this CD a boring offering, it's Swedish sounding with many melodies and little energy only. Not enough, the riffs are more than just unoriginal, they are even stolen ("522 666", the second song, has the same riff as Accept's "Princess Of The Dawn"). Even the coverversion of Bathory's "Die In Fire" is not the best... I don't know why FULL MOON signed this superfluous band/project.

INFESTDEAD "Hellfuck"
(Invasion)

Is this the new Deicide album? Ha, this one is very cool, because this sounds like a straighter version of Deicide. Dan Swanö seems to play his guitar aggressively after he produced so many wimpy Swedish albums, haha. Perhaps he got sick of all those melodic bands? Infestdead are real masters at their instruments, it's perfectly done at fastest speed. Great riffs, powerful drums, evil vocals, etc. I like "Hellfuck", pure dark raging Death Metal!!! Get it!

**INVERTED
"There Can Be Only One"**
(Shiver Records)

It took long time until the Death Metallers from Inverted managed to record their debut album. This CD offers pure and simple old-school Death Metal, without keyboards, without female vocals. The production could be heavier, but anyway... it's a cool album (not a killer, but cool). For a Swedish band they are uncommercial-sounding, because they have not joined this melodic crappy stuff as well.

**KAMPFAR
"Mellon Skogkledde Aaser"**
(Malicious)

Their promotape was nice, and this CD isn't much different to it. The thing that makes me sleepy while listening to this stuff is the sad truth that the magic of that style of music is gone for me. No riffs that make my fist raise... However, Kampfär (with Ex-Mock member Dolk) is a professional epic Norse band, and so is this release.

**KAWIR
"Pros Kavelrots To Kavrlis"**
(?)

After some cool demos and 7"EPs, time has come for the debut album of those Greek heathens. You hear that they are from Hellas, it's typical Greek Metal, comparable to Varathron and bands like that (you know, heavy, but still melodic riffs, dark deep vocals). For me this is a great style that I really love listening to, and it's cool that some bands (including Kawir) and still keeping up the tradition to play this original style. Support them.

**KEEP OF KALESSIN
"Through Times Of War"**
(Avantgarde Music)

Somewhere between harsh and melodic northern Black Metal descends this Norwegian band. The vocals are dark instead of high piercing ones which is good, and the music is aggressive, friendly, epic and atmospheric... all these elements can be found. It's all somewhere between old Immortal and Dissection/new Satyricon.

KING DIAMOND "Voodoo"
(Massacre)

Long live the king, as long as he comes up with good albums. Well, it's of course no big secret that he will never reach the class of "Fatal Portrait" and "Abigail" again, but the King is still able to offer some good work. "Voodoo" is quality-wise in the same vein as "The Graveyard" was, perhaps it's more complex than before. "Voodoo" will not disappoint any King Diamond fan, so you can go out and buy this one here. But Mr. Diamond should try to write more exciting riffs next time to keep the listener interested...



KRISIUN "Black Force Domain"
(Roadrunner)

Nothing but aggressive satanic ravenous Death Metal, fast and without any compromises from the beginning until the very end. No groovy shit, this is real brutal Death Metal! It's stuff like Vader, Morbid Angel, Krabathor, but by far more technical and unfortunately also chaotic... only for the die-hards of the die-hard Death Metal legions. I saw the band live, and it was impressive to see how those Brazilian lunatics desecrated their instruments (they are great musicians), but I wasn't able to hear any concrete rhythms or guitar riffs... it all sounded as if a tank is roaring and on its way to roll over me. Perhaps my mind is too slow to be able to follow Krisiun's music?!

**LIMBONIC ART
"In Achorre Dementia"**
(Nocturnal Art)

Norwegian Limbonic Art is a band that satisfies the needs of all people into modern and progressive Black Metal music. They play a style that is based upon dark and cold atmospheres, abyssic sounds and Emperor-like arrangements, but played with weapons (like drum effects/sounds, the modern production,...) that make their style sound synthetic. It's very unnatural for my ears. Of course they play with electric guitars 'n' stuff, this is no computer band if anyone has wondered! The band knows to sound aggressive and obscure (which are important methods for Black Metal in my opinion), and works on a very professional basis. For me the music, even though it is really good, sounds too sterile and is too far away from the original Black Metal roots. But if you welcome this development in Black Metal, then Limbonic Art will impress you with this second album.

LOBOTOMY "Kill"
(No Fashion)

Get blown away by Lobotomy's hard Death Metal, because those guys know to play hard'n' brutal. It's sometimes sounding like Vader/ Sepultura (especially the vocals), and sometimes like Slayer (when it comes to some of the riffs). But there are also some rhythms included which I don't like that much I must say... sounding untypical for this type of music. But generally it's a good album.



**LORD
"Behind The Curtain Of Darkness"**
(Eldethorn)

Usually I am used to hear only extreme Black Metal bands from France (like Vlad Tepes, Mutilation, Belketre, etc.), so I'm surprised to hear something tamed like Lord. They mostly play slow/mid-tempo Black Metal stuff which is performed with a noble atmosphere, supported by keyboards which can be heard in the background. The music has a medieval and epic touch and sounds like old (slow) Satyricon (first LP) stuff and probably Gehenna ("First Spell" MLP) as well. Lord managed to play enjoyable hymns which don't sound too cliché and pathetic (even if the bandphotos look stupid), so that I can say that this CD here is one of the better new Black Metal releases. Cool frontcover by the way.

LUX OCCULTA "Didnyos"
(Pagan)

A band that plays brutal Black/Death Metal in combination with keyboardsounds, like Emperor meets old Creamtury (ger). It's the kind of music which is hype now, and Lux Occulta are not doing a bad job for this type of music, even though I think they put more energy than necessary into this album so that it sounds a bit overloaded and unnatural. So you guys should settle down and keep cool, 'cause music sounds best if it comes easy and relaxed.

MACTÄTUS "Blot"
(Embassy)

The Ex-label of Gorgoroth, EMBASSY, comes up with a new Norwegian band that should continue where the Norwegian cults (like Darkthrone, Emperor, etc.) once started, if I had to believe the flyer for Mactätus' CD "Blot". Yes, they are a Black Metal band, but they are far away from the old harsh Norwegian style. "Blot" is more like harmonical/ melodic but still dark Black Metal with keyboards and a grim

voice, but it's all done in a more atmospheric way, sometimes reminding me of late Burzum stuff. It's a acceptable release, but it's far away from albums like "A Blaze In The Northern Sky" or stuff like that.

**MALIGNANT ETERNAL
"Far Beneath The Sun"**
(Napalm)

After an average, self-financed, debut album, this Norwegian band returned with a new CD on NAPALM. These guys have radically changed their style if you ask me... it's rawer but also more commercial-sounding now! It can be recognized as "Norwegian Black Metal" when it comes to the riffs, vocals, etc. It's straight ahead music with harsh riffs and dirty vocals, even some thrash elements were put into the songs. The "commercial" aspect I mentioned is the way they use their keyboards nowadays, 'cause exactly this kind of playing is very popular right now. Also the new bandphotos confirm that Malignant Eternal have taken a look to Dimmu Borgir and such kind of acts (who all use these hats). Perhaps all these guys wanna have a piece of the cake as well?! "Far Beneath The Sun" is a nice album nevertheless, I didn't expect the band to improve that much since their debut CD.

MANIAC BUTCHER "Krvestreb"
(Pussy God)

Those who liked the other Maniac Butcher stuff will not be disappointed with this new violent and fast Black Metal album as well. This Czech band rages like hell, no keyboards, no female vocals, no compromises. Only the dark storm.

MARDUK "Live In Germania"
(Osmose)

With this double-album, Marduk proof that they are able to play their hyperfast stuff live as well, and they succeeded. I don't need to describe Marduk's music as they are not an unknown band anymore in the Black Metal scene, so decide for yourself if you have to buy their Black Metal inferno not only as studio-versions, but as live-versions, too.

MENHIR "Die Ewigen Sterne"
(Ars Metallii)

Synths, harmonic guitar riffs beside the usual nordic background, sung (à la In The Woods...) and screamed (à la usual Black Metal) vocals, mostly mid-tempo rhythms, etc... well, that's what this album is all about. For this genre of music it is done with profession, with all the countless but well-arranged melodies, only the synths sound too "synthetic" for my taste and give Menhir a kitschy touch. It's all definitely not stuff you can rage to, it's more the stuff I would call intellectual, metallized (But not Metal) music, so primitive souls should stay away.

**MITHOTYN
"In The Sign Of The Ravens"**
(Invasion)

The sound of this Swedish band consists of very melodic guitarwork, a heavy use of keyboards, a scream voice, etc. All is probably comparable to Summoning, In Flames, Satyricon, but Mithotyn is more cliché sounding. It's not shit though if you like the bands mentioned above.

And here we have another album of this band, but I really don't know the title (due to lack of information). It's still all very melodic, the vocals are still very scream and do not fit to the music. I think the music is even more melodic (and less Black Metal) than before. A professional release, but I don't like it at all... it sounds too kitschy with all those melodic overdoses.

MÖRK CRYNING "Return Fire"
(No Fashion)

After so many disappointments from Sweden, I'm glad to listen to a band like this one here, because they know to rage hard,

even though use many melodic riffs. It's all done with the necessary wicked feeling, and even some Slayer-like soli can be hard (part from the Slayer coverversion). All in all it sounds as if bands like **Neophobic** and **Dark Funeral** joined forces. The vocals do not sound like pure Black Metal, it's more like a combination of Black and Death. Hope that Sweden will spit out more bands like this one in future.

MÖRSER "Two Hours of Doom"
(Per Roko)

This here sounds like one hour of chaotic Grind/Noise the brutal way...



MOON "Daemon's Heart"
(Pagan)

A great album by **Moon** (feat. **Christ Agony** member)... harsh Death/Black Metal the way **Christ Agony** has played it, but more straight ahead and less nordic-sounding. I like the vocal-arrangements which give the album a special dark and mighty touch. It is said that the drums were played by **Vader's** drummer, but it sounds more like computer drums if you ask me (perhaps this guy is not human but a robot, haha). This album is surely one of the better in this review section, bet your ass.

MORTIFIER
"Darkness My Eternal Bride"
(Battlegod)

Pure Black Metal which sounds like being written back in 92/93... harsh stuff à la old **Immortal/ Dark Throne/ Emperor** and some ancient Black Metal of the 80s. A MCD that still proves that Black Metal can sound powerful and dark without using the typical pseudo-melodic riffs that are considered as "evil" and ultra-speed drumming. **Mortifier** (an Italian band by the way) have improved through the years, and I hope that they'll come up with a real album soon.

NECROPHAGIA
"Seasons Of The Dead"
(Red Stream)

For me this is old news, 'cause I picked up this album about 10 years ago in Greece (in the record store I couldn't find even one interesting LP, but when I left it, I saw this album in the shop's window, so I simply had to enter this hot fuckin' store again). But I'm sure that most of today's Black/Death Metallers are not familiar with this great album that has become a rare item during all those years. **Neophagia** is an old Death/Thrash Metal band from the U.S.A., and after some demos they signed to **NEW RENAISSANCE** Records to record their debut LP "Seasons of the Dead". When I bought the album, I had to listen to it for a couple of times to find out what this band is all about, but at the end I just loved this album. Also the gory coverartwork (by **Drew Elliot** who also made covers for **The Unsane, Blood Feast**, etc.) which is absolutely tasteless, is fuckin' cult. The music on this album is both slow and fast, aggressive and melodic. The vocals are always dark but not growled... it's more like an aggressive spoken voice. It's a shame that **RED STREAM** didn't print down the old thanks-list on the re-release here, 'cause this was one of the largest and coolest list I have seen back then, similar to **Kreator's** "Pleasure to Kill"-thankslist. However, **Neophagia** is a MUST for people into old Thrash/Death Metal. Now you have your chance to check 'em out.

NEPHENZY
"Where Death Becomes Art"
(Black Diamond)

"Black/Death" from Sweden again... but this

time it's more based on guitar-rhythms instead of countless melodic riffs which are just combined in a row. This CD is acceptable... it's not bad, but definitely not good either.

NIDEN DIV. 187 "Imperyum"
(Necropolis)

After a boring MCD here the first boring full-length. It's probably the perfect stuff for people who like Black Metal the fast, very distorted, violent and aggressive nordic-way, with straight drums, and a high-screaming voice. I don't know why, but I'm not into this album at all... it's just another Black Metal album for me.

NOCTURNAL "Nocturnal"

Nocturnal is the Australian **Burzum**, simple as that! It's a mixture of **Grishnackh's** debut album and "Det Som Engang Var". The warrior behind this project did a good job, even if it's of course not as good as the original. However, die-hard old **Burzum** fans must have this album!

NON SERVIAM
"Between Light And Darkness"
(Invasion)

Typical melodic Metal stuff with screamy vocals from Sweden, well-played but without heaviness.

OPERA IX "Sacro Culto"
(Shiver Records)

A bizzare album... **Opera IX** are part of the scene for quite some time now, and they certainly have managed to create some original-sounding music. It's a kind of obscure Metal what they play, with female but Death Metal-like vocals and a strange (but very interesting) use of keyboards which doesn't seem to fit to be in harmony with it the rest of the music (but this is done on purpose to give the style a special morbid and obscure touch). "Sacro Culto" is a very interesting and variable album, and it doesn't get boring, you always find out new musical finesses. It's not a CD I'd like to listen to everyday, but I think it's great that a band tries to create something that differs from most of the other bands that usually just bore us to death with their trendy rip off shit.

OSCULUM INFAME
"Dor-Nu-Faughlith"
(Mordgrimm)

So-called Black Metal music ... fast, atmospheric, modern, but unfortunately without the "Black" feeling. It's music that should be described as melancholic and monumental, but not as evil. These French guys did an acceptable job though, it's just not what I call Black Metal.

PRIMIGENIUM
"The Art Of War"
(Full Moon)

"The Art Of War" is even harder, faster and more violent than the band's demo was. Black Metal for people into violent nordic sounds and any superfluous attempts to sound more evil. It's just Black Metal without any compromises.

RAGNAROK (Nor)
(Head Not Found)

Those who will never get enough of standard Norse sounds should check this CD. **Ragnarok** play the typical modern Norse stuff with all the standard riffs, sometimes melodic (almost Swedish-sounding), sometimes harsh. I'm not too impressed by this release, some parts are nice, yes, but I'm a bit tired of it all, I heard it too many times before. But if you're still hungry, go for it.

RAGNAROK (UK)
"To Mend The Oaken Heart"
(Neat Metal)

I already rated their demo as very technical and progressive Pagan Metal, and this CD here is just a logical continuation of the tape. It's masterful epic, progressive Pagan Metal, played by musicians who are real aces. The folklore influences sound like the one from **Skyclad** and **Cruachan**, very cool. The vocals sound like the ones from the **Impiety** CD... very high and extreme. When it comes to traditional folkloristic Metal-stuff which is played at a certain high technical level, then you don't have to miss **Ragnarok** from England.

SACRILEGE "The Fifth Season"
(Black Sun)

Typical neo-Swedish stuff, similar to **Dissection**, but with more screamy vocals and less thrashy-elements. For this genre of music I guess it's a very professional and strong album

SACRILEGIUM / NORTH
"Sesienne Suepty"
(Xul)

Two Black Metal bands on one MCD here, both offering great music with a wicked feeling and atmosphere. **Sacrilegium's** part is somewhere between the band's killer-demo "Sleeptime" and the epic first album "Wicher"... raw but still melodic Black Metal which is sometimes very similar to **Graveland** (especially the vocals), it's just more atmospheric and hymnic. I like it! It's a pity that **Sacrilegium** belong to the past. **North** is cool as well, but not as strong as **Sacrilegium** I must say. But anyway, it's enjoyable and good Black Metal. For fans of Polish Black Metal this MCD is like a gift from hell itself. Write to: **Black Arts, P.O. Box 4121, 3102 GC Schieden, The Netherlands.**

SADISTIK EXEKUTION
"K.A.O.S."

It seems as if **Sadistik Exekution** have left **OSMOSE**, or why is this new album here only available through Australian import?? "K.A.O.S." is in the same vein as "We're Death, Fuck You!", it's just better and not as monotonous as it used to be. For all people who still have tears in their eyes because of the death of **Blasphemy**, old **Beherit**, and old violent Death Metal bands, this third album of this old but still very extreme Australian band will deserve your full worship.

SATAN "Court In The Act"
(Neat Metal)

A re-release of a piece of **NWoBHM**-history. **Satan**, featuring **Blitzkrieg** vocalist **Brian Ross**, played technical but still straight ahead fresh Heavy Metal with powerful riffs, just check out the opener "Trial By Fire". They have nothing in common with "Black Metal" in case you have thought when you saw the bandname. To make this CD even more interesting, there are even some rare bonus songs included.

SATURNUS
"Paradise Belongs To You"
(Euphonious)

As you can probably guess from the albumtitle this is harmonical, doomy and thoughtful music with deep vocals. The whole atmosphere is varying from heavenly to depressive/ dangerous, with influences from **Paradise Lost**, the power of Swedish Death Metal, etc. For this type of music it's well-done.

SEA OF TRANQUILLITY/ PAX MORTIS
(Cursed)

Two U.S. bands on one CD. **Sea Of Tranquility** play technical but very brutal

Death Metal with a heavy production. Cool stuff, especially if you like it the more complex but still deadly way. **Pax Mortis** play Death Metal as well, but their style is more variable, sometimes a bit too variable as there are too many changes in style (sometimes it's like **Cannibal Corpse**, then it sounds harmonical...). But it's ok, it's not a bad recording. This here is a splitCD for people into complex underground Death Metal.

SETHERIAL
"Lords Of The Nightmare"
(Napalm)

Setherial are a band that changes their sound with every new release. This second album is more aggressive and harsh than the debutCD was. Very fast Black Metal-stuff (**Mayhem** meets **Marduk**, but with more melodies) with dark grim and distorted vocals (somewhere between **Cradle Of Filth** and **Deicide**) is what the guys recorded. I think every die-hard Northern Black Metal druggi will be satisfied with this CD. I myself think that the guitars sound too messy which make some grinded riffs sound like hardcore... but that's the way Nordic Black Metal should sound nowadays as it seems.

SOHRIN
"I Det Glimrande Mörkrets Djup"
(Near Dark)

Swedish Black Metal, both melodic and aggressive. I followed **Sohrin's** way since their demo, and even if they sound more professional than ever, I prefer their old stuff (demo/MLP) 'cause of the rawer Black Metal spirit that seems to have left the band nowadays. "I Det..." sounds like typical Swedish Black Metal... it's just too typical for my taste. The album isn't bad, but is definitely not a killer-release!

SCHETTAN "Bezerk 2000"
(Invasion)

Scheitan are a strange band for me... The first half of the CD offers music that sounds like "metallized" straight Gothic Rock with screamed vocals. Very simple but good music, it's like balsam for your ears. The band also knows to convince with slower majestic parts which have a strong epic touch. But the second half of this CD offers a kind of fast Black Metal in the nordic vein, similar to **Scheitan's** first CD "Travelling in ancient times". So, what the hell should I think about this band? This CD almost sounds like a Split CD, at least to me. But as both musical sides of **Scheitan** do not make my ears bleed, I can say that their music is enjoyable.

SKEPTICISM "Ethere"
(Red Stream)

Very boring slow motion Doom Metal we have here with "Ethere". It's just too boring, there are only very few highlights included in the 27 minutes that I have to enslave my ears to. Only for die-hards!

STANGULATION
"Between Nothing And Eternity"
(Touch Records)

In **TALES OF THE MACABRE #4** there was a review on **Strangulation's** demo, and I was a bit nerve-wrecked by it... I couldn't stand their too technical Death Metal stuff. This debutCD is still very technical, deathful, and still comparable to late **Death** stuff (but way more complicated), but this time it's done in a more bearable way. The songstructures are recognizablen now, no confused playing can be heard anymore. I'm 100%ly sure that people who like to listen to instrumental technical know-how will find a new jewel with this CD. The price of this CD is just \$16: **Alexandre Pignata, Rua Nagib Miguel Cinf.40, Santo Amaro - SP/SP, CEP 04711-120, Brazil.**

STORMWITCH "Priest Of Evil"

It was only a question of time to see a "best

of" -kind of album by Stormwitch after wimpy Hammerfall covered their song "Ravenlord" of this old German Metal band. "Priest of Evil" contains songs from the band's first three albums. Except for their debut LP "Walpurgis Night" and some single tunes, I was never too mad about this band's music due to the very kitschy vocals. Therefore my favourite song is the instrumental "Dorian Gray" which by the way was the first song by the band I ever heard (thanks to HR3 "Hard'n Heavy" radio who played that tune back then). Musically it's all very Iron Maiden-like, but influences from Accept, Judas Priest, even Helloween and Exciter etc. can be found out as well. The band labelled their music as "black romantic" back then, and always carried a strong romantic and sometimes even satanic image. Stormwitch were never too popular here in Germany, but perhaps now their time has come with this hyped (15 song) CD?? For me it's an acceptable compilation, with high and lows. For all those who haven't heard about Stormwitch yet, but liked "Ravenlord" by those Swedish guys, will be ok with this CD.

SURGEON
"The Sign Of Ending Chaos"
(self-financed)

No Black Metal or Death Metal, but Power Metal in the typical German style (Grave Digger, Rage) with some cliché melodies and vocals. But it's quite powerful stuff with good drumwork I must say. Some of the riffs even seem to be influenced by Judas Priest's "Painkiller" album, not bad! Generally it's all typical German "Kitsch"-Metal-sounding, as already said, but this seems to be the best way to become successful... just take a look at fuckin Hammerfall (nothing against the Surgeon guys though!).



SVARTSYN "The True Legend"
(Folter)

There are two bands with the name Svartsyn existing, one from Norway, one from Sweden. This here is the Swedish one, and they play fast and average Black Metal, and even the production is not the hottest. Not an album that you must have for god's sake.

SWORDMASTER "Postmortem Tales"
(Osmose)

Sweden has one more retro-Metal band with Swordmaster now which they can put on the list next to Bewitched, Gehennah, etc. The band also plays a sort of Thrash Metal which is next to old Slayer, Kreator, combined with some typical Swedish-styled melodic riffs. Just the vocals are screamed and are nothing special at all. The band plays their stuff very well, but to me it doesn't sound too honest. In addition, the riffs aren't the hottest, just ordinary ones. You don't need that record if you have all the original 80s Thrash LPs.

THE MIST "Gottverlassen"
(Repulse)

The title is German, but the band is from Brazil. They play a combination of old Hardcore stuff and old Sepultura which is not a big surprise, because guitarist Jairo was one of the guys who played his axe for this band on both "Bestial Devastation" and "Morbid Vision", so you see... The Mist is not a teenager band. Musically it's acceptable, sometimes with great riffs but also strange vocaleffects here and then. The band is not as "raw" as old Sepultura, but I think that their old fans will appreciate "Gottverlassen".

THOKK "Of Rape And Vampirism"
(Mordgrimm)

Ancient's Lord Kaiaphas goes solo. Musically it's fast and grim northern Black

Metal, it sounds like Ancient meets Mortis meets violent Grand Belial's Key-stuff. The guy knows to write some good riffs I must say, but it's all a touch too monotonous, especially when the drumrhythms do not change. This was the first side of this CD. The second part/ ecocation consists of electronic sounds which are superfluous in my opinion. So, on one side you have some cool Black Metal, and on the other side some shitty ambient music. Why hasn't this guy released two MCDs instead of this full-length (Split)CD?

THUS DEFILED "Through The Veils..."
(Dark Trinity)

Yeah, that's what I call aggressive Black/Death Metal. The sound is not perfect but raw, and it fits to the band's ugly and dark style. I guess an album like this one isn't a megaseller, but it has a good spirit for this music...

THY GRIEF
(Solistitium)

I've no info about this band, but I suppose they are from Sweden. Black Metal is the game here which is played very fast and which sounds like a mixture of Norwegian Black Metal and Swedish stuff. Some strange riffs that seemed to be influenced by Voivod can be heard as well. It's an acceptable album, but at least this band knows to sound at least a bit dark.

UNCLEAN
"Ten, který se vyhýbá světlu"
(Pussy God)

Great atmospheric but still dark Black/ death Metal here with cool deep vocals that are sung in Czech language (I love that). Even some influences from Master's Hammer can be heard, but Unclean have their own sound. Give them a chance if you have some money left.

UNHOLY "Rapture"
(Avantgarde Music)

Some people say this band is cult, but I never shared this opinion (tastes are different). For me it's original but average music... Doomy Death/Black music with a depressive atmosphere. If you liked Unholy already before, check out "Rapture" as well.

UNLORD "Schwarzwald"
(Displeased)

As a German speaking creature I just laughed quite a lot when I saw the album-title, and I thought "How poor has Black Metal become?". I thought that Unlord is a crappy name as well, so I expected a pathetic and cliché Black Metal here. Well, I would lie if I said that this band can't play, they know to handle their instruments and play a very fast style of music, but when it comes to the music's expression, then I can say that the riffs are far too melodic and unoriginal for Black Metal... this music has no power at all. I think nobody needs a release like this one, I'm sorry to write such words. The only excellent thing is the fantastic and evil coverpainting (by Petagno who also drew stuff like Motörhead's "Orgasmatron", "Sacrifice", etc.). It's a pity that such a great artwork gets used for such an uninteresting album.

URGEHAL "Arma Christi"
(No Colours)

Pure Norwegian Black Metal, like Darkthrone has played it on "Transilvanian Hunger". Urgehal plays a very harsh style of this music, and they managed to record a cool and very blasphemous album. Even some Celtic Frost-influences can be heard as well. The next album from these possessed Norwegian Black Metallars will be recorded in the band's rehearsalroom as I heard, ... I guess it will be more primitive than ever.

Usurper

USURPER "Threshold of the Usurper"
(Necropolis)

The necromaniacs from Usurper get more and more extreme with every new release. It's all faster and more aggressive than before, and the result is intense as they mix Celtic Frost-Doom with Northern Black Metal. The only weak point are sometimes the riffs' quality as they don't sound too original, but the whole MCD is still good though, especially the sound is great. As a conversion you'll detect "Black Funeral" (original version by Merciful Fate) which is nice. Usurper are busy now with their second full-length album called "Skeletal Season", so be warned!

VARATHRON
"Genesis Of Apocryphal Desire"
(Cursed)

For all those who missed to buy the demos and the splitLP of old Greek band Varathron now have a second chance with this CD. And, as a bonus you can hear three unreleased songs from 89, 93, 95. Not Rotting Christ but Varathron are the ones who played this typical "Greek Metal" stuff first, but this doesn't seem to be of any importance for the Black Metal fans of today... it's a pity that a band like Varathron is still creeping in deepest underground, 'cause they deserve a bit of success. Well, life is hard...

VELES
"Pure Hateful Metal"
(No Colours)

This new Veles-album consists of their old demo and some new recordings. Their old stuff (featuring Rob Darken of Graveland on keyboards) is totally in the vein of the old Graveland and the Infernum-demos, very harsh Black Metal with dirty and grim vocals, great stuff with a perfect "Black" feeling. The new stuff should rather be entitled as "Black amateurish Metal", because it's more than just primitive what they recorded here. Usually I like primitive music, but this here is a touch too primitive, it sounds like a bad rehearsal-session of guys who cannot play their instruments too well. For some people this might be cult, for me it's just too primitive, even though those Polish madmen know to create cool riffs and atmospheres. So you got a CD here with both great and below average-quality Black Metal.

VIOLATION "Beyond The Graves"
(Last Episode)

Melodic Death Metal with deep vocals and a deep, almost Sunlight-like guitarsound. The music is a mixture of old Swedish Death Metal and melodic stuff. The production is heavy as well... just the music is too average-sounding, nothing that moves me. Sorry guys... but I miss the final kick.

WAR "Total War"
(Necropolis)

People from bands like Abruptum, Vondur, Hypocrisy/The Abyss, and Ex-Necrophobic/ Dark Funeral created a new project called War to bring you a MCD of some real Black Metal destruction. It's harsh, aggressive and primitive music, somewhere between Darkthrone and Nifelheim. It's a fist below the belt of people who think that Black Metal is stuff like Dimmu Borgir, Cradle Of Filth, and other commercial-sounding shit. War are not a new cult band, but they are great food for starving die-hard Black fuckin' Metal freaks.

Some more Vinyls.....

SABBAT
"Live 666 - Japanese Harmageddon"
(Evil Records)

I seldomly pay 30 DM (without postage!) for a new album, but in this case I simply had to spend so much Deutschemarks for this live-album. The record is perfect in any way... The front/backcover rules and looks like pure Black Metal cult, and the live-recordings sound very well, powerful, professional and very honest... No overdubs, no extras, just the pure live-mayhem. The choice of songs is very good as well... "Total Necro", "Satan Bless You", "Mion's Hill", "In Satan We Trust", etc. For me, Sabbath's "Live 666" sounds as cultic as Mayhem's "Live In Leipzig" did when I bought it years ago. If you are a die-hard traditional Black/ Death/ Heavy Metal fan, then you have to have this LP in order not to be called a fuckin' poser. Check out lists of your local underground distributors to get this vinyl, or order it from EVIL RECORDS directly (\$25). For the address please look at the Sabbath interview.

Lordian Guard

"Sinners In The Hands Of An Angry God"
(Hellion)

A great looking Picture Disc by Lordian Guard here. "Sinners..." is the band's second album, and those who already loved the debutLP, will not regret buying this one here, too. At the beginning I had to listen to this LP again and again until I knew what this album's all about, but now I'm absolutely into it. This album would have been perfect if the vocals were better, 'cause the lady's voice isn't always stable. You have to get used to them, that's all. Lordian Guard, featuring Ex-Warlord mastermind William Tsamis, plays very emotional, melodic, soft medieval Metal with a strong epic touch and a very atmospheric feeling. If you haven't heard them before, you can't imagine what is expecting you here. If you see the album in your local CD/ record store, take a listen to it... perhaps you will love (or just hate) this one. But it's definitely very original music!

Iron Pegasus

- MAILORDER -

Write for a cool list with both 2nd hand and new stuff, from Hard 'n Heavy to blackest Black Metal from around the globe!

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Preferable limited underground stuff that is hard to get at the big distribution services. Write for a free list with a lot of mayhem stuff for fair prices. Be ready to enter the realm of the underground!!!

Costa Stoios, Brunnenstr.6, 54538 Kinderbeuern-Hetzhof, Germany

Demotapes from the Underworld

ADORIOR "Beyond The Distant Blue"

Adorior's northern Black Metal style is not bad, but just too monotonous when you look back to the five songs on this demo after you heard them. Especially the fast parts are very boring, and do not spread any dark feeling. Too many bands sound like this one... Adorior, 13 Glenrose House, 2 Benhillwood Road, Sutton, Surrey, SM1 4 HT (England?)

AGATHODAIMON "Near Dark"

This review is kind of superfluous now as this German band has managed to get a deal with NUCLEAR BLAST (trendcamp No.1), but I'll review it anyway. "Near Dark" is much better than the debut-demo which was just boring in my ears. Agathodaimon have developed to a skilled band who try to create an own style of atmospheric Metal (with Black Metal parts and harmonic guitarsounds), and they managed to record a demo that sounds unique. What I like is that this band tries to play real guitariffs here and then, and not just use their axes to create this typical noise "bzzzz"-sound. Sometimes the music sounds a bit too intellectual (if this is the right term) to me in contrary, too many elements were put into one song. And what about the female vocals? They are not missing, don't panic, haha. There's even a "Walzer"-drumpart included for the romantic souls among you, yeah. But enough shit written, it's a demo with both real good, intelligent and rather boring/ usual trendy elements. I think the band's label will make the band popular anyway. To get this tape before the CD arrives, send DM10 to: Martin Wickler, Westring 18, 55120 Mainz, Germany

ANCESTRAL

A tape somewhere between Death Metal and symphonic Black Metal (with choirsounds, etc.). The vocals are very weak, but I guess this is because it's just a rehearsal-recording. It's all fast, but still melodic... this seems to be a typical sign for modern Black stuff. 4 average songs are included on this promotape. Nicolas Constanty, 10, Rue De l'Eglise, 63870 Orcines, France.

ARGHOSLENT "Arsenal Of Glory"

A demo which I can recommend to people who like Black/Death Metal that is dark, with cool riffs, still with melodies, and which is far away from Northern hardcore-Black Metal riffing. Arghoslent, an American band that is around since 1990 (!), are comparable to some Grand Belial's Key-material, but the vocals are deep here. 7 songs (good sound) have found the way onto this tape, and they can be bought for \$5 only. The next release of this band is most likely an album, to be released on WOOD NYMPH, so get this demo before it's too late. Arghoslent, P.O. Box 393, Oakton, VA22124, U.S.A.

ARS MORIENDI

Typical new-styled Swedish melodic stuff... two songs of unheavy music (for me). Janne Hyttiä, Fodgetbacken 3 2tr, 14557 Norsborg, Sweden.

ASTAROTH "Vita Aeterna"

Fast professional keyboard Black Metal in the nordic style with gore (Suffocation-like !) and high pierced (Emperor-like) vocals. This is a very strange mixture, it combines all the Death and Black Metal clichés in one (sorry guys!). The sound is professional, and getting 7 studio-songs for 10 DM is really acceptable. Despite of this bad sounding review, this tape isn't that bad, but, as already said, very cliché-sounding. W. Dreisittel, Friedrichstr. 47, 95028 Hof, Germany.

BARATHRUM "Devilry"

Strange that a band like Barathrum (who already released three full-length albums) does a demotape. The music on this tape is in the typical style of the band and deserves being pressed on CD/LP format. "Devilry" is the most commercial release of the band I would say, but be sure that it's great stuff. Songs like "Angelburner" should not be missed! Get this tape for \$6.

BLACK ANGEL "Rites"

From Peru hails Black Angel, and they sent me a very professional looking demo with 4-coloured cover and a thick booklet. The intro of this tape sounded very interesting, a choir singing satanic stuff... then it's the band's turn to attack with their music, and those bastards really attack. It's primitive but harsh and sometimes very fast Black/Death Metal with a screaming blasphemous singer. You hear that this is an exotic band, 'cause they still have this ruthless feeling and atmosphere in their music. It all sounds as if this horde has written their songs in the rehearsal-room, it's so simply and just straight ahead. This tape is not recommendable for people into new sounds but for people who still like it the primitive, rough and dirty way. 4 songs + intro for \$5. Felipe Morena, Correo Central De Comas, Lima 7, Peru.

BLOOD STORM "Death By the Stormwizard"

It's very seldom to see such an impressive looking demo like this one. But let's talk about the music. It's fast merciless raw and primitive Black Metal without any compromises. If you buy this demo for \$5, then you have to stand six songs of pure mayhem. Mezzadurinus, 2756 Pratt St, Philadelphia, Pa19137, U.S.A.

BLUTTAUFE "Zeremonien des Teufels"

The band would be cool if they knew to create more original and catchy riffs, because this second demo is musically just boring. I hear that they tried to vary their Black Metal stuff (they call their music "trashing War Metal"), and those two musicians (their drummer is an "electric" one) tried to bring some new ideas into their music, but generally it sounds like a cheap version of Darkthrone and Burzum. So, there's still some more work to do... This 3-track studiodemo costs DM 10.

CRYPTIC "The Cryptogram"

A professional looking and sounding tape which features melodic Death/ Thrash Metal here. The vocals sound quite natural, no deep grunts are anything here, but they do not sound too professional yet. Cryptic managed to record 8 songs which is fine, and they have some cool riffs, but the whole result isn't anything very special... the final kick is missing to make this tape outstanding. But I hear that this band has potential. Christian Klein, Westring 30, 91462 Dachsbach, Germany

CARVING FOR VALUSIA

I'm losing my mind with releases such as this here, 'cause I can't really find words to describe such kind of melodic Metal stuff which doesn't appeal to me. Let me say it the simple but hard way: Those guys can play, but don't move me at all. It bores me to death. It has no spirit, just riffs that I heard before. It's a longplay cassette (\$7) for those who are interested. Rainer Guggenberger, Hollenstein 31, 3710 Ziersdorf, Austria

CELESTE Nature Dying

Four short-hair guys (and one with longer hair) from Finland are hiding behind

Celeste... so I do not expect something very heavy here (hehe). I wasn't wrong but I also wasn't right, 'cause this band has different styles of Metal in their repertoire... some very calm stuff with acoustic guitars, some mid-tempo (Tiamat-like) music, (fast) Black and even old-school Death Metal. It seems as if the band tries to unite as many styles as possible on their demo. The vocals rang from a normal voice to high screaming (like Impiety). This 6-tracker (studiorecording) has some good and some boring music included, but it's cool to see a band trying to bring some variety into their style. For a demo it's ok. \$5. Erkki Häntinen, Heposäkenkatu 6 c 6, 33610 Tampere, Finland.

DAWN OF RELIC "Of The Ambience..."

This is how most modern nordic Black Metal band sound. Sometimes fast, but always precise, with an aggressive voice, but always played with melodies. This band here did a good job for people who like this sort of "Black" Metal. The music has a lot of variety to offer, and some keyboards can be heard as well here and then as well. Except for a few riffs, this is not what I personally prefer to listen. This here is footage for those who think that old-school Black Metal is too primitive. Jukka Juntunen, Postiljoonintie 15, 90160 Oulu, Finland

DIABOLIC "City of the Dead"

A pure professional Death Metal inferno!!!! Yes, finally a demo that isn't a pain in my ears! Diabolic from Florida play nothing but brutal, fast and aggressive true Death Metal with no compromises. The vocals are also very dark 'n' brutal. All Death Metal fans should order this crusher now!!! (\$5 U.S.A./ \$6 world) Diabolic, PO Box 9689, Tampa, Florida 33674-9689, USA

DOOMSDAY "S.O.S."

Old-styled Metal Punk, similar to old Adolescents, D.R.L., etc... not very impressive I must say, and I'm sure that 99% of you readers do not like such music anyway. 4 songs: Hozotte, 184, rue du plessis s Bognard, 95130 Franconville, France

ECLIPSE "Promo"

Eclipse was also known as Sorcerer, and here's their first sign of life. After a boring intro, the band starts with their melodic but good Black Metal, a mixture of new Black Metal (keyboards/ melodies) and old Norwegian stuff (some of the riffs sound a bit Burzum-like). It's an "ok" job they offered us, quite good for the first step, so I hope to hear more of this band in future. One hint at the end: Throw away the synths, you don't need them. 10 DM: Bael, Brunnegasse 5, 97297 Waldhüttelbrunn, Germany

ERISKIGAL "Of A Star Unborn"

First of all, the sound on this tape lacks of heaviness, but musically it's good fast stuff in the vein of old Rotting Christ, nordic Black Metal, melodic Metal and even Thrash Metal. 6 songs can be heard here, available for \$5. For address please take a look at Goatfire.

EVEMASTER "In Thine Majesty"

One more attempt to create Black Metal... but Evemaster are not really disappointing me. Their music sounds a bit "forced" (when it comes to get an evil sound), yes, but their mid-tempo Black Metal is much better than the ones from most other demos that I find in my letterbox. By the way, the 3 songs which are included on this tape, are not "pure" Black, 'cause those guys also try to sing (which sounds horrible, but this doesn't

happen too often), etc. For a start we should not shout at the band. But there's still a long way to go until it's time to record a real album. Riffs, arrangements and drums have to be improved. \$5: Majurinkatu 12 c 105, 02600 Espoo, Finland

EVIL INCARNATE

Warning! This tape here contains true Death Metal, and is brutal as hell. It sounds like Sadistic Intent (especially the vocals), Autopsy, etc. Four skullcrushing songs cost \$5, so real lunatics into dark Death Metal have to contact following address: Evil Incarnate, P.O. Box 1184, Lake Villa, IL 60064, U.S.A.

EYE SEA "beLIEve"

Fast and aggressive Death Metal that will not disappoint fans of Cannibal Corpse, Demigod, and stuff like that. 4 songs. Tolga Kolburan, Pyramontstraße 5, 28207 Bremen, Germany

FLAUROS "The Myth..."

Average northern Black Metal without any highlights. Some good riffs would help making this 5-song studiodemo better. The presentation of this tape is cool. \$5. Sinkkonen, Poretie 10 as 2, 80160 Joensuu, Finland

FOREST OF PROUD SLAVS

Dramatic fast nordic Black Metal with evil synth, like old Graveland-stuff (but not that professional/good), mixed with fast melodic riffs. It's only an one-song demo of an one-man band, but it's a long (monotonous) song, so \$3 is not too much for this tape. Nazgul, P.O. Box 73, 23-400 Bilgoraj, Poland

FOREVER WINTER "In Metal We Trust"

These three guys do not really look like "Metal" with their short haircut, but I shouldn't judge a book by its cover, should I? To sound like real Metal they have refused any synths. Musically it's somewhere between ordinary Black nordic Metal, old-school Metal and Punk, and it's not bad what these guys managed to record (except for the fast parts which are boring). They are still far away from deserving a record deal (many bands who already have one don't deserve it as well), but some tunes are already cool and hopefully prove that this band is able to improve in future. This demo includes 6 songs. (\$5) Kimmo Liuksiala, Keskisenkatu 6 G 40, 33710 Tampere, Finland

FROZEN SHADOWS "Empires De Glace"

This is the right stuff for die-hard Emperor fans, pure old symphonic Black Metal with an abyssic atmosphere. It's of course just a demotape (5 songs), but it's enjoyable for people into this style of Black Metal. It's a pity that there was no contact address included in the booklet, all I know is that this band is from the French-speaking part of Canada.

GAUDERBEC "Release"

Greek bands usually play good and professional Metal stuffs, and so does Gauderbec... they play very professional, but I'm not too much into their music. Ok, some riffs are cool and the band seems to put a lot of hard work into this tape, but the songs aren't perfect yet... there are still enough too ordinary parts included. Musically it's a mixture of usual Heavy Metal and typical Greek stuff, no very exciting I must say, especially not the fast stuff. Michael Sirigos, 172 Thessalonikis str., Piraeus, Greece.

GLORY "Never Again"

A very professional demo (coloured cover, with booklet) from Italy. The band admits sounding like a mixture of *Naglfar* and *Dissection*, so I was warned before putting this tape into my deck. And *Glory*, they play that melodic Black/Death Metal style like the mentioned bands, sometimes very fast, sometimes very slow and calm. It's not my type of music, but if you like this style, then you will be satisfied with these 30 minutes of well-produced music. *Enrico Pajaro, Via Montegrande 9, 35031 Abano Terme (PD), Italy.*

GOATFIRE "Adorned In Black Blood"

Black Metal from Italy. This is only a rehearsal demo as it seems, without bassguitar (this is a two-men-band), but it's should be enough for me to get a good imagination of *Goatfire*. The vocals are the weakest point here, they do not sound too powerful, and the guitars are not loud enough. The rest however is satisfying. Especially the opening riff of the titlesong is cool. For an introduction of the band to the underground this 3-song tape is ok, the songmaterial is good, but the soundquality is too poor. Next time you guys should at least try to record with the help of a 4-tracker. \$5 to: *Solieri Nicola, Via India 73, 41100 Modena, Italy.*

GOTHONY "Hidden Thoughts"

Standard melodic/harmonic Metal with a Black Metal voice (sometimes also with a sung voice) and a melancholic touch. Three songs. *Mikko Toivonen, Vakkatie 9b, 00430 Helsinki, Finland.*

GÖTTERDÄMMERUNG "Sturmgot"

In the past I couldn't stand this band's music, but this third demo is certainly an improvement. Musically it's more violent and powerful than it used to be. It's a cocktail of Death/Thrash/Black and even industrial (thanks to the computerdrums), and it's listenable this time. Not many bands play like *Götterdämmerung* (a one man band by the way)... What still gets on my nerves is the fast changing of riffs, it's sometimes just too hectically. What I like is the statement on the demo that "Metal is supposed to be raw and heavy music"... that's the correct attitude! For 10 DM you can get this 3-song tape to your house. *Werner "Nyar" Linke, Klapp 4, 55741 Fronhofen, Germany.*

GRAVEWORM Demo '97

Yes, this is the band who also released an album in 1997, and this demo is in the same vein as the CD. Melancholic and symphonic Metal music with deep vocals, very professional but also commercial-sounding. Perhaps some music that you can play when an unknown lady enters your bedroom... *Stefan Flori, Löffelweg 6, 39030 Gals, Italy.*

GRUFF "Daze Your Mind"

A mixture of new *Paradise Lost* and modern standard (wanna be) DeathMetal is *Gruff's* 4 song demo. Not my style of music at all. 8 DM. *Frank Wichert, Alter Postweg 49, 21075 Hamburg, Germany.*

GUIDANCE OF SIN "Soul Disparity"

It won't take too long time until this band gets a proper record deal, 'cause they sound very professional and skilled. Members of *A Canorous Quintet* and ex-*Sanguinary*-vocalist joined forces to form this new band. It's very serious sounding Metal-stuff, with good riffs and some keyboards in the background. This band can't deny their Swedish origin, but they are not kitschy sounding, it's all sounding serious, a bit like *Katatonian* (but not so doomy and gothic). It's mid-tempo melodic Metal with deep dark vocals and a good atmosphere through keys and (acoustic)-guitarriffs. By the way, the band calls their music melodic Death

Metal. The cover of this demo is a printed one with lyrics, and the four songs are very well-produced, there's nothing to complain. \$5? *Jesper, Löfgren, Hallonvägen 60, 19635 Kungälv, Sweden.*

HELLFIRE "Tombstone"

These guys can play, but their songmaterial is not strong enough. It's a mixture of Speed and Heavy Metal, with some *Slayer* or *Metallica* kind of riffs, but they are not overwhelming me. The band has no real energy to offer, at least not on this tape here, something is still missing. 4 songs, audioproduction. \$5. No address.

HIDDEN IN THE FOG

"Into The Moonlight's Cold Embrace"

Here you'll get Black Metal the way it is popular right now, with keyboards, grim vocals, a general dark atmosphere... The production is very good, the music is acceptable as well, it's all well-arranged. Just the riffs are sometimes too ordinary and not very individual-sounding. 6 songs are included, and if you like music in the vein of *Emperor* and bands like that, you can send 10 DM or \$7 to obtain this demo. *S. Koné, Friedhofstr. 27, 06469 Nachterstedt, Germany.*

HORRID "Promo"

The sound is messy, but I can hear that this band plays brutal and dark Death Metal with deep vocals. 8 songs were recorded for this tape. Qualitywise it's hard to whether the band is great or not, because it's hard to identify single riffs. If you think you can find out what *Horrid* is all about, send \$5 to: *Phumari Mario, Via dell' Ongaro 44, 21010 Cardano al campo, (VA) Italy.*

HOSTILE "Behind The Eyes"

One more Swedish band that sounds typical Swedish. Even if some of the riffs are really not bad (musically the band is slightly above the Swedish average), the vocals do not appeal to my musical taste at all. 5 songs, good sound. \$5 to: *Asplind, Bergvägen 6, 790 20 Grycksbo, Sweden.*

HOT STOVE "Murder"

Death Metal with hardcore influences when it comes to some rhythms. 4 songs that I am not going to listen to again. \$5. *Marly Johnson, 1719 Memorial Dr., Pekin, IL 61554 1837, U.S.A.*

IN THA UMBRA

"Of the Singing Dusk..."

I'm not too fond of this tape I must say, because the band plays a sort of Death Metal which is melodic but straight ahead... that's not what I like. Some riffs are very good indeed, others do not erect me too much. But it all sounds professional, and the (LP?) tape even looks very professional with its golden print on green ground. This tape (7 songs) is limited to 300 numbered copies, so if you like to check this Portuguese band, you shouldn't wait too long. \$5. *Hibernia, P.O. Box 127, 8500 Portimão, Portugal.*

MAGGOT OF PUTREFACTION

"Hell's Eaters"

They simply don't surrender, haha, but I guess they are not taking their band serious as well. On this tape I must say that they have improved, ...they still sound amateurish and the vocals still sound, well...let's say silly (but mad!), but they have some good riffs, ideas and rhythms created (that are worth being worked out). It's all somewhere between Death Metal, old-Metal and old Punk. Hmm, what else should I say? They should work more serious, so that I one day can recommend their demo to the readers. For now... it's still not more than a garage-band with a taste of humour (playing with fun). *Peter Ott, Gutenbergstr. 6/P004, 89073 Ulm, Germany.*

MANEGARM "Ur Nattvindar"

The rhythms and arrangements are northern Black Metal-like, but the melodies sound very Swedish-like, mixed with some folk parts and orchestral arrangements. Even some cool violins can be heard. I don't know how to label this band's style... it's more like modern Metal, with a modern spirit of the late 90s. So, even if this band offered a good demo (I guess they will get a deal soon), it's not the stuff I like to go wild at. 3 long songs are on this tape, and can be ordered for \$5. *Jonas Almqvist, Stegelbacksg. 12 B, 761 45 Norrtälje, Sweden.*

MALEFICARUM Demo'97

A band that plays brutal Death Metal, but in a more variable way. In the 8 songs that were recorded, the band tried to combine both disharmonic, wicked and harmonic riffing, and both slow and fast rhythms. Just the deep brutal vocals never change. The tape is good, only some of the mid-tempo parts have strange rhythms that almost sound like hardcore, but this does not happen very often, fortunately. *Maleficarum* consist of ex-members of *Iconoclast*, *Excidium* and *Angel Death*, so we have some experienced musicians playing here. This studiotape gets mailed out for \$6. *Caralla G., via Perugia, 25-86039, Termoli (CB), Italy.*

MORNINGSTAR "Promo'97"

Great powerful stuff by old Finnish band *Morningstar* here... the vocals are not growled, but not sung either, and the music is a mixture of traditional Thrash/Heavy Metal, mixed with *Celtic Frost*, *Running Wild*, etc. kind of influences. You can hear that those guys have made some musical experiences during all the years of existence, and this resulted in a strong demo. If you don't believe what I'm writing here, then check out the 3-song studiodemo for \$5. *Ari Honkonen, Kuusirinne 3 B 13, 44150 Äänekoski, Finland.*

MURDER RAPE - ... and Evil Returns

It's strange that a band like *Murder Rape*, who already have some albums out, mails out demotapes, but anyway... They play a doomy and abyssic but still melodic Black Metal style, sometimes it's similar to *Rotting Christ's* way of playing. 3 coolsongs in a good sound quality are available for US\$5 at the band's *Evil Horde*. *P.O. Box 4912, Curitiba - PR 82530 - 970, Brazil.*

MYTHOPOEIA "Haaramonia In..."

The band claims to play "Mystical Doom Metal", but you should also know that their Doom stuff is based on harmonic Death Metal (slow-doublebass, deep voice, etc.). It's a good tape, especially the cover (printed, with photos, etc.) is very good looking. And the price is fantastic, because paying only \$4 for eight songs is indeed value for money. *Pavel Kusniarik, Blatenská 12, 307 02 Plzen, Czech Republic.*

NORDWIND

These four warriors of *Nordwind* play... yeah, Black Metal (what did you think?), fast, melodic, with synths and a dirty voice. You hear that this is Black Metal made in 1997, it's the style that seems to be popular right now, where real guitarriffs aren't important anymore... only managing to create a mighty atmosphere seems to be the main goal here. The tape (5 songs + intro) has a good and clear sound, and gets sold 10DM/\$6. *Zagan, Stadtweg 4, 87734 Benningen, Germany.*

OBRUNCACTION "40 days of Butchering"

Hectical and technical Death/Thrash mayhem here... sounds like *Morbid Angel*, *Demolition Hammer*, *Molested*, etc. when it comes to the music. The vocals are a bit

weak though on this 6-song livetape, but for the rest it's very well-played. The band splitted up unfortunately, but you still can get this tape for \$6/DM10 at the bassist's address: *Maurice Sas, Burg de Rooster 28, 3319 CC Dordrecht, Holland.*

PAGAN WINTER "Demo '97"

Nordic-styled Black Metal... fast, melodic but still raw. For a demo it's ok, it's all a live-recording. I think that this band has the weapons to improve to one of the better German Black Metal bands, in case they don't start to adopt all the modern cliché Black Metal elements that seem to dominate the commercial market nowadays. For now they sound like a band who has only one goal... to sound like the old Norwegian bands, which is no bad thing in my opinion. Good riffs exist without doubts. *Machosias, Blumenstr. 23, 66538 Neukirchen/ Saar, Germany.*

POHAKKA

"Minä kävelen vetten päällä"

This sounds like *Burzum* playing slowest Doom Metal... very cold and depressive music. The vocals are spoken and deep. Only one (very long) song is included on this tape. *Melkonkatu 1 C 58, 00210 Helsinki, Finland.*

PSYCHOSIS "Episode Of Existence"

Old-school (well, I mean early 90s) Thrash/Death Metal, but a melodic one. Nothing that excites me very much, but some good riffs are existing, and the band is not sounding like a powerless Swedish horde. 9 songs. *Adam Losiak, Ul. Mickiewicza 28/56, 38-405 Krosno, Poland.*

RANDOM VIOLENCE

"Summoned To Slay"

Take a look at the title, and notice that this is an Australian band... what would you expect? At least not a band like *In Flames*, right? *Random Violence* are not in the fast-playing Australian tradition, but their slow music is heavy and violent as well. Mid-tempo Death Metal with dark brutal vocals is what their style is all about. These recordings are from 1995, so I don't know how the band sounds today. They are not yet ready for a record deal if you ask me (they are not bad though, no way!), but if the band improves when it comes to the music's quality, then we should look forward to hearing this band. For all those who want to order this 4-song studiotape, should "Enjoy the Violence and keep it heavy" as it is written in the booklet. *Random Violence, P.O. Box 77, Doncaster, Melbourne, VIC, 3108 Australia.*

RAVENTHRONE

Lord Pazuzu returns in a Metal mood, like in the early days of *Summoning*. But *Raventhro* sounds much more modern, with more keyboards and not so many by guitars dominated parts. The medieval touch remained, and that's where this band is best at. It's still too early for a real album, the six songs which are included are all a touch too simple-styled, the guitarwork could be more complex if you ask me (remember the old days of *Summoning!*). But for the first sign of existence this is a cool demo (produced by *Pungent Stench's* *Martin Schirenc*). Interested people contact: *Raventhro, P.O. Box 525, a-1061 Vienna, Austria.*

REPENT "On your Knees"

Tamed Thrash Metal with awful vocals which sound a bit like *M.O.D.*! It's a pity, because the music isn't that bad at all (cool riffs at parts). 6 songs/10 DM. *Philip Rath, Am Wasserturm 26, 91207 Lauf, Germany.*

SADORASS "In The Chill of..."

Fast Black Metalcore, very primitive and straight ahead. 5 songs, for 10 DM (?). *Sadorass, Schäferkamp 12, 38226 Salzgitter, Germany.*

SKYFORGER "Semigalls Warchant"

Did you hear any bands from Latvia yet? I didn't, so I'm surprised with this demo, because Skyforger are a good band who play a style of nordic but tamed "Black/Pagan Metal" with good melodies. The vocals are a mixture of Rob Darken (Graveland) and Attila (Tormentor), musically it's more mid-tempo stuff. The tape (studiorecording, with printed cover + lyrics) contains 7 songs, so the price of \$5 needn't be justified. What I don't like at this demo is the use of the swastika.... but it's the band's decision. SKYFORGER, P.O. Box 77, Riga LV - 1047, Latvia

SOMBER SERENITY "Swallowed..."

This band sounds like old Crematory - "light" with a touch of melodic (so-called) Black Metal ... you'll hear a lot of melodies (single-guitar tones), calmer parts (acoustic), deep voice, etc. It's more "tamed" stuff, not bad but not good either, just usual. Not really music that usually gets much supported in this mag. If you like to order this demo (5 songs, studiorecording) anyway, then you have to send 10 DM (?) to: Stefan Bolz, Guardianstr. 104, 81375 München, Germany

SOMNIFERE "The Flight"

More melodic Metal... this time it's more straight ahead stuff with deceep vocals and sweet female voices which should awake some emotions. Good soli and cool acoustic breaks can be heard as well. Hmm, it's a all not bad, but it's still not my favourite music. 4 songs. Carsten Behring, Gabelsbergerstr. 39, 67551 Worms, Germany

SUMMUM MALUM "Rehearsaltape"

There's no info on this tape, no address, nothing. All I can say is that this horde plays

hateful nordic Black Metal, sometimes fast, sometimes mid-paced with some powerful riffs and vocals that almost sound like the ones on Gorgoroth's first demo. It's an average band I would say, but if you like to listen to something more malicious, then keep your eyes open for this band.

SUPERIOR "Metamorphosis"

Superior prove that Black Metal still can be played very aggressively... This debut-demo offers very fast Black Metal in the vein of Mayhem, Darkthrone and probably Dark Funeral. It's not perfect yet, but if the band improves, then we will cross their path again in future, I'm sure about that. Only two songs are included, but at least I can say that they will satisfy all die-hard Black Metallers. Leviathan Forge, Tegelbruksväg 9, 582 53 Linsköping, Sweden.

THORNSHROUD "Visions Of Death"

"6 songs that will take you back to the 80s great Speed and Thrash Metal" says the flyer for this demo, so I immediately had to check out this tape... After I listened to it, I was more or less disappointed, even if "Visions of Death" is good Death/thrash, it didn't take me back into the last decade. Weak are the vocals, and Ben, the band's guitarist knows this as well ... he also added that "the demo was a sort of a rush job" in his letter. New songs are already written, but due to lack of money the band isn't able to record them yet. \$4 (US) or \$9 (world) for "Visions of Death". Ben Jordan, R.D. 4 Box 351, Latrobe, PA 15650, U.S.A.

THYRING "Hednaland"

One more band to salute the Vikings. Thyring play a more folkloric and emotional style of Viking Metal, with some keyboards in the back. It's simple and acceptable music.

I think the band should try to improve their style to attain more attention, but what the hell... the band already signed to HAMMERHEART Records as I heard. I don't think that it's clever to record an album now if you really want to offer some great quality.... at least not with the 5 songs that are included on the demo which I received. The band is cool, but still not cool enough for a real album. Wait and see. For the demo send \$5: Kimmy Sjölund, Akervägen 5E, 135 53 Tyresö, Sweden

TUNRIDA "Astral Majesty"

"Astral Majesty" is the second demo of this young Finnish horde, and they play new - styled melodic Black Metal, with good use of keyboards and interesting drum rhythms. Luckily they know how to use melodies without losing the "blackness" in their music. Sometimes there are too much synths used in their music, but all in all they offer three acceptable songs which were recorded on 32 tracks (!). Add \$1 outside Europe: Seth Peltonen, Juvantie 4 b 18, 51900 Juva, Finland

URN "Promo'97"

Some Barathrum -members (not including Demonos Sova) formed a new band with the simple name Urn to bring us nothing but very primitive and evil Black Metal. Musically it's not far away from Barathrum's style, it's just not that bass-pregnant, and more primitive when it comes to the riffs. It's also more old-school Black/Death sounding, and very wicked in its expression. The vocals are truly possessed, I like it very much. 4 songs are on this promo, and you should get to hear them for five fuckin' bucks. It's good to hear such kind of demos, I wish I'd get more of them. Sulphur, Ahmantic 24 as. 2, 70400 Kuopio, Finland.

WINTERBLUT

"Im Lande des Mittenachtsberges"

Uuuu, this is really amateurish. Ok, this is a demo only, but this band has terrible timing problems. They play doomy Black Metal, and we all know that slow music isn't easy to play when it comes to the timing. When the band speeds up, it isn't all much better though. The best thing for the band is to keep on rehearsing before you send out more demos, 'cause "Im Lande..." is not recommendable yet. Those who think I'm talking bullshit should order this tape at: Oliver Heide, Schloßstrasse 22, 90607 Rückersdorf, Germany

witchmaster

"Thrash ör Die"

Some Profanum-members formed Witchmaster to salute the old Thrash Metal times, and they did an acceptable job. But the tape's sound is very weak (rehearsal), and the songtitles (like "Possessed By Satan", "Satanic Metal Attack") are as unoriginal as most of the riffs. For a demo I can accept this, but if Witchmaster decide to go for a real album, then more originality is needed in order not to be counted to all the Scandinavian old-school Rip Off bands. This tape (7 songs) is expensive (\$7), but if you want it, send your bucks to Geryon (for address see at the METAL PRESS-page).



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Heavy Metal Drill Is

Unlike most new Heavy Metal bands I can say that METALUCIFER doesn't sound "old-styled" but really old, as if they recorded their "Heavy Metal Drill" album about 15 years ago. Unlike most new Heavy Metal bands, there isn't a commercial background behind this Japanese three-piece.... you simply hear and feel that their music is coming straight from their hearts and spirits. And, last but not least, these guys have the necessary background and knowledge in order to play honest traditional Heavy Metal rock with intelligent riffs and arrangements.

They've released one MCD ("Heavy Metal Hunter") and one full-length CD ("Heavy Metal Drill") so far, and especially the last mentioned opus features the best traditional Heavy Metal stuff that I heard for quite some time. Excellent guitar riffs and killer-sole that force me to go down on my knees and play "airguitars", haha. The influences that I can hear are from ancient IRON MAIDEN (DiAnno-era), JUDAS PRIEST, WITCHFYNDE and even VENOM, pure NWoBHM/ European Metal styled stuff with class. The vocals are not growled but really sung. Well, you hear at the vocals that those guys emerge from Japan, but that doesn't matter much, at least not to me. METALUCIFER consists of (ex-)members of GORE and SABBAT, so my interview-partner was again Gezol, who already answered the SABBAT interview in this issue. But in METALUCIFER he baptized himself with the name "Gezolucifer"... to fit even better into the cult of this hard rockin' force. Let him do the talking.

Welcome to the hell of METALUCIFER...

'Eah, Sabbat is existing now since 1984, but we already played in different bands since 1981. Well, Metalucifer is very young (but the members are old ones). Metalucifer was born in 1995, Metalucifer is Gezol's solo-project. Why I started with Metalucifer? When I started Sabbat, I both liked barbaric brutal Metal like Black/Death/ Thrash Metal and pure traditional Heavy Metal. I chose to play brutal Metal with Sabbat, to become ultimately extreme in the Metal scene. The youth is more violent and merciless, I think you know what I mean. But I kept listening to traditional Heavy Metal at the same time. The current brutal Metal scene is full of big bands, but traditional Metal is quite poor, and the media is full of fuckin' alternative shit, like grunge, Industrial. I feel very provoked by this situation. There is a word that says "Know old stuff, realize the new one" in Japanese, so I've started Metalucifer. Its roots and its simplicity is its strength. I think the evolution of traditional pure Heavy Metal is already finished since the mid 80s (humm, I don't really think so...Metal can be even heavier than it used to be, don't you think so? -ed.). We should bring only the best mix that fits to Metal music, can you see? Sorry for my panic English.

I think I wanna play live with Metalucifer as a band, but now I'm very bsy with Sabbat. So, Metalucifer's plans for live gigs are not existing for the prescence.'

Is METALUCIFER a "fun-band" or is it something serious?

'Metalucifer is my fun band, but it's no joke-band. I love Metal, all music and bands, and I'm



always working seriously.'

Elizaveat left SABBAT years ago, but he plays in METALUCIFER. So, has he retired from Black/Death Metal or will he return to SABBAT one day?

'Elizaveat never retired. He is listening to some brutal bands like Pungent Stench, Behemoth, Mayhem, etc. ... he was just tired of playing live, so he has dropped it. Sabbat is well known in Japan, so he had a mental pressure. I think his return is impossible, except for some "guest appearances" or some helps.'

Was it easy to find the right members for METALUCIFER?

'Elizaveat is Sabbat's old guitarist, Elizabigore, the other guitarist, is Elizaveat's brother. So it was very easy. Elizaveat had some experiences with playing drums. So I asked him "Can you do play

drums for Metalucifer? Do you want to play?" His answer was "Of course, I wanna play. It's a dream that my drum-playing will be released on CD!". I learned to play guitar by Elizaveat, a bit.... so, he's a kind of master of mine. Elizaveat has also learned from his brother, Elizabigore! Elizabigore is the root in my root. The brothers know me well of course, moreover. We have been together alive in Metal for a long time. They also know a lot about other music beside other music. It's great for us to continue to play the 80s Metal. They know the meaning of 80s Metal very well, and in addition, they are also playing in a Hard Rock band in our area.'

Who's the Metal warrior on the cover of your CDs? Beside that... there is a wall full of LP-covers of unknown Heavy Metal bands on your covers... are these your favourite LPs?

Masaki Tachi, 1056, Hoshikawa, Kumana, Mie, 511, Japan

Watching You!!!



'The Metal warrior? Oh, yes, his name is Neal Tanaka. I'm not a big collector of rare LPs, hehe, but he is. The records that are put on the wall are from Neal Tanaka's collection. Neal Tanaka is my master. He's the top collector in Japan, or even in the world. I don't know about these LPs in detail. We simply picked up Neal's favourite Knight and Horse covers and comical, obscure and bad sense covers. He has almost every rare and popular rare Heavy Metal LPs/EPs, and he's also collecting melodic Black/ Death/ Doom stuff. He is a monster! The LP-wall cover was my dream cover. I myself am listening to "B-class" bands which aren't that big, but good is good. I like a lot of German Metal bands, like Wallop, Zenith, Carrie, Bloody Six, Noise Hunter, Brain Fever, etc.'

How came the idea to make a song like "Heavy Metal Hunter" with these cool lyrics (with all the songtitles and bandnames)?

'Aha, you really think it's great, without joking? Do you know Lone Ranger from the USA who released "Metal Rapsody" On MEGAFORCE REcords? The song is played with fuckin' rap music, and a lot of Metal bands' names were sung to it. I was unpleasant with it, why didn't they sing this in support of more Metal riffs? Ok, I should take only the idea from that song, and make it all greater. It became "Heavy Metal Hunter"!

This song's subject is ... Heavy Metal Mania record hunting! My friend Neal Tanaka likes albums with the word "Metal". When he buys records in shops, he certainly looks at the titles that are printed on the backcover. If there is the word "Metal", he immediately buys this record.... even if it is a boring album. The "Metal" word is his rule!!!

Any new songs written for the third album?

'Yes, I'm currently writing some new songs, but I'm also very busy with Sabbat, so the next Metalucifer album will be out in about four years, sorry. The album title will be "Heavy Metal Chainsaw"!!! Don't steal this title, guys!'

On your flyer you've written NWOBHM + Euro Metal with "Japanesque English".... this sounds like a parody to me. Don't you like your English? To me it sounds cultic...

'I learned English on my own, so I can't speak English, its pronunciation, very well. A lot of Japanese musicians have this problem. So "Japanese English" is the meaning of bad English. It's a true parody like you say.'

Does METALUCIFER sell well? Better than SABBAT???

'To be honest, the sales are better than for Sabbat. Metalucifer has received very good reactions and comments. But, anyway, we are an underground band... The CD was sold 500 times in Japan and overseas.'

Traditional heavy Metal starts to become popular again, and new bands start to play it... do you like this new trend/ movement? Do you like bands like HAMMERFALL, IRON RAINBOW, etc...? Or is METALUCIFER the only real force, haha?

'I think it's a good thing, traditional Heavy Metal is the root for all Heavy music-styles. People are tired of alternative, grunge, rap and pop Metal, trend Black Metal. I know both Hammerfall and Iron Rainbow. Do you know Greek Marauder and Power Crude? (Hmmm, no... shit!!! -ed.) It's great! Also White Skull from Italy. We shouldn't forget the great works of Judas Priest, Iron

Maiden, Manowar,... (of course we won't forget their timeless masterpieces -ed.). They are ultimate and the origin. Most of the new bands need more originality and strength when it comes to the compositions, I think.'

How old are the members of your band? Do you accept when 16-year-old boys start to play traditional Heavy Metal now after they got tired of most Black Metal stuffs?

'Ah, I know that a lot of Black Metal guys like normal traditional Heavy Metal bands. It's good for me. But to compose Heavy Metal isn't easy, these guys have to study even more. The most important matter is the Heavy Metal spirit. Our ages? Elizaveat and me are 32-years-old, Elizabigore is 35-years-old. The other Sabbat guys are 28-years-old.'

Latest news I know: Bill Andrews (yes, the man whose drumming can be heard on DEATH's "Leprosy" and MASSACRE's "From Beyond") will join METALUCIFER in Spring'98, and will record some new tunes for a Split 7"EP with another traditional Heavy Metal act. Look out for that one!! Also a Mini-album is planned in future.

After I was listening to the "Heavy Metal Drill" CD again and again, and after I noticed that its distribution is not the best at all (especially outside Japan), and that not many people have even heard about this cool band/ release at all, I thought that it's time to give those Japanese Metal slaves some extra support. So, in the end, I decided to re-release their great album for the international market. The re-released version has a different cover, and the song "Bloody Coffuntess" got replaced by a never before heard version of the old METALUCIFER song called "Monster of the Earth".

The interview here was done before this idea came into my mind, just to inform you. Don't be afraid... TALES OF THE MACABRE will always remain uncommercial and independent!!! Every maniac who is interested in this album can get it for \$15 (CD without plastic box)/ \$20 (CD incl. plastic box...sorry guys, but German postage rates are killer!!!) or DM 23 (for Germany). I think these are fair prices.

If the first edition of "Heavy Metal Drill" sells out, then a Vinyl version will be made for all die-hard collectors (like myself, hehe!). But only very few copies, only for real crazy dudes!



The tradition of presenting Czech Metal forces to you continues here with an underground Black/ Death Metal called ASGARD from Brno, which is also the hometown of ROOT and AMON (GOETH). Per incident I got to hear the cool but old demo "Cachticka Pani Hraběnka Bathory" which I like very much... a traditional Death Metal orgy with a "black" feeling and dark vocals. To check out if the band is still alive and terrorizing all "Nabozne Svine" (Czech readers know what I mean... with their black art, I contacted the band. Vocalist Mira replied to my surprise, and in addition he gave me the chance to sacrifice my ears to a brandnew professional demotape. It starts with a dark old horror movie-like intro, followed by the opening song "Obeti Cirkve" which is a straight ahead Death Metal neckbreaker with old-styled riffs and a dark atmosphere. All lyrics are sung in Czech language, like on the old demo. The new demo forces me to bang my head through five songs of the same quality. It's a tape of old but good news... Check out the following conversation which I had with the blasphemous tongue of ASGARD

"Cachticka..." is the only release I know from ASGARD, so please tell us about the whole "demographic" of your band. When did it all start for you?

'The band Asgard started about 10 years ago, when I was a young teenager. We couldn't play, but I felt that Black Metal is the only way for me. We made our first demo "Ride To Devil", but due to the bad sound quality we don't sell it anymore. After that we had some major personal problems and the band didn't play for two years. In 1995 we recorded our second demo "Cachticka...". It is a historical story about the countless Bathory and her bloody acts which is packed into a Black Metal style.'

Yes, and after that you released your new demo, have you forgotten that?? But nevermind, I at least noticed it, haha... To me, Asgard's music seems to be very inspired by the sound of AMON (GOETH) and old ROOT... do you agree? Especially your vocals sound like the ones from "Dr.Fe". Do you know those Czech veterans?

'Root and Amon are very good friends of us. We shared the rehearsalroom with Amon, and Lada from Amon now also plays in Asgard. But I think that my style is different from Robin "Dr.Fe" 's style... but that's my opinion.'

What about new stuff?

'Now we have a new demo called "Asgard". The music is speedier and more aggressive than the "Cachticka..." tape, but it isn't any Norwegian styled stuff. It is old school Death Metal, 80s styled. The lyrics are about horror acts of the holy inquisition in medieval times. Now we are making a new program with a historical theme about king Stack and his damned family in the same style.'

Did you know that a band called ASGARD already released an album years ago? Do you care about it?

'Yes, I know it, they are a Thrash or Heavy Metal band from Italy (Italy? Hmm... I just know Astaroth. I thought Asgard were Dutch... or were there two of them?? -ed.). But only we are the true dark black Asgard!'

Any new Czech bands you can recommend? Do you support each other?

'We have a lot of friends at Czech bands and we support each other. It is the matter of course, because the underground is our life, our world. We aren't any commercial shit!'

Some names would have been cool at the end, but what the hell... ASGARD's tape is available for \$6 or DM 10 (including postage) which is not too cheap, but for this price you'll get a studiotape with good sound. Check out the tape in case you're interested in this band after this interview.

Write to: Mira Horejsk, Zahradnikova 24, 602 00 Brno, Czech Republic

VADER

The name VADER stands for brutal and aggressive Death Metal, and not many bands perform it with such an intensity like these Polish gladiators. On the last VADER tour, I had the chance to talk a bit with frontman Peter before he was drawn to the tour-bus which was ready to hit the road.

Peter started to talk about their newest album when we started our chat...

The new album "Black To The Blind" is not a revolution in our style, it's pretty much in the same vein as before, just a usual evolution of our style, a bit faster, but not fast all the way.

What makes you sticking so to Death Metal? I mean, so many bands wimped out, but not VADER...

Death Metal is just a name. We had started in 1983, but we had to wait to record the first album in 1992, so a lot of people thought we are a new band, born in the age of the Death Metal boom. As already said, Death Metal is just a name... we play pretty fast and brutal, that's probably why we are called like that. In the past, Celtic Frost for example were first called a Thrash Metal band, then a Death Metal band, and now a lot of people think the old Celtic Frost is true Black Metal, hehe. These are just names. I think the term Death Metal is taken from the first Possessed album, and Onslaught, ...that's why the name is taken nowadays for fast, brutal and pretty evil music... We are not going to change our style just because we also listen to other music now, Death Metal is still our favoured music, so Death until the end. Vader is destined to play brutal music, and it's my life since the beginning of our existence. 'De Profundis' was for me a perfect mixture of SLAYER and MORBID ANGEL...

Yeah, I agree.... Slayer is an influence for all the brutal bands as they started to combine Heavy Metal with Punkrock, just playing it faster, more simple and more straight ahead, with an aggressive kind of singing... and it's the same with Vader, we have the same kind of emotions, solos...

...For example the last song on the "De Profundis"-CD sounds like a song from SLAYER's "Hell Awaits" album...

It's a pretty old song... I created it in 1985, but we used to put this song on the "Necrolost" demo in 1989, (now re-released on the "Reborn In Chaos" CD -ed.). It's one of the oldest song ever from Vader, I just changed some arrangements and added some new elements to the song for the album. The beginning is very heavy, and yes, it's pretty much in the Slayer style.

On your "Future Of The Past", you even recorded a coverversion of an old DEPECHE MODE song... is this a sign for the band's flexibility of your personal musical tastes?

It was a new idea to do that one. When we recorded "De Profundis" in the studio, our drummer got the idea to record an absolutely different cover of absolutely different music. One month before we started to record the "De Profundis" album, we played live in a city in Poland, and people asked us to play a SAMAEL song, but we hadn't practiced any before, so we just played this riff from the Depeche Mode song, just for fun, and a lot of people liked it, but they didn't even know that it was Depeche Mode, haha Then in the studio, we tried it again... and we recorded it on

one take, we just played it one time, just the one emotion, no repeats. And now, I'm very surprised, it's a kind of hit in Poland, I never thought that Vader is able to record a hit (laughing). I changed the lyrics of the song which are pretty dark now, and it's a kind of trick, because in Poland we get a lot of trendy shit, like radio-stations, etc. and they liked this song, just because it is Depeche Mode, nobody cares about the lyrics.... they are really dark, and the meaning is completely different.'

Do DEPECHE MODE know about your version?

I don't know, I hope so, haha. I like this band, even if it's not a Metal band, but they play what they feel, and that's great.'

Yeah, I also enjoy some of their tunes to be honest... How is the situation in Poland for you? Is the popularity of VADER in Poland as strong as in other countries?

Oh, we have a big position in Poland, I suppose we are the most popular Death Metal band here for years. The sales are big in our country, really. Hmmm, let me think... we sold 20.000 copies of "De Profundis" in Poland, and in other countries we sold about 10.000 copies if I'm right. Mostly in Germany, Austria and Czech Republic. Our new label is doing great work for us. They still need some time to build up their distribution, but they're a lot better than EARACHE was...

...You're not satisfied with their work?...

No no. I mean, they helped us a lot, it was the biggest chance for us back when we signed, but their promises were much bigger, haha. They didn't believe in us, we just recorded an album for them, and that's it. It's still a problem to buy our debut album in Europe and in the States,... everywhere. I don't know why, a lot of people are asking for it!'

But you got money from EARACHE, yes?

Forget about it. The first money we got was from our German label. The Englishmen in EARACHE still think we have to pay them, because the expenses were soooo big... but they didn't care about the distribution, I don't know why.'

You deal with many labels, so it is a sign for not being satisfied with them?

It's different. For example, REPULSE from Spain is a pretty Death Metal-like label, and they just asked us if they are allowed to release this "Sothis" mini-album. It was first only planned for the Polish market, but people from outside Poland asked for it, so REPULSE released this MCD, it just was one record-deal. REPULSE love this kind of music from their hearts, and they helped us a lot with this CD as it got distributed in South-America, etc. which is very cool.'

What's the connection between VADER and IMPERATOR?

Both bands were the first Polish bands to play Death Metal. I played in Emperor once or twice on Festivals, but that's years ago. It's too bad they ceased to exist, they were a real good band and very original in its style of music. It was the first band which played blast-parts...'

Who are your brothers in Death Metal, to say it with a MANOWAR kind of language?

Hmm, I don't mention any names, so those who are not mentioned would be pissed, haha. But I can say that the older bands we played with are more friendly, more open-hearted, and more true in playing their Metal. Some new bands' behaviour is pretty pathetic... The thing that I don't like so much is that they started to be stars pretty fast. They get their money and everything, and it's not good. There's no cooperation between the bands anymore like it used to be. Now people forget about that, it's pure competition, and that's shit. That's a problem...'

Where did you get the name VADER from? From Star Wars' Darth Vader???

Exactly... yeah, and it's also the name for "Father", like in German "Vater".'

Well, then he had to leave...And before I close this interview, I like to inform all people who didn't like Peter's new style of singing on the last album (the music can't be criticized if you worship real Death Metal) to check out the re-released demos on CD ("Reborn In Chaos") as the vocals are more like ordinary brutal Death Metal.

More Reviews...

EMPYRIUM

"Songs Of Moors & Misty Fields"
(Prophecy)

The second album by Empyrium, and it's better than the weak debut CD was, because the band doesn't as kitschy as they used to. On this new CD they managed to compose some symphonic, epic Gothic Metal which is always based on harmonies in order not to leave the commercial trail. Still weak are the sung vocals as the singer tries to sing deeper than his voice allows...it sounds awfully. But for the rest it's ok.

ICONOCLASM

"Preamble to precipitate..."
(self-financed)

Black/ Death from Belgium. It sounds like Northern Black Metal meets old-school Death Metal, and it's all played in a pretty aggressive way. The fast Norse-styled parts are not too cool, but when Iconoclasm reduce their speed, it sounds very powerful. Still to be improved are the screamed vocals, a bit more originality is needed here. For a start it's acceptable album. To contact the band, write to: Bart Bonne, Nieuwe Dreef 24, 9880 Aalter, Belgium.

JAGUAR "Power Games" (Neat Metal)

One more old NWoBHM-album that celebrates its rebirth on CD (including three bonus tracks) here with Jaguar's "Power Games". Their powerful rockin' stuff is comparable to some early Tank and even Accept stuff, to give you an idea of their sound. It's a cool album, even today, and worth checking out if you don't mind old Metal.

THINE "Journeys"

It's more majestic (Metal) stuff with good sung vocals here... it's hard to describe, but it's definitely very professional sounding stuff and it's fortunately not sounding too cliché-like. 20 minutes is the playing time, and the price for this tape is \$6 (Europe) or \$7 (world). Russ Smith, 6 Elderfield Road, Stoke Poges, Slough, Berkshire, SL 4 DE, England



(Repulse/Relapse)

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NECROPHOBIC

Sweden was famous for its Death Metal boom in the beginning of this decade, a lot of great albums were released and consumed by the thirsty Death Metal maniacs, but not too much is left now of this old movement. Therefore I'm happy to present NECROPHOBIC to you which have released a strong album called "Darkside" this year. Unlike many other older Swedish bands they still know to play music that can still be labelled as Death Metal, with the necessary brutal and dark feeling. "Darkside" is a logical and modern continuation of their debut album "The Nocturnal Silence" which was a neckbreaking Death Metal ceremony, a mixture of old Swedish Death Metal and MORBID ANGEL. So, what else do you demand from real Death Metal?? Their drummer Joakim Sterner started our conversation with the things that happened after the band released their latest album...

There hasn't happened any bigger things, apart from headlining shows here in Sweden, of course doing tons of interviews for magazines plus that we have been to the studio and recorded the Autopsy-cover "Ridden with disease, probably one of the best Death Metal songs written, for the BLACK MARK compilation album. It was cool to do something with our new guitarist Sebastian. He joined us one week before we recorded "Darkside", so he wasn't able to record with us on that one, apart from two great guitar solos. We should have gone to the studio again to do an Iron Maiden cover for a tribute and that should have been Sebastian's debut with us in the studio, but we found out that that tribute was "full".

That would have been the fifth NECROPHOBIC cover... quite much. "Darkside" sounds a bit different than "Nocturnal Silence" in my opinion, how would you describe the development of NECROPHOBIC during the years? I think you adopted some typical Scandinavian Black Metal sounds at parts...

Shit, I don't like the sound of that, I can't understand why people see it as a big change, because it's not. (the change is not big, but there certainly is a sort of little change. -ed.) We are a band with roots for Death Metal since the very early days. We have a passion for this music, we don't care what the trend is for the moment, we still do what comes from our hearts, so to speak. As we wanted to do an even more extreme album than our first one, we then did the new songs darker, faster, more evil and more raw. We wanted to get the old Death Metal feeling back (Why back? Did you lose it? Your debut CD was pure Death Metal, purer than "Darkside" is! -ed.). You know, filthy, blasphemous and without compromises. We still write with the typical Necrophobic touch, the music is the same, yet developed to the more extreme. Just because we are faster and darker and more evil than on our last album, it doesn't mean that we are Black Metal. If we are Black Metal now, we already were Black Metal in 1991!!! One thing that has changed a little bit though is the song structures. We don't play as many riffs in the songs, well, we didn't have so many in the old songs either, but on the new album, there's even lesser riffs and we built the songs more easy this time. You know, we "skipped" the unnecessary riffs, so to speak. This time it's more like right in your face, nothing fool around. Perhaps that didn't make sense.

NECROPHOBIC already existed before Black Metal became big in Sweden. So what do you think about all the new bands that suddenly rise from the unknown and start to play grim Black Metal? And why has the old Swedish Death Metal scene (with bands like GRAVE, TREBLINKA/ TIAMAT, MEGASLAUGHTER, etc.) almost ceased to exist? Have they all wimped out?

I don't care about the new trendbands in Black Metal. They don't know the history and don't capture the old feeling in their music, their roots lie in the first albums by Mayhem, Darkthrone and those bands (well, would be cool if this was true, but most of the new bands have their "Black Metal" roots in even newer stuff in my opinion, just listen to most of the newer bands. -ed.). The whole new Black Metal scene is not what I want. I mean, every single magazine or fanzine is packed with different corpse-paint bands that claim to be the most "true" and dedicated bands. I mean, is corpse paint any special today, when every fuckin' band is using it!!! They all look and dress the same. How the hell can we separate them? Well, about the old Death Metal bands from Sweden... I guess it's only Dismember that have existed from the beginning that still don't give up with Death Metal. They may have gone a bit over line with their third album, but have returned with their new album (...which isn't too exciting if you ask me. -ed.). All the other bands have either split up or changed their style, to a more "grown" style, as they explain it. Well, I forgot Unleashed who also won't stop with Death Metal (...they already have, or do you still call their music like that!!! -ed.). The best thing is that all the bands that started because Death Metal

was a trend, have died. Only the strong survive!!!

Today (so-called) Swedish Death Metal sounds very melodic and not very brutal at all, so is this the reason for keeping NECROPHOBIC dark and brutal?

Yes, I agree that the Swedish sound is more melodic these days. It's nothing wrong with melodies, because we have been using it since 1991, yet in a non "commercial" form. Some of the bands here don't know how to use melodies. They make it sound so damn happy and that's not what I like (...me too. -ed.). When we are using melodies, we use a melody that will make the listeners' blood freeze, a kind of horror melody. We have always tried to capture a dark and evil atmosphere in our songs, while other bands want to sound happy, I don't know (Happy Metal played by guys who wear Black clothes and tons of spikes, hoho. -ed.).

You had some line-up changes during the last years, so please tell us about that... One of the guys now plays in DARK FUNERAL, right?

David, with whom I formed the band eight years ago, decided to leave the band after we had finished the recordingsessions of the mini-CD "Spawned by Evil". He was supposed to record his solopart in the song with the same name, but he told us that he didn't feel well, that he was sick, so there's the reason why there isn't a solo as it is on the album (played by Sebastian). After we had mixed the MCD and went to our regular rehearsals, he didn't seem so concentrated, so I just left the room and was later told by Martin that he decided to leave the band. He formed Dark Funeral in 1995 and after the MCD, he wanted to just play in that band. However, he only played with them for a few months after he had left us. He was kicked out of that band. He wanted to leave them because they couldn't agree on a single thing. It's weird, because he did almost everything in that band. I wonder how they will sound without him. It takes more than a fast drumbeat to make a good Black Metal song. Well, why bother as it doesn't concern me.

You also released a MCD with some coverversions on it... what do BATHORY, VENOM and especially SLAYER mean for you? Who do you think are the real heirs of those bands?

Those bands mean a lot to us, as they were our influences when we started this band. Slayer are probably the only band, of those you mentioned, that I still like the new stuff from. The old stuff from all those bands are fuckin' masterpieces. There are no band in the world that can be their heirs.

Hard words! You are on the same label as BATHORY, so did you ever have the chance to meet Quorthon in person? If yes, what kind of guy is he?

No, we haven't met him in person. However, we had a release party in February and he showed up on that party. We didn't know about it. Well, Sebastian saw him, but he didn't tell us, because he thought that we had seen him as well. The Dj yelled at me to come over. He asked me if I wanted him to put on our Bathory-cover and I told him that I thought it was a good idea. He just smiled at me and told me that it would be embarrassing for him and that Quorthon hanged out in the bar. I thought he was joking, so I returned to my table and drank Beer. The next day I found out that it was true, if I had seen him, I would of course have talked to him. He has made a lot of fuckin' great music with Bathory, and since we have done a cover of "Enter The Eternal Fire", I could easily have started a conversation. I have found out that he thought our version of it was great. Well, I guess that we'll meet anyhow, the label may have a party sometime...

Do you already have an imagination which way NECROPHOBIC will go (musically) in future? Black/Death Metal forever?

Death Metal forever!!! I don't want to continue with this band if the music will turn out different in future. I would not want to put the name Necrophobic on an album that wasn't Death Metal. The new material we have at the moment is a continuation from where we left it on "Darkside". At the moment, there are no bigger changes. I think the next one has to be better than "Darkside", otherwise I see no reason to continue. We will be more extreme, as we will not take a step back, you have to move forward. No compromises, just follow your heart.

At the end, please feel free to promote NECROPHOBIC the way you like it...

I want to thank you, Costa, for doing this interview with me. I think all of you that haven't bought our new album yet better do so, or making your biggest mistake for not buying one of the greatest albums in 1997. If I didn't know, I wouldn't have told you. I hope to see all in the frontrow, banging your heads off to our blasphemous music when we visit your town. You rule!!! See ya!!!

NECROPHOBIC

"The Nocturnal Silence" CD (1993)

"Spawned by Evil" MCD (1996)

"Darkside" CD (1997)

ORDER FROM CHAOS



VULPECULA



Underground-formation ORDER FROM CHAOS splitted up, but their members simply can't stop playing music. While bassman Pete Helmkamp still brings us some violent noises with his Death Metal band ANGEL CORPSE, Chuck Keller decided to create a new band called VULPECULA to play some music that is far away from any Death/ Black or Thrash Metal ceremonies..

A 7"EP (with the title "Phoenix Of The Creation", right?) which I don't have myself (unfortunately), was the band's first professional release, followed by a MCD/ 10"inch which is entitled "Fons Immortalis". This output contains an undefined kind of Metal with harmonies and an epic atmosphere... The (guitar)sound has some effects and is not crystal-clear, and that makes it all sound very spheric. As a rough orientation I can name old KATATONIA when it comes to the melodies and the music's tempo, and BATHORY when you take the epicness. I needed some listenings until I fully got into VULPECULA's music... and all I can say is that these guys indeed managed to create music that differs from the rest of today's scene, even though I know that the band is able to (and surely will) improve their style. So let's get into the smalltalk with Chuck himself, to talk about styles, past and future, ...

"In this age of blatant plagiarism and unoriginality VULPECULA promise a monument to creativity and innovation"... please tell us more about the sense of this statement... Is VULPECULA a band formed to strike against all unoriginal bands?

"Vulpecula is about experimenting with boundaries and styles. It is about creating soundscapes of noctilicent atmosphere; things I had wanted to create for many years but would not have been appropriate in a band like Order From Chaos. We don't waste our time "striking" against anything else, damn the trends! We are musicians and we make music."

Your MCD/ 10"inch is out, but what about a full-length album? What can you tell us about it, especially in comparison to "Fons Immortalis"?

"Currently we are recording demos of the LP material in preparation for the real recording sometime in 1998. This LP will be called "Down Among Them" and will show the band to have progressed far beyond what we were at the times when the tracks for "Fons Immortalis" were recorded (1995 and 1996). Anyone who likes bands like Mefisto, Messiah, Sacrilege (UK), Varathron and old Vulpecula are sure to love it. Some new titles are "...of the Half-Light", "Coelstia", "Ekanin Shadowcast", "Ad Astra Per Aspera", "In Dusk Apparition", etc. We have expanded the scope of Vulpecula both musically and conceptually. I should say we will be a bit less obscure and more forthright in our aggression."

ORDER FROM CHAOS was quite different to VULPECULA, much more brutal, violent, fuckin' raw stuff... Have you retired from the bestial kind of black thrashing Death Metal the day you founded VULPECULA? How do you see the days when you still raged for your old band?

The glorious Order From Chaos days were great fun. We did what we wanted and accomplished our goals: and we managed to infuriate a few here and there, hahaha. Now Order From Chaos belongs to the ages and we shall let history decide our place. Vulpecula represents another side of my personality which some will embrace while others will never have the capacity to understand. Have I retired from the "bestial kind of black thrashing Death Metal"? No at all; check out Ares Kingdom with the former Order From Chaos drummer Mike Miller and myself if you want some infernal thrashing Metal. Mike played with Angel Corpse and tried another band called Serapis with some younger guys, but it didn't work out either. Now he is back with me as Ares Kingdom and will even be joining Vulpecula after we record "Down Among Them".
 W: at do you think of Pete Helmkamp's ANGEL CORPSE? At least they have kept some of ORDER FROM CHAOS' dirty spirit alive, don't you think so?

"Don't be silly, Angel Corpse have absolutely nothing to do with Order From Chaos in any way. One listen and the tiniest bit of objectivity shows that Angel Corpse has as much to do with Order From Chaos as Order From Chaos had to do with Cannibal Corpse. Angel Corpse are one of the best Morbid Angel-clones I've ever heard, that's all. Order From Chaos was influenced by mostly European Thrash bands of the 1980s (I guess they're all called "Black Metal" now) while Angel Corpse is a very American sounding band in the tradition 1990-1991 Florida Death/Grind Metal." You have dealt with quite a lot of different labels so far (DECAPITATED, WILD RAGS, SHIVADARSHANA, MERCILESS,...), so what experiences (both positive and negative), have you made? I think it's not a good sign leaving a label after a release...

"Of course it's a very bad sign, but Order From Chaos always had trouble with incompetent labels. I don't know why you included MERCILESS in that list since Order From Chaos never did anything with them (I didn't mean O.F.C. with "you", I meant "Chuck Keller" with the word "you" -ed.). I wish we had though. Now that OSMOSE will release our final armageddon entitled "An Ending In Fire", perhaps Order From Chaos will receive the distribution and promotion we always deserved. Especially since it took me two years to finish the final Order From Chaos song (lyrics and music) "There Lies Your Lord! Father Of Victories!" which leads off "An Ending In Fire", am I glad that OSMOSE will be doing the distro for the album."

If VULPECULA doesn't sell well at all, would this be a reason for you to stop the band?

"We do Vulpecula for ourselves and not for sales figures. If we all wanted to sell loads of albums we'd change styles and play like Immortal or Mayhem. Besides you did not define what it means to not sell well. 2000 - 3000 copies? (No, even less. -ed.)"

Is VULPECULA a band which is always good for musical surprises (like changes of style) or do you try to develop a certain style where people say "Oh, listen to this, this is typical VULPECULA" (like people say when they listen to MOTÖRHEAD, AC/DC, ...)?

"No one will ever be able to say "this is typical Vulpecula". Of course there will be a certain flavour that will run through our material, but we will not be pigeonholed into a particular style like Motörhead, Slayer or even Order From Chaos. Our influences and inspiration are varied and rather strange so I think that should make for some interesting music to come."



OBSCURITY is a band that is known to very few die-hard maniacs only (at least about a year ago) as this Swedish horde never managed to release an album, not even a 7"EP. All they were known for were their two demotapes (Obations To Death, Damnations Pride), which contained dark Thrashing Black Death Metal the heavy way, especially for the specific time when it got spreaded in the underground.

In the end of 1997, their "Damnations Pride" demo was re-released on limited 7"EP-format through a small new label called TO THE DEATH, and I saw my opportunity to get in touch with one of the bandmembers which really worked at the end (to my very surprise)... let's get into the smalltalk with Daniel.

"Obscurity started in 1985, when we wrote the song "Across The Holocaust". It was some kind of awakening for us! We never had any drummer, but we still rehearsed that song twenty times every other evening. During 1986, we wrote five more songs and we went straight to the studio to record them. The guitarists had to play the drums because it was terribly difficult to get a real drummer who wanted to slam the kits faster than the speed of light at the time. I remember when we got a helping hand from a drummer, it was like heaven opened up and the angels began to sing. In 1987 we recorded the demo "Damnations Pride" which got a hell of response around the world. We were filled with enthusiasm, but then, all of a sudden, the break up came..."

Now, after 10 years went into the land, "Damnations Pride" finally got re-released on 7"EP, and your first demo will be re-released as well... Why did it took so long until your re-recordings found the way onto vinyl? A lack of interest probably?

"Honestly, our first demotape could have been better (but it is cool as hell! -ed.). The "Damnations Pride" demo which was recorded in 1987 is on the other hand excellent stuff. At that time we had difficulties keeping the band together. One of us had to go to military and before long, we also lost our studio. Consequently, we could not continue to play. We split up and played in different bands for a while and in 1992 we recorded two new songs just for fun. If we continued in 1988, I am sure that we would have managed to get a deal sooner or later."

Why didn't you manage to get a record deal back when you released your demos? Do you think that your music wasn't hype back then? Where any labels interested in OBSCURITY?

"I wouldn't say that our music wasn't hype back then (yes, but dark Thrash was going downhill since 1987, wasn't it? -ed.). There was a small, but very loyal bunch of brutal Metal fans around the world including ourselves that hanged outside the record store early in the morning just to get hold of the newest speed release (that's what I call "Maniacs", yeah. -ed.). In most cases you had to return home with empty hands. I think we bought everything we could find that even resembled Speed/Black Metal between 1983 - 1988. Imagine if you did the same thing today, you should be broke pretty soon (you'd have been broke in the past as well if you picked up all the thrashy import LPs as well... -ed.).

We never got any offers at all in the 80s, but during the last few years we have got so ridiculously many inquiries from record labels who want to print our three old tapes

on a CD. Anyway, we finally signed the contract with FORGOTTEN JEWELS RECORDS (What a cool name... you guys read too much Tales Of The Macabre, haha. -ed.) from Italy and it will be out and distributed around the world when you readers read this here."

Do you think that being a band with a satanic image was a disadvantage for you? I still remember a review in Danish BLACKTHORN mag ("Still it's Death Metal closer to SODOM than SLAYER, and they still haven't got rid of their ridiculous satanism")...

"It can never be of any great disadvantage if you enjoy what you are doing. We like fast, brutal music and lyrics with a mysterious touch, whether they are about heavenly delight, infernal chaos or transmigration of souls. Regarding the comment in BLACKTHORN magazine which I can not remember... well, there arose many smartasses walking the earth (... and the funny thing is that editor Esben used to play in Samhain, later known as DesExult, who also had a satanic image in their early days. -ed.)!

Have you written or even recorded any further songs beside the demo stuff?

"We recorded a two track demo in 1992 which wasn't released. It will be on the CD though."

Are you still hungry for Black/Death Metal? What do you think of the current scene, do you follow the happenings?

"We still love early Venom, Slayer, Bathory, Celtic Frost, Hellhammer, Nuclear Assault and Candlemass. A matter of fact, these bands are still going strong on our record-players. We don't give so much for the new bands around, there are some good ones but also a lot of crap as well."

What were your influences in the past? I hear a lot of SODOM, BATHORY, even some SACROFAN ("Demented") in your songs. Which was the stuff you banged your head to?

"My greatest inspiration was actually the following songs...:

- VENOM "In League With Satan" + "Countess Bathory"
- SLAYER "Evil Has No Boundaries", "Fight Till Death", + "Chemical Warfare"
- BATHORY "The Return Of Darkness And Evil" (the version on "Scandinavian Metal Attack" compilation) + "Hades"

I will always love these songs! For the other bandmates Lindhe and Johansson it's the same, but also some early METALLICA."

If you had the chance to travel back in time, would you've made things different for OBSCURITY?

"We should have got ourselves a new rehearsal-studio after we completed "Damnations Pride" demo and just continued without Jan Johansson who was in the army. You can't believe the amount of fan mail we got during that period. From all over Europe, U.S.A., Australia, South America, Canada, Hong Kong, Egypt. We sincerely wish to thank all those who wrote to us, sorry that we didn't continue to play. Perhaps we will get a second chance now!!!"

...sounds like the band is ready for a "Comeback", if we can talk about anything like this in this case here. It's great that OBSCURITY's stuff finally got/gets re-released for all people who missed to catch this underground band back when they tried to conquer the scene. Use your second chance!

Violent Force



Living Death



Atomic Steif is one of the individuals who was part of the German Metal history, being drummer of i.e. VIOLENT FORCE, LIVING DEATH, and SODOM. So why shouldn't we take a closer look at him as all the mentioned bands have released great thrashing stuff which still gets remembered nowadays? This smalltalk should be seen as his personal history as a musician, so enjoy...

How and when did you get into Heavy Metal, into playing drums, and your bands?

"Well, in the youth you always are looking for something where you can hold yourself, and extreme things one found of course great. One day there was this Rock/Pop in concert stuff where bands like Jethro Tull, ZZ Top and Saxon played, and I was very overwhelmed by Saxon. It was my first party, and my brother bought a box of Beers, and I drank bottles of Beer, so the world looked completely great for me. Yeah, and then we were quite drunken, made a lot of crazy things like using cars instead of pavements for walking, going swimming at midnight which was not allowed, and so on. Then I got a tape from my brother, I think it was Saxon's "Wheels of Steel", and I was simply addicted! After that I bought my first record "Demin and Leather" by Saxon, and at the same time some friends from my school-class also listened to some Hardrock stuff, so we as a group decided that "Yeah, so now we also have to play music", and we formed a band called Hannen, like the "Hannen Alt Beer", ha. We rehearsed at a youth centre, but the guitarcase

was more like a Beer transporter, because it wasn't allowed to bring Beer to that place... of course the whole thing failed, haha. In 1983 I went into the Heavy Metal Fan Club Velbert. I got into drumming before I got into Heavy Metal, it was my brother's band, he played bass, my cousins' friend played guitar, and I was told that I had to play drums, so it all began... Anyway, when I was in the club, I wanted to continue to play music, and I always wanted Pelle, the president of the Metal club, to play guitars, but he didn't really want which he regretted years after, haha. He suggested us a bassist with Lemmy instead, and Lemmy was very enthusiastic about having a band, etc. I didn't really want to have him as a bandmember, but at the first session we, me and my cousin's friend, were blown away when Lemmy played "Smoke on the Water"... it all really sounded shit when I think about it now, but it was great back then. Then after some time our guitarist didn't come anymore, so Lemmy and I were on our own, and we had to look for new guitarists. One day I was standing at the bus-station, my head was full of thoughts "We have to get a guitarist", and Stachel was standing there as well, and he had a jeans-jacket where he has drawn the M.S.G. guitar on. So I went to him and asked if he plays guitars, and he said "Yes", and I said "Oh, we are looking for a guitarist", but he said that he already had a band, so I was pissed. Well, later we found out that his band consisted of two guitarists only, Waldy and him. I think they already called their band Violent Force back then. One Sunday we made a session with them, and it went well, because they knew to play guitars, even soli, and it was fascinating for us.

Then about the name, we, Lemmy and I, first didn't really want to accept the name Violent Force for the band, because we also to have an influence on the bandname, haha. For weeks we were looking for names, but Violent Force... I think, yes, it's from the Exciter album, "Violence and Force", remained. We really started in August 1984, and we wrote and composed songs one year, but nobody really wanted us, nobody liked our songs. Even in our Heavy Metal Fan Club they didn't want to hear our tapes, like "Oh, this is shit, noise, ...". There were only very people who were into our stuff. But within a half year things changed after we tried to put up our first concert, in my old school, and we made some promotion, like spreading flyers, so about 300 people came to see the gig, where we played together with Tormentor, now known as Kreator, and I think Sodom also played three songs at that evening. Then we made our first demo, about 150 copies, which we recorded in our rehearsalroom, and two months later we went into the studio to record the "Dead City" demo, played a couple of gigs with bands like Angel Dust, and things went pretty well for us...

But why have you left VIOLENT FORCE later? Was it because you wanted to get into LIVING DEATH?

"A lot of things came together back then. First, I wasn't 100% satisfied anymore with the band and how things went further. I think the band should have given more effort, and I had for the first time trouble with Lemmy. I said that it was his fault, because of his girl-friend, and that he wasn't as much present at the rehearsals because of her using too much of his time. But I think it also was

a sort of envy from my side back then. Anyway, I said something must be done, and at the same time Pelle came to me and said secretly "Watch out, Living Death's drummer got kicked out, perhaps they are going to ask you". And, wow, I was totally nervous, and I put all the Living Death stuff on the record player just to see if I was able to play that what I heard, because I was afraid to be not good enough. Well, I didn't really know whether I should join this band or not, but... it was a temptation, they already had a record deal... and, I don't know, but back then I had no idea what it is like having a record deal, it just sounded great. They were the first German band to release a Speed Metal record, and it's a pity that they had so much bad luck with their debut album, especially because of the bad production. They have written their material in the same time when Metallica wrote their "Kill 'Em All" stuff... However, I was very nervous, but I thought that I'll manage it. But then I was told that their old drummer is still in the band. And later at that time, at the end of 1985, we, Violent Force, had the chance to appear in the movie "Die Verlierer" (In English: The Losers), and we intended to

wasn't into family-life only, so he returned. And when he returned he changed his instrument from bass-guitar to six-string guitar, and they were looking for a new drummer in 1987, who, in my opinion, really made a bad job on the old songs of the album "Malevolent Assault of Tomorrow", which was recorded in the same year...

I heard that some of the songs contain your drumming, like "Dead City"....?!!

...Yes, I played three songs on the LP, "Dead City", "Sign of Evil" and "Destructed Life"... It was a very funny thing, we didn't really have a struggle, we only walked different ways, and one day I got a phonecall from Stachel, the guitarist, and he said "Right now we are here in the studio, recording our album, and our drummer isn't able to play some songs well. Can you help us?". We hadn't rehearsed for almost 1 1/2 year, Stachel came to take me to the studio after only few hours, and I just sat down behind the kit, and have beaten the drums... all went without problems. Lemmy was overwhelmed, and after he drank a lot he shouted at the other drummer all night long. After that I helped them out on several

any money for the first LP... they made promises and made nothing, just take the coverartwork. The logo on it was very small, somewhere in the corner on the cover, and the strange skull... it all looks quite cheap.'

How did it come that you appeared in "The Verlierer" movie with VIOLENT FORCE (they played "Dead City" live in front of wild headbangers..)?

It was an incident, the film was about two rocker-gangs, and they asked the Altenessener headbangers to join it. They first wanted to take an other band, a Heavy Rock band, I don't remember which one, but a member of the club said "Oh no, you couldn't do that, you should take a band that really plays hard raging music", and he gave the movie-makers our demo... and that's it.'

There are quite some famous people involved in the headbanging crowd...

Yeah, there was the "High Society" from Altenesser, like Mille, Grave Violator, etc....'

Not bad! But VIOLENT FORCE ceased to exist after the last demo, right?

There was one guy called Charly Piss-Rinne (hehe), an ex-METAL HAMMER editor, he had a



record a MLP, but unfortunately that did not happen. And after that the old Living Death drummer was really fired, and the offer to play in that band was too good for me so that I left my old band after the gig that we did on 22th February. My drumkit directly went into Living Death's rehearsalroom after the concert.'

Wasn't there any trouble with the VIOLENT FORCE guys after you left them, like saying "Oh, you betrayer", and stuff like that...?

'Hmm, I don't think so.... I don't know. But some time ago I met Waldy, and he told me that I did right back then from my perspective, and that he felt that the band couldn't go on like that. Back it all developed to the point where Lemmy left the both the band and the Fan Club until he realized that he made a mistake later on, and that he

concerts, like the one in Rotterdam, and suddenly I played in two bands. I helped writing the material for the second album, and one day, somewhere in March 1988, Lemmy and I spontaneously drove into the studio and we recorded a demo. Violent Force still had a deal with ROADRUNNER, but the label didn't accept the new material. By the way, the band never got

small record company who liked to release the second album, but only if I fully joined at Violent Force, but I said "No, I play in Living Death!". I didn't want to be a member in Violent Force when it comes to contracts. Beside that, there was no perspective because Charly had only drawn money out of us anyway, no promotion. I had made some bad experiences with him before...

And then in Autumn 1988 Living Death more or less splitted up, and Lemmy already joined at the recording of "World Neurosis", where he did the vocals with Toto, and the second voice. Then we parted from the Kelch brothers, and continued with Lemmy under the name Sacred Chaos. Then in the co-production of the MLP, our singer left, so only Lemmy, Fred and me remained, and Fred later went to Mekong Delta. He was allowed to play in our band as well, but first came Mekong Delta, Living Death and then Sacred Chaos, so we really had no perspectives anymore. The chapter of Violent Force closed after Lemmy and I were alone again. We first tried to find some new guitarists, but it didn't work well, and so we parted musically.'

What happened with you after SACRED CHAO

'Next band was Day, but it wasn't too great, just fun. After that I got a phonecall from Andy Claasen from Holy Moses, and I helped them out on a tour with Kruiz. Those Russians were very nice people and very skilled as musicians.'

Why have you so radically changed your style at LIVING DEATH when you see the development from "Protected from Reality" to "World Neurosis"?

'It's because of the vocals, but also because of the concept that we had back then. We wanted to create songs that will be stuck in the ears, with chorus, etc., more well-arranged stuff, but the production was not good enough for, well, I can almost say Pop-Metal, it should have been more bombastic! But it surely was also a result of experiencing music as well. Both guitarists of Living Death, Reiner Kelch and Frank Fricke, were the founders of Mekong Delta...'

They were MEKONG DELTA? They tried to keep the line-up secret...

They wanted to do as if the band was coming from America. Frank Fricke was very engaged when it comes to the songwriting. And Living Death's "Protected from Reality" was like a result from Mekong Delta, it's more complicated... there are things included that have been put into the songs just because of the learnt skills. It's a pity that it came to a split...

We, Fred, Toto and me, wanted to keep Living Death alive, but only without those Kelch brothers. We thought they would leave so that we could continue, but the day after they knew our decision, they have put a new lock into the rehearsal room's door, and they wanted to force us to join them on tour which was announced by the record company. You've got to know that we never toured before, we just played single shows. But we didn't want to, we just wanted to end the thing. Then we found our instruments in the foreground of the rehearsal room. Later we had to go to court with those guys, and they got the rights for the bandname. After that, Reiner and Dieter Kelch found new musicians and made one more album called "Killing in Action", a record which is more again in the "Protected..."-vein.

and just serve. He's a funny guy as a person, but just isn't a fair partner.

The glory days of Sodom are over since "Agent Orange" which was their best selling album, and from LP to LP the sales went down. I knew for example that "Masquerade in Blood" wasn't going to be a good album, but I didn't care at that time. I'm now happy with my new band Stahlträger, because this is a real band. Hope everything will work out well for us.

then we know how he usually plays, but when the playing suddenly is 100% tight, then it doesn't really sound like "Abaddon".

What do you think of all the revival stuff by the way?

I see it like this: People are getting out of ideas, and the most secure thing is to do things that already have been done. When I know that one certain album sells 10.000 copies, then I can be sure that the same style will sell 3.000 copies again.

Don't you think that it's nostalgia?

Yes, of course. Experimental stuff is cool, but you will always like the stuff that you've heard in your youth.

But there are also young people listening to it...

That's probably because the old records are more "alive" and sound more honest, because they didn't have the techniques like nowadays, where albums are like works from the computer. A lot of things are made in the studio. A lot of bands are not able to transmit certain things, and the computer gets used... and the computer has no feeling. That's why probably the old raw and not so tight albums are popular, because this music lives.

Well, I think that everything isn't as guitarorientated as it used to be...



And what about Thorsten Bergmann, the band's vocalist, did he ever make music again?

I don't think so. His sister told me last year that he would be interested to do some music again. But I doubt that it will be something serious, because his relation to notes is not the best to be honest. Many people had some problems with him, because sometimes his behaviour seemed to be a bit "warm" (= gay-like) sometimes. A video from Braunschweig was broadcasted on TV, I think it was Tele 5, and he wore a leather jacket which was so tight that he didn't manage to put it off on his own, and he said "Och, it is so hot here" (imitates a female voice), and two guys had to put the jacket from his body, and then he was standing there with a naked chest. Some people thought wrong about this. Also, we once had an interview date, and Toto wore an old jeans with holes, and his "hosenstall" (his trouser's gate to putrefaction) was open, and people were very angry because of that. But he didn't want to be like that on purpose.

And what about the time in SODOM, why did you split?

Sodom didn't work as a band anymore. When I think about the "Masquerade in Blood" period, we were at the rehearsal place, and Thomas Such, aka Tom Angel Ripper, just sat down and we, Andy Brings and me, should start to play... and Tom decided what's good and what's not so good. Then Tom offered us so little money for all the work which was ridiculous. I think I would have earned more money within one month with a good job, than two years in Sodom. The contract I got couldn't be accepted. Sodom is a band consisting of Tom and session musicians. He really needs the money he gets from his "band", because he has a wife and daughter, so others have to step back

Didn't you get any offers from other bands after the split?

The guys from Grave Digger heard that I was out of Sodom, and they asked me to join them, but I wasn't interested.

When it comes to drummers, whom do you appreciate?

In the past I thought that Philthy Taylor from Motörhead was great, and I wanted to play faster than he did. The first thing that I did was not trying to play a rhythm well, but to play fast. Also the Raven drummer impressed me as well as Cozy Powell, who was very celebrated by the press, but I think they celebrated him a bit too much. And Anvil, their drummer has his own style, and for years I was listening to it and always thought "What the hell is he playing right now?". I think it's a bit cliché to mention Dave Lombardo, he certainly belongs to the best.

And Abaddon?

...Eehhhh,I haven't met him personally yet until now, but I just know what happened with "In The Name Of Satan" tribute thing. Andy and Tom (Angel Ripper) made a song with him, "One Thousand Days In Sodom". I was not needed, because Abaddon already had the drum-parts on a tape...

...has he done this with every band on the compilation?

I think yes. I would have loved to play the drums for our coversong...

It wasn't possible?

No, he wanted to have his drums on the recording!

Has he really played it?

' Pfhhhhhs (sighing and smiling in one! -ed.)... yes, well, for me this sounded somehow like a drumcomputer. If you listen to the Venom -stuff,

Yes, Heavy Metal isn't as guitarorientated as before, because people detected that the drums should play a more important role. And also everything got more bass-sounds, and a deeper guitarsound until the strings hang on the ground...

And what about your musical future?

I'll try to express myself through my new band now, so I hope that everything will be fine for us. It's always difficult to convince with good music in this commercial Metal scene where interviews and articles can only be bought... let's see what will happen...

Atomicographie

- "Dead City 1" demo (VIOLENT FORCE)
- "Dead City 2" demo (VIOLENT FORCE)
- "Dead City 3" demo (VIOLENT FORCE)
- "Back To The Weapons" MLP (LIVING DEATH)
- "Protected From Reality" LP (LIVING DEATH)
- "Eisbein" 12"inch (LIVING DEATH)
- "Live" MLP (LIVING DEATH)
- "Malevolent Assault of Tomorrow" LP (VIOLENT FORCE)
- "World's Neurosis" LP (LIVING DEATH)
- "Demo" advance for LP (VIOLENT FORCE)
- "Sacred Chao" MLP (SACRED CHAO)
- "Get What You Deserve" (SODOM)
- "Marooned" DoLP (SODOM)
- "Masquerade In Blood" (SODOM)
- "Stahlträger" MCD (STAHLTRÄGER)

DAMNATION

This time I thought I should attack DAMNATION Records with some questions for this issue's "Label Special" as this Dutch label has released some cool stuff, like Vinyl-versions of great acts like **SEVENA**, **CARPATHIAN FOREST**, etc. In addition they are about to bring us the noises of **SOULBURN**, a new killer act which you can find elsewhere in this issue, so these should be enough reasons to get in touch with Daan who is one of the damned creatures in this label. Let's get back to the very beginning of DAMNATION...

How did it all start for DAMNATION ?

Back in 1990 Jeroen and another guy called Ron decided to start an underground distribution service called DAMNATION distribution. In 1992 they decided to release the **Corpus Rottus** "Rituals of Silence" cassette on a vinyl version, and so the label was born. For me it started when I met them in 1994 and I became a "regular" customer and got to know Jeroen a lot better. Then there was the first FOLTER Records festival in Bröhm/ Germany where Ron wasn't able to go, so Jeroen asked me if I could help out. That was my start with DAMNATION. In 1995 Ron left and in 1996 we got help from another guy called Stefan. So nowadays it's Jeroen (the boss and founder), Stefan and me, Daan.

When I take at the releases on your label, I see that you just released Vinyl stuff in license so far (if I'm right), but you started to sign your own bands now, didn't you? Please tell us about it. What does a band have to offer musically to get signed at your label? Is there a special attitude behind DAMNATION?

We haven't just released vinyl releases, we have released: **Einherjer** "Leve vikinganden" 7" EP (limited to 1.500 copies, co-release with **NECROMANTIC GALLERY** which ceased to exist), **Demoney** "Faustian Dawn" demo-CD (limited to 1000 copies, co-release with **SO IT IS DONE**), **Ancient** "Trolltaar" limited MLP/MCD, **Troll** "Drep De Kristne" CD. But the reason for all the vinyls we release is that we are all vinyl freaks, so when a really good release is only available on CD, we just talk it over and if we all agree we contact the label and see if they like our idea. One is certain: We won't do any PicDiscs in the near future anymore because everything is released as picture disc nowadays, it's nothing special anymore.

So far we released on vinyl: **Carpathian Forest** "Through Chasm, Caves and titan Woods" MLP, limited to 1.000 copies (licensed from **AVANTGARDE**), **Pentacle** "The Fifth Moon" PicLP limited to 525 copies, **Limbonic Art** "Moon in the Scorpio DoLP" limited to 500 copies (licensed from **NOCTURNAL ART**), **Emperor** "Wrath of the Tyrant" PicDisc limited to 525 copies (licensed from **HEAD NOT FOUND**).

As for your question: Musically the band should know how to handle their instruments. But most important, we must like it. If the music is good and the band hasn't got interest from any big labels yet we just take contact and see how they react. There isn't a special attitude behind DAMNATION. We just want to be the cheapest mailorder with the fastest delivery here in Holland and with the label we try to keep the metal spirit alive.

What is your personal musical taste by the way? Which bands would you love to be on your label?

I'll name some of my faves: **Bulldozer**, **Necrophagia**, **Venom**, **Pentacle**, **Destruction**, **Usurper**, **Destroyer 666**, **Beherit** (old), **Blasphemy**, **Carnage**, **Volvod**, **Sodom**, **Desaster**, **Nifelheim**, **Scepter**, **Morbid Angel**, and the list could go on and on.... Some bands which I would love to see on the label are **Usurper**, **Pentacle** and **Destroyer 666**, to name a few.

Please tell us about your next activities.... do you have any new bands signed already (beside **SOULBURN**)? Is your relationship to your bands based on business only or is it more?

Next up should have been the vinyl version of **Destroyer 666's** "Unchain the Wolves", but **MERCILESS** Records have already announced to release this LP, so we now have the **Soulburn** LP/CD coming next, and we'll also do the vinyl version of **Tartaros** (from Holland). We have no new bands under our wings yet although there is one band we've spoken to but I won't mention their name before all the papers are signed. The relationship with all our bands differ. Some are good friends, others I would like to beat to death (or better said one -fellow).

You're also running a big distribution service... is this necessary to keep your label alive, or are you able to live through the sales of your label-products anyway?

The distro is necessary because our label has released mostly limited editions, all our vinyl versions are limited (do you know any vinyl-versions that aren't "limited" nowadays? I don't... -ed.). So these are not the thing you earn by money with. But we are doing our best to become more professional in all ways. Our goal is to live from the label/distro in future.

When it comes to your distribution service... what is the kind of stuff (bands) that gets sold most? Does it differ from country to country or are all "fans" equal? I heard that the German fans are the ones who buy the most crap, true?

The stuff that sells best are the "big" Black Metal bands like **Cradle of Filth** (Black

Metal/ Pussy Metal would fit better here! -ed.), **Gorgoroth**, **Satyricon**, **Dark Throne**, **Gehenna**, etc., also the **Gothenburg** - **Death Metal** (What ??? -ed.) like **In Flames**, **Dark Tranquillity**, etc. sells very good. I don't think it really differs from country to country, but I have to say that we don't have many foreign customers, most of our customers come from Holland and Belgium. About German fans, I don't know why but we get almost no mail from Germany. But the ones who did order mostly asked for the **Pentacle** PicDisc which is no crap in my opinion or other vinyl which they said was hard to get in Germany.

What was your biggest disappointment with DAMNATION so far? I can imagine that there's a lot of shit happening in the land of business, isn't it?

The biggest disappointment for me was after a good day at a metal market when we went to eat afterwards. When we came back the box with all the money from that day was stolen out of the car. Of course it was stupid to leave it in the car. Also a disappointing thing for me the **Troll** CD-release, not the CD or the way it looked, but everything around it and the rockstar allures of Mr. Nagash Blackheart.

Is Holland still a good market for Metal music as it used to be? What can you tell us about your country when it comes to Metal?

Holland is not what it used to be concerning Metal in that way that there are almost no good bands anymore (what about **Occult**, **Countess**, **Pentacle**, **Martyrdom**, **Soulburn!** -ed.). There are enough concerts and fans though.

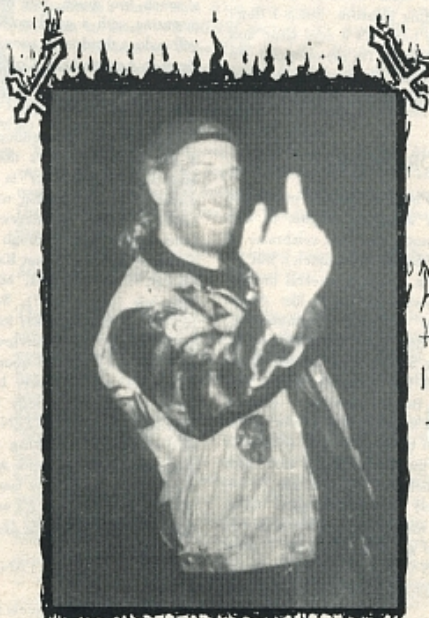
How's the competition between the labels in Holland? I mean, you have **HAMMERHEART**, **SHIVADARSHANA**, **MASCOT**, etc.... Any backstabbing actions you should be prepared for?

For the label the competition is not so big because there are always good unknown bands around which other labels don't know or want. But with the distribution service the competition is pretty big, because Holland is a small country. But I think we all have our "own" customers who won't buy at others. But it's important to have the new stuff as soon as it is released. Oh, one more thing: One of the labels you mentioned doesn't exist anymore, namely **SHIVADARSHANA**, which I see as a good thing because he has ripped many people and bands.

How many hours do you invest into DAMNATION in one day? Do you think that this could be a job for life-time?

It differs, sometimes (like today) I am busy the whole day (for 10 hours) with the label, but sometimes it is 2 or 3 hours a day. I also have another job, 20 hours a week. The other guys are practically every evening a few hours busy with the label, plus they have fulltime jobs beside DAMNATION.

As already written in the **SOULBURN** interview elsewhere in this magazine, DAMNATION were kicked out for **SOULBURN's** album release. But the label tries to sign some new bands at the moment... hope these signings will be good ones, so that I won't have to be ashamed of doing this interview in some years, haha...



DAMNATION
HOGE ARENDEWEG 55
1221 AK HILVERSUM
HOLLAND

Metal Press

Reviews about zines/ mags that are involved in the metallic underground...

CONSPIRACY #1

A new magazine from Sweden. This first issue is quite old right now, but let's give it a fair review anyway. These two motivated zine-editors have concentrated more on bands from their homeland Sweden, you'll find interviews with Crown Of Thorns, Luciferion, Dawn, Sohrin, Arckanum, Nauthis, and a lot more. People who like to know more about the happenings in Sweden should check this issue here as it's well-done (printed), quite informative (72 A4 pages to read) and well-written. But there are also some (but not many) interviews with "foreign" bands included, like Moonblood, Melechesh and even U.D.O. / Accept ("I'm not really into Death Metal" (dass Metal, he he he)), yes. Well, as said, this issue is not too actual anymore, so you should better ask those guys if there's a second issue available. For all those who are interested in #1, send \$5 to: Nils Jansson, Antikvarievägen 7, 72481 Västerås, Sweden.



And one more Swedish magazine, this time an older one called PUTREFACTION, which is done by Ex-No Fashion chief (he runs Iron Fist Records nowadays) Tomas Nyqvist. Here I have the 12th issue, and it seems that Tomas has left most Black Metal bands in the dust and prefers to feature more traditional Heavy/Thrash/Death Metal bands nowadays. Names like Necrophobic, Witchburner, Loud Pipes, Desaster, The Haunted, Scepter, etc. can be found when it comes to interviewing bands, and Tomas also had a chat with Frank Stöver (VOICES Prod./ SNAKEPIT) and some other guys as well. It's a cool magazine, but it's not a cult-magazine like some people say, 'cause for a 12th issue this here is just too ordinary to be called "cult". And 48 A4 pages (with quite big typing and about 7 pages with adverts) is not a guarantee for a looong reading pleasure. But... I don't want to sound too negative here, it's a cool issue and most bands included are good ones (in my opinion). To get this printed matter, send \$5 (Europe) and \$6 (world). Tomas Nyqvist, Finningsvägen 72 D, 64542 Strängnäs, Sweden.

SHEMAFORASH #2

The Polish scene has always been an extreme one in my opinion, and I think this magazine is part of this particular scene. Well, it's not a zine that celebrates all the Polish N.S. Black Metal bands (fortunately), but it's still extreme though when it comes to several images. Beside the "usual" interviews with bands like Absu, Desaster, It (Abruptum/ Vondur/ Ophalania), Emperor, etc., you'll also find stuff like Carnun, D. Zone, MZ -412, and some more. Some questions are not relating to music at all but satanism, policy, etc. which is not the style I like. But it's a matter of opinion, of course. This magazine is xeroxed, and all the text is written in Gothic letters (to be more cult or ancient or whatever). 46 is the total number of pages, and there are almost no adverts included (except for "Anti-Nuclear Blast", and others) which is a good thing, especially as xeroxed zines really don't need commercial adverts in my opinion. To get this magazine, I guess you'll have to send \$4 or \$5 (I don't really know, sorry) to: Geryon, Staszica 19/13 65-176 Zielona Góra, Poland.

ISENGRIM Issue 1, Spring 1997

This fanzine isn't very new, but anyway.... ISENGRIM is mainly a voice of nordic Metal, so the choice of bands is based on Scandinavian acts mostly, such as

Dodheimsgard, Helheim, Crimson Midwinter, Gravfred, Utgard, Funeral Mist, etc. as you can see from the names, this zine contains a lot of underground-stuff. Additionally, there are interviews with persons such as Odinn (speaking on 4 pages about his dead zine EINHERJUM and other topics, incl. his criticism towards my way of writing/ reviewing), Temu Kautonen and Carsten of trendlabel SOLISTITUM. Oh, there's also an interview with Japanese band Sigh, which is my personal highlight in this issue (I'm not too much into most of the other bands to be honest). The style of asking questions is good, a bit in the ISTEN-style, editor Kristian tries to ask intelligent questions which are sometimes beyond the musical side of things. Good are the reviews, they seem to be very honest and well-thought. Hmm, I myself just wish that if Kristian manages to come up with another issue of ISENGRIM, he will include some better bands next time (yeah, I know that I can't always accept other Metalheads musical tastes, Kristian, but... that's just the way I am!). This first issue (44 printed pages with clear photos and a proper sterile layout) is still available for \$5: Kristian Piililä, Mechelininkatu 13 A 14, 00100 Helsinki 10, Finland.

Temple of the Damned #2

I'm always interested in magazines from other continents, and I already saw interesting flyers for TEMPLE OF THE DAMNED #1 some time ago. Naturally I was surprised to find their second issue in my letter box, and the first impression was a very good one with its cool printed cover (an old Emperor picture) and the list of bands included (Mayhem, Ka-ir, Equinox, Varathron, Gehenna, Ancient Rites, Abyssic Hate, etc...). The interviews are outdated unfortunately but are still enjoyable and worth being read. What I like are some interviews/ reviews on exotic bands (from Brazil, Panama, Peru, etc.), 'cause where else do you read about such unknown acts except for probably DESECRATION OF VIRGIN which is at the edge of starvation? The layout and print-quality of this magazine is good, but what could be better is the number of pages. Demanding US\$6 for just 34 pages is a touch too much, but for the rest it's a real good magazine with a good musical taste. Hope these guys will make a third issue soon. Write to: Erick Neyra, Av. German Aguirre 1422, Condevilla Lima 31, Peru.

ISTEN "Twin Sister"

"The Last Great Independent" fanzine around is ISTEN if you have to believe the three editors of this old magazine. "Twin Sister" is a very cool and "different" underground publication with no lack of humour and criticism at all. The interviews in this well-printed zine (with a great typical rough "underground" -like layout) are done with The Great Kat, Agathodaimon, Rotting Christ, Two Witches, Metalucifer, Tales Of The Macabre (who's that?), Solstice, etc..., so you see, ISTEN do feature every kind of Metal (and not only Metal) music. The interviews are cool, 'cause you won't find all those standard-questions ... and the reviews on CDs/zines/ etc. are very honest, the editors are not afraid to tell the bloody truth (read the review on Devastation, etc.). ISTEN is a very original magazine but also very provoking one... if you like to read something more in depth and critical, check it out. But the price for being "the last great independent" is high: \$7 costs one mag, but it's worth the investment. Write to: Janne Sarma, Arturintie 28, 33880 Saaksjärvi, Finland.

SATANAKIA #2

As you can probably guess from the name, this is a zine dedicated to "blackened" bands. It's a xeroxed zine, filled with interviews like Emperor, Marduk, Desaster, Barathrum, Bewitched (Swe), Mortuary Drape, Death SS, Necromass, Countess, Ancient Rites, etc. You soon realize that SATANAKIA is still able to

improve, but I like the basic attitude of editor Manuel Medeot who just seems to be a fanatic Metal fan. It's a thick zine (Sorry, but I haven't counted the pages), so the price of \$6 is acceptable.

Manuel Medeot, Via Carducci 34, 34170 Gorizia, Italy

SNAKEPIT #2

Former VOICES FROM THE DARKSIDE-creator Frank Stöver here with his new zine after he got tired of today's trendy Black/ Death Metal scene. SNAKEPIT #2 is dedicated to traditional Metal stuff only, be it melodic, Power, Speed or Thrash Metal. Therefore you won't find any interviews with "corpse-paint"-bands at all, but interviews with acts such as UFO, Manower, Razor, Gamma Ray, Metalucifer, Hittman, The Company, Rhapsody, Venom, Holy Mother, etc... If you are into such bands, then SNAKEPIT will satisfy all your needs as the interviews are very well-done and in depth. \$5 to: Frank Stöver, P.O. Box 210212, 28222 Bremen, Germany

ABDS RETUAL

A zine from Colombia, dedicated to mostly underground Black/ Viking Metal stuff. Check out the list of bands included: Wizard (Fin), Miasthenia, Det Hedenske Folk, Solstafir, Muspellsheim, Hoch, Falkenbach, etc. Some interviews are cool, some aren't, but the spirit of the mag is good, and they are even critical towards their interview-partners (editor "Putrid" for example calls SKOGEN's editor Sascha a trendy mother fucker in their interview). But I think they should be a bit more critical when it comes to the reviews. These 54 pages get sold for \$6. Giovanni "Putrid", A.A. 3610 Cali, Colombia, South America

METAL INVADER

I knew an old issue of this cool Metal magazine, but when one of the editors (Lord Sonap FFF) sent me their newest issue, I was blown away. It looks like a METAL HAMMER now, coloured and ultra-professional. But this does not mean that they wimped out, because interviews with Saxon, Venom, Rotting Christ, Virgin Steele, etc. are cool. This mag is written in Greek unfortunately, so most of you will not have the pleasure to read it. But for Greek-speaking dudes this mag is highly interesting. Write to: Lord Sonap FFF, P.O. Box 14092, GR 115 20 Athens, Greece.



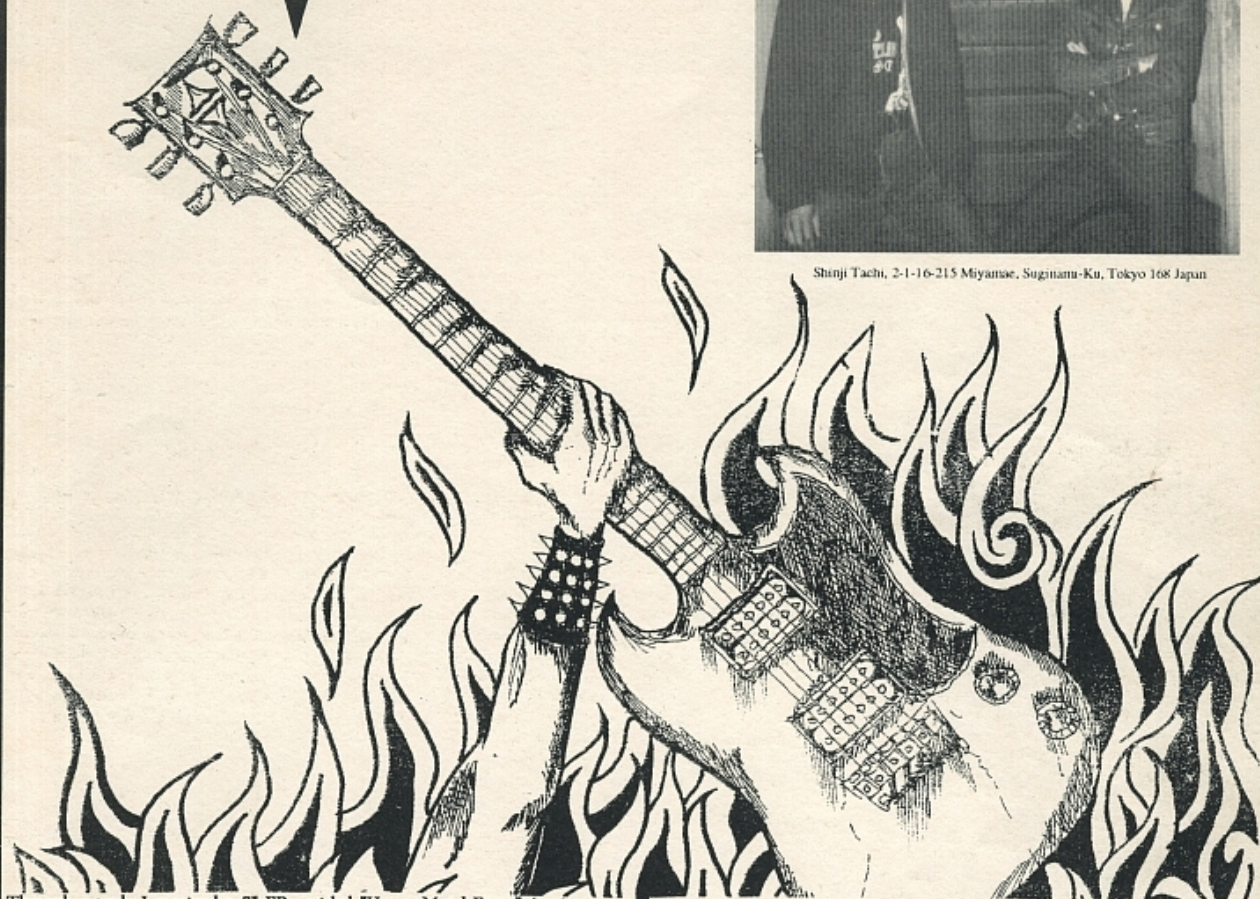
For a debut issue it has a real professional look and clear layout (it's all well-printed). The content is based on Scandinavian acts mostly (Gehenna, Thy Serpent, Horna, Azazel, Utgard,....), the exceptions are just Ironsword, Tales Of The Macabre (ch...) and a small article on Overlord from Poland are the only exceptions. But the spirit of the mag is good, it's not a cliché elitarian Black Metal zine. If you like to check this issue, send \$5 to: ? (where's the address in the magazine?)



MAGNESIUM



Shinji Tachi, 2-1-16-215 Miyamae, Sugnamu-Ku, Tokyo 168 Japan



Through a trade I received a 7" EP entitled "Heavy Metal Fever" (review see elsewhere), not knowing what the hell expected me! But after listening to MAGNESIUM's side of this record, I was totally astonished by their old but very honest style of traditional Heavy Metal Rock. It sounds like a fusion of very old IRON MAIDEN, DEMON and ANGEL WITCH, and causes some heavy nostalgic feelings as it contains the true spirit of that specific time when those bands ruled.

"Tell Me" is the only song I heard from MAGNESIUM so far, and I'm really hot for more! MAGNESIUM is the third traditional Heavy Metal band from Japan (beside METALUCIFER and GORGON) that seem to be around in these days. The contact address was the address of Shinji Tachi who plays guitar and does the vocals, and he quickly responded to the letter that I sent him.

I only know your Split 7"EP, but that's it already. Please tell me some words about MAGNESIUM...

'We started back in 1993 with Magnesium. Before, I played in Sabbath, Sacrifice and Buried Alive. I used to play drums, but I think it's better to play my own songs now as guitarist, that's why I play guitar in Magnesium. About singing in the band: I think it would be too difficult to look for a good vocalist, so I took over that part as well. But right now, we have no bassman and drummer, so we can't play in studio. Magnesium only plays the NWOBHM style. We released a demo entitled "Buried Alive" in 1994, but it's sold out now.'

Your song "Tell Me" sounds very old-styled, almost 70s-like. Do you think there's a market for such kind of music in today's Metal scene? Does the 7"EP sell well?

'No, there's not a good market for this music. And... we have only sold about 20 copies to German maniacs.'

Why is there such a good "old Heavy Metal Rock" movement in Japan? I think no other country has to offer bands like MAGNESIUM, METALUCIFER, GORGON, etc...

'There's no movement in Japan, these bands are only bands from NWOBHM fans and collectors. When we play a concert, there aren't many fans. In Japan we scarcely sell 7"EPs. It's due to the Japanese fan who doesn't like and support Japanese Metal bands, but I'm not one of that sort of fan.'

What can you tell us about new MAGNESIUM songs? Any changes?

'We have five unreleased songs. First up we have "Magnesium Lady", which shows

Magnesium's tamed side. It's a very good, nice and wonderful song. It's a little bit different to usual NWOBHM sounds. It's more like European Metal sounded in '84/85. Next tune is "Time Tells No Lies". It's just a melodic but hard song, but it's great, too. It's more in the Praying Mantis / Incubus and Saxon-style. However, we have a lot of songs, but all songs have the typical Magnesium taste.'

MAGNESIUM is a strange name for a band... is there a special meaning behind it? It's not a typical "Heavy Metal" name...

'Good question! You know, Magnesium is a kind of Metal element. It's the lightest specific gravity in it. Our sound is Heavy Metal, but I chose Magnesium as a band name as I just distinguish heavy bands. It also includes a sort of sarcasm, haha.'

Do you have any big plans with the band? Or is it just a hobby that you do for fun, after work?

'We plan to re-record unreleased tunes, but we have no plans to play a gig. Magnesium is my life work!!! Thank you!'

That was Shinji's talk about his band. His English is really not the best I must say, so I hope I got all the points when I typed this interview. But as long as his vocals sound satisfying in MAGNESIUM we should really bother. I think he has the best voice of all the mentioned Japanese Metal bands to be honest with you.

Shinji sent me a tape along with his answers, so I had the chance to check out "Magnesium Lady" and "Time Tells No Lies". The first song is very original, but very soft I must say, so I needed some listenings until I full got ito this tune. But the band works very professional... brilliant guitars and perfect arrangements. They do not sound like a demo-band at all!!!

"Time Tells No Lies" is fuckin' great and my favourite song so far. It's not very heavy, but has a great, straight ahead rockin' riff with a fantastic melody. Also the chorus is good, and the entire atmosphere is melancholic, even if this music is no doom or whatever. Just great and beautiful (without sounding wimpy or anything like that). It proves that music can have a special nostalgic and melancholic feeling without keyboard overdoses and tons of effects 'n' shit.

Now I understand why Shinji has chosen "Magnesium" for the bandname... Metal the light and beautiful way!

I think that the work of bands like MAGNESIUM will not be honoured in this commercial Metal scene as it is no fuckin' trend music. Give them a chance if you like to listen to something softer but still metallic. MAGNESIUM perform it with class!!!

