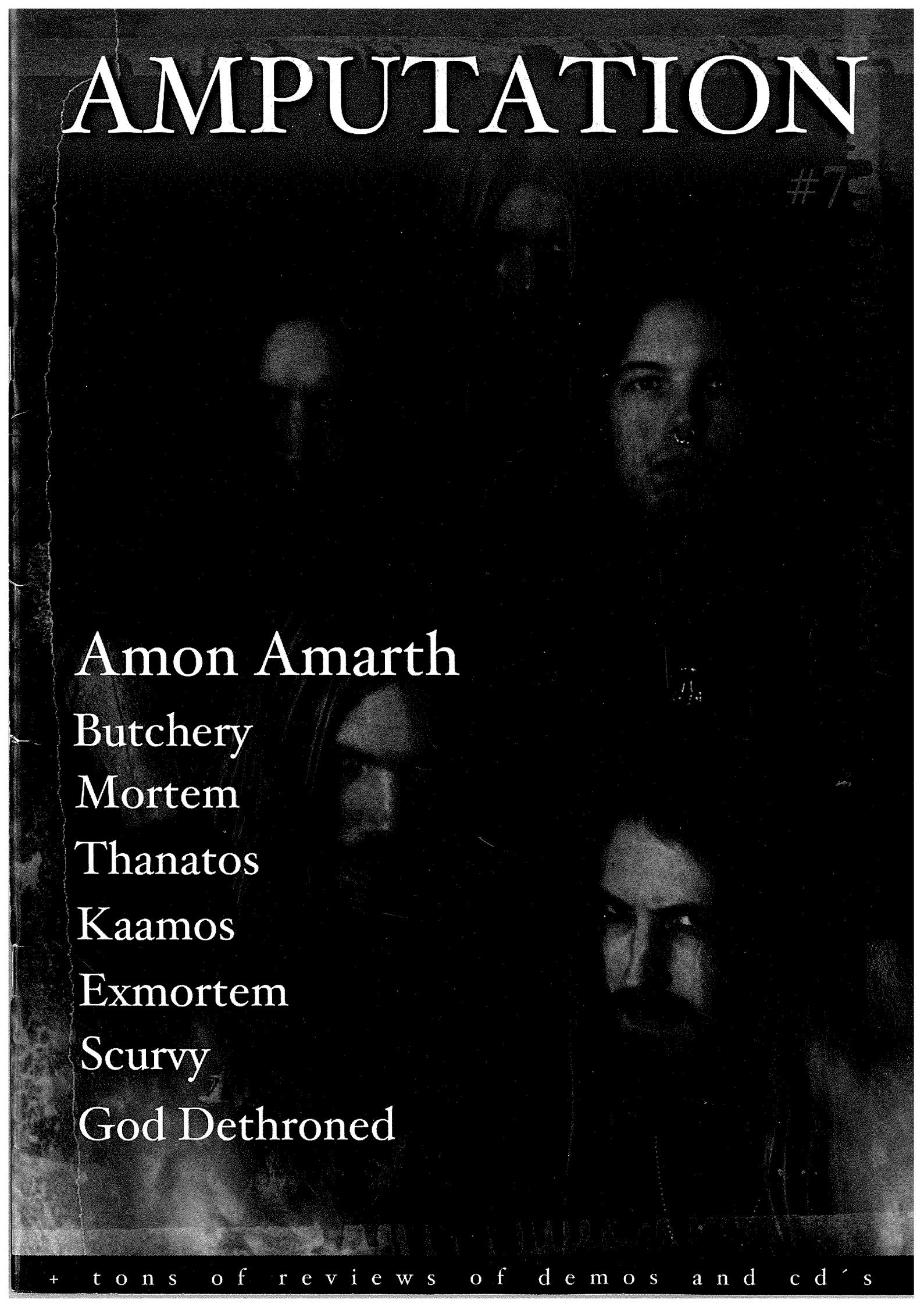


AMPUTATION

#7



Amon Amarth
Butchery
Mortem
Thanatos
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Exmortem
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God Dethroned

SARGATANAS REIGN



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message from the EDITOR

Thanx to the following people, without whom this magazine wouldn't exist: Filip - for the time and great effort he put into making this magazine look so professional, Sofia - for correcting all my misspellings, Joel & Immersed In Blood, Bruno & Hypnos, Lowlife rec, Prophecy prod, Frank & Relapse rec, Black Lotus rec, Andreas & Metal Blade rec, John & Extremist rec, Nicholas & Osmose prod., Rich & Lost Disciple rec, Loic & Overcome rec, Patrick, Kasper & Hammerheart rec, Joey & Necropolis rec, Daan & Damnation rec, Blackfish rec, Pigghouse rec, Jill & Razorback rec, Vicque & Revelation rec, Krille & VOD rec, Psychic Scream rec, Straight up rec, Nocturnal Art prod, Listenable rec, Golden Lake prod, I Hate rec, Makoto & Weird Truth prod, Colleen & Dwell rec, So Die music, Bloodbucket prod, Rock Extremum, Solemn Music, Diehard Music, Volker & Merciless rec, Michele & Nuclear Abominations, Norman & Cudgel Agency, Dark Horizon rec and all the bands that sent their demo's and CD's for review. Also a big cheers to all the bands that did the interviews. Finally last, but certainly not least, all the distributors and other people who helped with the spreading of this mag across the world. You make it possible for me continuing doing this mag. I'd also like to say hi to all my friends in Stockholm and Växjö, as well as all the cool people I'm in touch with all over the world.

Unfortunately, there are some rats out there ripping people off and they've crossed my way too. I'd like to send a little message to them as well, and that is "Fuck you, you greedy bastards! I hope it all comes back to you."

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Holland has always been a quite important country when it comes to produce qualitative death metal bands. The new album from God Dethroned called Ravenous was recently released and once again, the marihuana-country #1 in Europe can brag with a great death metal album. Metal Blade made the bassist Beef answer my questions.

Let me start this interview by refreshing the memory of you all. The early recordings of God Dethroned were not so little inspired by our Swedish scene. I'm thinking of the debut-album The Christhunt, on which parallels could be drawn to Entombed, Dismember, Carnage and the likes. Although Beef wasn't in the band at that time, he agrees that Henri was quite impressed by our scene back in 1991.

- Yes your totally right about that. Especially Left Hand Path from Entombed was a big inspiration for him. By that time, God Dethroned was one of the first bands in Holland with a sound like that, and it seemed to work out very well at that time.

So what do you think about our Swedish metal scene of today?

- What can I say, I think you guy's have one of the strongest scenes in metal. It's been like that in the past and still is today. You know, for bands in Holland it's sometimes frustrating because it seems that if you are a band from Sweden, it's easier to get a good record deal.

Personally I think that way too many bands all over the world, not only in Sweden, has gotten themselves a record deal without deserving it, while other great and promising bands have problems with getting their stuff on the market.

Now lets go back to an important part of the Dutch history. Right after the release of The Christhunt, Henri decided to split the band up.

- The reason for Henri to stop with God Dethroned was because the guy's who were in the band at that time did not have the right attitude. A birthday party was enough reason for them not to do a show with God Dethroned. Incidents like that and many more forced Henri to end the band's existence. He tried for a while to keep it going with some other people but they were not good enough musicians.

Almost immediately he formed a new band, which went under the name Ministry Of Terror and an album called Fall Of Life was released in 1994. What kind of music did Ministry Of Terror play?

- Ministry Of Terror was a kind of Death Thrash band. Their music wasn't very fast but it had some catchy riffs and a drummer inspired by Dave Lombardo. That was some real head bang music.

So what made the good old Henri to put God Dethroned together again?

- When Ministry Of Terror toured with Impaled Nazarene, Henry received many requests about reforming God Dethroned and that was the reason for him to finally get the band together again. When Henry asked me to join him to record a new God Dethroned album, I said yes right away. And also Jens (van der Valk - guitar) and Roel (Sander - drums) were into it right away.

Next album The Grand Grimoire was released in 1997. On this album, one could find more melodical material and they kind of left the Swedish-influence for a bit. Yet it was still fast and death metal as hell...

- Yeah The Grand Grimoire is totally different from The Christhunt, but there are five or six years in between the writing of those two albums. Besides, The Christhunt was written by Henry alone, while on The Grand Grimoire, all four of us were involved in the writing process. We still tried to maintain the "Swedish" sound on this album, although I think the production could have been a lot better. It's good to hear someone say that it sounds death metal as hell, because we are always compared with a black metal band (nothing wrong with that by the way), but we have seen ourselves as a death metal band al the time.

Black metal, death metal, what is the difference these days, really? Anyway, The Grand Grimoire was supported by tours with Marduk, Angel Corpse, Obituary, Cannibal Corpse, Immortal and Six Feet Under. All of them are more or less classics within the metal scene.

- We have only good memories from those tours. With all the bands we toured with, we had a very good time. I think it was a good thing for us to tour with bands that have some status in the scene. That way, we got to play in front of a lot of people on these tours.

The evolution into more melodies went on and one year later, it was time to enter the studio once again to record the third album Bloody Blasphemy.

- Yes, actually we wrote Bloody Blasphemy in the same way that we wrote The Grand Grimoire. It took us about four weekends of rehearsal to finish the songs. The album turned out to be a little faster and we made a big

improvement on the production. We did four tours for Bloody Blasphemy, two in Europe and one in America and Japan respectively. We did some good promotion for that album.

Last year, Cold Blood Industries released Ancient Ones, which is an album filled with demo-tracks and live-recordings. An excellent way for the new God Dethroned fans to check out their early steps.

The reason for Henry to release The Ancient Ones is that a lot of people were asking for the old demo tape, but it is of course since long sold out. This album is also for the people who don't know how the old God Dethroned sounded. Of course the three demo tracks Hordes of Lucifer, Cadavers and God Dethroned are on the album. There are also a few live tracks from a show in Holland when God Dethroned was supporting Gorefest and there is also the banned video Necromagnon on the CD, something a lot of people haven't seen I think.

Now lets talk about the reason I decided to do an interview for this issue of Amputation magazine, your brand new contribution to the death metal scene, Ravenous. The album was written by the band as a unit, although Henri is the leader and therefore also makes the final decisions.

Ravenous was written by the whole band, but Henri's writing was the biggest influence on the album. When we finished the recording of Ravenous, we were very pleased with it because all the songs turned out to be really great. We didn't know what the result would be when entering the studio, because all the solo's, melodies and lyrics were done in the studio.

These new songs are quite different from everything you've done before. I sense more thrash...

- Yes you might say so, but this was not done on purpose. We wrote the songs for Ravenous like we always write our songs. Everybody came up with a song or a few guitar riffs and out of them we built up the complete songs. As usual, it doesn't take us very long. That there are some more thrash riffs on this album is just because those riffs turned out to be the good ones.

The recording of Ravenous seems to have passed through as usual, but some problems occurred in the mixing-process.

We recorded Ravenous in the same studio where the other albums were recorded, which is Franky's Recording Kitchen. The album was produced by Berthus, who is also the owner of the studio. The recording did not take us very long, as the drums were recorded in five days and the following week we recorded guitars and bass. The solos, melodies and vocals took us another week or so. The mix, however did take a little longer than usual. After a week of mixing we had to start all over again and this time it worked out better. Especially when we removed the trigger from the snare drum, things were easier to mix.

I'm sure that I wasn't the only one who got surprised to find out that Tony Laureano (ex Angel Corpse) recorded the drums on Ravenous.

We've known Tony for a while, because we've toured with Angel Corpse. Tony was also the drum tech for Cannibal Corpse some times, and we've played with them a few shows. After we heard that Angel Corpse had split up, we asked him to record the album with us. We would

love to have him in the band as a real member, but he already has his obligations with Nile.

Yeah, but he is only playing with Nile while their drummer is recovering from his illness. He could become a regular member of God Dethroned once their drummer is back.

- Unfortunately not, but there is a chance that he will do some tours with us in the future. But we hope to find someone who has the right attitude to be a real member of God Dethroned.

I never found out what actually happened to your old drummer Roel.

- Roel couldn't combine his job, his private life and his other band Inhume with God Dethroned any longer. So he put himself for the choice and he decided to leave us. We finished the shows that we had on our program and that was it. We all wish him all the best for the future.

Once you've bought your own copy of Ravenous (and after reading this interview, I'm sure you all will run to your local dealer to get it), you'll also get the chance to check out God Dethroned's versions of Death's Evil Dead and Macabre End's Consumed By Darkness. Those songs will not be featured on any tribute-albums, and they're neither any kind of bonus-tracks for special editions of the album, so everyone will have them on their copy.

- Yeah, the two covers are recorded specially for Ravenous. We recorded Evil Dead because we played this song on a Chuck tribute concert. We all liked this song from the past so the choice was not that difficult. Consumed By Darkness is a song that Henri had on an album and we figured that the atmosphere that this song has fits real good with the songs we write, so that is the reason why we wanted to record it. When it come to tribute albums, I would like to be on a Black Sabbath tribute, but I think there are enough tribute albums at the moment so lets wait a while.

Your lyrics have always been pure blasphemy, and your hate against Christianity has not become any less over the years.

- Yes that is true, Henri always had this aversion against Christianity and this also counts for the rest of us. But you can't see it in a way that we are busy with this every hour of the day. What we try to do is to give the stories in the bible a bit more of a down to earth explanation. This has always been done with a great deal of black humor.

However you also write about other morbid stuff.

- The title track of Ravenous is about cannibalism and the lyrics were written after seeing the movie Ravenous. It is about a guy that eats human meat to grow stronger. It's a very sick story with the same dark humor we like. Jens, who studies psychology, also wrote a few lyrics about people that are mentally insane.

Soon you're gonna be on tour again, the No Mercy Festivals 2001 together with Sinister, Marduk, Vader, Mortician, Amon Amarth, Mystic Circle, And Oceans and Bal-Sagoth. Which countries are you gonna visit and what kind of expectations do you have on that tour?

- Well there are six shows in Germany, that is almost half of the tour. Further there are shows in Holland, France, Belgium, Italy, Austria and Switzerland. This tour is for us really good to do promotion for the album

because you get to play before a lot of people. There will be like 1000 people a night so that's always good. Still I think that nine bands on one tour is way to much.

All the people down in Europe don't know how lucky they are, getting chance to see so many great bands on the same night. It's also gonna be the first time they'll present the new material to the audience, 'cos they haven't played these new tracks live yet.

- No we haven't, because we didn't have a drummer. We have been searching for someone for a while to do the No Mercy festivals with, but in Holland we couldn't find anyone that was capable of doing it. Actually Janne from The Crown will handle the drums for us on The No Mercy festivals. In a few weeks, we will have some guys for audition though, so we will see what comes out of that.

As I already mentioned before, except for Roel you all have stuck together since the second chapter of the band. What is the secret for a band to stick together?

- I think that is something that is different for every band. For us, it's because we're all behind the things we do. We all can bring in our musical ideas and we respect each other for that. Beside, we don't see each other a lot outside of the band. We all have our own different interests, but when we come together as a band again we all have the same professional attitude.

Lately I've got the chance to check out some really good albums from Holland. Especially the new album from Thanatos, Angelic Encounters, is a great piece of music, but according to Beef, few of the new bands will make it.

- At the moment there are a lot of bands in Holland, but I don't know any band that is really new that is going to make it. There are some bands like Centurian and Severe Torture that already have an album out, you're going to hear from real soon again.

As I'm out of questions, I let Beef of the hook and wishes him the best in the future.

- We hope when we do a headliner tour we can come and play in Scandinavia.

I certainly hope that'll happen very soon.

Don't get deterred by the quite cliché-bandname Butchery, because behin it, you'll find yet another new, and very good death metal band from Sweden. With only one demo-tape on their account, they made a big impact on the scene and the Mad Butcher (singer Christer Elgh) is here to shed some light on the band.

BUTCHERY

Butchery was formed as late as autumn 1999 by Jonathan Gonzales and Juha Helttunen (both guitar), and Tobbe Israelsson on drums.

- Gonzales and Tobbe had a band called Demonio together. They were playing some kind of death/black metal, but the other members in the band were not serious at all and didn't show up for rehearsals or even studio-sessions. So they decided to start up something new instead, this time a pure death metal band. They got in contact with Juha as they had met him on different drunken occasions, and knew that he played guitar and was into metal. Then Juha took me along, as we are long time friends since we grew up in the same dump north of Karlskoga. Robert came to the band through a friend of ours.

Jonathan sang in the beginning, but soon Christer came in and took over the duties behind the microphone. Maybe Jonathan didn't manage to combine the deep growling with playing his guitar?

- I really don't know, but I guess that he felt that he only wanted to concentrate on the guitar. He was singing in their old band too, so maybe he was fed up with it.

After the arrival of bassist Robert Lundgren, the line-up was complete, and Butchery could record their first songs. However, those songs didn't fulfill the band's expectations and were never released.

- Those are the songs that should never been. At that time, many different stimulants were used and that really can be heard on the tape, if you know what I mean. Fylledöds (drunken death) as we named it. Still, we have been doing one of those songs (Dismembered By A Chainsaw which I wrote around 94/95) live sometimes. Anyway, that recording is pure shit, not worth wasting time on.

The next time Butchery booked a studio was in autumn 2000, and the recording they came out with was the base for this interview, namely the demo The Coming. There's a great portion of Florida in the music, above all Cannibal Corpse pops up in my mind as I listened to your songs, but I even sense some Slayer-riffing here and there.

- Yeah I guess you are right about the Florida-touch, but I also think we have some parts that are more similar to the old Swedish death metal sound. And for the Slayer-riffing, that might as well be true cause, as myself, Juha is also a great Slayer fan and he has composed the music on the demo-tape. Maybe the old unholly slayer-ghost has infected the material a bit. Anyway, we only take it as a big compliment!

I guess that melodies are banned in your rehearsal-room.

- I could only say that it depends on what you consider as melodies. I think we have melodies, but a country-singer should probably not agree. Melodies can be good if you use them the right way, like they're used by Dismember, who has a lot of melodies but still manage to capture the brutality. But there are also bands like In Flames who has overdone it into happy-lemonade-party.

What's spinning at your turntable at home these days? Are you guys open for any other music beside death metal?

The band as a whole are mostly into death metal, but also a lot of black, thrash and heavy metal are consumed. Speaking for Juha and myself, we're also into punk, but that's something the others aren't very fond of. While answering this interview, I'm listening to the latest Krabathor-album. Some other stuff that has been spinning lately are Insision (their promo 2000 is amazing, godly!), Morbid Angel, Mayhem, Kaamos and Maze Of Torment.

There are no lyrics printed in the booklet for The Coming, and one might wonder what the Butcher is growling about.

- Ok, first out is The Ancient Wrath, to unleash certain powers that dwells within everyone, which will result in the end of their Jesus Christ. Repeating Madness has the standard death metal lyrics: A schizophrenia type of person hearing voices commanding him to kill. Finally The Coming is about someone or something taking over everything, destroying and killing all in its way. Creation through destruction.

I'm only aware of one show that Butchery have played (the one with Throneaeon, Serpent Obscene and Legion in their native Karlskoga earlier this year), but I'm quite sure they must have played some gigs on other occasions..

- Well, our part of the Karlskoga gig was just crap. Some of us were a bit too drunk and the mixer-guy was an incompetent fucking idiot. You couldn't hear a thing either on stage or in the audience. Besides that particular gig, we have been playing in Växjö, Jönköping, Uppsala and Kumla. Out of those I think Växjö was the best. A sea of maniac headbangers and we also put up a great performance.

Way to go Växjö, I'm proud of you all! Next weekend, Butchery will be performing at the 2 heavy for U-festival here in Sweden. With some quite big names within the scene on the bill, this will probably be their real challenge.

- Well we have rehearsed quite much, so if we get a somehow proper sound, I hope it will turn out good. Our stage-time at the festival sucks though, as we are playing early at Saturday morning, which of course will mean that most of the people are sleeping away Friday's madness in their tents. Probably, some of us in the band will not be in the best shape either.

Any bands that you'd wish to check out there?

- I've stopped planning to see bands, because usually you're in the camping area with vomits in the hair, fucking and drinking instead. But it would be nice to see Nominon, Legion, Nifelheim, Hypnosia, Vomitory, Soulreaper and Necrophobic. Immersed In Blood are the band before us on stage so I'm gonna see them, which I think will be nice.

Just recently, I found out that a deal has been signed between the band and VOD records.

- Yepp, we have signed Krilles papers. It's for one album and then option for a second.

Were any other labels interested in Butchery, or was VOD the only one to offer you a deal?

- Well we didn't send the tape to so many companies at all. Instead we concentrated sending it to magazines. But there have been some other small companies interested. Personally I think we signed a bit too early.

Later this year, the result of their co-operation will be ready in the shape of a debut full-length album. Expect another dose of brutal death metal from Sweden.

- There will be 10 songs on the album, including some material from The Coming tape. Compared to the demo, it's going to be faster, and hopefully much sicker and rawer. Otherwise, we are mostly concentrated working on the 7"EP.

Yeah, I've heard something about this 7"EP. It's supposed to be released by a Swedish label, right?

- This single will be recorded in a local studio in the middle of June. It will feature the songs Towards Death's Majestic Throne, Broken Illusion and one more. We haven't decided which one yet. Probably it will be released later this year by Gothenburg label Downfall Records.

Where will you be recording these full-length then? I hope not in Black Lounge again, as the sound on the demo left quite much to wish for.

- We haven't decided which studio we will use yet. As I said, we are going to record the 7"EP in a studio here in Karlskoga, so if that one turns out good we'll maybe record the album there as well. About the sound on the

demo-tape, I actually think it's quite fitting to our band with a raw and filthy sound. Beside that, it's just a fucking demo-tape. The album would of course not turn out the same way even if we did it in the Black Lounge Studio. If you listen to proper albums recorded in the Black Lounge (Centinex, Uncurbed, Bombstrike), the sound is very good. We choose the Black Lounge because of how relaxed and easy it is to work with Kjellgren, the owner of the studio.

Are any of the members of Butchery involved in other bands or projects

- I'm also a member of a raw-punk band called Bombstrike, which will have an album out this summer. I guess you could say that Butchery is my main band. Even though Bombstrike has been around longer, I'm more involved with everything concerning Butchery, like promotion, doing interviews, sending letters, fixing gigs etc. I'm also more satisfied with both the lyrical and musical approach of Butchery. Juha is also playing in Headmans, which is a punk-rock kind of thing. But something strange happened with their singer, so that band is put on ice for the moment. In conclusion, yes, Butchery is the main band for all of us.

Time's out and the Mad Butcher needs to prepare himself for the big festival, which take place a few days after this interview. He still manages to do some promotion for the band, though.

- Thanks to you for this interesting interview. Those of you who want some good death metal should send 20 Sek/Nok, 4\$, 4£ or 10DM to our address. Check out the homepage at <http://www.butcher.com>. Death and misery!

The best Danish metal band at the moment is called Exmortem. I base this statement upon the release of their brand new album Berzerker Legions, which is an uncompromising, full speed death metal attack from the beginning 'til the end.

I got hold of Martin "Sigtir" Thim the day after Exmortem's show with Polish death metal legends Vader. The gig was a release-party, to celebrate their brand new album Berzerker Legions, and it seems to have been a successful evening.

- It was a cool show and a lot of people showed their support. This was our first live appearance with this line-up, but it went really great, and the people were very surprised that our new drummer was almost as fast as Reno. A lot of people even said that there is more energy in the band now!

How was the new material received by the audience, considering that the new album has not been officially released yet?

- It was received very well, but it would of course have been better if the CD had been out for a while. Still, I think that it was great and we look forward to play some shows when people have had a chance to listen to the album!

Berzerker Legions will be out on the 21st of May. How are you preparing yourselves for the big day?

- Well, right now I just got a hell lot of interviews to answer all the time, so I don't really think that much about it. But I look forward to see peoples reactions and how much this album can sell! So far, we have received really great response from the press, so I hope that we will take the next step with this album. Actually the 21st is today by the way!

What impressed me the most with Berzerker Legions was the very high tempo that is present during the whole record. It's full blast from the beginning until the end, yet without getting too monotonous and boring.

- It is very important that the tracks have a great flow and some great riffs, so that the songs don't become boring. I think that it's a big problem with a lot of metal bands, that their tracks become uninteresting and boring after a while. I think that this album grow instead and become more interesting actually! About the tempo, we have worked a lot on this and we reached our goal with this album. The next album will of course have as high a tempo as this one, but not all the time. The new stuff will have a few more mid tempo pieces... maybe.

The name Berzerker Legions showed up already in 1999, then as the name of Exmortem's half of the split 7"EP, which they shared with Impending Doom. Due to the fact that I don't own that particular 7"EP, nor have I ever heard it, I was curious on whether that material is a part of the new album.

- There is some old material on the new album. Some of it is actually from the beginning of 1999 and some is also

present on the 7", but in a slow version with other titles and so. The Berzerker Legions were only the title of our side of the 7", so there was no track called that at the time. I first made the lyrics in 2000.

Speaking of the old material, what did the earlier albums sound like, comparing to the new CD?

- They were slower and rather different. The first one sounded like a bulldozer. Really old school death metal. The second one, Dejected In Obscurity, was more technical and really brutal, but our drummer was more into weird bands like Cynic and the like, so there are too many fills and stuff all the time for my taste.

In the booklet, Sigtir states that he feels that they've finally, after many years of struggle, recorded the fast album that they always wanted. One might wonder what stopped them earlier, and his answer is rather simple.

- Differences within the band! We didn't want the same thing and didn't have the same vision for the band. So it, of course, helped a lot to get a drummer that wanted to play fast...all the time hehe!

Anders Lundemark is one of the most known persons within the Danish metal scene, and his name has been credited as the producer for this project. How much did the old Konkhra-veteran contribute to the final product?

- Everything was finished before we entered the studio! I made a few new harmonies and so and we changed a word or two in the lyrics, but that was also it really. Anders was more like coming with some input on the sound etc. It was actually mostly a guy called Bo that was the engineer. In other words, Anders didn't have anything at all to do with how our material is written or arranged!

All of the material was written by Sigtir and the other guitarist Kolle (the line-up on Berzerker Legions is completed with singer Simon Petersen and drummer Reno Kielerich). Are the other members just playing what this duo tells them?

- It has always been Kolle and me who came up with the riffs and mostly also the structure of the songs. I also write all the lyrics these days. But it's not really like a dictatorship, as Reno also had a word in the making of the structures on some of the tracks on the new album.

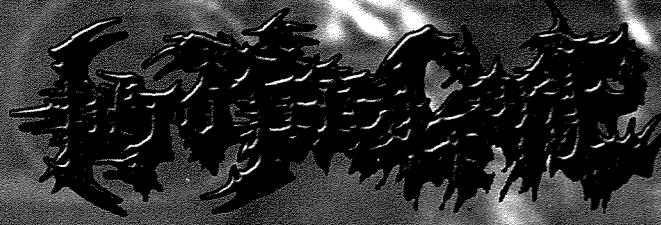
Let's talk about the line-up of Exmortem for a while. In the thank list, you welcome a guy called Michael as your new drummer (he's also stated as your drummer in the bio). Who's that guy and does that mean that Reno is history, as far as Exmortem concerns?

- Reno recorded the drums for the album, but while we were in the studio we decided to part ways. He is very focused on getting a career and stuff and I don't really care about all that. I don't want to rehearse for six hours a day. I want to have fun while playing music and it shouldn't be a work! Then I would kill my inspiration for sure, we have tried that! Our new drummer Michael fits better to the band in my eyes. It's more relaxed now and there is no more bad vibes and stuff like earlier. We are more like a unit now.

You might think that I forgot to state a bass player in the line-up above, but the case is that there really is no one who handles the four-string in this orchestra. In fact, they haven't had any bass-player for many years, and I wonder whether they might be a difficult bunch to work with.



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-I don't know if we are difficult to work with. We just haven't been able to find a cool bass player yet! It would be cool with a bass player, it helps a lot live I guess, but we will see if the right guy shows up.

Sigtyr recorded the bass on five of the songs on Berzerker Legions, while a guy called Martin Rosendahl recorded the other five.

-Martin is the singer and bass player for a Danish band called Corpus Mortale. It's an old band, but I guess they smoke too much weed to get an album out, heheh. They have been around for many years! If we get on a tour, he will probably help us out on the bass.

Besides the bass player problem, a whole lot of musicians have passed through the line-up of Exmortem, but they are quite satisfied with the situation they are in at the moment.

-Yeah I think this is the right line-up. But you never know what happens, do you? It's hard to tell when people loose their interest, because it cost a lot of work and time and some time people want to bang their girl a bit more, drink a few more beers and just relax. And then they quit, hehe. Anyway, I hope this will continue for a while and that we might even find that fucking bass player. I got in the band just before they changed the band name to Exmortem (They used Mordor in their early days - ed). That was in 1995, the only original member today is Kolle.

Almost every band I know of have fallen for the cyber-world and are having their own homepage on the internet. Exmortem is no exception. Their homepage is up, but it's just a beta-version. Many of us are wondering when the final version will be up and running, and what kind of stuff we can expect there.

-It's hard to say when it will be up, cause this is one more thing that I have to do and right now, I do interviews all the time. But I hope that the new pages will be finished soon!

It will be possible to order the merchandise there, so you should check it out. I have even talked to an old general in Russia about some damn hot Exmortem bazookas, so we will see! There will be some more material for people to download, some unreleased stuff and so on. The Internet is just a good way for people to check out a band before they order the CD etc. Instead of ordering something from a flyer that says: "this is the best band in the world... send cash!" I have also thought about making instructions for the perfect suicide and I know that you Swedish people like that!

We've all, on some occasions, bought stuff because of a flyer and ended up with disappointment, haven't we? The first Exmortem material was released on Euphonious (the debut album Labyrinths Of Horror and later on the above-mentioned follow-up Dejected In Obscurity). The 7"EP however, came out on Perverted Taste and now they belong to Hammerheart. Have you already noticed any difference with being on a bigger label?

-Better distribution (for the first time we will have distribution in the US), better promotion, better touring possibilities, better everything. And a LP version!

Well, enough said about Exmortem. After reading this interview, I'm sure you're all ready for some Danish death metal, so run to your record dealer to obtain your own copy of Berzerker Legions. One never knows when they start touring with this album.

-There are no plans yet, but the chances that something will come up during the summer are high I guess! Thanks a hell lot for this interview and the support! Remember to kick yourself on a daily basis!

Why should I?

DEMOS

BUTCHERY

The Coming...

Yes indeed, good old death metal is still being played in our oblong country. All the bands have not fallen victims to the melodic Gothenburg-style of "metal". The Karlskoga-boys starts with The Ancient Wrath a frenetic mayhem which last through the whole tape, which means the songs Repeating Madness and The Coming... Their material is a bit in the same direction as Cannibal Corpse, but they are also very well familiar with our own Swedish death metal history. I'm ready for another strike of Butchery-metal. (30Sek / 5US\$)

DIKTAT

Demo 2000

If you're into fast and brutal death metal the American style, then you should check out the new band from Paris called Diktat. Their music is full of tempo-shiftings and complex song-structures and might take a while to get into. Even though their technical compositions shows the skills of the musicians, it's not really my cup of tea. I think that it sounds too shattered and chaotic, however this is only the debut demo, and I'd like to see how they'll progress.

IN GREY

Mask

With roots in Goth metal, In Grey have taken their music a step further and created pretty easy-listening songs which easily sticks on ones mind. Clean vocals and talking is mixed with deep screams in a natural way and follows the changes in the music, which is closer to regular rock than metal. The three songs you'll find on Mask are probably nothing for a die-hard death metal fan, although ones who doesn't mind softer music will enjoy this one. (50Sek / 8US\$)

INSISION

Promo 2000

This demo arrived just a few days after the 6:th issue of Amputation was sent for printing, so I've had it for some time now. And it's been spinning frequently at my residence ever since. Their way of playing death metal is strongly influenced by the US scene, which means fast, fast music. There are four trax on this tape, and every one of them is a great performance of crushing brutality. I really don't need to say anything else. Just buy this demo.

KAAMOS

Curse Of Aeons

Good old-school death metal, mmm what a sweet melody. I can't stop kicking myself though for missing this band, which was formed three years ago, have released a promo and a 7"EP prior to this tape and live in the same city as I am. Anyway, few demo-bands have recently made such good impression on me and recorded such good material. I listened to Curse Of Aeons for two hours in a row when I got it, over and over again, and that should give you an idea about how good this actually is. Or maybe it only tells you how twisted I am.... If you grew up with Swedish death metal in the beginning of the last decade, you are gonna dig these four tracks (+ one short instrumental piece) that Kaamos offers. (30Sek / 5US\$)

KARNARIUM

Breaking The Manacles Of Malkuth

Karnarium have had their share of line-up problems, and since the last demo, 50% of the band has remained (Judgement and Funeral Whore). This duo, who also are the founding members of Karnarium, refused however to break the band up and recorded this new demo-tape. According to Funeral Whore, Karnarium was formed because of the lack of an old-school death metal band in Angered, just outside of Gothenburg. I guess they had enough of all the melodic "death metal" bands that grew like mushrooms after heavy rain everywhere, and they have stayed true to this style. The sound quality on this tape sux to say the least (even though it seems to have been one of the band's goals), and decimates the total grades of this recording. I think that is very unfortunate, as the material is far from bad.

MORBIFIK

Gradually Killed In Torture

From Indonesia comes this three-piece band and their tape concist out of 12 fast death metal songs. I can not say that I was too impressed by their work, however it's not completely crap. They have some pretty cool ideas and would win on being more selective with their material. It seems like they're recording every single riff they come up with. Quality before quantity is a saying that they should consider before they decide to record some new material. Then the grade would be higher than just average.

THANATOS

NECROPLASMA

Demo 2

I like primitive black metal, but then it has to be raw and simple, yet with a touch of originality. Necroplasma is pretty raw and simple, but their sound is way too common these days and the famous feeling "heard it before" appears almost immediately. Here and there, some melodies occurs within their evil compositions and occasionally I think they've done an OK job. Slaughter Of The Light and Awakening From Beyond are both quite decent songs, but they could've skipped the Venom cover Witching Hour. Or at least rehearsed it better before recording it. I like the singers screaming the best on this tape and would like to hear some more when Spinegrinder, Priestor Afa, Goat and Death Slaughter gets more tighter.

NEFARIUM

Demo 1999

After an intro with some backward-messages, the first out of two songs on this demo gets started. The black metal music of these Italian's is (just like the case is with most black metal bands these days) absolutely nothing I haven't heard before. It's scary how predictable it is. Fortunately, they don't use any female vocals, which is a good thing but the music is still quite boring. The grades gets even lower, considering the incredibly stiff programming of the drum-machine.

RAVENS OVER GOMORRAH

Darkly Melisma

I've tried and tried, but I can't find any good stuff on this demo. Well, one riff in the middle of the second track Kingdom Beneath The Wolf is quite decent, as well as the acoustic piece at the end called Ballad Of The Left Hand Path but that's it. These boys have made some brave efforts to create cold black metal but they've failed and the whole demo sounds very amateurish. Not only is the material weak, also the performance by the band is way below good and they should have rehearsed more before recording this tape. However, Darkly Melisma has been out for a while, so you might want to get in touch with Mike to see whether they have some new material available. Also check out his Black Death Distro with tons of underground stuff.

SCURVY

Demo 1

On the last Wacken Open Air festival, a friend of mine received a copy of this particular demo, and it spent a whole lot of time spinning in the cassette-player in the car on our way back home to Sweden. Ever since then, I've been saying to myself that I need to get a copy for myself, but before I managed to get my lazy ass moving, the guys

sent me a copy for review. Well, as you might have understood already, this is in my opinion a really good tape, consisting of four death metal trax in which the guitarist occasionally takes over the vocal duties, and screams like Corporate Death himself. A big part of the greatness of this demo are the lyrics, in which they sing about a guy who loses his job and starts killing his work-buddies (Forklift Massacre), about the guy that comes to take the life out of old people (Grandpa Reaper) and what can happen when your sideburns starts growing inwards ((In) Sideburns). Definitely a tape you shouldn't miss!

VISCERAL BLEEDING

Internal Decomposition

Visceral Bleeding is a Swedish band, however their musical influences come from the other side of the Atlantic Ocean. On this four-track CD, one can check out their fast US death metal where the riffs and tempos are constantly shifting, accompanied by the obligatory ultra grunting vocals. Visceral Bleeding composes their music technical and every now and then it works out pretty good, but they are not breaking any new grounds, so don't expect some "new" music. But for dedicated fans of this style, who collects anything within this kind of music they can get their hand on, Internal Decomposition might be a good investment.

DRACO HYPNALIS / ROMANTIC LOVE

Split demo

My first reaction on Draco Hypnalis's music was "those are some incredibly irritating vocals". I got the feeling that it didn't matter how the music sounded, because as long as the singer is interfering with his black metal screams, he's ruining everything. When I tried to ignore the vocals, I found a quite melodious black / heavy metal with the compulsory keyboards, with the guitar as the main instrument. The guitarist is also the one in the band who's done the best job on Draco Hypnalis's side of this tape (which they call Nobleness Of The Storm-Gatherer), and he has together with the bassist composed some pretty complicated music. Unfortunately, their efforts left me untouched. The name Romantic Love doesn't go well with Cannibal Corpse and Mortician T-shirts, so I was quite curious on what kind of music they'd come up with. It turned out that death metal is their style, but my luck didn't last long and soon the first strange jazz-like riff turns up on what they call Hopeless Anxiety. Just like Draco Hypnalis, their music too is technical and they are no bad musicians but the same thing goes for them as for their split-friends. You won't exactly go and hum on their songs on the way to the bus-stop. And for crying out loud, change the name immediately!



Holland has over the years produced some very good death metal. Much of that is thanks to Thanatos, a band that was among the first to introduce this noble art in the marihuana-country almost 20 years ago. I had a chat with Stephan Gebedi, who is the brain behind Thanatos, about their native scene, the reforming of the band and of course their brilliant new album Angelic Encounters.

Thanatos was formed as one of the first death / thrash metal band in Holland already back in 1984. Unlike many other artists who despises their early recordings, Stephan still likes the two albums that they released in the beginning of the 1990's, Emerging From The Netherworlds and Realm Of Ecstasy.

- I still like the music on those albums. Of course the production sounds a bit old now, especially on the first album, but I'm still proud of those albums. Each album represents a certain era of the band and as a matter of fact, I still like Realm Of Ecstasy very much. Even sound-wise it's still a cool album

Both albums were quite successful at the time of their release, however when Realm Of Ecstasy was finished, Stephan decided to split the band up.

- First of all the record company (Shark Records) did us more harm than good. They didn't do any promotion, no advertising, no payments, nothing! Besides, they had a very bad relationship with the German press so it was hard to get into the German magazines. We also had some problems within the band because certain band members were too much into partying and too little into making music. I figured it was better to stop back then!

In 1999, Thanatos finally raised from the dead to once again be a part of the Dutch death metal movement.

- I wanted to reform the band earlier but I couldn't get the rights back of the first two albums. In 1999 I finally

bought back the rights and then there were no more obstacles to reform the band.

Did you ever consider any of the original members of Thanatos for the reforming?

- No not really. First of all, we had good reasons for the split in 1992 and besides that those guys are no longer into metal so I didn't bother to ask them

Shortly after the announcement that the band is alive again, a deal was signed with Hammerheart records.

- I contacted a few labels and one of the first that reacted was Hammerheart. At first I only wanted them to re-release the old albums, but then they asked us to record a brand new one, so I had to get off my lazy ass and start writing some more songs for a new album!

Speaking of re-releasing the old albums, Hammerheart did make Emerging From The Netherworlds and Realm Of Ecstasy (originally released in 1990 and 1992 respectively) once again available last year. If I'm not mistaken, some bonus-tracks also appeared on those albums.

- Yes we put all our official demo tapes (four to be precise) as bonus tracks on those albums. Hammerheart also did a new lay out and inlay for the CD-booklet and which look better than the original booklets. The front-covers were kept the same though.

And finally, at the end of year 2000, the new album Angelic Encounters was released. An album that Stephan and his comrades are quite satisfied with.

- We recorded the album during two weeks in the Excess studios in Rotterdam and we spent one more week mixing and mastering the CD. All in all I'm pretty much satisfied with the album. The songs are strong and the vocals and guitar-sound are better than ever. I think that the sound on the drums could have been better though, as the base drum and snare drum sound too much alike and the sound is too digital. We'll have to work on that next time, but in general I'm happy with the album

Stephan has written all the music, as well as the lyrics for the new album, and for a while I thought him to be a frigid dictator who doesn't let anybody to get involved in the composing.

- Hahaha! Yes of course! The other guys are just too lazy to write more stuff. I hope that especially our guitarist Paul will come up with some more material for the next album. This time it just simply happened this way. I started writing new songs before the line up was completed and Aad and Theo play in other bands as well so they don't have the time to write songs for Thanatos.

Not only new material is present on the album, as The Howling and Speed Kills are both old songs.

- The reason for the re-recording of these old tracks was to show everybody that we haven't changed our style drastically since the beginning. Basically we still play the same kind of music as in 1984, but of course it sounds better and we've learned to play better. Basically it's still the same though. No one can say that we've changed our style or followed trends since we started 17 years ago. We're true to our old death/thrash sound!

Hammerheart is one of those labels that's still pressing their releases on both CD and vinyl. Angelic Encounters is no exception.

- Yes, a limited number was pressed on vinyl (500 or 1,000 I'm not really sure). The album has a gatefold sleeve and looks really awesome. I love vinyl releases especially because of the packaging. Sound-wise, I prefer CD's but vinyl looks 10,000 times better!

In the booklet for my copy of the album, there are the lyrics for Massacre's old hit Corpse Grinder, however the song is not on the album.

- That song is only on the digipack version and on the vinyl version. Hammerheart only printed one version of the booklet, which isn't very clever I think, although the lay out and the artwork of the new album rules!

So, the album's been out for a few months now. Have you started to write any new material yet?

- Yes I've been working on new songs already and I have idea's for about like four or five songs. Paul has also finished a song, so I guess we'll really start putting the songs together this summer. We're not sure yet on which label we'll release the new CD on though. Hammerheart is still an opportunity but if other labels are interested, we will talk with them too, as long as they also want to release a vinyl version and have proper distribution and promotion.

A tour to support Angelic Encounters would be a proper thing to do, however Thanatos have not had the luck on their side when it comes to live-activities.

- We were supposed to go on tour with Behemoth in November last year and then there were plans to go on tour with several other Hammerheart bands in may 2001. Unfortunately, neither of those tours did happen, but maybe this fall or after the next album it will work out for us. We'll see.

Still, some shows have been played in their native

Holland and some of its surrounding countries, in front of appreciating audience.

- We have played a lot of shows already in Holland, Germany and Belgium and so far, the response was quite good. People seem to enjoy the new material as well as the old shit we play. By the way, on may 26th we'll play the Fuck The Commerce festival in Germany!

Do you, during your live-performances, also play any of the old tracks?

- Yes we play a couple of songs from both of the old albums, like War, Outward Of The Inward and Jesus Wept.

Your "new" bassist Theo is besides Thanatos also playing in Houwitser and Judgement Day. How are his other bands doing?

- Theo is no longer in Judgement Day, but Houwitser is doing very well. They just signed to Osmose!

The other members of Thanatos also have other bands on the side.

- Yes, Aad is still in Sinister and also in Houwitser and Paul is also in Cremation (he's the singer/guitarist in that band).

So, is Thanatos the main band for the four of you?

- It was our main goal that all bands would be equally important. For Aad and Theo, sometimes Houwitser or Sinister will have the biggest priority and sometimes Thanatos. If someone can't put enough time and energy into Thanatos anymore, then it's time to look for another solution, but this far everything's going pretty well.

As stated above, Stephan has been a part of the underground for a very long time and has roots in the 80's death / thrash scene. I was curious of the opinion of a man with such history on the different styles of metal that are played these days, like the melodic stuff that's played by many bands in Sweden, the guttural death metal from the US etc.

- In the 80's, the underground scene was more like one big family and there was more originality among the bands. Nowadays there are too many bands around, but on the other hand the musical and technical level of most bands is much higher now. Personally I like the US death metal style very much, although a lot of the American bands sound too much alike and are a bit too one-dimensional for my taste. The Swedish melodic death metal is not my cup of tea either. I prefer bands that still have a certain touch of originality like Angel Corpse, Vital Remains, Monstrosity, Nile and of course Morbid Angel, but also stuff like Soulreaper and Necrophobic.

I think that lately, some great albums have been released in Holland, like for instance the new album from God Dethroned Ravenous. I was asking Beef from God

Dethroned about the Dutch death metal scene when I interviewed him, and he thought that there are in fact very few new bands in your country that are worth any attention.

- I think Beef has been sleeping the last couple of years! Apart from the older bands like God Dethroned, Thanatos and Sinister, new bands like Houwitser and Severe Torture have released very good albums. I think God Dethroned is a very good band, but there are a lot of other bands in Holland that are very good as well. The Dutch scene is becoming a strong scene again so Beef, wake up man!

Before I say goodbye to Stephan, he reveals that soon you're not only gonna be able to listen to their albums, but you will also have the possibility to check out their ugly faces on the TV.

- We've just completed a video clip for the song In Utter Darkness. It will be on TV-shows throughout Europe and you can see a part of it on our websites.

SCURVY

Forklift Massacre, Grandpa Reaper, (In) Sideburns and Deathwish are four reasons why you should buy Demo 1 from Stockholm's Scurvy. After I got hit by their grinding death metal, I decided to help them spreading their name a bit and one day in late April, guitarist Johan Wallin was put against the wall and forced to answer some of my questions.

Let me start off this interview by complimenting you on your debut demo. Every single one of the four songs is a true hit.

- Thanks a lot man! It feels very good hearing that from you, and we are also satisfied with that demo. The response has been great! We have received great or good reviews in nearly all the zine's we have sent it to, and the demo has been spread in over 1300 copies so far.

The line-up is completed with bass-player/singer Fredrik and drummer Martin. Even though the demo is the first presentation of the band's material to the underground scene, they've been around for a while.

- We started Scurvy in the summer of 1998. The line-up was the same then as now, but completed with one more member that played guitar and screamed with high vocals. He lost interest in the band after a few months though, so I took over his screaming and started to play all guitars by myself.

And besides Scurvy, the three musketeers are busy with other bands as well.

- Yes, all of us have played, and in some cases still are playing, in different constellations. Martin used to play in a death metal band called Patholog and he's still playing in Slaganfall, which is a crust-core band. Fredrik used to play metal in Myhistore, and he and I played heavy metal in Gallow. I play in Repugnant as well as in Goatsodomizer. The bands that still exists are Slaganfall and Repugnant, although it is questionable whether Slaganfall exists anymore. I really don't know and I doubt that they even know themselves.

Even though the debut demo was a big success (as an underground demo, that is), the boys in Scurvy has not just laid back and with satisfaction enjoyed what they've created. New songs have been written and recorded and a couple of new releases have already been planned.

- Yep, we sure have. In fact we recorded seven new songs in April 2001, to be released on a split LP which we will be sharing with the German band Entrails Massacre. T.V.G records will release the LP in July this year. The songs are of course in the same vein as before, that is death

metal with lots of grinding madness! We are not totally satisfied with this recording, neither sound-wise nor performance-wise, but some of the songs turned out great anyway so check it out for a dose of lethal death/grind!

The combination of deep growls and high screams (and in some way even the music) reminds me a bit of Macabre.

- I guess you could say that Macabre is a very big influence for us, especially concerning my vocals, and to some extent also in the musical part. But I feel that we have a rather "scurvy-sound" that people will recognize, which includes lots of different influences. We take influence from many bands such as Macabre, Impetigo, Brutal Truth (Extreme Conditions.), Terrorizer, Napalm Death, Mortician, Repulsion, Autopsy, Carcass (Reek Of Putrefaction and Symphonies Of Sickness) and also some Swedish bands like Grave, Entombed, Dismember, Carnage, Vermin (Scum Of The Earth - demo) and many others. All of us also listen a lot to the old thrash/death bands of the 80's, like Death (Scream Bloody Gore and Leprosy), Slayer, Sodom and so on, and I think you can hear a bit of all these mentioned bands in our music.

Sure, if you listen carefully you will find the influences from all those bands. However, some are stronger than others and I get the feeling that for being a Stockholm-band, the Scurvy sound is more American.

- That is actually something I've never heard before! Well, there's a first time for everything.

- People have said that our music has ingredients of the Sunlight bands and even some thrash riffs, but American, I don't know. That depends on how you mean. If you mean American the way of Terrorizer, Brutal Truth, Impetigo and so on, I get what you mean, but if you mean American the Dying Fetus, Internal Bleeding or even Morbid Angel and Deicide way, I don't think we sound a lot like that.

Yes, I meant the old and classic American bands. You sure don't sound like the typical 1991 - Stockholm - band.

- Sure bands like Suffocation, Cannibal Corpse have had quite a large impact on us but I don't know and I don't really care either. We sound like we sound, may it be American, European or fucking Turkish. That's not for me to decide.

I'm not saying that you have to decide anything, that was just a matter of opinion from me. Anyway, since you seem to be so influenced by the old, classic bands, do you think that there are still good death metal albums released nowadays? Or do you only listen to the old classic records?

- Of course there are good and great albums released these days, but mostly by old bands that have existed for a long time or already released albums in the past. I can't come up with many new bands in the death genre that have released good albums. Some smaller demo bands that I'm sure will release great albums when they get there are Insision, Butchery and Kaamos, all three from Sweden. In the gore/grind-core genre there are many great bands out there like Morbid Savouring (Fin), Machetazo (Spain), Sublime Cadaveric Decomposition (Fra), Afterblast (Ger) and many more. But that's not really death metal, so I guess that's out of the question? Some older bands that releases great records these days are Macabre, Vomitory, Deranged, Nunslaughter and some others. Take notice that since you asked about Death metal I have only mentioned that. There are lots of great heavy metal, black metal, crust-core, thrash and whatever that is also worth noticing, but that is a completely different thing.

Yeah, the list can go on, and on, and...

Personally, I find it harder and harder to sell Amputation magazines for every new issue. People don't seem to be interested in discovering new bands, instead they rather buy stuff from already known artists, which unfortunately mostly are new power-metal bands. When I offered Amputation mag #6 to a guy at a death metal gig here in town, he looked at the front page and asked me who Immolation were. He'd never heard of them. He was wearing an old Morbid Angel shirt, so I figured he'd know what it's all about, but no, no, no. He probably borrowed it from his older brother. I've seen Johan walking around on various gigs here in Stockholm, trying to sell Scurvy demos as well and it seems we are all in the same boat.

- I know what you mean. It's not easy trying to promote your band/zine in the underground when people don't want to support it and be a part of it. But I must say that it's better now than maybe two or three years ago, I think. Nowadays there are at least some people that buy the stuff, but you really have to shove it up their ass for them to take notice about it and then maybe they'll buy it. If you would just stand with a merchandise stand no one would give a fuck about it, unless you're already on Metal Blade and have released 10 albums. I think it's important that you go and talk to people and convince them why they have to buy this stuff and then maybe they'll do it. Anyway, it sucks but that's reality here in Sweden. I can understand that not all people buy every demo that's available and so on, but I can not understand that people are too lazy to come around when there's some cool metal show in town. That's a fucking disaster to me! For me, that's the most fun thing in the underground, going to cool shows and meeting nice people that has the same interest as you. Not fucking sit at home, listening to the latest Edguy record and pretend to be a hardrocker.

Speaking about gigs, has Scurvy been on the stage yet? I can't recall seeing any posters advertising for Scurvy-gigs.

- Yes, we have played some gigs. I believe we've done five gigs here in Stockholm and one in Gothenburg. All of them have been rather well attended, and mostly there is a

lot of moshing and banging. We love to play live and always search for new shows. Anyone interested in arranging a show, drop me a line and we'll work something out! We play for free. Travel-money is always cool but not necessary, but a place to sleep and some cool people to booze with will usually do! We have played our own material and also covers of bands like Mortician, Macabre, Sodom, Napalm Death, Terrorizer, Joel-bitar etc.. Bands that we have played with this far are Coercion, Pagan Rites, Deathforce, Regurgitate, Kill, Insision, Soils Of Fate, Undercroft, and maybe some more. I guess you'll have to keep your eyes more open about the gigs man! Ha ha...

Or maybe you have to do a better job advertising for the gigs.

When reading the lyrics that are printed in the cover of the demo, one understands that Scurvy is a bunch of guys trying to have as fun as possible. My first thought was "These guys don't seem to take the band too seriously".

- Of course we are serious. Very much indeed, but in my opinion being serious about a band is not the same as having serious lyrics (death, Satan, tears, or whatever), or looking cool at band photos. Serious for me is to promote your band in every fucking way there is, and to rehearse often in order to get better at handling your instruments and writing songs. We rehearse as often as possible and I always have Scurvy in the back of my head, thinking of new ideas for lyrics, riffs, covers or whatever. We are a serious band with not so serious minds. And of course we are trying to have as fun as possible. Isn't that what you're supposed to do when you're playing in a band? It's not a god damn job or something.

The demo is dedicated to Charles Bronson, and I guess that the last track Deathwish also is dedicated this old karate-hero.

- It's Fredrik who is the real Bronson-maniac of us all. He's mean, he's bad, he's Bronson!! That should say it all.

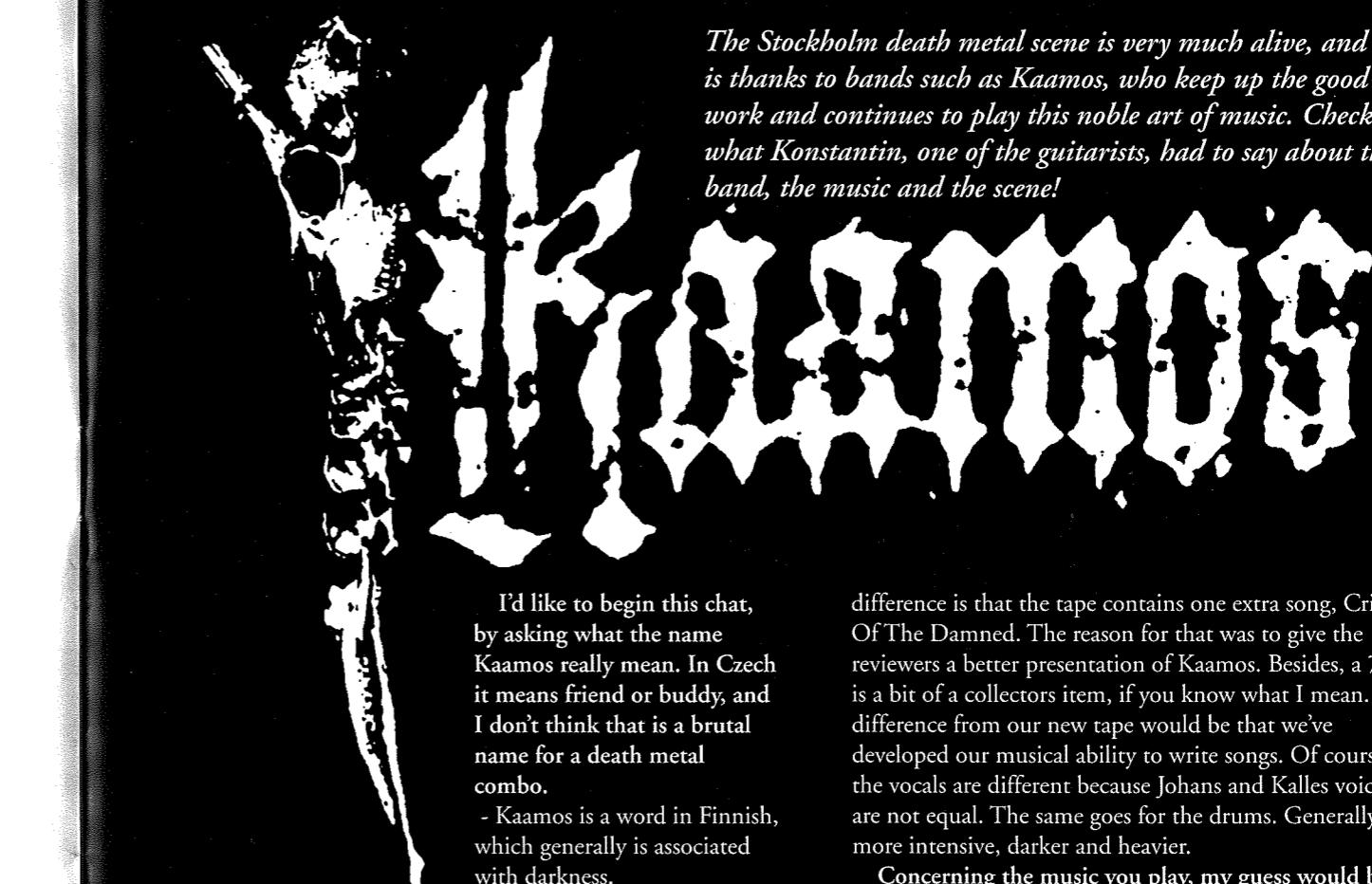
Yeah, now I'm perfectly enlightened about the greatness of Mr. martial arts... And as I'm running out of questions, I'd better end this interview right here. You all should send a few \$\$ to Johan and order their demo before it's sold-out. If you ever attend a metal show here in Stockholm, I'm sure you'll stumble upon him, as he is strolling among the people with a bag of Scurvy-stuff. Then you can buy their merchandise in person.

- Thanks a lot Micke, for this interview. We appreciate your support! Amputation is a great zine that everyone should lay their hands and stinking feet on!

You heard the man. Send me your money!

- Order our demo for 4 US\$ or the same in any currency. We also have cool Forklift Massacre - t-shirts for 10 US\$. Those are black shirts with 2-sided print and 2 colors and they are available in all sizes. Check out our upcoming split 7" and split LP. The 7" will be available from us but the LP will only be available from the label. Write to T.V.G records for further information. Both split's should be out in July 2001. Support the chaos!

The Stockholm death metal scene is very much alive, and that is thanks to bands such as Kaamos, who keep up the good work and continues to play this noble art of music. Check out what Konstantin, one of the guitarists, had to say about the band, the music and the scene!



I'd like to begin this chat, by asking what the name Kaamos really mean. In Czech it means friend or buddy, and I don't think that is a brutal name for a death metal combo.

- Kaamos is a word in Finnish, which generally is associated with darkness.

More scientific, it is a phenomenon, which means that the sun doesn't manage to make it over the horizon and leaves a place in darkness for several days. This occurs in the wintertime and is a phenomenon that can be experienced in most northern parts of Finland. One can take advantage of it as it leaves an inspirational flow to ones mind.

This guy seems to be one deep individual. Anyway, beside Konstantin, three other individuals make the line-up complete. Drummer Chris Piss is according to the guitarist one hell of a drummer and generally a funny guy. The second guitar is handled by Nicklas, who is a huge nihilist. Last, but certainly not least, there is the frontman Kalle, who also plays the bass. I assume that Kaamos have, as most other bands, had their share of line-up changes.

- Yes, we sure have. From the beginning, Kaamos contained only of members from A Mind Confused. After a while, they started to leave the band one after another. Johan left first and was replaced by Kalle, who does a huge job as our front man. The same thing with Thomas, who's position has been filled with Chris Piss, an outstanding drummer.

Still Kaamos is not the only band for its members.

- Kalle plays in Revokation, which he did already before he joined Kaamos. Nicklas plays in Serpent Obscene, which Chris Piss also does, however I'm not sure whether he is a regular member or just a session-drummer for them. I'm sure I'll notice that in the near future.

The only previous releases that have the name Kaamos on them are one promo-tape and a 7"EP. How does the old material differ from the new demo Curse Of Aeons?

- It's true that we released a promo and a 7"EP, but not many people know that those two are the same recording. It's just available on two different formats. The only

difference is that the tape contains one extra song, Cries Of The Damned. The reason for that was to give the reviewers a better presentation of Kaamos. Besides, a 7"EP is a bit of a collectors item, if you know what I mean. The difference from our new tape would be that we've developed our musical ability to write songs. Of course, the vocals are different because Johans and Kalles voices are not equal. The same goes for the drums. Generally it's more intensive, darker and heavier.

Concerning the music you play, my guess would be that good old Swedish death metal is spinning quite frequently at the member's homes.

- Yeah, one could say that. But to say that it's the only thing we're listening to would not be correct.

So how would you say the Stockholm and Swedish death metal scene is doing in the year 2001?

- That's one of those eternal questions. Of course there are some really good death metal bands from here, I'm thinking of Revokation, Repugnant, Serpent Obscene and Vomitory etc. The only problem is that there's constantly so much hypocrisy going on. Especially here in Stockholm, we're so spoiled when it comes to gigs, which results in people standing still and observing the show very critically. You can't be happy from a gig you've attended, since everybody plays is bands and gets critical as soon as they see something that's really good. If you go just outside of the big cities, people gets satisfied only for being able to go to a gig and see a band they like performing live, and they show it.

All the songs on Curse Of Aeons are fast ones, (except the instrumental song). Does a death metal song have to include speed?

- No, it doesn't but when it comes to Kaamos, it's really our style. Personally I like it intensive and fast but it needs to be well arranged and thought out. Otherwise, it will only be fast but without any point. We have a few slower songs as well, such as Cries Of The Damned and a new one that we're working on at the moment.

Does melodies and death metal go well together then?

- Absolutely, if it's done with finesse as Dissection did it. Still there are way too many bands out there, who can't do it, if you'd ask me. One can not let the melodies take over the whole song, because you don't want it to end up being a fucking schlager-song.

Kaamos was formed back in 1998, yet only a handful of shows have been played and I don't think any of them has taken place outside of Stockholm. I bet you're ready to spread your music outside of our capital-city.

- We've only played four gigs actually. Still, we have played outside of Stockholm. We played in Örebro with Vomitory. We'd really like to play more outside of Stockholm, but it's tough. Having in mind we haven't released a full-length album yet, we're not too attractive for the club-owners. We'd probably not gather a big audience, comparing to a band that has released an album but sux. Anyway, that's what I'm suspecting. I hope that will change though.

At the end of April, you played again here in Stockholm. This time with Throneaeon and Vomitory, according to me two of the best death metal bands this country has to offer at the moment.

- I know, I was there.

Well, so was I but I was hoping you could give me some comments on that gig. Anyway, you were the smallest band, as both Vomitory and Throneaeon both have released albums, but you're set was the best. More talk in-between the songs, and some blood is always right. A band can have good songs, but if they're just standing still on stage and play the songs, it's like getting ripped off. One might as well stay at home and listen to the albums.

- Thanx for the compliment!

You're welcome. You also managed to squeeze in a Terrorizer-cover.

- Yes, we did Fear Of Napalm. They're not exactly gods for us, but we wanted to do a cover of a band that not many have done before. It's actually the only cover we've done with Kaamos.

That's not completely true; Zombie Ritual was put on tape while Curse of Aeons was recorded.

- Yeah, but that song was recorded during quite comic circumstances, and it's reserved for our private parties only, hahaha. It's really funny. Other than that, we're not really a band that does many covers. We have our own songs to concentrate on.

So what's going on with new material?

- It looks really good. We are working on three songs at the moment, but neither lyrics nor names are available yet. It's gonna take some more time before we enter a studio though.

I guess I'll have to patiently await the new material. Is there any chance you won't have to release the new stuff by your selves?

- Quite many labels have gotten in touch with us actually, but until now we have turned down six offers I think. At the moment, there are a few labels we are negotiating with, but I don't want to say anything else at this stage. We'll just have to wait and see what happens.

Alright then. Those of you who don't own a copy of Curse of Aeons should immediately obtain one, and the rest of us will look out for the new material. Also check out their T-shirts, which are available from the contact-address as well.

One of the, if not THE, biggest names within the Peruvian death metal scene is Lima's Mortem. They started their activities already back in 1986, and the fact that they are still around, playing the same kind of music that they once started with, shows the passion they have for death metal. Here's how guitarist Fernán Nebiros answered my questions.



The sound of Mortem is quite seldom these days. It's the old style of death metal that's typical for South America.

- Yes, I agree. Although I think we have several influences from many bands from all over the world. But yes, I would say that our sound is South-American. We focus on true feeling and uncontrolled brutality rather than cold technicality.

Thinking of the music you play, you are very devoted to the old school of death metal. Do you think that there is still good music released nowadays, or do you only listen to the old classic albums?

- We listen mostly to classic stuff, but we do like some newer bands. For example, we like Brazilian bands like Krisiun, Rebaellum and Abhorrence, as well as Centurian, Hate Eternal, Diabolic, etc, etc. We also liked Angelcorpse a lot.

Well, seems like me and Fernan have similar taste in music. Too shame that Angelcorpse had to quit some time ago. So what do you, for instance, think of the melodic type of death metal, the so-called Gothenburg-style? Can you even call it death metal, you think?

- Sometimes it's a bit too melodic for our taste. We like the rawer, right-in-your-face sheer brutality of the predecessors. Modern bands seem to put too much emphasis on subtleness rather than brutality. We're definitely not into that.

Let's take a look at the history of this band. As I already wrote above, Mortem was formed way back in 1986 by Alvaro Amduscias on drums/vocals and Fernán Nebiros who then played all guitars. What was it like to start a death metal band in Peru back then?

- It was great, but at the same time, it was tough. We lacked of adequate equipment and we couldn't find any suitable members for the band. It was just a two-piece band. We tried several musicians but at the end, we decided to record our first rehearsal tape with just the two of us. That was in 1987. Later, in 1988 we found other members and finally, in 1989, with a stable line-up, we

recorded our first demo.

As a total, four demos were released, but they weren't very well spread. At least not the first couple of them.

- No, not really. We didn't do the right promotion due to lack of money and possibilities. Aside from that, there's the fact that South-American bands did not seem to interest too many zines or labels. The first demo had just a b/w cover and the second one had a very badly produced sound. Our third demo from 1992 was our first studio demo and we started promoting it in a more appropriate way.

The lyrics on the first rehearsals were all written in Spanish, however from the first demo and forth, everything's been written in English.

- We used some lines in Spanish on our debut album Demon Tales too, but we choose English in order to spread our music to other countries. When I listen to a band I also try to get into their lyrics, but if they're in, say, Norwegian or Swedish, then I don't understand them. I would hardly listen to a band whose lyrics I don't understand. We feel the same way about our lyrics.

Demon Tales was released by a local, Peruvian label called Coyote/Huasipungo Records. They didn't do much for the band though, and didn't last too long in the business either.

- Coyote records was a very unprofessional label. They pressed 100 copies or less of the album. They did a very poor promotion in South-America and no promotion at all for the rest of the world. The label passed away right after they released the album.

Lucky for all the Europeans that later on it was re-released by Merciless Records.

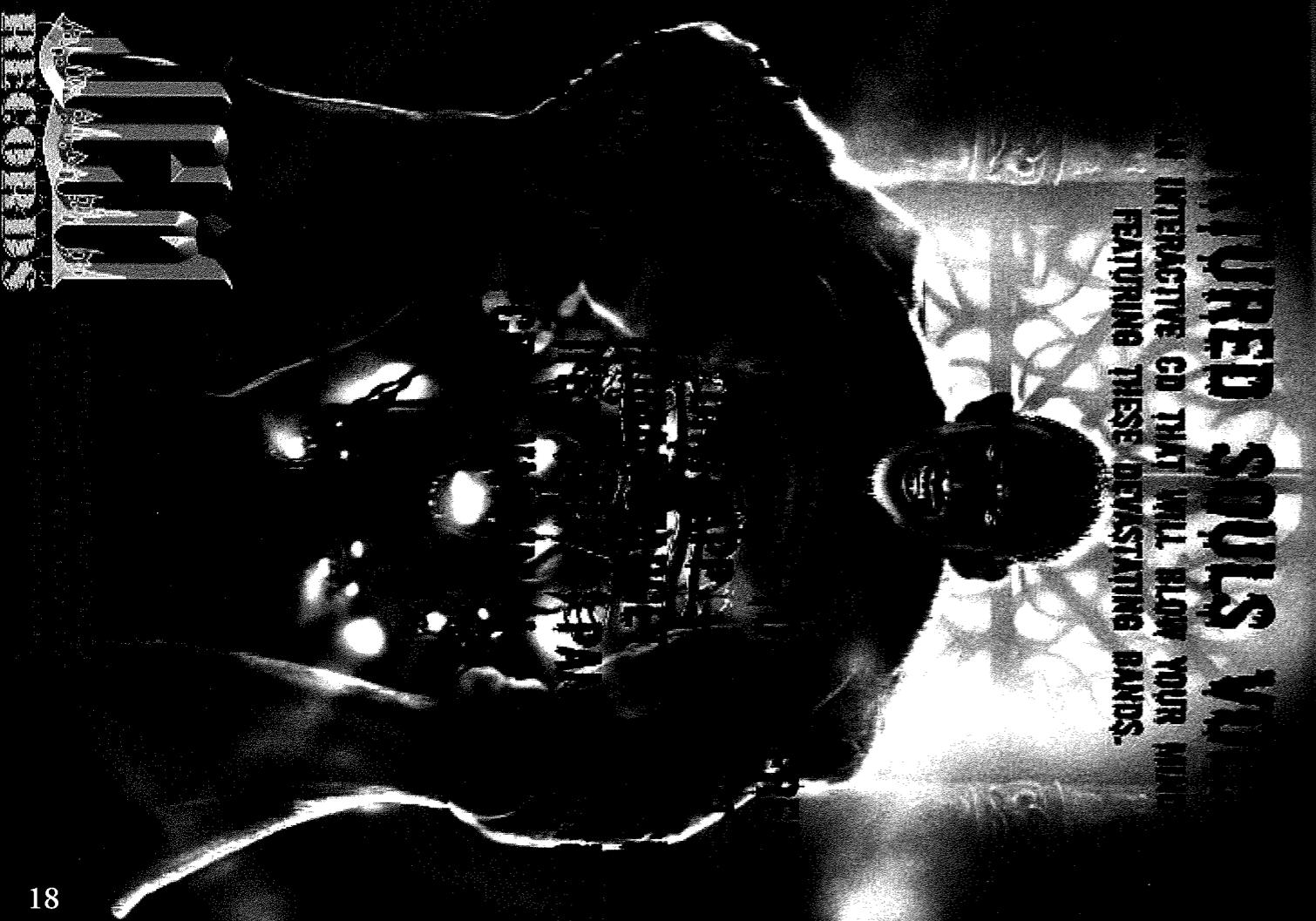
- Volker from Merciless contacted me back in 1993, after listening to our demos from 1992-1993. He ran a distro back then. He contacted us again in 1995, when he had already released a couple of German bands on his label. When he heard our new material on CD, he offered us to re-release it on CD and vinyl. We liked the idea and we have released three albums on that label now.

The contacts with Merciless resulted in a two-album deal, and a few years later, in 1998 to be precise, The Devil Speaks In Tongues was released. This album is available on cool picture LP, limited to only 333 copies, directly from Merciless.

- Yes, we took some time to arrange the 11 tracks for our second album. We also used some old demo tracks for this production.

And not only for that production, but more about that later. Finally we've reached last year, when your newest album Decomposed By Possession was released.

- We used some of the unedited riffs we had written before to create new songs and we came up with nine tracks plus two covers. Those are Crypts of Eternity from Slayer and Satan's Curse from Possessed. The covers are only featured on the LP version. We had some problems during the recording process, as one of the guitar tracks was lost and we had to record it all over again. It's always a pain to try to get a decent sound at a Peruvian studio.



As we've already mentioned, the previous albums contain some old material. During the recording of *Decomposed By Possession*, Mortem once again dug deep into their archives to pick up some older stuff.

- We like to use old material in contrast to the new tracks, to see for ourselves how much we have preserved the original essence of the band. That's very important to us. We had much fresher ideas back then but we, of course, have plenty of new ideas for the times to come.

I noticed that your founding member, the drummer Amduscias, has left the band.

- Amduscias is my brother and ever since he left the band he's been co-writing songs with me. As you said, he was a co-founder member back in 1986 and is a very important part of Mortem. He left the band because he couldn't afford the time to play. However, he will re-join the band after a few shows and definitely replace Jaime Garcia in the future. Actually, he never left the band because he always helped us in the composing process with writing the lyrics and the music.

He recorded the drums for more than the half of the songs on the new album.

- Yes, as I said before, he is an active part of the band. We both are the original founders of the band and 100% of the music and lyrics is done by the two of us.

Decomposed By Possession has been in the stores for one year. Do you have any new material written and when can we expect a new album from Mortem?

- We're currently working on new material. So far, we have written four songs entitled *Black Demons*, *His Tomb Leads To Hell*, *Illusion (Of Blood)* and *Island Of The Lepper Dead*. We have some other songs in the works too, and I assume that the year 2002 will see a new Mortem album come out.

I can't wait to hear it. Is it gonna be released by Merciless again?

- We'll have to work out the deal with Merciless. We still don't know who will release our new material. I think Merciless Records has done a good job as far as promotion in Europe is concerned. Of course, there are limitations. If we can't tour, we can't do a good promotion overseas. But anyway, we're actually working on playing out of Peru and South-America and we shall see.

So have you ever played in any other South American countries?

- Yes, we've played in Ecuador and Colombia.

What are the chances we'll see you guys play in say the US or Europe one day?

- We plan to do it in the future, but nothing's confirmed yet. We are aware of the fact that if we don't play there, we have very little chances to get known. However, we have a contact in Sweden, so we might do a show by the end of the year. That would be awesome. Only time will tell...

Your lyrics consists of death, darkness, horror etc. Are those topics the only possible for Mortem lyrics, or could you write about for instance some social problems in your country?

- No, Mortem was conceived as a Death Metal band totally dedicated to darkness and fascinated by all that is

evil. Of course, this doesn't mean that we don't care about our social problems, but why should we sing about them? We're not gonna change the situation by singing about those problems. Those topics are more appropriate for HC bands, I guess.

I've always thought that all of the South American countries were very Christian. How do you manage to keep on going with your lyrics, without getting lynched by the people?

- Yes, people in our country are very Christian, but in their own Andean way. We've never had any problem at all with the Christians. They would never mess around with us. Our metal scene is very underground so they probably haven't even heard about us. If they did, they would probably be shocked but they wouldn't be able to do anything about it.

Would you consider yourselves Satanists?

- I would say so.

What's the underground scene like in Peru?

- It's very underground but there are a couple of local shows every month. There are quite a few bands here, but very few of them have demos out.

You've been playing with Mortem for over 15 years. What makes you keep on going?

- A passion for brutality and darkness. Also, a strong conviction on what an underground Metal band should be. If it hadn't been for that, we would've quit long time ago.

Do you think that you'll be playing death metal for another 15 years?

- Most certainly. If I get to live those years, I will, haha.

Alright, thanx for you time Fernan, and I wish you good luck with Mortem in the future!

- Thank you Mische for this interview. Good luck with your zine and greetings to all the insane death metallers out there in Sweden.



Check out further info on their new official homepage at www.impnaz.com.

Fates Warning are now signed to Metal Blade worldwide, and a new album should be expected in the end of 2001 or beginning of 2002!!!

Solient Green's new full-length has been recorded. Expect the release of it in August, and check them out on the road this June with Napalm Death and Isis.

News from Nocturnal Art Productions.

Sirius have finished recording their new album, to be entitled *Spectral Transition - Dimension Sirius*, in Norway at Akkerhaugen Lyd studio (Emperor, Zyklon, Myrkskog, Mactatus, etc.). The new sound of Sirius is much more extreme with a bigger focus on the guitars, but the symphonic aspect of the band is of course still present. Check out the bands new site at www.neverland.nu/sirius

Red Harvest's latest album *Cold Dark Matter* was released in the US in January via Relapse Records. The US version includes four bonus tracks from the previous EP *New Rage World Music*. This EP will also be re-issued by NAP with exclusive bonus material in the spring time 2001, under the title *New World Rage Music*. Their site is at www.redharvest.com.

Tidfall will enter Akkerhaugen Lyd studio in March 2001 to record their second album.

Limbonic Art is working on new material for a new album. No studio time is booked at this moment, but the plan is to release the album in the autumn of 2001.

Meanwhile, Hammerheart Records will during 2001 release a box with all the Limbonic Art CD's. Further info at www.limbonic.com.

Odium and Choronzon are no longer on NAP.

Armored Saint, Six Feet Under, Judas priest, Rose tattoo, Stratovarius, Kreator and Solitude Aeturnus are some of the bands that will perform on the Bang Your Head Festival on the 29th. & 30th. June 2001, in Balingen Messegelände (45 minutes south of Stuttgart). Check out www.bang-your-head.de for further info or write to heavy-oder-was@T-online.de.

Norwegian Death Metal-tornado Blood Red Throne (featuring among others Tchort ex-Emperor, ex-Satyricon) will enter Norwegian Dub Studios in April to record their upcoming debut-album for Hammerheart Records. The album will be titled *Monument of Death* and some of the songtitles are *Ravenous War*, *Machine*, *Dream Controlled Murder*, *Mary Whispers of Death*, *Monument of Death* and *Portrait of a Killer*.

The new Six Feet Under album *True Carnage* will be released August 6. They also invited Ice-T to do some vocals in one song...

On the 11th of June, Metal Blade Records will release an Armored Saint CD with rarities. It will be entitled *Nod To The Old School* and the first edition will be a double-CD limited to 10.000 copies (18 songs and four videos). The US version will only have 14 songs and only 2 live videos.

The 7th studio album, *Absence Of War Does Not Mean Peace*, from Finland's Impaled Nazarene will be recorded in July. Some of the songs (in which the new bassist Mikael Arnkil and lead guitarist Teemu Raimoranta will present themselves in) are *The Lost Art Of Goat Sacrificing*, *Nyrkillä Tapettava Huora*, *The Madness Behind*, *Humble Fuck Of Death*, *Never Forgive* and *Hardboiled And Still Hellbound*.

The long awaited new album from Ancient will carry the title *Proxima Centauri* and is due to be released within the first two weeks of October. This album, which was recorded at Andy Larocque's Los Angered Studios in Gothenburg, Sweden, will hopefully take the band on tours across The U.S., Europe, South America and possibly even Asia. www.ancientband.com

Danish Sacrificial is planning to enter the Berno Studio (The Haunted, Vomitory, Deranged etc.) in the end of 2001. The new Mighty Music-release will according to the band be less complex, more simple, catchy - and in your face, but still thrashing death-thrash.

Singer Johan Lindstrand has left The Crown, but his replacement is none less than Tomas Lindberg (ex-At The Gates).

Fly Machine, formerly known as the Confessor, have signed a deal with Dies Irae Productions.

Sinister will enter the Excess Studio in May, to record their new album *Creative Killings* with their new vocalist Rachel from Occult.

Deceased have finished up the recordings of the *Behind The Mourner's Veil* MCD, which will include three new songs: *It's Alive!*, *The Mausoleum* and *Victims*

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Of The Masterplan, as well as the cover songs Zombie Attack (Tankard), The New Age of Total Warfare (Warfare), Reaganomics (DRI) and Deathrider (Anthrax).

This years X-mass festivals will be held between the 11:th and 22:nd of December. Don't miss the impressive line-up, consisting of Cannibal Corpse, Kreator, Marduk, Nile, Dark Funeral, Krisiun and Vomitory.

Alas recently finished the recordings for their upcoming debut on Hammerheart titled Vol. I Absolute Purity. Release-date is set for May 7th and some song titles are The Enchanted, Silencing The Sorrow, Quest Of Serenity, Loss Of A Life and Absolute Purity and the album will according to the label be THE surprise of 2001...

If you live in a French-speaking country, you might be interested in Underground Society, which is an underground newsletter from France. It consists of 6 A4 size pages with professional layout / design and you'll find reviews, tour dates / concerts, interviews etc among it's pages. Underground Society is available 4 times/ year at the following address: Duarte Philippe, 13 Rue John Kennedy, Lotissement Du Lac, 40990 Saint Paul Les Dax, France or email them at duartdav6@aol.com.

Hammerheart have buried all their sub labels (The Plague, Well of Urd and Unveiling The Wicked) and all the planed releases on these sub labels will be released directly under Hammerheart.

The underground veteran Mr. Chris Forbes, editor of Metal Core fanzine and manager of the unholy Immolation, will be handling the promotion of the releases from Singaporean label Dies Irae Productions, in the US, Canada and Mexico. Speaking about this label. The new Dim Mak album, which will be entitled Intercepting Fist, was recorded in Florida during January by Erik Rutan in his Dimensional Sound Studio.

The Summer Breeze Festival in Abtsgmünd (near Aalen/Stuttgart) between August 23 and 25 2001 will have Vader, Amon Amarth, God Dethroned, The Crown, Tankard, Amorphis, Crowbar, 2 Ton Predator, Onkel Tom and many more on the bill. See their homepage at www.summer-breeze.de for further details.

Kreator is working on a new album, which will be released through Steamhammer this summer. According to Mille, the new material is going back to the awesome Coma of Souls stuff and there will definitely not going to be no effects and experiments with samples.

Control Denied has signed a worldwide deal with Hammerheart Records. The new album When Machine And Man Collide was recorded in Tampa's Morrisound studios with producer Jim Morris at the board and Mr Schuldiner promises that it will be something for all true Metal fans. Other signings to the label are Satariel and Sunset Sphere.

Danish Death metal legends Iniquity will enter the Aabenraa Studio together with Jacob Hansen during the summer to record their long awaited third full length

album for Mighty Music, which is expected to be faster, dirtier and more brutal.

Dismember have left Nuclear Blast and signed a deal with Hammerheart. A new album should be out this year.

Root will be recording their sixth album in April, for a summer 2001 release.

X-rated records announces a few new releases. Expect doom / death from Mexico's Under Moonlight Sadness - Genesis and black metal from Russia's Rossomahaar - Imperium Tenebrarum.

Holland deathsters Centurian have finally managed to complete their line-up. Jerry Brouwer will handle both the bass and the vocals, replacing two departures from the band. Also a second guitar-player, Oscar van Paradijs, has been recruited. The band will be recording their new album in spring/summer and a release-date is set for September.

Bassist / vocalist Jason Netherton has left Dying Fetus. His replacements are Derek Boyer (Deprecated) on bass and singer Vince Matthews (Mucus Membrane, Autumn Dawn).

Rebaellun has recorded a new album Annihilation in Stage One Studio, with Andy Classen.

From May 16th up until Dynamo Open Air, Die Apokalyptischen Reiter will tour once more across Europe with assistance of Lowbrow and Ancient Rites.

Red Stream are going to re-issue the Death Is Fun album from Necrophagia, with two previously unreleased tracks as a bonus. Also check out the cut And you Will Live In Terror on the DVD-version of the Lucio Fulci classic The Beyond.

New signings for Steamhammer: Biohazard, Raging Speedhorn and Thorn.Eleven.

Big Boss (Root) is going to enter the studio in May to record his third album. The title will be Equirhodont.

Incantation should release a new album this fall on their new label Necropolis records.

Throneaeon from Sweden is now signed to Hammerheart, who'll release their full-length Neither of Gods in May.

More from Hammerheart:
New albums are recorded by Aeternus (Ascension of Terror) and Diabolic (Subterranean Magnitude). Watch out for Monstrosity's Enslaving the Masses containing a live CD and various hard-to-get material, and the re-releases of Macabre's legendary album Gloom and Primordial's Imrama and A Journey's End. Morifade and Satariel will enter the studio this summer.

Jacobs Dream now has an official fan club. Get in touch with them and join at www.jacobsdream.de.

2 TON PREDATOR, <http://www.listen.to/2TP>
AMON AMARTH, <http://www.amonamarth.com>
AURA NOIR, Aggressor, Pontoppidansgatan 11b, 0462 Oslo, Norway
AVENGER, Honza Kapak, Prechovice 16, 387 01 Volyne, Czech Republic
AVRIGUS, P.O. Box 344, Sydney, NSW 2042, Australia <http://www.avrigus.com>

BURNT BY THE SUN, <http://www.burntbythesun.com>
BUTCHERY, C. Elgh, Gustavsgatan 12a, 691 34 Karlskoga, Sweden
CAVE IN, Steve Brodsky, 49 Appaloosa Drive, Methuen, MA 01844, USA <http://geocities.com/sunsetstrip/studio/2548/cavein.html>

CENTENNIAL, R: Antonio Jose Marques 225, Beata Neves, Sao Bernardo do Campo - SP, 09760-620, Brazil <http://listen.to/centennial>

CIANIDE, Mike Perun, PO Box 388 135, Chicago, IL 60638-8135, USA
CONFESSON OF OBSCURITY, PO Box 37, 2570 Duffel, Belgium bad.smell.propaganda@online.be

CRAWLSPACE, Dirk Meinelt, Neusalzer Str. 75, 630 69 Offenbach, Germany <http://beam.to/crawlspac>

CREST OF DARKNESS, <http://www.crestofdarkness.com>

CRUACHAN, <http://cruachan.artshost.com>
DIE APOKALYPTISCHEN REITER, P.O. Box 1236, 995 02 Apolda, Germany <http://www.reitermania.com>

DIKTAT, Jeremie Granai, 89 rue de Marbene, 750 10 Paris, France <http://dikrat.ifrance.com>

DIVINE DECAY, <http://www.geocities.com/divinedecay/>
DECIMATE, 23 Barley Mow Lane, Catshill, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire, B61 0LU, England <http://decimate.ukhc.btinternet.com>

DRACO HYPNALIS, Martin Kasperek, K. Svetle 490/84, 760 01 Zlin, Czech Republic
DRAGBODY, P.O. Box 5381, Winter Park, FL 32793-4281, USA
DRILLER KILLER, Lundberg, Simrishamnsgatan 3, 214 23 Malmö, Sweden http://listen.to/driller_killer

DROGHEDA, <http://www.artistfirst.com/drogheda.htm>
DROWNINGMAN, 157 Main St, #1 Burlington, VT 054 01, USA

DYING FETUS, <http://dyingfetus.com>
ELFFOR, iug@clientes.euskaltel.es
EMBOLISM, Michal Kotrik, Sportova 205/1, 972 17 Kanianka, Slovakia

EXMORTEM, Martin Thim, Sondre ringgade 10 2.tv, 8000 Århus C., Denmark <http://www.exmortem.com>

FALL SILENT, PO Box 15051, Reno, Nevada 89507, USA <http://www.fallsilent.com>

GOSPEL OF THE HORNS, No 141 500 Centre Road, Bentleigh, Victoria 3204, Australia
HOLOCAUSTO CANIBAL, Ze Pedro, P.O. Box 85, 4439 909 Rio Tinto, Portugal <http://www.crosswinds.net/~myopia666>

NAER MATARON, Kaiadas, Ath. Diakou 94 & 4C1, Canada <http://go.to/hcanibal>
HORDE OF WORMS, http://members.tripod.com/~worm_3/index.html
HORFIXION - Samuel Landry, 871 Trudel Quest, St. Boniface, Quebec G0X 2L0, Canada <http://www.horfixion.com>

HOUWITSER, Theo van Eekelen, Valkseweg 225, 3771 SE Barneweld, Holland <http://houwitsert.tripod.com>

HYPNOSIA, Mikael Castervall, Skolgatan 1A, 352 33 Växjö, Sweden <http://hem1.passagen.se/hypno/>

HYPNOS, Bruno, Kopanky 1726, 686 03 Stare Mesto, Czech Republic <http://www.hyperlink.cz/inbloodwetrust>

IMMERSED IN BLOOD, Joel Andersson, Fjällviolen 3, 424 48 Angered, Sweden <http://www.immersiondirect.com>

IN GREY, Dennis Liljedahl, Sköntorpsvägen 83, 120 53 Årsta, Sweden <http://www.in-grey.com>

INHUMATE, Fred Anton, 1 rue du collège, 67170 Brumath, France <http://www.inhumate.maxximum.org>

INSISION, Thomas Daun, Birger Jarls gatan 75, 113 56 Stockholm, Sweden <http://www.insision.se>

INTENSE HAMMER RAGE, 42 Studholme street, Burnie, Tasmania 7320, Australia <http://clix.to/ihr>

INVOCATION, Morbid, 70 Richland Ave., Coopers Plains 4108, Brisbane, QLD, Australia <http://www.invocation.com>

KAAMOS, Box 605, 136 26 Haninge, Sweden <http://www.kaamos.nu>

KARNARIUM, Patrick Clarke, Titteridammsh. 17, 424 68 Angered, Sweden <http://www.karnarium.com>

LOVE HISTORY, Radim Chrobok, Na klasternim 13, 162 00 Praha 6, Czech Republic <http://www.lovehistory.com>

LOWBROW, PO Box 3900, Brandon, FL 33509, USA Lowbrow_metal@yahoo.com

LUCIFUGUM, PO Box 80, 262 024 Zhitomir, Ukraine <http://www.lucifugum.com>

MANGLED, Harold Gielen, Vermeerstraat 8, 5961 AV Horst, Holland <http://listen.to/mangled>

MINCOLLAPSE, Eddie Partos, Höstvägen 14 f, 352 37 Växjö, Sweden <http://mindcollapse.cjb.net>

MINDSNARE, Gigi Casini, Via Rueglio 8, 101 48 Torino, Italy <http://www.mindsnare.nasha.com>

MORBIFIK, PO Box 02, Kereo 15156 Tangerang, Indonesia <http://www.visit.to/brutaldeathgrind>

MORTEM, Julio Rodavero 867, Urb. Las Brisas (2da. Etapa), Lima 21, Peru <http://www.run.to/mortem>

MORTICITE, Steve Eberl, 322 Pike street, Reading, OH 452 15, USA <http://www.morticite.com>

MYOPIA, 1137 Renfrew Street, Vancouver, BC V5K 4C1, Canada <http://www.crosswinds.net/~myopia666>

NAER MATARON, Kaiadas, Ath. Diakou 94 & 4C1, Canada <http://go.to/hcanibal>

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http://fade.to/necroplasma
http://drink.to/necroplasma
NEFARIUM, Fabio Filippone, Fraz. Fontanalle 26, 110 20 St. Christophe (AO), Italy
NEFAS, Dario & Tom Pagotto, via Illirico 10, 201 33 Milan, Italy
NILE, P.O. Box 6062, Greenville, SC 29606-6062, USA
http://www.nile-catacombs.com
NOCTIFLOROUS THORNS, Bul. Sv. Kiril I Metodi 9A. Apt. 12, 2700 Blagoevgrad, Bulgaria
OBLITERATE, Ladislav Polak, Ladicke nam. 7, 040 22 Kosice, Slovakia
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OUTCAST, Wesley Bral, Aardooisestr. 62, 8870 Izegem, Belgium
OVERSUN, Tolmachev St 11-82, 141282, Ivantsevka, Moscow region, Russia
http://www.rusmetal.ru/enscogitans
OZIUM, Andreas Österlund, Herrhaggatan 6a, 652 18 Karlstad, Sweden
http://listen.to/ozium
PATHOLOGY STENCH, Brano Barancik, Tulska 16, 974 01 Banska Bystrica, Slovakia
PROFANITY, Thomas Sartor, Johnstr. 5, 863 99 Bobingen, Germany
http://www.profanity.de
RAVENS OVER GOMORRAH, Mike Wortham, PMB 187, 17602 17th Street #102, Tustin, CA 92780, USA
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http://come.to/regurgitate
ROMANTIC LOVE, Lukas Jelinek, Druzba 1273, 768 24 Hulin, Czech Republic
SARGATANAS REIGN, http://i.am/sargatanasreign
SCURVY, Johan Wallin, Hagvägen 2K, 194 40 Upplands Väsby, Sweden
http://come.to/scurvy
SKINLESS, P.O. Box 829, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866-0829, USA
http://www.4skinless.com
SKYFIRE, Jonas Sjögren, Musikantvägen 20C, 224 68 Lund, Sweden
http://listen.to/skyfire
SOULLESS, Chris Dora, 6110 Bradley Ave., Cleveland, OH 44129-2218, USA
http://www.soullessdomain.com
STARGAZER, Denny Blake, P.O. Box 182, Ingle Farm 5098, SA, Australia
SUFFOCATE, Gelert Pasztor, Tesedikovo 428, 925 85, Slovakia
http://www.suffocate.phuture.sk
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THANATOS, Stephan Gebedi, Van langendonckstraat 28, 3076 sl Rotterdam, Holland
http://go.to/thanatosdeathmetal
http://run.to/thanatos
TRAUMA, Nino Aspiranta, Komplek P.W.I., Blok 1 # 123 Jln, Tajuk Rencana, Cipinang Muara, Jakarta Timur,

134 20, Indonesia
UNDERULE, Mark, 143 Carter Rd., Cheltenham, GL52 0US, England
UNVEILED, Feisal, No 9 Jalan 7/3, Taman Desa, 860 00 Kluang, Johor, Malaysia
VAMPIRIC MOTIVES, Tom Kanai, 1-26-3-204, Miyagi, Adachi-Ku, Tokyo, 120, Japan
VISCERAL BLEEDING, Peter Persson, Adelgatan 10, 393 50 Kalmar, Sweden
http://www.visceralbleeding.com
VOMITORY, http://listen.to/vomitory
BLACKFISH RECORDS, P.O. Box 15, Ledbury, HR8 1YG, United Kingdom
http://i.am/blackfish
BLACK LOTUS RECORDS, Kon / poleos 72, 172 36 Himittos, Athens, Greece
BLOODBUCKET PRODUCTIONS, 1 Anglesey Blvd. Suite B, Islington, Ont. M9A 3B2, Canada
CUDGEL, C/o Norman, Collegienstr.21, 06886 Luth. Wittenberg, Germany
http://www.cudgel.de
DAMNATION RECORDS, Hoge Larenseweg 55, 1221 AK Hilversum, Holland
http://www.agonia.dagdy.com.pl/damned.htm
DARK HORIZON RECORDS, 6435 West Jefferson Blvd #666, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46804, USA
www.geocities.com/darkhorizon666
DIEHARD MUSIC, Tim Lyng, Mühlenstr. 8, 23552 Lübeck, Germany
http://www.diehardmusic.com
DISPLEASED, Ronde Tocht 7d, 1507 CC Zaandam, Holland
http://www.displeased.nl
DWELL RECORDS, P.O. Box 39439, Los Angeles, CA 90039, USA
http://www.dwellrecords.com
EREBOS PRODUCTIONS, P.O. Box C8, 010 01 Zilina, Slovakia
http://www.erebosproductions.com
EXTREMIST RECORDS, 808 Renninger Rd, Akron, OH 443 19, USA
http://www.extremistrecords.8k.com
GOLDEN LAKE PRODUCTIONS, 19 Castlehill drive, Newton Mearns, Glasgow, G77 5Jz, Scotland
http://musicfans.to/goldenlake
GRIND YOUR SOUL, 61 Rue De L'hôpital, 671 00 Strasbourg, France
HAMMERHEART RECORDS / THE PLAGUE - P.O. Box 277, 6300 AG, Valkenburg, Holland
http://www.hammerheart.com
HELLBILLY, Brogatan 14, 654 55 Karlstad, Sweden
HYDRA HEAD, http://www.hydrahead.com
I HATE RECORDS, Box 13023, 600 13 Norrköping, Sweden
LISTENABLE RECORDS, BP 73, 629 30 Wimereux, France
http://www.listenable.net
LOST DISCIPLE RECORDS, P.O. Box 340, Winthrop, MA 02152, USA
http://lostdisciple.com
LOWLIFE RECORDS, Box 134, 9200 Dendermonde, Belgium

http://lowlife-records.com
MEGAHARD RECORDS, Cx Postal 41.698, Sao Paulo, 05422-970, Brasil
http://www.progressive.com.br
MERCILESS RECORDS, P.O. Box 72, 97448 Arnstein, Germany
http://www.merciless-records.de
METALBLADE RECORDS, Postfach 1332, 73054, Eislingen, Germany
http://www.metalblade.com
MORBID RECORDS, Postfach 3, 03114 Drebkau, Germany
http://www.morbidrecords.de
NECROPOLIS RECORDS, Herman Gorterstr. 330, 1521 MZ Wormerveer, Holland
NOCTURNAL ART PRODUCTIONS, P.O. Box 4, 3671 Notodden, Norway
http://www.nocturnalart.com
NUCLEAR ABOMINATIONS RECORDS, via Repubblica dell'ossola 18, 411 00 Modena, Italy
http://geocities.com/nuclearabomination/index.html
OSMOSE PRODUCTIONS, BP 57, 629 90 Beaurainville, France
http://www.osmoseproductions.com
OVERCOME RECORDS, BP 80249, 351 02 Rennes Cedex3, France
http://www.overcomerecords.com
PIG HOUSE RECORDS, P.O. Box 79, 2304 Pernik, Bulgaria
PROPHECY PRODUCTIONS, Kurfuerstenstr. 5, 544 92 Zeltingen-Rachtig, Deutschland

Och Jesus sade:

"Låt barnen komma till mig,
så ska jag knulla skiten ur dem."

{säg 4:12}

AMON AMARTH

A lot of water has flown under the bridges since my first encounter with these Stockholm warriors. In January 1995, I saw them play in a basement in Södertälje, sharing stage with then up-coming black metalers Dark Funeral. 1 _ years ago, Amon Amarth released a great album called The Avenger, and just recently Metal Blade put out a follow-up that is, again, one step better than its predecessor. A good reason to have a talk with the beer-addicted guitarist Olavi Mikkonen.

The new album The Crusher is in the stores. Let's hear it about the recording. Did everything work out fine?

- The recording of The Crusher went very well, although we were quite nervous during the last couple of weeks before we went to the studio, because we had to work our asses of in order to get all the songs finished. Once in the studio, everything went smoothly thanx to us being so well prepared. We rented a buss, parked it just outside of the studio and lived in it during the recording, which made us feel like one big family (alcoholic parents with drug-abusing children). Peter (Tägtgren; Hypocrisy & Pain) fixed the sound and Lars (Szöke; Hypocrisy) was responsible for the recording. At the end of the recording, the people from the record-label and some reporters came up to the studio for their share of alcohol.

Just like the case was with all their previous recordings (except the first album Once Sent From The Golden Hall) all the albums have been recorded in Abyss-studio. Maybe a change would do you guys good?

- No way! It is true that one always wants to try new stuff, but I think that we've done very good in Abyss and found our own sound. It would be stupid to start over once again. And it's also very secure for us to record there, because even before we go in to the studio we know that we're gonna come home with a killer production. And of course, the fact that the atmosphere in the studio is great is another thing worth keep coming back for.

Peter Tägtgren should know you all quite well by now.

- Sure, that's one of the advantages with going up to Dalarna. Peter knows what kind of band we are and we know how we want our albums to sound like. Everything is prepared before we go into the studio, since we do all the arrangements in our rehearsal-room. It happens though, that we bring some bonus-tracks or a not so important song with us, that we mess with in the studio. Peter doesn't really interfere with the songs, but sometimes if he has some ideas, he tells us and we try them out. Still, most of the time everything is already finished. He's more involved in the production. We know exactly what kind of sound we want, so we work together with Peter to create the right sound. It happens that we have different opinions about things, and have to find a way in between both opinions. He is very good at sounds, and ignoring such talent would just be a waste.

The writing-process within Amon Amarth is not a one-man job. The whole band is involved, but the way of writing might differ.

- It depends. Sometimes we have a few riffs, which we

start working with, and try to decide which kind of lyrics would fit to it. We started some of the songs by writing the lyrics that we later put music to. But sometimes we just sit around and talk about ideas and then we just sit at our homes and create riffs/lyrics to them. When we've found a base for a song, we don't just play it over and over again, but record it and try to write new possible riffs. We pick up all these riffs and try them in different variations. We can work with several songs at the same time. In the beginning when we started to work with this new album, the work-title was The Crusher, and we worked out different moods around that specific title.

I was quite surprised by the cover of The Crusher. It's a bit Manowar-like...

- Sure it is! It's very much old heavy metal à la Iron Maiden, Manowar etc, but what the hell. We are very satisfied with the cover. It totally shows what The Crusher is all about, and that's what's interesting.

I believe the same artist who painted the cover for The Avenger also is responsible for the new one. With the same colours, same logo, similar title... aren't those two albums a bit too similar?

- Yeah, we used Thomas Ewerhard again. The fact that those two albums have all these similarities is the whole idea. Thomas came with the idea of doing it like that, and we thought it was great. The logo is a kind of trademark now; the golden-logo with the line and the album-title underneath. The same idea is also on our homepage, and we're gonna use the same thing for the follow-up to The Crusher as well.

If you bought the limited edition of The Avenger, you found the old song Thor Arise from a demo with the same name at the end of the album. On The Crusher, you're once again getting an old track from the same demo, this time it is Risen From The Sea, and it's gonna be available for everybody. Not just for the lucky ones that buy the vinyl versions or limited editions of the CD.

- We first thought we'd use it as a bonus-track for the first pressing of the CD and LP, but once we recorded it, Szöke thought it was way too cool to end up only as a bonus. Therefore we skipped the bonus-track-idea and

used it as a regular song instead. What's kind of funny with the bonus-songs is that we never rehearse them before entering the studio. We brought Risen From The Sea on a tape and picked the riffs out and talked a bit about how we wanted to do it the evening before we recorded it. Johan (Söderberg - guitars) and Fredrik (Andersson - drums) had never played that song before, and the rest of us hadn't practiced it since 1994.

The rest of the band would be Ted Lundström on bass and vocalist Johan Hegg, who are completing the line-up of Amon Amarth. I've read somewhere that the lyrics for that song are nothing Johan is very proud of.

- The lyrics really suck, but we wanted the song to remain as it was and didn't change almost anything so the lyrics remained as they were originally written. I'm not really sure what the lyrics are dealing with, but they consist of some kind of satanic matters. Johan decided to write a song like that back then, and after that we haven't touched that subject again.

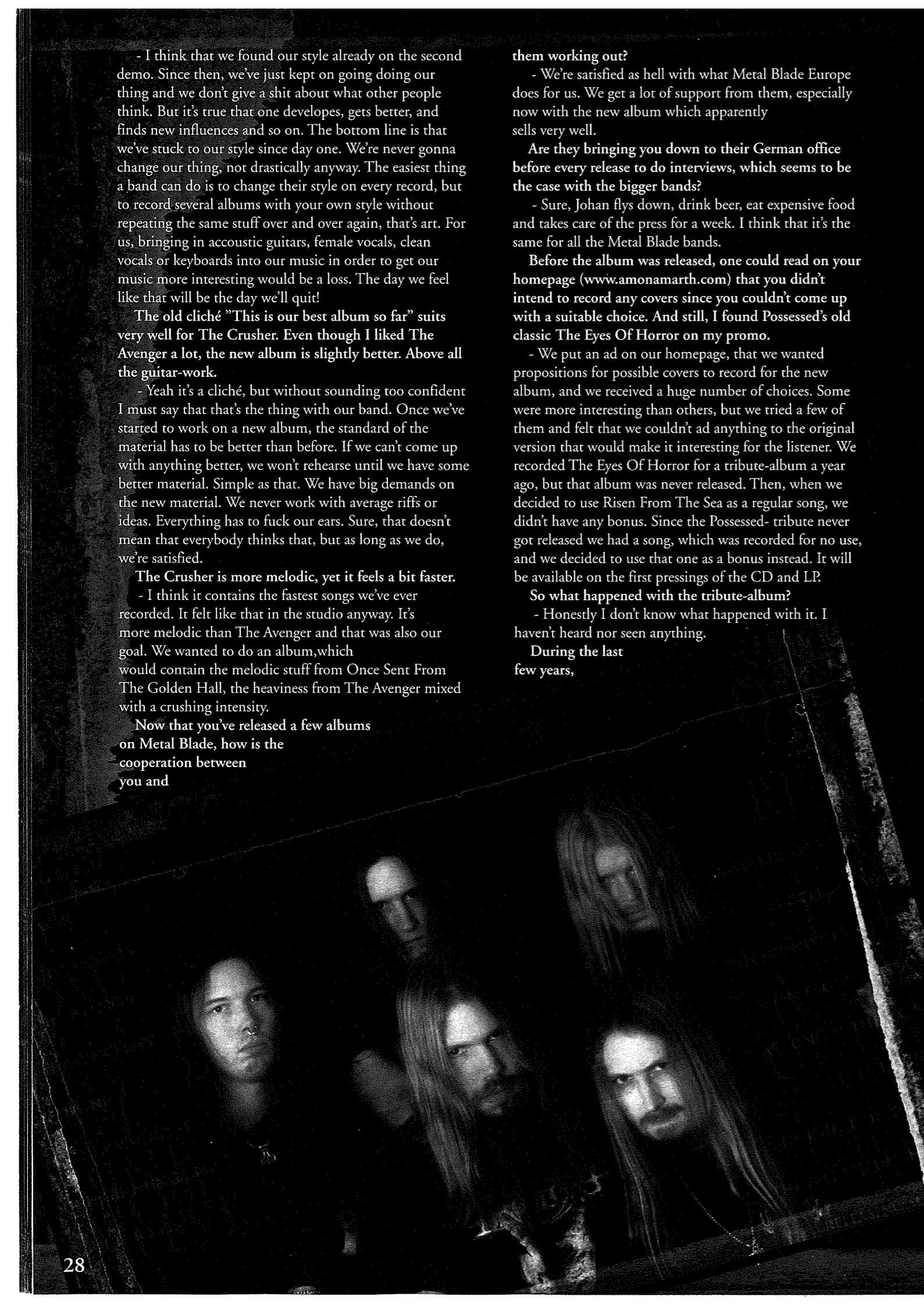
The Thor Arise demo was never released, was it?

- No it wasn't. The sound quality was very bad and we put all our energy into writing new material. Instead of recording it we recorded a new demo instead.

So, is that something you're gonna continue with, recording an old track for every new album?

- I don't know whether we're gonna use old songs as bonuses, but the plan is to release a mid-price album next year. If we manage, that is. We have big plans for the follow-up to The Crusher. We have started to work on the base to build upon, but we haven't written or rehearsed anything yet. It's gonna take some time before it's out and we'd like to release a cheap-variant in between. On that record, we thought we'd record the rest of the demo-tracks, re-record some new song or something like that. We haven't decided much about this record yet, but we will within the near future.

One can of course notice a development of the music while listening to all your albums, but between The Avenger and The Crusher I believe the difference is the least. I get the feeling that you've found your style on The Avenger and now you've just adjusted it a little bit.



them working out?

- We're satisfied as hell with what Metal Blade Europe does for us. We get a lot of support from them, especially now with the new album which apparently sells very well.

Are they bringing you down to their German office before every release to do interviews, which seems to be the case with the bigger bands?

- Sure, Johan flies down, drink beer, eat expensive food and takes care of the press for a week. I think that it's the same for all the Metal Blade bands.

Before the album was released, one could read on your homepage (www.amonamarth.com) that you didn't intend to record any covers since you couldn't come up with a suitable choice. And still, I found Possessed's old classic *The Eyes Of Horror* on my promo.

- We put an ad on our homepage, that we wanted propositions for possible covers to record for the new album, and we received a huge number of choices. Some were more interesting than others, but we tried a few of them and felt that we couldn't add anything to the original version that would make it interesting for the listener. We recorded *The Eyes Of Horror* for a tribute-album a year ago, but that album was never released. Then, when we decided to use *Risen From The Sea* as a regular song, we didn't have any bonus. Since the Possessed-tribute never got released we had a song, which was recorded for no use, and we decided to use that one as a bonus instead. It will be available on the first pressings of the CD and LP.

So what happened with the tribute-album?

- Honestly I don't know what happened with it. I haven't heard nor seen anything.

During the last few years,

a great deal of cover-albums have been released. Have you appeared on any of them, or have you even got a request of appearing on one of them?

- Except for the Possessed-cover, we haven't done any other. However, Metal Blade are planning to do a box or something where new Metal Blade acts will cover songs from the old bands on the label. For that album, we thought we'll revive an old Desultory-song or something. But I'm a bit sceptic to the whole thing with covers. If you can't make the song better than the original, you shouldn't do it at all. To cover a song and play it just as the original, without putting your own band into it, it's wrong as well.

Your lyrics deal with Nordic mythology as well as the battle against Christianity and other religions (as for example *The Sound Of Eight Hooves*, *Annihilation Of Hammerfest*, *The Fall Through Ginnungagap*, *Masters Of War*). Johan writes the lyrics, but I guess that the rest of the band is also interested in those subjects.

- Of course we all have an interest in the lyrics. We write the songs together with the lyrics, and it would be quite strange if the rest of us didn't have a clue of what they are all about. Or worse, if we didn't care. Still I must admit that Johan and Ted are more into that stuff than the rest of us.

But *Bastards Of A Lying Breed* is about something else than war and religion.

- With that text, Johan wanted to view his opinion on what's been going on in the US above all. Bands like Judas Priest were prosecuted by parents for encouraging their children to kill themselves in backward-messages on their albums. When the truth came forth, it turned out that the parents themselves had put their kids in that position, and not the music. But it's still about religion. It's a hate-song against all the lies and abuse of power which the Christianity stands for.

I read somewhere, that you guys are members of Friends Of The Suncross. What kind of organisation is that?

- It's an old, traditional klubb. We get together every now and then, drink liquor and have orgies.

You've played some shows around Europe, but it's been very rare with Amon Amarth shows in Sweden. If I remember correctly, before the show here in Stockholm in March this year, the last time you played here was in February 2000.

- The reason for us not playing in Sweden too often is that there isn't any huge interest in seeing us perform. We played that gig in March just because it was the premier for a new metal-club, and at the same time it was a kind of release party for *The Crusher*. On the other hand, we can't give up and I know that we crush most of the other bands out there on stage. We have to show that, so that everybody can see it. We're gonna play at the Dist-festival here in Sweden this year, and it's gonna be great to play there. I hope that the audience will find the time to check us out.

What's the difference of playing in Sweden, comparing to for example Germany?

- That's a huge difference. The audience here is just standing still and watching, almost as if they were trying to find something to complain about. In Germany on the other hand, the shows are really rough.

The last two weeks last year, you cruised across Europe with Purgatory and Seirim. I believe that it was your first headline-tour.

- That was a really great tour. We started in Denmark with Jeel, which was incredibly positive. I didn't think that we had such huge amount of fans in Denmark. After that, we went down to Europe with Purgatory and Seirim. Purgatory are old friends of ours and we like their company. We didn't know anything about Seirim though, but I was pleasantly surprised as they were a great band. Many of the shows were sold-out and the rest were not far from that. Audience-wise, it was a very successful trip. The response from the people at the shows was great.

What's the difference between being a support-act and headlining a show?

- The disadvantage with headlining is that most of the people go home after you've played. There isn't too many left to mingle with. The advantage is that you can play for as long as you'd like and you also get all the extra benefits.

Yesterday, you came home from the No Mercy Festivals 2001, on which you played together with Marduk, Vader, Mortician, God Dethroned and Sinister.

- It was fun to tour with Marduk, Vader and God Dethroned. Janne from The Crown played the drums with God Dethroned and it was great to see him again. We shared the bus with them and Vader. Everything worked out very well for us. It showed that we've grown since we toured last time and we had a huge support from the audience. Also Marduk, Mortician, Vader, God Dethroned and Sinister showed everybody how to play metal. The bus broke down in the Alps, and we missed a show and got stuck in a village for one day. But that was pretty cool, as we ate all their food and drank all the beer at their local pub. The day after, we got to take a tourist-bus to the last gig. That wasn't too funny, but I guess that you have to put up with some shit.

How did the fans receive the new material?

- We played mostly new songs on this trip, and I think they worked out fine. Of course, the people want to hear the stuff from all the albums, but we wanted to save that for our regular European tour. This trip was more of a promotion-tour for us.

The biggest tour you've done so far must have been with Deicide, Six Feet Under, Naglfar and Brutal Truth in May 1998.

- That was a nice tour. It was a lot of drinking going on, I think we drank all the time. We had a lot of fun with the guys in Brutal Truth and Naglfar, with whom we shared the bus. I don't think that I slept in my own bunk for many nights, but they don't call me El-Domino for nothing!

Speaking about drinking, when you are touring I bet that the alcohol is floating.

- Well, some days are worse than others, but I think that we've calmed down a bit. In order to be able to do a good job, it doesn't work drinking like crazy all the time. Nowadays we drink like crazy every second day instead. We drink beer all the time and after a while you don't feel anything, but when we go on the liquor, that's when it gets really wet.

Last year it was talk of a US tour, but nothing happened. Maybe you'll get there with this album?

- At this moment, nothing is planned. It was a shame that it didn't work out last year. We had our flight-tickets, green-card and everything. It would have been a great opportunity to beat the Christianity out of the Americans. We'll see what happens once *The Crusher* is released over there. Meanwhile, the Americans (and the rest of our fans) should drink liquor and check out our homepage. Cheers!

RECORDS

2 TON PREDATOR

In The Shallow Waters
Diehard

The muscle-men from Örebro in Sweden have, after various problems, finally managed to release their debut album. Having in mind they started already in 1993 (they used to call the band Wedge back then), I'd say it was about the time. I've read a few reviews / interviews with the band lately and the press have described their music as Pantera and Machine Head meets Alice In Chains. That description turned out to be quite good, however I would like to add Crowbar and COC to bands that are close to what 2 Ton Predator is doing. The music is very aggressive and heavy and the grunge comparisons are mostly because of the way the singer Mogge Lundin uses his voice some times. The guy sure can use his throat to more than just screaming. Even when they slow down a bit, they still keep it heavy and the dark lyrics goes well with the music. My personal favorites among the 11 filled-with-pain-trax on In The Shallow Waters are Lynch Mob, Hole In My Mind and Burned, which have stuck on my mind and refuses to leave. Good job!

ABSU

Tara
Osmose

I know that Absu is a well known band by now, but since I've never properly checked out their earlier releases, I can't compare this new album to their older material. I can tell you how Tara sound though. This album is divided into two phases (Ioldanach's Pedagogy and The Cythraul Klan's Scrutiny) and all in all it consists of 10 songs of worked through black metal with close relationship with death (plus the bagpipes-intro and outro and the outro to phase 1). Tara is not a cheap-line article, but a very good album within a style of music which very often tends to get quite predictable. Absu is everything but that, and within their songs there are more to be found than just speed and hatred. The riffing by the two string-masters is faultless, however what distinguishes a bit extra is the drummer Proscriptor, who springs forth as a tornado. During phase 1, speed is pretty much what you get within all the songs, but if you want more than that, you should check out the ending part of Tara. Before the outro you'll find Bron (Of The Waves) which is an acoustic piece and Stone Of Destiny (For Magh Slecht And Ard Righ) in which you'll find high and clean vocals, heavy metal vocals, thrash-screams and also some piano. Now, do you really want to miss this?

AETERNUS

Burning The Shroud
Hammerheart

Aeternus have been around for a while now and they have a few releases (I count them to four) and tours behind them. Despite of that, they never made it all the way into my CD-player. However, I don't exactly feel that I've missed that much but still I'm glad I received this CD from Hammerheart. You see, their older songs (out of which this album mainly consists), which were more into black metal weren't all that bad, but there are so many bands around these days that are just good, you have difficulties keeping track of them all. Dark Rage, which was released on a 7"EP in 1998, and Raven And Blood from the Shadows Of Old recording sessions are my favorites among the old tracks. I still don't think that I would have liked a whole album consisting of such songs. When it comes to the only new song Burning The Shroud (taken from their forth-coming album), Aeternus have headed for a more death metal kind of sound and it is the best song on this album. It's gonna be interesting to see how the rest of the new material is gonna sound like. Oh yes, there are also four live-tracks recorded in Bergen in February 2000 on this disc.

AMON AMARTH

The Crusher
Metal Blade

Finally it's here, the follow-up to the excellent 1999-release from Amon Amarth The Avenger. The band once again locked themselves up in Studio Abyss with the Hypocrisy-duo Tägtgren (mix) and Szöke (engineering), although the production did they handle by them selves this time. The result is yet another massive album containing nine strong death/heavy/black metal songs, and it doesn't take many seconds before you'll recognize the sound and style that they've created during the years. Just like on The Avenger (the first limited edition of the album), on The Crusher you'll also find a song from their past, and that is the 2000-year version of Risen From The Sea, which originally appeared on the debut demo. The first pressing also includes a cover of Possessed's Eyes Of Horror. If you compare The Crusher with its predecessor, I'd say that the new material is a bit heavier. Still, the characteristic melodies are there and the songs stuck on ones mind immediately. Yet another very, very good album!

ANCIENT RITES

Dim Carcosa
Hammerheart

I have not heard this Belgian cult-band for many years, and what I found on their new album was certainly not what I expected. Oh, what a disappointment was my first thought. However, I didn't give up on this one so easily and after a massive consumption of Dim Carcosa, I discovered its qualities. The material on this new album could be described as some kind of fusion between black metal and folk music, with a touch of power metal. It's not easy to get it at the first time, nor the second but once you've listened to it for some times, you'll find all the cool arrangements with varying vocals and great melodic parts and solos. I bet that there are a lot of blood, sweat and tears with making this album and all of the members (the line-up on this album consists of five very talented musicians) have really put a lot of effort into it. Don't let this one pass you by.

ANGEL CORPSE

Blood, Iron & Blasphemy
Osmose

During their relatively short time of existence, Angel Corpse managed to record three excellent albums and I am sure many will be mourning their split-up for a long time. As a farewell to the scene, Osmose have recently released Blood, Iron & Blasphemy, an album filled with various sweets from Angel Corpse's career. There's their four-song demo Goats To Azazel (which secured them an interview in Amputation #2) and the two 7"EP's Wolflust (consisting of the title track and Possessed-cover Burning In Hell) and Nuclear Hell (with the live-versions of Envenomed and Sodomy Curse). Furthermore, you'll find a few live-tracks recorded during their 1998-tour and covers of Slayer, Morbid Angel, Sarcofago, Iron Maiden, Kreator and Judas Priest which are all performed with Angel Corpse's characteristic style and sound. Nothing to complain about here for sure. This is a very good album, on which the fans can check out some quite hard-to-find stuff, and remember a great death metal band.

ARCHAEO HARMONY

Nihilism Mundane Soul
Solemn Music

I don't exactly receive music from Malta on a regular basis, and Archaean Harmony didn't make me much excited either (at least not as excited as the girl in the fourth song Venery Dreams seems to be). I get the feeling that the three musicians locked themselves into the studio, aiming for recording as unique and original music as possible. I must admit that it is in fact quite unique, although it's not all that interesting. The result is a cocktail, consisting of black metal, orchestral arrangements, melodic guitar solos, progressive elements and strange riffs etc. They are all very skilled musicians, I do have to give especially the guitarist credit for his work, but they're showing of a little too much and their music is too complex. Nihilism Mundane Soul was originally released as a promo but Solemn Music found it to be so good, they re-released it as a regular MCD. The band is currently working on new material, which they are hoping to release as a full-length.

AURA NOIR

Increased Damnation
Hammerheart

Aura Noir consists of a duo, Apollyon and Aggressor, from Norway and they have earlier released one MCD and two albums. That's all I know about them, and I have never before heard a single tone from them. Since most of the songs on Increased Damnation were recorded between 1995 and 1998 with various line-ups, I doubt that it is their third regular record but more of a collection of rare recordings. There are also a few live-trax and the original version of Tower Of Limbs And Fevers which was recorded already back in 1994. Aura Noir's way of playing thrash/black metal, which has close bounds to the bands from the "good old times" (Sarcofago, Sodom etc), appeal to me quite a bit and proves that retro thrash doesn't need to be boring and all about just stealing.

AVENGER

Shadows Of The Damned
Merciless

Some of you might already have this album in your possession, and that is simply because this is a re-release. Shadows Of The Damned was recorded already back in 1996 and originally released by Breath Of Knight records. I don't know if it's because of the Czech lyrics, but I come to think of Master's Hammer as this CD spins in the CD-player. (The lyrics are translated to English, for those of you who don't know the language.) Avenger's black metal has place for some melodies, and you could say that it's a bit more death metal than what the above mentioned Czech cult used to play. You'll also find two covers here, My Dying Brides Cry Of Mankind and Masters Hammer's Kolem Kotle, and it's a shame that the sound on those two songs is much worse than their own songs. Despite of that, I like Avenger and you should give them a try too. Watch out for the new Avenger album Fall Of Devotion, Wrath And Blasphemy, which Merciless plan to release later this year.

AVRIGUS

The Secret Kingdom
Well Of Urd / Hammerheart

I could almost sense what was coming when I discovered that The Secret Kingdom was released by the Hammerheart sub-label Well Of Urd. In Amputation #6, I reviewed an album with Hagalaz Runedance, which was released on the same label, but as it didn't appeal me that much I did not have any big expectations on this one either. This Sydney-based male/female duo however recorded a quite interesting album. It is very atmospheric and dark and at least I have never heard such music before, and I believe that The Secret Kingdom will be appreciated amongst fans of bands like Anathema and My Dying Bride etc. The music would surely do well in a movie or on a theatre. They gain a lot by not using the typical male growling / female singing and don't mix in too much metal. They keep the music on the same level so to speak. This is not an album I'll put on at a party, but once you're sitting in your favorite chair with a good book on a dark night, it works just fine. That's how I'm gonna wear this album.

BURNT BY THE SUN

S/t
Relapse

It's a pretty short yet very intensive four-track album that Burnt By The Sun attacks with. Their music is an energetic and angry metal / hard core and the disc (which is their first, as they've only put out a split EP with Luddite Clone before) clocks in under nine minutes. What at first seems to be just a bunch of different noises turns out (after a few listenings) to be a chaotic cocktail, in which every single tone has its given place. I especially like the flipped out guitars, which occasionally gets very twisted. In their lyrics, one can read about everyday problems and even though they'd like to get the people to think about what's going on around them, they don't take themselves too seriously. Watch out for their full-length debut, which will be recorded in June.

CATASEXUAL URGE MOTIVATION

The Encyclopedia Of Serial Murders
Razor Back

Catasexual Urge Motivation from the land of the rising sun was some time ago renamed to Vampiric Motives and The Encyclopedia Of Serial Murders was originally released five years ago. Razor Back Records found it to be such a qualitative product, so they decided to re-release the album. I have, apart from a few songs on various samplers, never before made any closer acquaintance with their work, but I've heard a lot about the band and was pretty anxious to check out a full-length. Now I've got quite a dose of their murderous metal with ultra guttural vocals / sick screams in form of the 22 songs on this album, and I feel quite satisfied. Their perverse and sick creations, which proceeds through the 60 minutes long album, is a performance of good grind core that few can brag with, and song-titles such as Murder Is Art, Accepted By Many Artists, Murder Is Better Than Birth, I Am As Beautiful As I Have Killed And Campaign For Legalize Murder witnesses of their vivid and pretty twisted fantasy, which goes very well with the music.

CATASTROPHIC

The Cleansing
Metal Blade

Trevor Peres (yes, it is the riff-master from Obituary) has joined forces with the guys from Pyrexia, and the first result of their co-working is now being released under the name Catastrophic. Since Trevor has been involved in the writing of almost all the songs on The Cleansing, it's not all that unexpected that it sounds quite a bit like Obituary. They've also picked some stuff from punk / hard core and mixed it into their metal. Most of the time it's mid-tempo death metal, but occasionally they speed it up a bit and that's when they sound the best. You'll find a whole lot of good stuff on The Cleansing, but it tends to get a bit too viscous in the slower parts. When they decide to do it fast on the other hand, the singer seems to have problems to keep pace with the music. Balancing The Furies, Jesters Of The Millennium, Blood Maidens and You Must Bleed are my favorite trax on this album, and if you like metal a la Six Feet Under (heaviness before speed), then The Cleansing is something for you.

CAVE IN

Until Your Heart Stops
Relapse

Cave In is one of those hard core oriented bands on Relapse. Or let me put it this way, they have more in common with Today Is The Day and Converge than Incantation and Exhumed. There is also a bit thrash thrown into their music. Does that sound like a strange mix? Well it is, but after I've listened to this album a few times I started to appreciate it more and more and now I find it really good. The music is occasionally mellow, with clean vocals but I guess that it's just to give the listener a chance to catch their breath between the aggressive attacks. Most of the time though, it's experimenting hard core. The leader of the band, Steve Brodsky, is screaming his lungs out behind the microphone and he's, together with the second guitarist Adam McGrath, creating one strange noise after another in-between the riffs and shows that their fantasy has no limits. They're accompanied by a good rhythm-section and everything is packaged with finesse and wealth of imagination.

As a bonus when you purchase Until Your Heart Stops, you'll get the MCD Creative Eclipses which consists of four songs that were originally released by Hydra Head, the same label that originally released Until Your Heart Stops as well. These songs are far from the music on Until Your Heart Stops, and were meant to be some kind of an experiment or something. Hydra Head have also released the CD Beyond Hypothermia, which is a compilation of all the songs that Cave In released on various vinyl releases during their first four years of existence. Check that one out as well.

CENTENNIAL

The Rotten Beauty
Megahard

The musicians in Brazil's Centennial seems to be four depressed gentlemen, whose album should be avoided if you want to get cheered up. This record could have gotten a better start as the title track Brings The Lament is a very long and viscous piece, during which I'm awaiting something to happen. It doesn't happen, and one sleepy riff is followed by another one and that goes unfortunately pretty much for the whole album. Every now and then, the tempo gets a bit higher and occasionally it feels like something's gonna happen but quite soon they're back on their slow and boring path again. The singer varies his voice and proves that he can sing with clean voice, growl and scream but his achievement is on the same level with the rest of the musicians and the thrash/doom that they blend with a bit heavy metal. Here and there, the lead-guitarist performs some good solos and also his acoustic pieces are pretty OK but that doesn't save this album and I feel that The Rotten Beauty is quite vacant.

CIANIDE

Divide And Conquer
Merciless

Cianide have been crawling in the Chicago underground since 1991, still I can't recall hearing any of their previous

albums. I'd like to check those out though, to see whether they were such a legendary band as their label states in the bio. Divide And Conquer is an OK album but it can't be labeled as a classic. Cianide's death metal occasionally gets a bit too slow and tends to fall into some slightly boring passages. I'm lucky there are faster songs like Armed To The Teeth and Bastardized which saves this album. Divide And Conquer didn't make me a huge Cianide-fan, however I will gladly put this album on from time to time.

CIRCLE OF DEAD CHILDREN

The Genocide Machine
Necropolis

Circle Of Dead Children starts with Migration, which is a death metal song with varying tempo. The second track sounds like a mixture of neo hard-core and death metal in which the singer growls as well as screams. And this goes on during the whole album. Sometimes it goes quite slowly with guttural vocals, sometimes it's grinding metal with screaming vocals, and sometimes somewhere in-between. (Bethovens Children is almost black metal.) Apparently, the members all come from different musical background, which shows in their music. This band experiment a lot and they are not afraid of trying some new stuff, which I'm sure will offend die hard grind-fans and attract a more open-minded audience. Most of the time, their songs work out pretty well and I like some of the material, which is weird and crazy, however almost 30 minutes of it, is more than enough.

CIRITH GORGOR

Unveiling The Essence
Osmose

Cirith Gorgor appeared in the fourth issue of this mag, right after the release of their debut demo Mystic Legends. I remember this demo to contain some quite OK black metal songs, however they didn't knock me over. Since then, their debut album Onward To The Spectral Defile was released 1999 by the same label that now releases the follow-up. The Dutchmen are whipping through the eight songs in an almost 100% fast tempo and is speedy black metal the only thing you are looking for, then Unveiling The Essence should be THE album to buy. Unfortunately that is not enough for me so I'm not gonna praise this album, but it's definitely not bad. Their music is a raw and cold style of black metal, but it also contains melodies, which are good antipole to the furious riffing. They've made some progress since the demo-days and that's a good sign. It's good enough to be played at my house from time to time though.

CRAWLSPACE

Death 'N Roll
Self-released

The first release from these Germans was the four-song MCD The Deep on which average death metal, which neither surprised nor disappointed, could be found. When they got some more routine it was time for release #2, which came in the shape of the demo Down Sick Dead, a tape with way better songs. Their latest release Death 'N Roll totally surprised me though, since I was not expecting this development and change of musical direction from

Crawlspace. I thought that they were gonna continue polishing their classic death metal, although the title itself reveals some changes. The new songs are still heavy and quite good, but Crawlspace have taken a step away from traditional death metal, and added even some hard core to their music. In the faster tracks like Bound, Tortured, Killed, Born In Pain and Loved To Death they sound like a pale version of Entombed or DellaMorte. The music was quite a pleasant surprise, although they need to work with the lyrics. I mean, after playing for such a long time, they shouldn't be even thinking of a text-line like "We changed our style, to go new way, death 'n roll is the music, which we love to play".

CREST OF DARKNESS

Project Regeneration
Listenable

Personally, I've never heard of Crest Of Darkness before, but the band has released two albums before Project Regeneration. Ingar Amhein and his personnel shows with this record (maybe they've always had) that music should be developing and all kinds of different noises, beats, riffs etc pops up within their songs. In other words, it's a whole lot of experimentation going on here. You could call their material black metal, but having in mind that their arrangements are industrial, as well as atmospherical, and also chaotic and much more, it's not easy to put a label on their music. Ingard's vocals are high screams that add the coldness into their creations, but another person borrows the microphone in some songs. It's within the tracks Luciferian Night, A Place With No Memories and Living Death that a sweet voice, belonging to a woman, shows up as an antipole to the evil screams. Project Regeneration includes some good solos and melodies and I like the variation within their songs. The last track contains of a bit too much electronic sounds for my taste, but the rest of the 10 songs are quite listenable.

CRUACHAN

Ride On
Hammerheart

The first track Ride On, which by the way is a cover of Jimmi McCarthy (No, I don't know who that is either), is even though it consists of some repetitive riffing a pretty cool folk-rock song, which I after a few listenings still like. The female vocals goes well with the flutes (the band uses some other traditional Irish instruments as well) and is accompanied by heavier instruments and male vocals. The second song is completely instrumental and pretty boring too, to be totally honest with you. The third track has a bit too much of the folk-influences in it, which is not what I prefer, but in the last song the tempo gets a bit higher and some heaviness is added to the music. Cruachan hails from Ireland and it seems as they are quite popular in their home country, and if you're up for some different stuff you should try them out. Die-hard metal fans should however avoid this MCD. A full-length will be out in August.

CRYPTIC WINDS
Storms Of The Black Millenium
Breath Of Knight / Merciless

The first thing that strikes me as Prelude Of Portentousness (together with Satanachia the best songs on this album) starts spinning in the CD player, is how they are trying to do what Bathory once did so grandiosely. Without getting very close. The second track is a faster piece and of the cold-and-primitive-black-metal-kind, which I, and I'm sure many others, have heard too many times before. The primitiveness goes on for the rest of the album, on which you'll find a total of six black metal songs. It wouldn't be black metal without a singer who's screaming out his hatred against Christianity and so even here. Besides, this guy is also a spokesman for total war! Out of the sextet that formed the band back in 1996, only Howitzer-Dochterman remains, as the singer/guitarist/drummer Dev Azur some time ago vanished from the line-up. He was replaced with Varn, and on this album you'll also hear Sturmmörser on bass. Even though I know that it's exactly like this, that this music is supposed to sound like, I can not disregard from the fact that I think it's monotonous and vacant. The Americans should, however, be able to sell a few copies of this album, as I've heard much worse bands within this style.

DECIMATE

In The Name Of A God
Blackfish

If I'd tell you that there are traces of both thrash and hardcore, as well as regular metal and to some extend even punk on this album, you might figure out how varying it is. However, it's not as shattered as one might think. Most of the time, the tempo on those five songs is high, with thrashing riffs (not totally unlike of The Haunted) and hard-core beats and vocals. These songs are right at it, and not a second on In The Name Of A God feels like a filling of time. The only time they slow down a bit is in A Breath Of Winter, which is an acoustic piece, dedicated to a lost friend. Definitely worth buying!

MENTOR

Enslave The Weak
Osmose

First time I heard Dementor's death metal was 1996, when they were about to release their new album Kill The Thought On Christ. I haven't heard from these Slovaks since, (They released an album called The Art Of Blasphemy on Quabalah Productions / Repulse Records a few years ago, which apparently I've missed to check out.) until now when Osmose sent me their newest album. And what an album then. I liked their old material a lot (which also resulted in an interview in Amputation #2) because their classic death metal satisfied my needs in the black metal infected 90's. During the years that have passed by since our last contact, Dementor has played several gigs, which has made them tighter and better musicians. The songs on Enslave The Weak are more technical and generally more complicated and it shows that there's a lot of work behind them. Here and there they remind me a bit of Morbid Angel, mixed with some Immolation. During the intro for Killing Christians, it sounds like King Diamond paid a visit in the studio, but mostly it's full sped through the whole album. Enslave The Weak should

be in every anti-Christian's possession!

DIE APOKALYPTISCHEN REITER

All You Need Is Love
Hammerheart

The new album from Die Apokalyptischen Reiter is not really anything I get all that excited about. First of all, this kind of melodious and atmospheric metal with some classical music arrangements is not my thing and secondly, I have a problem with German lyrics in heavy music. Furthermore, their choice to mix in various more or less known melodies (anyone recognizing the melody-line in Unter Der Asche?) into their music is not cheering me up either. I can however admit that they have a sense for melodies and some parts in some of the songs (like for instance Regret) are quite OK, although as a whole this album doesn't impress me that much. I'm sure that All You Need Is Love will be appreciated by many, as it is a professional recording, although it won't get any high scores from me.

DIES IRAE

Immolated
Metal Blade

It sounds very much like Vader, when Immolated starts spinning, but the resemblance with Poland's finest is not all that strange while taking a look at the line-up of Dies Irae. The band was formed back in 1992 by Mauser and China, although China is no longer in the band. The drums are handled by the ever so astonishing machine gun, Doc. Above all, Immolated was recorded in Studio 333 by Bartłomiej Kuzniak, the lyrics were written by Lukasz Szurminski (who's gonna write the lyrics for the new Vader MCD) and the graphical design was made by Jacek Wisniewski. The other members are Novy from Devilyn (who sounds like a deeper version of Peter the great,) and Hiro from Sceptic, which are both good Polish bands as well. In spite of all these similarities, I reckon Dies Irae have their own identity. Immolated is build-up of nine technical and incredibly tight death metal tracks of very high quality, to which every one of the members are guilty of. The tempo is mostly high (and I guess that everything else would be out of question) and is really only slowed down by Doc's industrial intro to Sirius B and outro after Lion Of Knowledge, which together with The Nameless City are my two favorite songs on the album. Personally, I don't find anything to complain about and if you like Vader, you're gonna literally drive over Immolated.

DIVINE DECAY

Songs Of The Damned
Osmose

Good old thrash metal flows out from my loudspeakers the second Finlands Divine Decay enters the CD-player with their debut album. And I don't mean the kind of German thrash which has been reinvented lately, but the Bay Area thrash that bands like Metallica and Testament once played so well. Every single one of these 10 songs on Songs Of The Damned smells the 1980's from far away.

and it's well worth a purchase. Other than that it's a seldom-heard kind of music these days, it actually is a good album. Now, these Helsinki-boys are not as heavy as Hetfield &Co once was and occasionally they get a bit too melodic, but that's not a reason to keep away from this disc.

DIVINE EMPIRE

Doomed To Inherit
Olympic / Plague

In Amputation #5 I praised Redemption, the debut album from Florida's Divine Empire, which struck me like a lightning and made a big impression on me. Therefore, I've been awaiting the follow-up with great expectations and finally it was released under the name Doomed To Inherit. Even though they continue with delivering qualitative death metal, this time around they've tried some new ideas and experiment a bit more. This shows already in the opening track War Torn, in which JP Soars "spaced" up his guitar-sound. In Dead And Martyred they're getting close to an almost black metal kind of sound, while Truth Be Denied reminds on the other hand of their Florida colleagues Six Feet Under. The instrumental track Birth Of Legends is a pretty cool interruption in their death metal mayhem, where JP takes his guitar-playing into different sounds. Still, you can recognize Divine Empire's style, which they created on their debut. JP has contributed more with the composing process and that is probably why it's that varied. Another thing that's changed is that Derik Roddy left his spot behind the drums and was replaced by another ex Malevolent Creation dude, Alex Marques, who's done a great job. If you liked Redemption, you're gonna love Doomed To Inherit. Personally, I was stunned by the debut album but Doomed To Inherit beats Redemption.

DOMINUS

Godfallos
Diehard

We're talking thrash here. Danish Dominus's latest album (their third if I'm not mistaken) is filled with music which can be referred to Metallica. By that I mean the Bay Area thrasher's work that they produced at the end of the 80's, when they were still serious musicians. The similarities goes not only within the music, but also the singer / guitarist Michael Paulsen is trying to copy the good old James the best he can. This guy can really sing and he's using his voice in different ways during the album. I personally like the faster songs where he sings with more aggression the most, like in The Fare That Wouldn't Show. Godfallos is a good album but it took me a while to finally realize it, so if you decide to get yourself a copy of it, don't give up on it after just one listening.

DORHENREICH

Her Von Welken Nächten
Prophecy

From what I remember, Dornenreich didn't sound like this on the demo I received some years ago. It was more black metal back then. The music on Her Von Welken Nächten, their third album, is somewhere between synt-black metal

and German rock / metal a la Rammstein. German is also the language in which all the lyrics are performed and that's also what bothers me the most about this album. I still haven't found a way to appreciate this language in music. On occasions they deliver some pumping and heavy riffing, but there are also moments when they slow down and acoustic guitars appears together with some whispering vocals that creates a whole different atmosphere. I like it the most in the faster songs though, like Schwarz Schaut Tiefsten Lichterglanz and Trauerbrandung. The label is talking about Her Von Welken Nächten as an album on which the lyrics and the music are equally important; however I'll never know since I only received a promo. You'll be able to check out the whole package when you've bought the album though (provided that you're familiar with the German language).

DRAGBODY

Flip The Kill Switch
Overcome

If someone had played this album for me I'd immediately guess Relapse as the responsible label for its release. The thing is that while their agro / hard core pumps out from the loudspeakers, I come to think of Dillinger Escape Plan and Converge from that label. This Florida quintet creates a musical chaos during the nine songs which are not all that easy to get into, but listen to it a few times and you'll get it. There is some strange riffing, weird drumming, a lot of furious screaming and various other noise that I find to be quite interesting. Here and there it gets a bit too twisted and complicated for my taste, but generally I like this album.

DRILLER KILLER

And The Winner Is...
Osmose

The fifth album from Swedish Driller Killer delivers yet another dose of raw-punk songs, that I find to be very good. Most of the time it's really fast within the 13 songs on And The Winner Is... and that's perfectly fine with me. Quite a few hard-core tones shine through here and there, but also a piece of metal, which makes this album interesting and varying from the first song until the end. I'm sure that Legalize Murder, Sliced and Lost Man Landing will appear on some of mine mixed-tapes as it is a perfect party-record, although I guess that live they're even better. Hm, I was just wandering whether Driller Killer sounded like this last time I heard them. I believe they were more into crust a few years ago, but I could be wrong (although that doesn't happen too often).

DROWNINGMAN

Rock And Roll Killing Machine
Revelation

I guess that the front-cover of Rock And Roll Killing Machine reflects on the live-performances of Drowningman...a tooth that has been punched out of somebody's mouth. Since the music is such an angry and intense hard core, I bet that everything ain't going so smoothly in front of the stage on which these Boston

maniacs stand. A line from the text to Code Breaking Hearts sums up their work the best, " What Once We Were Receiving, Tonight We're Sending Back..." There are some similarities with some of the bands on Relapse, whose music is chaotic and experimenting neo hard core, and the best results are achieved in the songs My First Restraining Order, Last Weeks Minutes From The Meeting Of The Secret Society Of Your Friends Who Actually Hate You and The Truly Dangerous Nature Of A Man Who Doesn't Care If He Lives Or Dies. There's a whole lot of stuff going on within their music and for every time I listen to the album, I "discover" new things. The singer swaps between aggressive screams and clean vocals, dependent on which state his fellow musicians are in, although of course most of the time it's quite violent. Lately, I have started to dig this kind of music and Rock And Roll Killing Machine is yet another album I voluntarily put on every now and then.

DYING FETUS

Destroy The Opposition
Relapse

My first encounter with Dying Fetus was (what seems to be) an eternity ago, when I bought their demo Infatuation With Malevolence which resulted in an interview with bassist Jason Netherton in Amputation #1. Since then, I haven't been following the band so closely and I've only checked out some songs on various compilations. Now that I've got the chance to take a close look at their new, fresh CD Destroy The Opposition, I can quickly establish the fact that they've developed a lot as a band. I don't remember them being this technical and even though it's natural for a band to develop over the years, I wasn't expecting such a huge step forward. They are very determined and know exactly where they want to take their music. I was mostly surprised (and also impressed) by the guitar-work that Sparky and John plays and the furious drumming by Kevin. Every single one of the eight songs is an exhibition of tight death metal (with a bit hard-core thrown in here and there) in which every member of the band does his outmost, in order to contribute to the very qualitative finished product.

ELFFOR

Into The Dark Forest
Drag-on

The keyboard-player from Suffering Down probably wrote some material which his band-mates didn't find suitable, so they locked him up in a dark basement. It was too atmospheric compared to what they wanted to play. In the basement, he found a keyboard and started to play his music which he also recorded. He also found a microphone in which he immediately started to scream for help. That was also recorded and that's pretty much what you'll find on this album. Don't waste your money.

EMBOLISM

And We All Hate Ourselves
Erebos

Embolism from Slovakia plays on their debut a sort of mix

of death and grind, with the accent on the latter. Their singer tries occasionally to make something funny??? with his voice, but it's also the only real minus on this one and you'll learn to live with it after a while. Just listen to his accent (best heard at the end of The Nowhere Land) and you'll forget everything else. The other musicians have done a quite decent job on And We All Hate Ourselves and there's really no major reasons to why you shouldn't give it a try. But even though it's quite fast, it's not fast enough for real grind-maniacs. I don't know why these guys hate themselves, although they don't need to do that for recording this album. If you'd like to check out Embolism and some other acts on Erebos, the cheapest way would be to order the four way split with Embolism, Suffocate, Haemorrhage and Obliterate.

EN SINFONIA

Intimate Portrait
Hammerheart

The first thing I did after discovering that a cover of Iron Maiden's Revelations was on this album was to put it into the CD-player to check it out. Almost immediately I got a chock, and after listening through the whole song I was mighty disappointed. I like it when a band doe's something different while covering a song (instead of trying to do it as similar to the original as possible), but En Sinfonia's version of this heavy metal classic is a pure disaster. The female vocals are way too weak for this song and the guitars are so dark that the excellent melodies are lost. The synthesizer is another annoying element. Their own material is pretty much as boring as the cover. Mr. Griffin (Broken Hope) is here and there growling with a deep, deep vocals but the combination male growls/female vocals doesn't feel all that exciting. I can live without this atmospheric album and I'm sure you'll survive without it as well.

ENSLAVED

Mardraum, Beyond The Within
Osmose

Norway's Enslaved is not exactly a small band within the metal music scene, although I've never really gotten into their music too much before. Unfortunately I would say, since their latest album Mardraum, Beyond The Within opened my eyes for this band. They're mixing heavy metal riffing with heavier and faster black metal and melodies, clean vocals with hysterical screams and I can only describe it as Enslaved-metal. They are way to original to be categorized and comparing them to any another band wouldn't do them justice. Where some bands experiment with their music with the result of being to pretentious, Enslaved makes it very tastefully and all the components they're mixing into their songs are fitting in as a hand in the glove. Already in the opening track, the marathon song Larger Than Time, Heavier Than Night (or Storre Enn Tid, Tyngre Enn Natt which is the name of it in their native language) you'll get a taste of all the elements they are blending together. Very original and very good!

EVOKEN

Quietus

Dwell

Do you enjoy watching the queue-numbers change at your local post-office, staring at the test-signal on the TV or studying wet paint dry? Well then, go ahead and buy Quietus 'cos you'll most likely gonna dig it. Personally, I think that Evoken's incredibly leathery doom, in which the singer is sometimes mumbling, sometimes bursting out in some kind of black metal screams, really sux. I didn't even manage to go through the five listenings I usually do before I write a review. Stay away from this one!

EXMORTEM

Berzerker Legions
Hammerheart

Berzerker Legions will surely get highly welcomed and appreciated by death metal fans worldwide. The reason for my prophecy is simply the strong and qualitative material, with which this album is filled with. This is the way death metal should be played like and it's played fast, very fast. This Danish combo has been active for almost a decade and the great ones from the golden years are still the main inspiration for their own songs. Both of the guitarists are tearing the strings as fast as the drummer is tormenting his set, yet without loosing the feeling that most of the bands that only concentrates on speed does. Also the singer Simon is of course important within the songs, varying his voice to fit to the music. Old school, yet fresh and worth buying!

EXTREME DECAY

Progressive Destruction
Extremist

I can not come up with one single band from Indonesia that I've heard and really liked. Extreme Decay is unfortunately no exception. According to their bio, they play primitive grind core (I can agree that it's primitive, but grind core?) mixed with elements from the 80's punk (I can agree with that as well). But, to even mention Napalm Death's From Enslavement To Obliteration in the same sentence as Extreme Decay is a strong deviation. Yes, there are a few songs among the 35 trax on the album that are OK, but a lot has to be done before I voluntarily buy an album from these guys.

FALL SILENT

Six Years In The Desert
Revelation

Revelation continues to release good hard core albums, and this time I read Fall Silent on the album that they sent from California to the Amputation headquarters. If the guys in Fall Silent spent six years in the desert and came back to civilization with an album like this, I hope they're already back there and writing new songs because this album is good. Their neo hard core is picking up bits and pieces from the metal scene, and the result is a very aggressive material that kills. I think that particularly the metal-influences are what make it so good. The music is heavier and more varied than most other hard core bands. The singer sounds really pissed through the whole album,

and you can read out from the lyrics that there are many things he's angry at in this world. Very good. We get to check out his abilities to sing with clean vocals as well, for example in the songs Heartbreaker and Sunny Days (Sesame Street), which are together with No Values and Clenched Fists & Black Eyes the four songs not written by the band. This album is with it's 62 minutes quite demanding on the listener, but the second part of it consist of the No Strength To Suffer - album (originally released by Revolutionary Powertools), which means good value for your money!

GOD DETHRONED

Ravenous
Metal Blade

God Dethroned has made them selves a pretty good reputation thanx to the last few years of touring. Now that their third album for Metal Blade is here (fourth if you count them all), I can see why they've reached such success. Before Ravenous was released, all I ever heard from God Dethroned were a few songs on various samplers years ago, but now I finally got the chance to take a closer look on their music (and immediately checked out their previous work). It turns out that God Dethroned's music has some bounds to the Swedish scene, yet without ripping any particular band of. In the faster parts, they are pretty close to the style of Swedish black metal with melodies, especially when they use some synthesizers like in The Iconoclast Deathride, or in The Mysteries That Make You Bleed. Parallels can also be drawn to The Crown in, for instance, Villa Vampiria. Anyhow, I like this album a lot, and they did a good job with the two covers from Death (Evil Dead) and Macabre End (Consumed By Darkness) as well. God Dethroned is definitely one of the best bands on the Dutch metal-scene at the moment.

GOSPEL OF THE HORNS

Eve Of The Conqueror
Damnation

Eve Of The Conqueror was quite a surprise. It's the first time I've stumbled upon this Australian combo, but their black metal hymns made a good impression on me. One can trace references to the great ones from the 80's (read Venom, Motörhead etc), from which most of the inspiration has been taken. Also some newer influences are present within their music, such as the melodies which slightly reminds me of our Swedish masters Dissection. Overall, their material sounds quite Scandinavian and I bet that Gospel Of The Horns have heard more than one album from our cold latitudes. A song that I specially liked is the title track, in which the combination of aggressiveness and good melodies works good together. The last track Sinners could however, in my opinion, been skipped as it's nowhere near the quality of the other songs.

HOLOCAUSTO CANIBAL

Gonorreia Visceral
So Die Music

The 100% gore-tag on the front-cover feels pretty

pointless, because a simple look at the cover (slided corpse) reveals what this is all about. You don't have to be Einstein to figure it out. Of course there are more tasty pictures inside the booklet as well. Almost every song is introduced with an intro, created or adapted by the band and the whole album lasts for almost 19 minutes. During this time, this Portuguese band has managed to squeeze in seven songs, which unfortunately doesn't impress too much. Their efforts of making brutal gore/grind music are not all that interesting and I think that they should spend more time in their rehearsal-room, instead of surfing on the Internet for gore-pictures.

HORDE OF WORMS

Dreams And Dying Eyes
Bloodbucket

Horde Of Worms from Ontario, Canada is a quartet consisting of four speed-maniacs who take pieces from death, black as well as grind-core in order to create their own songs. Occasionally I find their stuff pretty good, but those moments are a bit too few for me to like this album.

They've also added some samples from various movies, to strengthen the violence and death in the music. Embrace Damnation is not a masterpiece, however it's well worth to check it out.

HYPNOS

In Blood We Trust
Morbid

After the release of the self-titled MCD in the beginning of 2000, the guys in Hypnos said that a full-length album would be in the stores by the end of the year. They managed to keep their promise, and now we all can enjoy their brand new album entitled In Blood We Trust. After the above-mentioned MCD, I had high expectations on

their debut full-length and Bruno and his crew managed to fulfill them all. The death metal they showed on the 4 track MCD have developed considerably (maybe all the guitarist-changes had something to do with it) and the band seems more matured and secured on what they are doing. Hypnos dragged Mika from Impaled Nazarene to the recording studio, who lent out his vocals to some of the songs. Good choice if you'd ask me, because his screams fit well together with Bruno's dark growls. In my opinion, all of their new songs are by far the best material they've recorded and my favorites on this new record are Sacrilegious and Burn The Angels Down. That's also why I was a bit disappointed when I found all of their songs from the MCD on In Blood We Trust. I would have preferred new material instead of these old songs. All that remains to do now is awaiting their next album, which I trust will be as qualitative as this one.

HORFIXION

Disynchronize
Self-released

Comparing with Horfixions' last release, the four-song MCD Rage which came in 1999, the new material on their latest album (this time a full-length) is a bit faster and generally better. Two songs from the above mentioned MCD are to be found on Disynchronize as well (title-track and Deserter Landscape), this time however recorded with the new bassist. They haven't abandoned their beloved thrash and seem to have grown as musicians in both composing and playing. I compared them with their fellow country-men Martyr before, and that band will be mentioned in this review as well, since Daniel Mongrain (guitarist for Martyr & Gorguts) is both performing on this album and is partly responsible for the recording. I liked Rage and I like Disynchronize as well (especially the last track Nightmare), so get in touch with these guys and experience some Canadian thrashing.

HOUWITSER

Embrace Damnation
Displeased

There's been some inbreeding within the Dutch death metal scene, and now I've stumbled upon Houwitsers whose members have connections to Sinister, Judgement Day and Thanatos (those are only the bands that I know of...). 1999 they released their debut album, Death But Not Buried, and two years later they're back with a new singer and a new album. Just as I expected, it's fast death metal that is delivered and there's not much space for melodies on Embrace Damnation. It's brutal death metal, which sound quite American, without compromises and right in your face. From the beginning, until the end.

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HYPNOSIA

Extreme Hatred
Hammerheart

Ever since the release of their MCD Violent Intensity, I've been awaiting a full-length from this thrash-phenomenon from the south of Sweden. Now that I've made acquaintance with Extreme Hatred, I can tell you that the new album is by far the best they've recorded until now. Hypnobia model 2000 is a way tighter unit and they write much better songs. Cab's vocals have developed into inhuman screams that will give you goose-bumps all over your body, and also his solos have been improved. Right from the beginning they start to torture their instruments

in order to create fast and aggressive music and they don't slow down until the seventh song, the instrumental Gates Of Cirith Ungol. That doesn't last for long and almost immediately they find their way back to the thrash-inferno that they rule over. All their influences pass through my mind as I feast on Extreme Hatred, (Kreator, Sodom, Sepultura, Sadus etc), and one of their old heroes has been honored with a cover. The song they've chosen to do a cover of is Possessed's old hit My Believe, which I think is a successful interpretation. The only chance for you guys to check it out is to buy a vinyl-version of the album. To mention some of their songs that stick out a bit, I would say that beside the title track, also Circle Of The Flesh and Act Of Lunacy are my favorites on this album. Take my advice and get yourselves a copy of the album ASAP. I promise you that you won't be disappointed.

ILLDISPOSED

Retro
Diehard

The Danish deathsters in Illdisposed have dug deep into their old wardrobes, dressed themselves in their old metal-shirts from the golden years and recorded an album with tracks from their old favorite bands. I find it to be a good initiative, since we seem to have mutual heroes, but then again, who doesn't like old hits with Obituary, Autopsy (Gasping For Air is the best cover here, together with Motörheads' Killed By Death and Paradise Lost's Rapture), Carcass, Death or Venom. Illdisposed's choice of covers from their early influences is great and the way they've recorded them is not bad at all. Retro is a good album and I've had a great time listening to it many times, but still, we all know that the original version is always better. The rest of the 11 tracks on Retro are songs from Dark Throne, Infernal Majesty, Pestilence and AC/DC.

IMMOLATION

Close To A World Below
Metal Blade

The unholy force from New York has released yet another album of blasphemous death metal, and once again they are ready to strike the world with amazement. This new album will surely please all of their old fans, and we are all lucky that the time that elapsed since their last masterpiece was not so long. If you liked the Failures For Gods album, then you're most likely gonna enjoy Close To A World Below as well, as the new album seems like a proceeding to where they stopped last time. The new songs have become more technical but overall, you're gonna recognize the complex and well-played death metal that Immolation have built up during the years. The producer Paul Orofino has once again been recruited, therefore the sound is pretty much the same as on the last album as well. A special credit goes to the drummer Alex Hernandez who has grown behind his set and his performance sticks out a bit extra. Of course, the nine hymns on Close To A World Below are a sure buy, everything else would be unimaginable.

IMPALED NAZARENE

Decade Of Decadence

Osmose

I think that I will always associate the title Decade Of Decadence with a completely different band, and even though Impaled Nazarene are music-wise light years from the above mentioned band (anyone know which band I'm thinking of?), this new album is indeed very good. From being just one among thousands new death metal acts in the beginning of the 1990's, Impaled Nazarene have developed quite a bit and today they belong to the major league within extreme music. I'm sure that this celebration-album will please many old fans of these Fins, with unreleased and rare material and I certainly hope that more people will discover this fantastic band. Decade Of Decadence is opened with the first two demos from 1991, Shemhamforash and Taog Eht Fo Htao Eht, followed by two 7"EP's from the same year and 1992 respectively, Goat Perversion and Sadogoa. From the studio-sessions from October 1996 you'll get three songs (including SOD-cover Kill Yourself), two instrumental tracks are taken from the sessions in July 1997 and there are also two bonus-tracks from the recording of Rapture (including the cover Burst Command Til War by Sodom). Does all this sound tempting? Believe me, the album is worth every cent!

INHUMATE

Growth
Grind Your Soul

So, the time has come for Inhumate to release their third album in their "heptalogy based on the concept of life and the ambition of life", to use their own words. Just like their previous work (which by the way are all sold-out), Growth was released on their own DIY-label Grind Your Soul, which also is a distro where you can find tons of brutal stuff. This album starts off with the 1 second long track I Want To Kill Some...Part2, and I'm getting ready for a grind-party, which is exactly what I get as the rest of the 16 tracks relief each other. The inspiration has mainly been taken from the other side of the Atlantic ocean and I bet that there are quite a few bands in the NY-area that the guys in Inhumate like a lot. Inhumate's music is fast, chaotic and technical and not all that bad, but I wouldn't chase myself to death in order to get a copy of it, if you know what I mean. There are some pretty good stuff on the album, but none of the songs is more than just OK (Clock, Underground and Karamazov) and a few (Time, The Golden Cage and N.S.C.) are built upon such boring riffs that they are on the edge of becoming really bad.

LEGION

Conqueror
Dark Horizon

I don't know a thing about Legion. Where they hail from, what they released earlier...nothing. Therefore, the music will speak for itself. Conqueror is filled with death metal (and pretty decent one as well), if you ignore the stiff-sounding and "electronic" drums which bothers me during the whole album. Another thing I'm not satisfied with are the guitar-solos, which I think are pretty weak. Apart from that there's not much to complain about. Don't get frightened from the almost 10 minutes long

opening track, because it will get better. Legion is choosing heaviness before speed, although it goes pretty fast here and there during the eight songs (out of which one sounds like an intro). Influences were probably taken from the forefathers of this noble art of music, especially early Morbid Angel, and Legion's sound is old school. I'd reckon that if you think that for example Divine Empire is a hell of a band then Conqueror should appeal to you at least a bit.

LOVE HISTORY

Anasazi
The End

You all might recognize the duo of drummer Radim and keyboard-player Hana from the line-up of Forgotten Silence, one of the biggest names within the Czech doom-scene. Those two are no longer playing in neither

Forgotten Silence nor Love History, but if you're a fan of the first, you most likely are (or soon will be) a fan of the latter as well. I don't say that because the music of those two bands is completely alike, but I still dare to say that if you like their previous band, you are gonna enjoy Anasazi as well. The music on this album is compared to Forgotten Silence not as jazz-infected and complicated, but more metal so to speak. One could call it atmospheric doom, which is not so little progressive. The atmospheric-part would be for the keyboards, which are always a bit in the background, yet still quite present. They've brought all kinds of different elements into their music (such as acoustic guitars, female vocals, male vocals, opera-quires, etc) which mostly goes in mid-tempo and there's not much to complain about when it comes to the skills of the musicians. I think that they should skip the growling vocals, and instead go 100% with clear voices, but that's only my opinion.

LOWBROW

Victims At Play
Crook's / Plague

As many of you already know, Allen West has left Six Feet Under but it didn't take long before the Obituary-guitarist gathered some new musicians and formed Lowbrow. The four gentlemen that are completing the line-up are non others than Richard Bateman, Ben Meyer and Curt Beeson from the legendary Florida thrash-act Nasty Savage and Rich Hornberger who used to be a roadie for Obituary. One other guy from the Obituary-family was involved in the making of Victims At Play, namely Donald Tardy who produced the album. The music that Lowbrow recorded has got a lot in common with the earlier work of Six Feet Under, although it's not as "monotonous" and a lot more stuff is going on during the songs. The music is also slightly faster, more technical and includes more guitar-solos. It's obviously death metal we're talking about here, and the album is in my opinion a great release, otherwise it wouldn't be played as frequently at my house as it is. Don't let Victims At Play pass you by unnoticed.

LUCIFUGUM

Instinct Prevelance
Dark Horizon

This album is actually not a regular full-length from this Ukrainian band, but re-mastered versions of two of their early demos. I don't know whether it's because these two recordings were recorded in slightly different line-ups or something else, but they sound a bit different from each other. The first part of this CD, the Path Of Wolf demo, is a bit more melodious black metal, in which the keyboards gets quite a lot of space. I like this demo the best, as it is more varied and worked through. Even though its pretty simple arrangements, I enjoy it. The second demo is called Fire Of Hatred For Sky and the songs on this one are rawer, faster and more primitive, although there are a few keyboard arrangements on it as well. The sound is also dirtier. It's not every day you get the chance to check out a good black metal band from Ukraine, so I suggest you take a closer look at this release.

MANGLED

Most Painful Ways
Plague / Hammerheart

It's a major improvement these Dutch-men have made since their debut album Ancient Times. Their old grave-rock is gone and these days they're playing real death metal, in your face, without compromises. All their flirting with dark rock or doom (or whatever they were doing) is gone and nowadays their music is closer to the Florida-style of death metal. The melodies are heavily reduced and more space has been devoted to speed and brutality. It's faster and the singer is just like the musicians sounding way better this time. It's more Cannibal Corpse than Paradise Lost to give you an idea, and if you like the music that's coming from the south of the US, you're gonna swallow this one as well. The vinyl comes with a cover of A Scull Full Of Maggots from Cannibal Corpse.

MELECHESH

Djinn
Osmose

Melechesh is yet another band that's been around for many years without getting noticed by me. The band was formed in Jerusalem and they released a demo, 7"EP and a debut album before relocating to Holland and France. I'm sure that they'll gain more fans now that they're on a bigger label, and the fact that Proscriptor from Absu became their drummer last year will surely help as well. The music you'll find on Djinn is based on black metal, however they've added some of their native middle east tones into their songs. Every now and then it sounds very death metal, but also heavy metal can be heard here. I guess you're thinking "oh, a black metal variant of Nile", but that would be making it too easy, because as they have similar influences, the result is quite different. The bands from Israel I've stumbled upon are very few and none of them has been even close to what Melechesh is doing. Check Djinn out, it's really cool!

MINDCOLLAPSE

Vampires Dawn
VOD

Hypnosia is not the only band that can thrash so the houses fall into ruins in the southern part of Sweden. Another band worth checking out is Mindcollapse and their debut album Vampires Dawn. But don't expect the same Germany-smelling thrash which their colleagues so successfully plays, because Mindcollapse's music is not all that fast and includes also a great portion death metal. However, they know of course how to play fast as well, just not in the same way. Their songs are technical enough that one can get impressed by their musical skills, yet not that complicated to let the listener easily digest their music. Particularly the melodic riffing and the solos are what I got attached to, as well as the singer's varying register. It was about the time they got this chance to show what they are capable of on a full-length, as they are no newcomers on the metal scene. Vampires Dawn is good, it's in fact very good and without any doubt the best release on VOD this far.

MIND SNARE

Hateful Attitude
Psychic Scream

It took 10 years and seven demo-tapes before the first laser-disc from Mind Snare saw the light of day. In 1999, the MCD Hegemony was released and after that these Italians signed a deal with Malaysian label Psychic Scream, who's responsible for the release of their debut full-length Hateful Attitude. And what a debut! Raw and powerful death metal with intense drumming, furious riffing and solos and a bass-player who's not satisfied by only following the guitar and drums. No, this guy takes as much space as the other musicians and makes his instrument an equally important part of their music. On top of that, he's also growling the classic death metal way. Fans of, for example, Morbid Angel and Cannibal Corpse should check it out and I believe this is the best stuff I've heard from Italy in a long time.

MORTEM

Decomposed By Possession
Merciless

On their third album, Mortem once again delivers good old South American death metal. This is how it's supposed to sound and no one is happier than I am when such an album gets into my possession. It's an excellent death metal album, simple as that. Their fast, heavy and unholy metal (which they started playing already back in 1986) was kept secret to the world until 1996, when Merciless records re-issued their debut album Demon Tales. If you like their eastern neighbors Krisiun or Rebaellun but think that their music is a bit too complicated, then these Peruvians should satisfy your needs. On Decomposed By Possession, you'll also get the chance to check out a bit of their past in Curdled Blood, Incubus: The Return and Blackest Funeral, written in 1992, 1988 and 1986. Of course you should run to your closest record-shop or get in touch with Merciless ASAP to obtain the first two albums as well.

MORTICIAN

Domain Of Death

Relapse

I've never been too attached to Mortician's previous releases, and the new CD Domain Of Death has not made me a big fan of this NY duo either. There are many people who find their quite simple gore death metal very entertaining (judging from all the tours and advertisements that Relapse is spending on Will and Rogei), but for me it only work as background music at tops. First of all, I don't like the sound of the programmed drums and the deep and ultra guttural vocals are not very appealing to me either. However, if you are an old fan of the band you won't get disappointed, as this new album is pretty much in the same vein as House By The Cemetery and Chainsaw Dismemberment. That is music so deep it sounds like lightning and vocals that sounds like Will has swallowed the microphone and is struggling with getting it out again. Besides, you'll also get to check out Mortician's versions of Pungent Stench's Pulsating Protoplasma and Disastrous Murmur's Extra Uterine Pregnancy.

MYOPIA

Concentration Of Suffering
Self-released

With two albums released, Vancouver's Myopia has paid another visit to the studio to record a brand new album, for all worldwide fans of brutal death/grind. If their previous releases sounded as good as Concentration Of Suffering, I can not understand that no label has yet offered them a deal. There should be many labels that could release their Cannibal Corpse-smelling metal. Well, they'll have to suit themselves, but you can order this album from the contact-address at the end of this magazine. You're not gonna regret it, because this ain't a record just like all the others in the genre, but a massive steamroller that crushes everything that comes in its way.

NAER MATARON

Skotos Aenaon
Black Lotus

It's been long time since I heard a new black metal band from Greece. Well this album is new, however their music is far from groundbreaking. Although the material on Skotos Aenaon is a quite mediocre black metal, I wouldn't totally reject it and I have no problem with it in small doses. They try to vary the speed with some slower riffing and melodies like in the songs Iketis, Astro-Thetis-Cosmos and Wolf Of Ions. The sound is stiff and cold (as it should be) and every now and then they're even sniffing at the Dissection-sound. On occasions their songs feels a bit too simple and predictable and starts to get pretty boring, not to mention the length of this album which is close to one hour. I like their idea of using their own history within the lyrics though. By the way, Skotos Aenaon means endless darkness in Greek.

NAERVAER

Skiftninger
Ember / Prophecy

This album should not be reviewed in Amputation

magazine at all, since it has **NOTHING** in common with metal music what so ever. It's a genuinely strange record and describing for you what the music on it sounds like is quite impossible. The folk music influenced songs are performed with acoustic-guitars, piano and other more or less regular instruments, which are handled by the 10-man strong band. They describe their music as an expression of emotions and moods, and I find it hard to come up with anything better. There are some songs here that would fit in a movie I guess, but very often, the effect of listening to this album is equal with swallowing a sleeping-pill. Just listen to some of the "songs" at the end of the album, without getting your eyelids falling down as the bar at the railway crossing.

NEBRON

The Message
Dark Horizon

The Message from the Hungarian band Nebron is quite old news, as the album was recorded already back in 1997 (the intro and the first six songs) and 1998 (four additional bonus tracks). Not much was different between these two recordings, except of the change of their bassist and drummer. Their music is on both recordings pure black metal, which actually reminds me of the Greek scene as it sounded in the beginning of the last decade. They are mixing slow passages with fast stuff and the vocals are high and screaming during all of the songs. But, I don't find anything appealing with this release. The sound is pretty weak and the songs lacks of power and heaviness. The Message is pretty vacant and performed without any feeling, which is a shame, as the musicians seem to know how to handle their instruments.

NEFAS

Transfiguration To The Ancients' Form
Nuclear Abominations

Italy is not the first country you come to think of when it comes to death metal, but of course there are bands there as well that can create some brutal music. Nefas is a three-piece combo (led by the Pagotto brothers), who has recorded five technical death-songs to introduce them selves with on this debut MCD. I bet they've spent several hours in their rehearsal-room, because they are all quite skilled musicians, but to show that they've made the songs a bit too complicated. They compose the songs into a muddle, which makes them quite confusing. I don't understand the pointless bass-lines (from one of the brothers) that occurs here and there, and though I'm perfectly aware of the fact that it's the music that counts, the cover is not a pleasant sight either. Apart from that, I think that Transfiguration To The Ancients' Form is a decent mini-album, and if you like technical US-death metal, then you should get something out of this one as well. Some of the stuff here is really good, but it takes a while to get into the songs.

NILE

Black Seeds Of Vengeance
Relapse

Once again, Nile have crawled up from the catacombs and brought with them a new feast which they named Black Seeds Of Vengeance. Since their last album, the highly acclaimed debut Amongst The Catacombs Of Nephren-Ka, they have adopted a new member to their tribe, the guitarist Dallas Toler-Wade, who also contributed with some vocal parts. Furthermore, Derek Roddy, who should be known to everyone by now, has contributed with a few additional drums on the album. Of course, the Egyptian culture is still a leading part of Nile's creations, both musically and lyrically, and they have been weaved together with modern and highly technical death metal, where every single tone has been carefully thought out in order to fit into the complex wholeness. They have gone further and developed (entangled) what they started on the debut, which was a bit more straightforward. On Black Seeds Of Vengeance, the use of all the different instruments that create the special atmosphere, that only Nile are capable of, have been used more frequently. A new master piece by the pharaohs.

NOCTIFLOROUS THORNS

Symbolic Immortality
Pig House

I don't know whether it was the cover, the band-name or the discover of a keyboard-player within the line-up, but I was expecting Symbolic Immortality to sound pretty much the way it does. Once again I'll describe a bands' music as black metal with a touch of doom, which the keyboards make melodic. Comparing to other bands that play this music, especially from the eastern countries, Noctiflorous Thorns' music is a bit harder and rawer. They are also quite skilled musicians but that is not enough. You need to have good ideas and that's what they lack of, which makes the music quite vacant. On top of that, the sound quality is pretty bad as well.

NOCTUARY

When Fires Breed Blood
Lost Disciple

Even though they come from sunny California, Noctuary sound very Swedish. In times when they play fast and raw black metal with melodies, that is. But, there's a lot more going on within their music than in many of the black metal releases that were recorded in Sweden during the last decade. Noctuary have added, among other things, some piano and acoustic guitars, which breaks up the fast and chaotic black and the music is occasionally getting closer to heavy metal. The cool guitar-solos are also responsible for this album (which is divided into five chapters and eight songs) not being just one among many. Fortunately, they didn't infect their recording with female-vocals, and no one is happier than I am. When Fires Breed Blood was a pleasant surprise, having in mind that their contribution on the compilation from Oskorei magazine a few years ago, was a sad piece of music.

NUCLEAR DEATH

Bride Of Insect / Carrion For Worm
Extremist

Extremist records describes Nuclear Death as a band that was ahead of their time, and in the beginning of the 90's (when these two albums were originally released) they were unique with their extreme lyrics. Hm... I don't think they were all that unique 10 years ago and these days, lyrics about cannibalism, necrophilia, gore, death, incest and stuff like that are pretty common. They might have been unique by having a girl (Laura Bravo) in a grind band though, and a singer (who might actually be Laura herself) who sounds like he/she has escaped from some thrash band from bay area to join this grind act. On the first of the albums that is. On the second one, the vocals are more in the traditional grind core-way with screams and growls. I'd describe the music as an average grind core that works OK a few times (the Carrion For Worm-album) but that's it. I don't think I would have liked it any better if I'd received the original release of it back in 1992, considering all the classics that were released during that time.

OBLIGATORISK TORTYR

S/t
Osmose

With Ingen Återvändå (No Turning Back), Obligatorisk Tortyr starts a duel between hysterical and high screams and dark metal-roars (a combination, which appears on more than one occasion). On this their debut album, one can enjoy 25 grind/crust songs that are quite amusing. What makes me like this disc is that they are so "right on it". They know where they want to go and don't make any detours in order to get there. Apart from that, the songs are enough varying and energetic to keep the listener interested throughout the almost 50 minutes. Lyrically they are oscillating between their native Swedish (the majority of the lyrics are Swedish) and the English language, and with song-titles such as You Are So Weak, Soon The War Will Begin, My Enemy, Kill The World, Destroy Life etc, one can imagine how pissed off they are on our society. This album is suited for a good party, however there's no doubt that the material is best while performed live.

OBLITERATE

The Feelings
Erebos

The Slovaks are releasing their debut album after almost a decade of existence. A debut which is filled with 11 songs of grind/death metal music that occasionally reminds me of how Napalm Death sounded around the middle of the 90's. Since I seem to be one among very few who actually liked what the English legend created back then, I like this album as well. Especially the guitar-riffs made me fall for them, but the other musicians are contributing as well to make The Feelings a good album. Everything is just fine until the fifth song, where they're honoring the American Indians in Indian Holocaust. That song is pretty viscous and one starts to long for some speed. I bet there's hard work behind the songs, which they've tried to make sounding like no one else. Perhaps the singer should work some more on his deep vocals, as it on occasions seems like he's got a problem with keeping up with the music.

Nothing's wrong with his screaming though. Obliterate is one of Slovakia's hidden secrets and I hope more people will discover their music. They should have a new MCD out by the time you read this, and they also appear on the tributes to Agathocles and Impetigo.

ODES OF ECSTASY

Deceitful Melody
The End

Odes Of Ecstasy is a Greek band whose music can be described as symphonic power metal, in which the female vocals, the keyboards and the orchestral arrangements dominates. It's true that bands that fits in such description are far too many these days, however there's something about these guys (and the woman). It's obvious that they've composed their songs after having studied every single tone in details. I occasionally feel that there's a bit too much of the female vocals, but that's only because such music doesn't get played too often at my house. For all the power metal fans out there: This (their second) album should be a part of your collection.

OVERSUN

Tragedy Of Time
Nostradamus

Russians who want to sound as American as possible. That was my first thought as Tragedy Of Time went into my CD-player, and out from the loudspeakers came a flow of industry "metal" with all kinds of electronic blip-blops. I guess that bands from their former cold-war enemy country that are hyped right now (read Korn etc. and some neo hard core combos), have been spinning a few times in the Moscow-duo's living rooms and left a big impact on them. Nah, this album is not anything I would force onto my die-hard death metal friends, but those who like experimental music with the mixture of electronic music with some "metal" elements might appreciate Tragedy Of Time. I pass however and when I feel the need for some electronic "metal", I put on Pain's debut album. Considering about doing a Slayer cover while playing this kind of music is doomed to fail, and that is exactly what became of Oversun's embarrassing version of the thrash-legends old hit Reign In Blood. The songs are quite professionally recorded though, I have to give them credit for that.

OZIUM

S/t
Hellbilly

Tonedaf from Sweden have changed their name to Ozium and this EP is their first release (apart from a few demo-tapes). Judging from the four songs on this EP, they're not tone-deaf at all, so I guess that they've made some progress since their early steps. They seem to be influenced from some 70's heavy metal bands (Black Sabbath have surely been played at these guys homes a few times), but there are also elements from regular American rock bands in their music. Maybe Monster Magnet is another band they adore a lot. Unfortunately, their songs are quite weak and S/t sounds like an average demo, which

is pretty mediocre. I'm advertising for more balls and "go" in their songs for the next release, which shouldn't be too hard since they have a ground to build upon.

PATHOLOGY STENCH

Accion Mutante

Shindy / Rock Extremum

Countless are the times I've stumbled upon the name Pathology Stench, but I've never before picked up any of their previous releases since their first steps back in 1992, the demo Practical Brutality and debut full-length Gluttony. Thanx to Rock Extremum, I now have the chance to check out their latest work in the form of second full-length Accion Mutante which is not at all what I've expected. I've always thought that their music was gore-grind, but they turned out to be followers of classical death metal. These guys are really good at what they're doing and surprised me a bit with their skills. The songs are executed one after another in a furious tempo, and they manage to keep up the interest of the listener through the whole ride. Every single one of the nine songs on Accion Mutante are creative and well thought out pieces and I can only congratulate them to a successful record. I have to check out their early material as well.

PROFANITY

Slaughtering Thoughts

Cudgel

Since the last album, the 1997-release The Shadows To Fall, the Germans have changed their logo, guitarist/singer Tom has cut his hair of and their old original member Martl is back with his bass. What's really interesting though, is that the music has gone through some changes as well. They are still playing technical death metal for sure, but this time, it sounds way better than last time. The sound is way "thicker" and the songs are heavier and generally better. I think that the guitar-solos and the vocals of Tom have gone through a real face-lift. If you liked their last album (I did), then you're gonna like Slaughtering Thoughts as well (I do). Write to Cudgel ASAP and get yourself a copy of it!

The RAVENOUS

Assembled In Blasphemy

Hammerheart

When three gentlemen like Danny Lilker, Chris Reifert and Killjoy gets together to record an album, it just can't result in a failure. Assembled In Blasphemy is a very good album and pretty much what I've expected. It sounds a lot Autopsy, which is not so strange since the old Autopsy-members Danny Coralles and Clint Bower helped out the trio with the recording. There's, of course, a lot of blood and death involved within the nine songs on this album and fans of good old death metal should check it out.

REGURGITATE

Carnivorous Erection

Relapse

Now it's finally here, the new album from Regurgitate,

who've arisen up from the dead after a few years of silence. If you've read Amputation #6, you know what this album is all about, since the advance of it was reviewed in that issue. They've shown that they still can grind like hell, but the new songs are a bit longer and also more metal than the ones on the debut. The cover-art, signed by Wes Benscoter, is one of the sickest I've seen, and it's one reason to buy the album. The fact that you'll get 38 songs of great grinding mayhem is just a good bonus.

RIGHT BRIGADE

S/t

Revelation

Boston's Right Brigade delivers a more classic type of hard core on their Revelation debut, than I'm used to receiving from this label. Their songs are quite simple and straight ahead with a touch of punk and I feel that they are pretty effective. They also have a singer who's screaming his lungs out here, which contributes to their aggressive sound. Everything goes well during the first 13 songs (20 minutes of music), and that's also where this album should have ended. The last track is their longest one (3 minutes), however it's followed by 20 minutes of some kind of guitar-noise, which is irritating and totally pointless.

SETH

The Excellence

Osmose

Just prior to my first encounter with Seth, I was reading a review of The Excellence in a magazine where the reviewer cursed the album, which according to him is crap and waste of a laser-disc. After listening to the album a few times, I don't agree with my colleague, because I don't feel that Seth's record is all that worthless. It's by far not the worst music I've heard. This doesn't mean that they're good, though. Their black metal is pretty standard and in my home country there are hordes of bands that waste their energy with playing this sort of mixing-melodies-with-screaming-black-metal-music. When they, probably in hope to create something interesting, mixes the French language into their lyrics, it just sounds stupid and I'm not far from bursting into a laugh. Music is supposed to entertain, yes, but I think that Seth are deadly serious about their work and their songs are not meant to be funny.

SKINLESS

Foreshadowing Our Demise

Relapse

I remember ordering one of Skinless's demos several years ago, but I never got the tape I ordered, and eventually I kind of forgot about this American gang that was supposed to play fast and brutal death metal. Their debut Progression Towards Evil came in 1998, and those of you who got a copy of it received a great dose of death/grind. Thank you Relapse for sending me Foreshadowing Our Demise, as I found their songs with groovy and heavy mid tempo passages as well as grinding madness very enjoyable. They are trying some different stuff, apart from all the millions of death metal bands in the US which all sound

the same. I understand that Skinless is a quite recognized band in the states, and I certainly hope that they'll get some attention from the metal fans in Europe as well. They are one of those bands that are keeping death metal alive and doing it very well.

SKYFIRE

Timeless Departure

Hammerheart

Out of nowhere this Swedish quintet suddenly appears with an album, which I'm willing to confess I had troubles with in the beginning. Later on, I found myself appreciating it more and more for every time I listened to it and now I'm at the stage when I like Timeless Departure. Imagine a mixture of In Flames, Dimmu Borgir and a huge dose of your choice of a power metal band, and you can make your own picture of what this album sounds like. Skyfire takes bits and pieces from different styles of music, out of which they create music that's quite easy-listening. They have the ability to write melodies that sticks on your mind and the keyboards, which gets a lot of space within the music, fits the whole concept of symphonic heavy/power/black metal very well. Check it out for yourselves.

SLANG

S.C.H.C.

Straight Up

Apparently, these Japanese have been active for some time and this three-track MCD is their first release with a new line-up. It's also just a preview of what to expect from their brand new full-length. They offer downright hard core that is not bad at all, and show the world that the land of the rising sun has more to offer than just all kinds of crazy grind-releases. Slang have during the years toured across their island with parts of the American HC-elite (Agnostic Front, Mad Ball, H2O etc) and bands like that are a great source of inspiration to them. I'm pretty sure that they are quite familiar with a few good old punk-releases as well. Their songs are pretty simple and uncompromising, which works fine during the 4 minutes that this MCD last, however on a full-length album I would like to hear more variation and a few guitar-solos. (It's true that there is a solo in the first song Confidence, but it's mixed so low, it doesn't count.)

SOULLESS

The Darkening Of Days

Self-released

When the 10-song debut-album from Cleveland's Soulless lands in my CD-player, thrashing music is flowing out, and it's not bad at all. Traces of death metal are to be found here and there which makes their music balance between those two styles. That's not really that strange, as they state Kreator, Sodom, Slayer, In Flames, The Haunted and Unleashed as their sources of inspiration. The singer and drummer have a past in Bloodsick, another thrash-act from which Soulless was born and it shows that especially the singer was brought up with thrash. A new full-length is planned to be recorded and with a bit heavier

production, the result should be worth waiting for. I'm looking forward to check it out. The Darkening Of Days is actually their first demo-songs, re-pressed on the CD-format, so the new material should be interesting.

SUFFOCATE

Lust For Heaven

Erebos

On this debut album from Suffocate, you'll find some quite varying music. Their metal is occasionally close to grind core, however it's spiced with a great dose of hard core and it sounds very "modern". They've also used some effects on the vocals and you'll hear both growls and screams (sometimes on top of each other), as well as some talking and sing-a-long chorus. I think that Lust For Heaven sounds very American. I don't like the funky bass-lines and some of the jump-up-and-down-riffs (which is quite understandable for a death metal fellow), but I wouldn't mind this album on rare occasions.

SURRENDER OF DIVINITY

Oriental Hell Rhythms

Psychic Scream

The four convinced Satanists from the Thai capital, who call themselves Surrender Of Divinity, just released their debut album. Is that anything to care about, you might think? Well, they started their career by covering songs from Marduk, Immortal, Dark Throne and Mayhem to name a few and that's where they've taken the inspiration for their own songs. Those are raw, cold and noisy black metal tracks and not all that bad, however definitely nothing to get crazy about. First of all, too many bands are doing the same thing and second, the songs are way too long. They start with the 10-minute track Conquerors Of The Apocalypse and the length of rest of the six songs is just below that. Of course the lyrics are dealing with the up-coming battle between heaven and hell and how great everything will be, once we're all burning in hell.

THANATOS

Angelic Encounters

Hammerheart

The history of Thanatos goes way back in time. The band took its early steps already in 1985 and in the beginning of the last decade, they released two albums, Emerging From The Netherworlds and Realm Of Ecstasy. Two albums that gained good response worldwide and placed the band among the most important acts within the Dutch death metal scene. In the year 1993, they split up and not until seven years later did the guitarist/vocalist Stephan Gebedi come up with the idea to take of from where they once stopped. Although it's not really a reunion we are talking about here. Stephan is the only original member of Thanatos, but he has written all the material for Angelic Encounters, so you can be sure that their original style is present within their new creations. The style is of course old school death metal, a damn good one as well, and Angelic Encounters proves that Stephan (and his new band-mates, who by the way come from Houwitser, Sinister, Cremation and Judgement Day) is

still able to write composition that will satisfy many old fans. Hopefully, this new album will gain them new ones as well. Those of you who missed the first two albums, you have now the opportunity to check them out as Hammerheart has re-released both of them.

THORIUM

Ocean Of Blasphemy

Diehard

I'm always excited about checking out new bands, and when they turn out to be qualitative ones (like Thorium), it's like receiving a X-mass present. Now Thorium might be a new band, although it's members have been around within the scene for a while. Michael H. Andersen comes from Danish Withering Surface and the other Swedish members have released a few albums with their band Taetre. Thorium was formed in 1997 with the intention to create music in the vein of the Florida-scene from the beginning of the 1990's and combine it with some modern way of playing death metal. Personally, I think that their 9 songs sound quite Swedish as well and at times, I come to think of At The Gates and their great efforts in the Swedish metal scene during the last decade. To close the album, Thorium choose to cover Lunatic Of God's Creation from Florida's most evil orchestra, and when the song ends the 33.56 minutes long album, it's only a sign to get up from the sofa and get the record spinning again. I hope that the group of these Scandinavian allied is not only a project that will be known for just releasing this only album, and that they will please my ears with more releases in the future.

UNDERULE

Misfortune Comes By Means Of The Mouth

Blackfish

I like hard core and Underule's idea of throwing in some metal into their songs results in a quite cool mix. Relapse or Revelation could easily have released this album, since Underule has got bits in common with the agro hard core bands on those labels. The intensity and will to sound as angry as possible is present, but the songs tends to float into each other and I have a problem with keeping them apart. I however like Misfortune Comes By Means Of The Mouth which I think is a decent album, but the die-hard hard core kids will appreciate it more than me.

V/A

Black Eyes' Aggression

Weird Truth

Black Eyes' Aggression is a good chance for you all to check out what Japan has to offer within black metal music, but I hope that the bands on this compilation aren't representative for their entire scene, since none of them made any big impression on me. The Under starts this tape with an ultra-fast track, which suffers from such bad sound, that not much of the music can be distinguished. The material from Insanity Of Slaughter is a bit better, but it is too standard and a bit nagging from the riff they're repeating over and over again (which is what Old Serpent does as well in their calm and almost atmospheric song that ends the tape). Infernal

Necromancy is the only band with two tracks here and I wonder why, since there's nothing special with their songs. In the second one, they slow down a bit and plays a line over and over again, mixed with some chaotic screams, and that is one of the worst on this compilation. Crifotoure Satanarda are using some melodies within their music and their contribution is also one of the least crappy here. But only if you take away the middle-part of some kind of folk-music, with which they totally ruin the song. Gorugoth is mixing deep growls with high screams but their music is very pointless. Hurusoma is using some traditional Japanese music within their own song, which is pretty cool. Holokaust Winds is a one-man project of Tormentor, who's playing as if his pants were on fire and he is also using some melodies. I think you've figured out what I think of these bands, and if you'd like to check them out for your selves just order a copy of this compilation. Personally, I wouldn't buy even a demo from any of these bands.

V/A

Hymns Of Rebellion, Part II

Golden Lake

This is a compilation with varying range of both styles and quality. I doubt that Sean Reinert and Sean Malone from Cynic will sell their stuff thanx to their names. Their band is called Aghora and sure, it's technical as hell but not very exciting. There's a dose of bad, bad black metal performed by Ephel Duath, Rakoth (they call it black fantasy metal, but I call it Donald Duck metal), Haborym and the trio which is obsessed by Scandinavia, Asatru. There are also Mauolin Of The Well (boring doom for 9 minutes) and Unsilence (who are a quite decent melodic thrash/doom band, however their song is destroyed by the singers vacant voice.). Sweden is represented by Obscura, whose death metal song is pretty OK and nothing to be ashamed of. The same goes for Dutchmen in Pulverizer. A lighter version of death metal comes from Dying Day and their melodic death with connections to the Gothenburg-style. Inner War comes with one song from their demo 2000, which was a good metal tape. Japans Cryptic Revelation makes a quite shattered impression as their song oscillates between decent death with speed and slow and boring riffing. Rain Fell Within made a good impression on me with their original demo Solemn Days and this song is good as well. So is Al Sirat, who throws in some melodies into their sometimes thrash / sometimes death metal. The whole disc is concluded by Autumn Tears and their slow synthesizer music (or is it supposed to be some kind of relaxing-music?). Don't waste your money on this one.

V/A

Voices Of Death, part III

VOD

The third compilation from Sweden's VOD records is mainly filled with average black metal acts. Overlord, Maleficio, Archangel, Misteltein and Mornaland are all playing a quite boring kind of music, which is nothing to get excited about. There are also some other styles represented here, like Divine Souls and Skymning (power / heavy metal, except for the vocals), Midian and Ars Moriende (death metal), The Provenance (black/doom

with flutes, keyboard and female vocals), Unpure (punk/death), Obscure Divinity (slower death metal) and Norway's only contribution Trendkiller (doom). None of them is anything I would waste my money on though. Immemoreal and Zahrim plays their black metal fast and both of them are way better then the rest of their competitors within this genre, while Serpent Obscene and Enthralled are the two death/thrash bands that presents the best music on this compilation. Most of the bands here are just wasting valuable space, which could have been better used by other bands.

V/A

Scream Forth Blasphemy,

A Tribute To Morbid Angel

Dwell

I'm one of those people who are not too fond of tribute albums, as I think very few of them make any justice to the original band. Therefore it was a pleasure to find out that Scream Forth Blasphemy is a really successful way of honoring one of the biggest legends within death metal. The 15 bands that attend on this album have chosen material from the older albums (no songs from neither Domination nor Formulas Fatal To The Flesh) and every single one of them have succeeded with their interpretation very well. The highlights are Angel Corpse - Demon Seed, Mystifier - The Invocation / Chapel Of Ghouls, Draconis - Evil Spells, The Chasm - Abominations, Aurora Borealis - Ancient Ones and Centurian - Blasphemy Of The Holy Ghost, although the performances by the rest of the bands on this tribute, Mangled, Headhunter DC, Diabolic, Withered Earth, Black Witchery, Infamy, Damnation, Coffin Texts and Exmortis are not far behind. Generally, this is a fuckin' good album and none of the bands have dishonored the gods from Florida. Not much to add really, except that the bands have all done a good job by paying their respect to a legend that has inspired an endless amount of bands during the years.

V/A

In The Sign Of The Horns

A Tribute To Venom

Dwell

I have in my possession one other tribute to this English cult. I think it was in the year 1993 or 1994 that I got Promoters Of The Third World War - A Tribute To Venom, which the Swedish label Primitive Art Records released. On this album, very few good versions of old Venom-classics were to be found and the times when this particular record makes it all the way to my CD-player nowadays are quite rare. Dwell record's effort to honor the forefathers of black metal doesn't seem to be any better as Nocturne opens In The Sign Of The Horns with a quite dry version of Black Metal. As Coffin Texts follows with their own interpretation of One Thousand Days In Sodom, I get rapidly in a better mode. Also some of the bands that follow, Bloodstorm (Satanachist), From The Depths (Live Like An Angel, Die Like A Devil), Evil Incarnate (In Nomine Satanas) and Noctuary (Die Hard) have all done pretty good covers of this classic horde.

Black Witchery (Warhead) and Diabolic (Buried Alive) are in a way quite good but not as good as the versions that Massacre and Unanimated once did. The both non-American bands here, Swedish Mörk Gryning (Leave Me In Hell) and Japanese Ritual Carnage (Welcome To Hell) have both done good jobs as well and both stand well against the American domination. Venerel Disease (Lady Lust) and Perverseraph (Genocide) would both be much better with another singer although not even that would help Acheron (Countess Bathory), Morpheus Descends (Angel Dust) or Anal Blast (Red Light Fever).

V/A

Wizards Of Gore

A Tribute To Impetigo

Razor Back

Having in mind what kind of records Razor Back usually release (extreme death/gore/grind), it's not all that strange that when they decide to honor a band with a tribute album, their choice is the old and among many remembered as cult act Impetigo, a band that was put to eternal rest back in 1993. 28 bands are appearing on this tribute and due to the lack of space I'm not gonna mention them all. Instead, I will concentrate on the ones that did a good job. The album starts with two of the best songs on this album, Boneyard from Sweden's representatives Murder Corporation and Dis-organized from Aussies Blood Duster. The Dutch band Last Days Of Humanity does a "special" version of Revenge Of The Scabby Man and just like the Czech's Ingrowing (Bitch Death Teenage Mucous Monster From Hell), they have nothing to be ashamed of. Other bands that have done good jobs are the Americans Exhumed (Cannibal Apocalypse), Impaled (I Work For The Streetcleaner), Lividity (Bloody Pit Of Horror), Lord Gore (Breakfast At The Manchester Morgue) and Vastion (Harbinger Of Death), as well as Germany's Blood (Wizard Of Gore) and Japan's Vampiric Motives (Sinister Urge). I don't understand why Razor Back let more than one band covering each song though. For instance, there are three versions of My Lai. This is a quite entertaining album on which total failures are very few and since many of the bands here were totally unknown to me before, Wizards Of Gore worked as an education for me as well.

V/A

Overload 2

A Tribute To Metallica

Dwell

Unfortunately, I've never had the chance to check out the first Metallica-tribute from LA-based Dwell records, but I guess it was a success since it's time for a second tribute to the Californian thrash-legend. I must say that most of the bands on Overload 2 has done a good job with the music, but some of them ruined that totally by disastrous vocals, like Blasphemy Divine (Welcome Home / Sanatorium) and Diabolic (The God That Failed). I was also a bit disappointed by Coffin Texts contribution, as their version of The Call Of Ktulu didn't fulfill my expectations. The previous covers I've heard from them sounded way better than this one. Brazilian Mystifier, who opened this album

with a cool version of Phantom Lord, and Krabathor from Czech Republic, who follows them with just as good version of The Four Horsemen, did both add a personal touch to the covers and adjusted them to their own sound. Same thing with Abominant (Battery). Solaris from Holland tried the same with Nothing Else Matters, but their ambitious, electronic black metal just didn't work on this particular song. Noctuary's contribution (Leper Mesiah) is pretty OK, but the too high-mixed bass and the screaming vocals ruins it a bit, but Soulless did a decent job with their cover of Motorbreath. New Eden (Ride The Lightning) is probably together with Last Chapter (Escape) the two bands, that managed to get their covers to sound the closest to the original on this album. From The Depths version of For Whom The Bell Tolls is quite close as well, but the vocals are a bit rawer.

VOMITORY

Revelation Nausea
Metal Blade

Vomitory belongs with their 11 years of existence to the veterans within the Swedish death metal scene. It's a shame that they have somehow found themselves "in the shadows" so to speak during the years, and I certainly hope that it's gonna change now, because Revelation Nausea is one hell of an album. After two full-length releases on Fadeless Records, the line-up has been reduced to a quartet and a new deal has been signed with Metal Blade. The label can therefore present yet another great death metal release. Vomitory's new album consists of 10 strong, old school death metal songs which of course sounds very Swedish, and even though it's clear where they come from, they've managed to give their songs an own identity. Right from the beginning, and through out the whole album, they deliver their material in a furious and uncompromising speed, and finding anything to complain about here would be like looking for a needle in a haystack. If only more bands could play like this.

WYNJARA

Wynjara
Nocturnal Art

Ever since I heard that the guitarist from Divine Empire J P Soars has got a side project called Wynjara, I've been awaiting the opportunity to check them out. They were formed way earlier than the above mentioned band (which by the way already have two albums in the stores), but not until now has the good old Samoth and his Nocturnal Art Productions made it possible to release their debut album. How shall I describe the music then? Well, of course there is a lot of death metal in their compositions (which is not all that strange, since the band was also formed by Jason Morgan, who once in the time used to play with Monstrosity), but the music is spiced with some progressive elements that makes this album a unique product. I like it a lot, however it would be even better if they'd skip the instrumental tracks. I feel that only Waratah is in a way a cool interruption in their otherwise heavy songs, the other three non-vocal tracks I could live without. Luckily, there are still plenty of good songs on Wynjara that makes the album worth your money. There's

also a cover of Scorpion's Animal Magnetism. Unfortunately too many bands, especially in the US, play the same music as 1000 other bands. Therefore it's a pleasure to find out that there are still bands that try some new stuff to keep the scene alive.

BLACK WITCHERY / CONQUEROR

Hellstorm Of Evil Vengeance, Split CD
Dark Horizon

The Florida sons that form Black Witchery attacks right from the beginning with raw and fast black metal of the more primitive kind. That means, that you won't find any keyboards, female vocals or melodies on any of their songs. Only pure and cold darkness. Unfortunately, the sound could have been way better. Still their songs are well worth checking out, even though none of them is a regular hit. I don't know much about Conqueror (except that the band consists of a duo), whose four songs are to be found on the second half of this album. They open up with some kind of grinding black metal, and just as their colleagues on this split, they too want their material raw. The result of Conqueror's time in the studio is an intro and four songs which, just as Black Witchery's five tracks, doesn't impress too much but works quite OK.

CONFESION OF OBSCURITY

OUTCAST
IMMERSED IN BLOOD

Sweets For My Sweet, 3-way split
Low Life

Sweden's Immersed In Blood only offers two new tracks on their part of this split, which they've called The Emporium, and those are Breed and Transmutation / Emporium. The first four songs comes from their debut demo Eine Kleine Deathmusik from 1999 (Pull The Trigger is re-recorded but still), and those of you who've heard this tape know what to expect. That is two new ultra-brutal death metal cuts the American way, with deep growling vocals and technical music. They're right on it as if there was no tomorrow and personally I reckon Transmutation / Emporium to be their best song to date. I want a full-length album soon! (Amputation #6 with an interview with the boys is still available.)

Confessions Of Obscurity hails from Belgium and they deliver the usual mixture of gore/movie-samples which is funny to listen to a few times, but nothing you'd pick up when you're feeling for a classic. During the 23 songs, the tempo is obviously very high, so if you're looking for some speed, Hack 'M Into Pieces might suit you. I however want some more and apart from some laughs from some of the samplers, the music doesn't give me anything. Outcast is also from Belgium, but their music on Total Retaliation differs from both their countrymen and the Swedes. They are playing some sort of grind/death with a touch of hard-core, which occasionally is quite brutal, but sometimes it turns into some "jump-a-long" music. It's during the slower parts I like Outcast the most, since their heaviness comes forth the best, but the fast stuff is not all that bad either.

Outcast and Immersed In Blood plays in a whole other division that Confessions Of Obscurity, and they are well

worth some of your attention.

DROGHEDA / INTENSE HAMMER RAGE

Split CD
Extremist

I've heard Americas Drogueda before and I'm also aware of that they've released some stuff before. But, I've never been a fan of their grind core since I never found anything interesting in what they've recorded. They didn't manage to catch me this time either and their songs once again pass me without a notice.

If you already have Intense Hammer Rages' debut album Devorgrindporngorecoreaphile in your possession, you know exactly what the other half of this split sounds like. Yes, it's the complete debut album that the Australian boys decided to represent themselves with on this split. The music they've written on their isolated Tasmanian island is twisted grind which occasionally is really enjoyable. The chaotic rhythms that changes in speed all the time and all the intros to the songs contributes with not making it boring. Intense Hammer Rage is definitely the better band on this split and I appreciate the chance to check out a band from Tasmania for the first time in my life. Too bad they didn't include any lyrics in the booklet, because they use to be half of the fun on records like this one.

This whole album is more than 77 minutes long, which could be a bit too long for even the most dedicated grind-fan.

DROGHEDA / MORTICITE

Split CD
Extremist

My opinion about Drogueda's work on this split is equal with the one above. Sure it's fast and the speed is nothing to complain about. The problem is the riffs which to me seem quite pointless. Just like the previous split, I don't understand Drogueda.

And just like the previous split, the second band is the better one. Although I wasn't all that excited about Morticite's grinding either. To break what seem to be the only possible things to write about these days among grind bands, porn and gore, Morticite writes about the social problems in their "land of opportunities". I'm sure many people will wet their pants over this split, I understand that there's been a rush for Drogueda's albums before, but I don't think that I will play it so many times in the future. Even for being a live recording, the sound is pretty bad and that doesn't exactly help, does it.

STARGAZER / INVOCATION

Split CD
Dies Irae

Thanx to the Singaporean label Die Irae Productions, two Australian bands have gotten a chance to release a common CD. Stargazer begins with their black/death metal which, in the beginning, didn't make any big impression on me. However, I did like Conspirators Winds and Interrestrial Black Twilight the most, and since these two songs are the newest ones (all of their songs on Harbringer were written between 1993-1996), I think

their next album should be quite interesting. It's not that the songs on this album are bad, but very little sticks to ones mind, even after several listenings, but maybe that's because I don't get the songs.

It's way more pleasant to get acquainted with Invocation, who've named their side of the split Horrific Ancient Sumerian Traditional Ursupurs Remembered. Their music is closer to death metal and I don't think that I'm all that mistaken while stating that quite some inspiration has been taken from Morbid Angels early albums. This is my taste of fast and technical music (mostly Rebirth Of Chaos, Homage Eternal and Death Shall Awaken), and this album is worth buying to check out the second half of it.

UNVEILED / TRAUMA

Split CD
Psychic Scream

Unveiled from Malaysia starts this album heavily with some gruff gruff death metal a la USA, but after a while their sound turns into a more "traditional" death metal. And that's better. In fact, this must be the best death metal band I've heard from this Asian country, way better than I expected. They're partly grinding, partly chugging heavy riffs and their four songs actually sounds like a lighter version of Cannibal Corpse. The sound however is a problem, as the bass drum seems to have disappeared in the mixing process.

Trauma is a band hailing from the Indonesian islands, and they too start with the American style of death metal with impossible-to-distinguish-a-single-word vocals. But, they stick to this style through all their five songs, which are also more technical. The sound on these songs is better and they are also the best I've heard from this country (which is not that hard, since everything I've received from there earlier were lousy bands, recorded with lousy sound on lousy tapes).

If you're not familiar with the metal scenes in these two countries, then this is a good chance to check it out.

7"EP

SARGATANAS REIGN
Hellucination
I Hate

Anyone remember Devo Andersson from Marduk's early recordings? These days he's ventilating his lungs in Sargatanas Reign, for me an unknown act until now, even though they've been together for more than five years. It's not all that strange actually, as Hellucination is their debut release. The four songs you'll find on this red vinyl could be described as evil death metal (evil because of the content in the lyrics and death, of course, because of the sound of the music) and I was positively surprised by them. Their compositions are stuck on ones mind after just a few spins on the plate and they have a strong old school feeling. Order a copy from I Hate Records right now before the first pressing of 500 copies is all sold out.

STARGAZER

A Raging Vortex of Extreme & Eclectic
Black / Death

INVOCATION

Mystical Death Metal Forged
of the Ultimate Dark



DAY 004 CD STARGAZER / INVOCATION SPLIT CD

Introducing two of Australia's most brutal acts
to date. A crushing split release.

DEATH OF MILLIONS



DAY 001 DEATH OF MILLIONS

FROZEN CD

DEATH OF MILLIONS latest releases 'FROZEN', offers up to 11 intoxicating and sobering visions of homicidal, stomach turning acts of corpse violation, and dark ancient ceremonies and practices.

DIES IRAE PRODUCTIONS

proudly presents

DIM MAK



DAY 002 DIM MAK

ENTER THE DRAGON CD

DIM MAK pack a powerful punch somewhere in a grey area between hardcore and metal. 'ENTER THE DRAGON' is an all-out attack of finesse and fury from a band that treats music like a martial art. 13 songs of uncanny design that release destructive dimensions of musical might.

DIES IRAE PRODUCTIONS

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