



Hi!

Welcome in "Kogaionon"! There is no need for an editorial on the first page, is there? It would bore the hell of you anyway, so, I'll just skip it, and go straight for the label' addresses besides a grateful greeting next to them. Underground should always be underground! Good reading...

John Michael; Kultura!!!

Stefan

*Pagan Blessings,
Doru ATOMEI*

ARS METALLI, Rosengasse 3, 15230 Frankfurt (Oder), Germany, E-mail: arsmetalli@t-online.de, www.ars-metalli.de;

AVANTGARDE MUSIC, Via de Amicis 4, 20123 Milano, Italy, phone: ++390289408677, fax: ++390289408688, E-mail: greylife@tin.it, Website: www.avantgardemusic.com;

BESTIAL RECORDS, Str. Caras, No.8, 1900, Timisoara, Romania, phone/fax: +4056163024, E-mail: bestialr@banat.ro, http://bestialrecords.virtualave.net;

BLACKEND/PLASTIC HEAD RECORDS LTD., Unit 15, Bushell Business Estate, Hithercroft, Wallingford, Oxon, OX10 9DD, U.K. phone: +44(0)1491/825029, fax: +44(0)1491/826320. E-mail: Plastichead@compuserve.com, www.plastichead.com;

CACOPHONOUS RECORDS/VISIBLE NOISE, 231 Portobello Road, London, W11 1LT, England, phone: +44(0)1717929791, fax: +44(0)1717929871, E-mail: lilith@cacophonous.com, julie@visiblenoise.com, www.cacophonous.com;

CANDLELIGHT RECORDS, 2 Elgin Avenue, London, W9 3QP, UK, http://www.candlelightrecords.co.uk;

CCP RECORDS, Dinghoferstr.54, A-4020 Linz, Austria, phone: +43(0)7326041400, fax: +43(0)7326041404, E-mail: ccp@privat.at, http://ccprecords.homepage.com;

CENTURY MEDIA RECORDS, Schäferstrasse 33a, 44147 Dortmund, phone: +492318297, fax: +492318297101, http://www.centurymedia.com;

CODE 666, Emiliano Lanzoni, Via Billi 2, 40026 Imola (BO), Italy, fax: +390544406468, E-mail: code666@imola.queen.it, http://code666.cjb.net;

COLD MEAT INDUSTRY/CRUEL MOON INT'L, P.O. Box 1881, 58117 Linköping, Sweden, E-mail: info@coldmeat.se, www.coldmeat.se;

CONQUISTADOR RECORDS/SUPERNAL MUSIC, 27 Fortis Green, East Finchley, London N2, 9IL, U.K., phone/fax: +44(0)1813653470, E-mail: mail@supernal.demon.co.uk;

DAMNATION RECORDS, Hoge Iarensesweg 55, 1221 AK Hilversum, Holland, E-mail: damned66@xs4all.nl;

DARK SYMPHONIES, Box 547, Billerica, MA 01821, USA, phone: 9786638871, fax: 9786339591, E-mail: darksympho@aol.com, www.borg.com/~lordxul/dsl.htm;

DIES IRAE PRODUCTIONS, P.O. Box 337, Yishun Central, Singapore 917612, fax: (65)7521056, E-mail: dayofwrath@mailcity.com;

DISPLEASED RECORDS, Ronde Tocht 7d, NL-1507CC Zaandam, Holland, Fax: +3175670479, E-mail: displeased@xs4all.nl, www.displeased.nl;

GUTTER RECORDS/MASSACRE RECORDS, Rauheckstr.10, 74232 Abstatt, Germany, phone: +49(0) 7062953660, fax: +49(0)7062953666, www.metalmerchant.com; www.blackend.de;

E-mail: heavymetalbreakdown@metalmerchant.com;

HALL OF SERMON, P.O. Box 749, CH 4310 Rheinfelden, Switzerland, phone: +41(0)618317272, fax: +41(0)618315150, E-mail: hallofsermon@compuserve.com, http://www.hall-of-sermon.de;

HAMMERHEART RECORDS/THE PLAGUE (ex-FADELESS RECORDS), P.O. Box 277, 6300 AG Valkenburg, The Netherlands, phone: +31(0)464373600, fax: +31(0)464373800, E-mail: hhr@hammerheart.com, wilko@hammerheart.com, www.hammerheart.com;

ICARUS RECORDS, C.C. 1593, 1000 Correo Central, Buenos Aires, Argentina, phone/fax: +54(011)43450211, E-mail: icarus@ba.net;

KAOTIC PRODUCTIONS, Olivér Kápolnás, 1192 Budapest, Beresényi u.26, Hungary;

LAST EPISODE, In der Vorstadt 114, 73529 Schwäbisch Gmünd, Germany, Fax: +497171989318;

LUNA SOUND RECORDING, Bergshojden 42, 174 45 Sundbyberg, Sweden, fax: +46(0)86399409, E-mail: Luna@ettnet.se;

MAQUIAVEL MUSIC ENTERTAINMENT LDA, P.O. Box 172, 2400 Leiria, Portugal, phone/fax: 0035144872852, E-mail: maquiavel@mail.telepac.pt;

KOGAIONON CONTACT:

DORU ATOMEI, O.P. 4, C.P. 150, SUCEAVA, 5800 ROMANIA, (the old address is also available),

TEL/FAX: 004030526577, www.kogaionon.ro

E-MAIL: AQSV@WARPNET.RO (don't include this address in any kind of mailinglist without my permission, thanks).

METALSTORM, Schaufelder Str.38, 30167 Hannover, Germany, E-mail: Tomek.Braun@stud.uni.hannover.de;

MILLENIUM MUSIC (ex-SOLISTITIUM RECORDS), P.O.Box 1145, 26793 Moormerland, Germany, fax: +49(0)49546876, E-mail: Millenium@t-online.de, http://welcome.to/milleniummetal;

MOONFOG PRODUCTIONS, Arbeidersamfunnets Plass 1, 0181 Oslo, Norway, phone: +4722201590, fax: +4722201591, E-mail: moonfog@online.no, www.moonfog.no;

NAPALM RECORDS/DRAENOR PRODUCTIONS, Vordernbergerstr.20, A-8790 Eisenerz, Austria, fax: +4338433273, E-mail: napalm@leox.net, www.napalmrecords.com;

NATIVE NORTH RECORDS, Skillebekkg.45 A, N-5522 Haugesund, Norway, phone: +4752705773, fax: +4752705774, E-mail: mail@nativenorth.com, www.nativenorth.com;

NECROPOLIS RECORDS, P.O. Box 14815, CA 94539-4815, USA, fax: 5106230927, E-mail: Necrop@necropolisrec.com, www.necropolisrec.com;

NOCTURNAL ART PRODUCTIONS, P.O. Box 4, 3671 Notodden, Norway, phone: +4735020862, fax: +4735012108, E-mail: eclipse@online.no, http://www.nocturnalart.com;

NO FASHION RECORDS, Industrivägen 1, 17148 Solna, Sweden, phone: +4686303600, fax: +4686303601, E-mail: nofashion@houseofkicks.se, http://come.to/nofashion;

NSM RECORDS, Hauptplatz 24, 2700 Wr. Neustadt, Austria, phone: +43262265321, fax: +43262265337, E-mail: nsm@nsm.at;

PAGAN RECORDS, P.O. Box 12, 86-105 Swiecie 5, Poland, fax: +48(0)523330248, E-mail: paganrec@friko.onet.pl;

PAVEMENT MUSIC EUROPE, Suite NR B 66 Nieuwezijds, Voorburwal 86, 1012 SE Amsterdam, Holland, fax: 31207779265, E-mail: pavementeurope@hotmail.com;

PLASMATICA RECORDS, Box 8855, 40272, Göteborg, Sweden;

PROPHECY PRODUCTIONS, Kurfuerstenstr.5, 54492 Zeltingen Rachtig, Germany, phone: +49(0)6532945020, fax: +49(0)6532945021, E-mail: info@prophecyproductions.de, www.prophecyproductions.de;

REDSTREAM RECORDS, P.O. Box 342, Camp Hill, PA 17001-0342, USA, phone: (717)7743606, fax: (717)7743747, E-mail: RedStream@aol.com, www.rstream.com;

REPULSE RECORDS, P.O. Box 50562, 28080, Madrid, Spain, phone: +34915225636, Fax: +34915311122, E-mail: info@repulserecords.com, www.repulserecords.com;

ROCRIS DISC, P.O. Box 110, OP.1, Constanta, 8700, Romania, E-mail: rocris@gmb.ro;

SCARLET RECORDS, Via Mattei 48, 20097 S. Donato Mil.se (MI), Italy, fax: +39022423200, E-mail: scarletk@tin.it;

SEASON OF MIST, 24 rue Brandis, 13005 Marseille, France, phone: +33(0)491830308, fax: +33(0)491800037, E-mail: info@season-of-mist.com, www.season-of-mist.com;

SHINDY PRODUCTIONS, Martin Brzobohaty, Sadova 17, 67904 Adamov, Czech Republic, E-mail: shindy@telecom.cz;

SOUND RIOT, P.O. Box 243, 2500 Caldas da Rainha, Portugal Fax: +351 262 83 3542, E-mail: soundriot@mail.telepac.pt orriot@alanet.com.br, http://www.wingsofdeath.nu/soundriot/;

TRINITY RECORDS, Ahornweg 19, 64807, Dieburg, Germany, fax: +4960715737, E-mail: trinity.records@t-online.de;

UNISOUND RECORDS, 84 Academias Avn., 10678 Athens, Hellas, phone/fax: 003016560570;

VELVET MUSIC INTL, BP 3072, 69397 Lyon, Cedex 03, France, phone/fax: +33(0) 478391971.

VOCES OF WONDER, P.O. Box 2010, Grünerløkka, 0505 Oslo, Norway, phone: +4723226666, fax: +4723226667, http://www.vow.dk;

X-RATED RECORDS, 3215 NW 10th Terrace, Suite 206 Fort Lauderdale, FL 33309 U.S.A., E-mail: x_rated_records@yahoo.com, www.xratedrec.com;



PAZUZU is a respectable name from underground and Ray Wells, the man behind the mask, decided to answer me on a lot of questions. There was the first interview made for this issue of the magazine.

Hi Ray. How are you? We are in 2000. Interesting year, don't you think?

"Absolutely so... I am fine thanks."

Should I understand that leaving the Old Continent helped you identifying yourself...or helped you to express a lot much better the pessimism next to human future? Could be Canada a proper land for you to create? Is it? Austria is an old history country... a former mighty Empire... While Canada... Was it worth "to give up" Vienna for Toronto? (how stupid might even sound!)

"Yeah definitely, and especially now with this fucked up political situation there, I much rather like living here. I love Canada, and I have been here almost two years now. It was worth leaving Austria for sure."



I have information (I know, in fact) you work as Quality Assurance Technician at Car Seat Factory. Does it please you? Are you plainly satisfied? Should be the financial worries that determined you to leave Europe? How can you make possible that your rational, practical, material half embrace the other inner ideal half? As they are kind of interdependent?

"Actually I got promoted again, haha! Well, I like my job, and it pays pretty good. That helps me stay alive. But it wasn't money I came here for. Austria is rich enough... I just like this country a lot more. Music is part of my life as is my work, both don't interfere with each other."

If I ever come to a decision like moving away in Canada what would you recommend me? Do you miss your friends? Are you longing for "home"? If I correctly recall "Awaken The Dragon" was dedicated to your parents and brother. Have you ever taken in consideration an eventual return back home to Austria?

"Well, my parents have been here for quite some time now. Canada is very nice and very big. Nature here is really unbelievable. I miss my friends, of course, but there are airplanes and e-mail, right?? I probably won't go back to Austria to live."

That's all introduction. Let us find the music. "PAZUZU" is a Sumerian mythological concept. Is there any link to your personal musical concept?

"No, PAZUZU the name was only chosen, because I like the sound. Only the first CD deals with the topic. All other ones are more personal."

In the last Autumn of '99 Avantgarde Music released a new PAZUZU's album. I would say that "The End Of Ages" represents and opens a whole new chapter for you. Could it be considered as a consequence of your own isolation? I may be wrong, please correct me.

"No, I think there is truth in what you say. PAZUZU is a living entity in me, it is my soul speaking. This album turned out the way it did, because I wanted it this way, cold and organic."

The album is different, changed a lot, and tipped on dark synth having also industrial, ambient, gothic influences with less melodiousness. "This music was guided by the hands of decadence, evil, filth, suffering and plague... This is the antidote for Life". Where did it come this apocalyptic vision? Maybe 2000 ascendancy? "The End Of Ages" denotes the whole amount of your phobia and nightmares. Is it discharging? In other words, is it really coming the end of the world or is it a fear of yourself? An apprehension of yours?!

"I am certain, that the earth realm will fall soon. I enjoyed the 2000 hysteria around me. It was the prelude to the symphony of demise... to say it a little poetically, hehe! I have very dark and apocalyptic visions in me, and wanted them to channel through my music."

"Eclipse: Final Clash Of Swords" is the most complex track, "Schalen des Zorns" is the most expressive and "Hallucinations" is a strange industrial experiment... I've chosen only 3 titles. What do they express? (more specifically). Let us know your personal view above the album, the tracks. Did I correctly appreciate or value those tracks?

"Yeah, right on... those are my favorite ones. "Eclipse" describes the final clash between light and darkness as depicted in the Revelations of John... "Schalen des Zorn" (Vials of Anger) is also from that chapter of the bible. Where the archangels proclaim Gods fury... It is a very mystical part of the bible, and probably the only part I read, hahaha! "Hallucinations" was more of an experiment, with the synth techno stuff, I wanted to try something new. I like that track."

The artwork was performed by Roberto. The cover is perfectly compatible with the name of the album. It's you I want to know if being completely satisfied of this "match".

"Yeah, I love that cover. It looks like the figures are hailing the apocalypse and greeting deliverance..."

The previous albums were following a different, more melodic, medieval profile, configuration. A much more coherent one. Should I understand that your Ego was "shadowed" by the partnership with Silenius and Protector? By the way, do you keep in touch with them? What may have happened with Dark Matter Records?

First of, Dark Matter ripped me off major, they owe me tons of money. I stay in touch with all the guys in SUMMONING etc... Well, "Awaken The Dragon" was also almost entirely written by me, so no, I guess it was just a different mood of music. But like I said I wanted to create a dark an organic CD. Many people have a hard time adapting to the music, but it takes time and I find this new PAZUZU style more interesting."

This metamorphosis of sound pleases me and I truthfully hope for PAZUZU's fans to have the same opinion. If not it might bring changes in sales, which might impose, for Avantgarde Music to revoke the contract. Does it scare you such idea? Could it? What are the intentions you have with PAZUZU for this year?

"Haha, thank God Avantgarde are not like that. Well, like I said, it's a new direction...PAZUZU is for open-minded people. I am glad you are one of them! This year I will be working on new material mainly for RAVENTHRONE. But I will do more PAZUZU stuff, for sure..."

Some bands are taking in consideration also the recommendations of the labels' boss and though release interesting albums either as sound or profit. Is it your case also? Tell me more about your relationship with the Italian label.

"No, like I said, Avantgarde are not a wicked label, they are serious and honest! It is a privilege to be in their family!"

RAVENTHRONE is the other project of yours. And, to be sincere, the style is totally different. More black metal having medieval or gothic features. What can you share with me about RAVENTHRONE? Some other projects?

"RAVENTHRONE is my metal project. But I try to keep it fairly symphonic and so on. I like this project very much and enjoy writing material for it. Right now I am also working on some film music for a friend of mine."

I would like finding out something about the way you get inspired. Do you "require" a special proper state of mind and not only? Are you using drugs or alcohol? Or something like the hippy kind: "make love not war"?

"No, haha... I just get these moods and then it comes like from beyond. It just flows and ideas become music. Drugs are ok though, haha"

I still listen and tremendously enjoy DEAD CAN DANCE. Should it be regarded as a limitation of mine or generally speaking? I suppose this band became history for you, am I wrong?

"No, I also still like them, as well as Blackmoors Night and good old Loreena McKennitt. They are awesome artists..."

There are theories that impose quality music as being only performed by and with authentic instruments, no other electronic accessories. What's your point of view? How do you stand?

"Bullshit. Depends on the music you want to write. How would an industrial band sound with an orchestra???"

Are you interested of Canadian metal scene? Would you have the kindness of landing me the details?

"Well, it isn't very big. There are two good quality zines and a few bands, whose names escape me. Nothing like in Europe!"

I also would like you to share with me a few thoughts regarding the reappearance of heavy metal or the bands' return to heavy metal. Death metal is dead since a long time; black metal is hardly surviving using deviating melodic trickeries; ambient remains where it belongs... Don't

you think that music styles are kind of cyclical? The quality seems to delicately distinguish from quantity... But it needs time. Don't you think we also face more bands than fans? Could it be a natural "artistic" desire or an evident envying naivety?

"Yeah, for sure. I mean any fans wants to be in a band, right? Or have something to do with the scene. There are tons of fanzines out there too, right? Anyhow. I miss death metal like in the late 80's and early 90's. AUTOPSY, ALTARS OF MADNESS, SCREAM BLOODY GORE etc...those were the days! And I miss good old thrash too, like old EXODUS, TOXIC etc..."

How do you approach music: a stream of creative unconsciousness or a rational act of composing?

"Definitely a stream of creative absence from here. It's like a trance...for PAZUZU at least..."

Let me pass over another issue. Is love significant for you? Land me your personal considerations if not being too intimate for which I apologize already. Do you think that infidelity is an "art" or a handicap? And as it came here, are you married, have children?

"I am married, very happily and have no kids...and don't want any either. I feel no urge to be unfaithful. Like I said I am very happy...why do you ask?" (just curiosity-ed)

I conceive you're not a religious person but you mention often of Armageddon. The human race destiny involuntarily depends on religious dogma, don't you think? Either it implies us or not we seem to reflect ourselves in a perpetual religious conflict.

"Religion is the path of the weak. It guides the blind and streamlines the masses. In the states religious extremism is almost as bad as in Arab countries, haha! They are fucking Christian fundamentalists. I hate that. I leave them alone, why do they bother me?"

In Christian dogma loving "the other" is the quintessence. Moreover, it is said that if you give you shall also be "gifted". Does your sociability accept also the concept of love for "the other"?

"I respect people that obviously respect me. Anyone else can kiss my ass...simple as that. These religious dogma were valid at no point in time, because humans were always bad..."

In your point of view is the suicide a pitiable attitude in front of life or bravery? Someone said once that isolation is a Saints' privilege. Could it be suicide the very consequence of isolation???

"My next door neighbour committed suicide and left a wife and two cute little kids. That is certainly not bravery. But I don't know, if someone is terminally ill and wants to die, that's a different story...agreed?"

Politically and economically facing the facts... USA gained the title of mondial jurisdiction. Isn't it strange for a state, that has a no older than 200 years history, to dominate the entire world of nowadays? To despise any law and to make murders in the name of a subjective justice?

"Like I said, the states are very fucked. Because most people there are out of their minds, one way or the other. Very violent and primitive people in my mind. Canada I must add is the exact opposite, that's why Canadians and Americans don't get along, hehe!"

We already entered 2000. What might be the wishes you want to come true? Do you think that Bill Gates' glory shall fade?

"I hope so, bastard is rich enough as it is, hehe! My wishes? Hmm, I want to write good songs. That's about it right now."

Ray, before ending the present interview I'd like telling you what I think about PAZUZU after re-listening all the three albums: The first two represents your very roots, the history and safety of those times when "The End Of Ages" meant your inner struggle searching for a lost serenity of your soul. I do thank you for your patience and kindness and may this New Year provide you the serenity and nerve for composing other albums, as your heart requires. A word of farewell?

"Thank you very much, and forgive the delay in answering, I am pretty busy all the time. Hail to you and Hail Romania... Armand is from there!" (Armand is the other guy from RAVENTHRONE-ed)

Contact:

E-mail: pazuzu@cgocable.net

KOGAKUCHA 6



Black metal is an important musical style for actual metal scene and ...AND OCEANS is one of the hundred bands who sustain the melodic, modern and atmospheric side of this kind of music. My guests in this interview were Neptune and K-2t4-s.



Hi Neptune. How was the last Autumn tour? Was the public in the same mood as it was in THY SERPENT and BARATHRUM gig? You have got some cold, I know; any other special events? How does it look like ...AND OCEANS, BLOODTHORN and AGREESSOR live? Did you use classic black metal make up?

(Neptune) "Well, the tour was great though we all were really sick during the whole tour and our singer lost his voice almost totally after a few gigs etc. We met really cool people, we drank a lot and had fun!! We also would have had opportunities to play with e.g. AETERNUS, ANGEL CORPSE, MARDUK AND CANNIBAL CORPSE!! With CANNIBAL CORPSE twice! This never happened because these gigs didn't apparently fit to our tour schedule according to our label manager!!! Fuck, it would have been great!!! Audience were great at least in Marseilles and in Strasbourg!!"

(k-2t4-s) "An ...AND OCEANS kicks ass live and BLOODTHORN & AGREESSOR are really weak. No seriously, we are like any other band live, nothing special to say about that. We just try to perform and play the best possible way. AGREESSOR is really good live both bands were better live than on CD."

You have over ten years of performing on metal scene and yet you still managed to sign a serious contract only with ...AND OCEANS. The other projects had broken apart: PEACEFROG, HEADACHE, EXTREME

DISCO TERROR, FESTERDAY? Isn't it so? Was it just because the thrash, death, grind styles did not interest any more? Presently, how do you regard those old times?

(Neptune) "Those old times were great!! I mean like we had our first gig in '91. We played with gigs with bands like IMPALED NAZARENE and SENTENCED back in '92 etc. They had just released their demos then. It was real underground!!"

(k-2t4-s) "We had a contract going on with FESTERDAY, but

we just split up before any real signings. EXTREME DISCO TERROR had a contract for one album, but we didn't want to record it. These were

mostly projects and we didn't take them THAT seriously, so that's one of the reasons why we never released anything officially. Nothing beats the good old times!!"

The actual members are also playing in some other bands: BLACK DAWN, ROTTENSOUND, ENOCHIAN CRESCENT. What is your personal opinion about their music? Me, I must confess I really enjoyed either "Drain" or "Omega Telocvovim". Could it be interpreted as lack of loyalty for ...AND OCEANS the fact that your partners are still looking for music and not only in some other bands but even in their projects? Or I suppose the answer might be that the desire for art has no borders? Should it be hard to own a distributive attention?

(Neptune) "Lack of loyalty?!?! Black Dawn and Rotten Sound has been around before ...AND OCEANS. Members of those bands has come to play in ...AND OCEANS not the other way around! This has nothing to do with being loyalty or not!!! We all are friends and share similar interests, so it's natural to play in same bands as we also live in the same area. E.g. our drummer played on the "Omega Telocvovim" because the former drummer left and it wasn't easy to replace (actually impossible) him, so they had to find a drummer somewhere and hey why not use our drummer?!? I must admit there aren't that much drummers in Finland who could play like that!!"

The band was created in 1995 and released a demo in the same year after which a promotape '96 and also "Mare Liberum" in 1997-a demo released at Defender Productions. What was your state of mind by that time compared with the present one, the actual? Did you receive "positive" critiques?

(Neptune) "We consider the "Mare Liberum" demo being the first ...AND OCEANS release because it represents us the way we wanted from the beginning, but couldn't do it before the line up of the "Mare Liberum". With "Mare Liberum", yes we got good response, but honestly we didn't send it to that many places because actually our debut CD came out before that because Defender Prod. managed to delay it a BIT!!"

Who had the idea of giving ...AND OCEANS name to the band? I suppose it has nothing to do with the real meaning of these words... it should be like a metaphor... I'm I right? What is meant to say by this name?

(k-2t4-s) "I came up with the name and it has nothing to do with water, sea or factors of the nature. We use it more like a metaphor to thoughts and colors. One has to see it from a different semantic perspective than from a physical point of view. It's a progressive name with no limits in any concrete directions, a psychedelic name that symbolizes the eternal individual thoughts and colors. I think it's essential for a band to have a personal name with a personal signification instead of having a typical "go with the flow-dictionary" name."

"The Dynamic Gallery of Thoughts" was recorded in October 1997 and released at Season Of Mist. How do you analyze the debut album? Do you see it as being a little bit too simple or having a few "missings"? The lyrics were presented in four languages (English, French, Finnish, Swedish) and the artwork was performed by Alf Svensson (ex AT THE GATES). Why so?



(k-2t4-s) "Actually we used Swedish lyrics on the debut album and the reason to this was that I felt like using my mother tongue. The lyrics were supposed to be in Finnish and English to compensate the whole mindworld, but I just couldn't find the right words to express certain things. There is no use in translating metaphorically written lines and personally apprehended thoughts, because the interpretation aspect becomes too narrow and the comprehension could be twisted."

Express your feelings about "...AND OCEANS vs BLOODTHORN War" Volume 1.

The next album in line was "The Symmetry of I, The Circle of O" and included Gaunt at bass. Tell me, please, where and, especially, why did Mr. Oos leave?

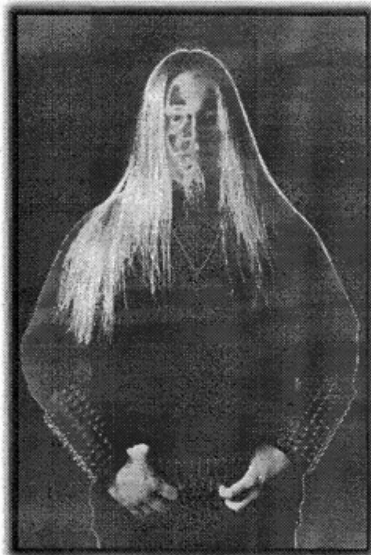
(Neptune) "The WAR album was a really great experience to make. Making covers and trying to make them in ...AND OCEANS way, that was challenging!! All in all there were two new of ...AND OCEANS and they were made between the debut and The Symmetry album, so they were almost like a mix of two different styles of our two full lengths. Gaunt played already on the WAR album! Mr. Oos didn't leave, but he had to go because he showed too little of dedication for this band and also the fact that he lived too far away in order to attend rehearsals when needed!!!"

This very material appeared also as double Digipack CD along with an ambient noise CD which was spontaneously recorded in studio. Where from did you get the idea?

(Neptune) "I don't know actually where the idea came from!! We had just talked about doing that kind of recording and when we had the chance we did it!! It was really fun!!!"

The album's title is a little bit difficult to handle or perceive. Can you explain it somehow? And, moreover, I would like you to unravel the meaning of "I is the omnipresent substance of the vertical spheres of O which is the emptiness with horizontal levels of nonexistence". I mean your personal connotation of this phrase.

(k-2t4-s) "Each and every person can interpret the title as they like, there are no obstacles for the mind only oppositions and contradictions. The title should be seen from a perspective of multiple interpretations and the same goes for the lyrics, but it depends on the floating how the mind apprehends the colors and pictures in question. I symbolizes individuality and O symbolizes the person's mindworld if I try to give a concrete form to an abstract figure. From an Inhumane position to a world of Obliteration where the all black becomes white."



The final outcome includes eight tracks; the last dark ambient track is composed by PUISSANCE. For how much time did you flirt with such style? Do you think it would be natural that in the future album PUISSANCE should appear an ...AND OCEANS's track? I might be malicious, but I assure you it's only an innocent curiosity of mine.

(k-2t4-s) "There was also another track that should have been included

on the other disc, but the band didn't get it finished in time so we had to drop that idea. The idea was to put two tracks made by non-metal bands to give balance to the concept. The tracks would've been opposites to each other and therefore the idea would have suited perfectly to this release. I don't think we're gonna use this idea once again."

The other seven tracks are following the first album line: a fast rhythm, massive keyboards and "black" voice. Yet I found something interesting on "Aquarium Of Children..." a few passages where the voice is near King Diamond's modulation. Moreover, you introduced some other nonblack elements... I simply got the impression of a more complex

product than the previous one. Explain somehow, please, the way you conceive sound maturity? If I correctly recall, the studio was the same, Tico-Tico, right?

(k-2t4-s) "King Diamond, uuaahhhkkk. The production, construction of the tracks, arrangements etc. is much better on this new album. This new material is more compact, but I'm not satisfied with the total result. Musically it's pretty okay, but all in all it's maybe too concrete and obvious audiovisual material. Maybe I sound too negative towards our own music, but I found that pretty positive in a way. Yes, we used Tico-Tico for the last time."

The majority consider you a black metal band. If the sound may correspond with this criterion..., in exchange, the lyrics are obviously contending this concept, don't you think? Who's writing those lyrics and what may be the meaning of them? I found quite strange terms like "mechanic hippie", "baby blue doll" (and musically I distinguished also a few cosmically tendencies), "acid sex and marble teeth"...

(k-2t4-s) "I don't consider ...AND OCEANS to be black metal because we don't have any satanic lyrics even if our thoughts lay on an anti-christian level, but that's not the issue in ...AND OCEANS. Musically one could say we are black metal and we are always categorized as black metal, nothing wrong about that, but if we are pedantic to the context then we are not black metal. But I guess we are more black metal than Mortification is. Black metal has to contain satanic lyrics otherwise it is not black metal. We are an anti-christian band, but that's not the issue in ...AND OCEANS, the anti-christianity stays more on the personal level in our life outside the band. It's pretty difficult to say what our music offers the listener because it appears differently to everyone. Some people like it some don't, but who cares anyway. One could compare our music to a meadow of flowers. The production, construction of the tracks, arrangements etc is much better on this new album. This new material is more compact, but I'm not satisfied with the total result. Musically it's pretty okay, but all in all it's maybe too concrete and obvious audiovisual material. Maybe I sound too negative towards our own music, but I found that pretty positive in a way. I write the lyrics, but I don't think it is significant to reveal the inner semantic deepness of each thought because people can't otherwise apprehend the individual coherens in their systematic network. Each and every one can read and interpret the written lines as they like by finding their own spiral of the rainbow. Look for contradictions and find the oppositions."

I remembered you had to release a 7" at Somber Records along with BLUTTAUFE. Do you think 7"s are still profitable? But LP's? What would be your news? I have information that the Season Of Mist contract was supposed to last only for two albums. Did you elongate it in the meanwhile? When do you aim for a future album? What would be its sound? Do you assume we'd hear more dark ambient industrial tracks (see GGFH)?

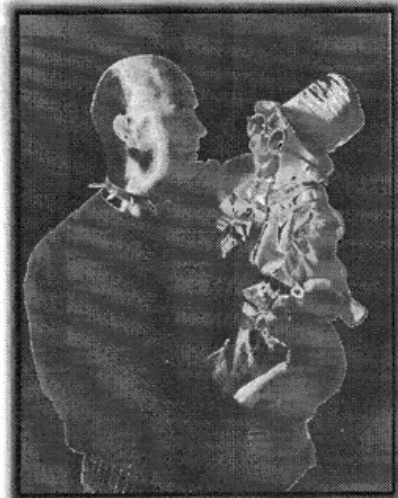
(Neptune) "We have had several offers recently. Two offers we have thought more carefully are Avantgarde and Century Media! We'll see..."

(k-2t4-s) "The 7"EP will hopefully be out from Sombre, but it all depends on them. If they don't release it, I don't give a damn. The contract with SOM is over at the moment, but we'll see what we'll do. Our next album will be recorded next August/ September. The music will be fresh and groovy!"

I am curious, do you take into account your own dominant influences or it happens for you to listen to music and then creating? What do you enjoy listening lately? Would you precisely recommend me three albums?

(k-2t4-s) "I never listen to music in order to get influenced by it, that's the weakest way of creating personal material. I don't listen to music, have never really done that so it's pretty hard for me to recommend any albums."

I would like you to introduce the other band's members and, if possible, to disclose what else are you fascinated by besides music? What is the way



you spend your spare time?

(Neptune) "I hardly have any spare time because of my day job. But if I manage to have some time, I'll have to try to create new tracks for ...AND OCEANS and answer the email/mail and all these interviews, haha!! Of course at weekends I'll have to take care of my duties as a man, haha!!"

(k-2t4-s) "I spend my spare time on sex & socialization!"

No doubts, your vocal has a very strange nickname. What is the meaning of? Expand a little the idea of that distinctive dance of the visual voices or "short movie".

(k-2t4-s) "It's a short movie about 12-15 minutes long containing two ambient tracks and one metal track. The material has been shot with 3 different cameras, one 6mm, one 16mm and one security camera and of course everything is black and white with some overlighted moments. The screen will be divided into 3 pictures with 3 different topics rolling on at the same time. The material is pretty avantgardish and I don't think the regular metal people will understand it. We've got about 13 hours of material, but we still have to go through the whole material, do the cutting and editing. It's very time

demanding, but we're working on it and hopefully we'll get it finished this year. The headman behind the cameras has made lots of shortmovies and won some cultural prizes for his work and he'll spread the material to be shown on some underground shortmovie "festivals" in Sweden, Poland, Finland, Belgium etc."

I drop the conclusion you "adore" contrasts exactly from "The Black Vagabond and the Swan of Two Heads", a representative title for my conclusion, isn't it? Dualism is important for you. Right?

(k-2t4-s) "Dualism is the answer my friend and these contrasts are equivalent to different personalities. It's about finding the right piece to fall on the wrong place and vice versa. Man is dependent on the very opposite and existence is based upon emptiness. One has to face the eternal search and learn to take advantage of the positive in the negative."

Suicide. What do you think about such act? In metal scene we confronted with a lot of cases of suicide. The most recent one I recall is BORKNAGAR's drummer, I suppose you have heard... about. Is it really an escape? Mostly we only could explain it as an escape, how else could we perceive such an act?

(k-2t4-s) "Yeah, I heard that the drummer of BORKNAGAR took an OD. Maybe suicide is to escape from reality or to escape to reality, it depends how one interprets it."

Are you fascinated by religion? Could you? I know you lecture various occult books but you do not consider yourself a Satanist. Roberto (MONUMENTUM) once said "any kind of religion is a moral slavery, even Satanism, which some might think as the philosophy of unmoral, but it becomes a slavery itself". What do you think?

(Neptune) "Fascinated by religion in particular?! No! I'm fascinated by all the occult, satanic, supernatural things/phenomenon! Yes, I don't consider myself being a Satanist because I don't acknowledge any particular direction of Satanism or anything like that, I just take things and thoughts which fits to my own way of thinking! Roberto may have a point there!! You always must keep space for your own thinking and not to follow somebody else's 'ready' thought patterns. It just limits you or enslaves you as Roberto had said. You always have to question everything!!"

Do you esteem yourself as a sense of humor person? What do you think about it?

(Neptune) "Humor person, why's that? If you mean our music, we are taking it very serious! It's true that we aren't taking all this black metal, true and evil things like most of the people do. It's quite ridiculous to see how those kids are trying to be so mean looking like that would make them something and lifting their status or whatever, hahah! They are just making a fool out of themselves!! We like to fuck with this kind of people by stating some offensive things and laugh at them! We like also sarcasm! All in all people who know us knows what we are, but it's true that people

who don't know us can be confused after reading our interviews etc.!!"

In XI century, Eric IX, Sweden's King, had started a crusade which meant indeed Finland's Christianizing. After a few other centuries the Lutheran Reform placed your country into a different position reaching, nowadays, a major Protestant statute. Because it is not a monarchy (like in Norway, Sweden, Denmark's cases) the president is not forced for being necessarily Lutheran. What about utterance freedom? It seems like your future president would be a woman, Tarja Holonen, of left sights and having no religion. Did you vote? Do you believe in women emancipation in any sphere? Politics, socials and even music?

(Neptune) "Well, Finland was the last country of these Nordic countries which was christianized. I don't know too much about our countries religious past, it seems that you know more! Yes, Halonen is our new president and she is an atheist!!!! I didn't bother to vote!! Women here are equivalent to men, nothing more to it!"

The Russians had conquered you and had left you without Karelia yet you still have a special distinctive respect for them. Especially for Lenin... You do have even a Museum dedicated to Lenin in Helsinki. Can you conceive that Lenin really offered you the independence? Swedish people had also subjugated your country and, look, Swedish is the official language in Finland. A thin verticality characterizes your people, don't you think?

(Neptune) "I don't mind not having Karelia!!! Respect for who? Russians? Are you kidding me, hahaha?!?! What news papers or books you have read?!?! Of course our government has to be on their toes all the time not to piss them off too badly that they could come up with some excuse to attack us again like last time when they attacked! So what if there's a museum dedicated for Lenin in Helsinki?!?! It's just a historical thing!!! No offense Russians, but how the hell we would want respect that much when their country is totally fucked up?!?!? No money, drunk president, Mafia, prostitutes who are invading Finland etc.!!!!!!"

We are independent now because we defeated Russians at the Winter WAR!!!!!!

In many countries there are several official languages, so what?!?! Like Switzerland, Belgium etc. that has necessary nothing to do with wars or subjugation or shit like that!"

From another different point of view, when pronouncing Finland... I instantly have in mind the thousand lakes country, polar foxes, Lapponia, reindeers or even Santa Claus. Have you ever seen his sleigh? Is really Finland a beautiful country? (rhetorically questioned I guess!)

(Neptune) "Of course Finland is something else!!! It's like any of the other Nordic countries amongst the few countries in the world which still have relatively pure nature!!! Those things you mentioned are the things which most often comes up when asking ignorant foreigners about Finland!!!"

Unfortunately, we must end our discussion right here... otherwise... who knows? Perhaps the kids who proudly wear CRADLE OF FILTH T-shirts would have expected to read a horror interview, a "destroying" one, full of a lot of "fuck" and some other "black messages" they are used with. I confess I truthfully did try something else... Do you believe it is difficult to dream on...? Can you observe any kind of differences between an idealist

and a dreamer? I definitely appreciate all your support and agreement to respond... and I wish for you to enjoy a flourishing New Millenium! The "Kogaionon" Mountain awaits for your final account...

(Neptune) "What can I say I'm a realist, if you are a dreamer you are just deceiving yourself hoping something better for you which will never happen anyway in this fucked up modern world!! Learn to live what you've got and make the best of it!! Of course it's another thing if you want to do some mind expanding experiments, haha!!!"

Contact:

Neptune, Purotie 12, 68600, Pietarsaari, Finland

E-mail: andoceans@pp.inet.fi

Homepage: www.blackmetal.com/~mega/AO



ATARAXIA: DREAM OR REALITY? Hard to decide... Probably many of you had read about these Italians who through their answers might have brought you into the ancient, medieval times. Since Vittorio had granted me with an original stuff, which I have included in first part of my material, I had decided to "unveil" ATARAXIA's mystical aura. So, this was the reason I asked Francesca to answer a few simple, common questions. So, firstly dream then reality...

ATARAXIA



"Decoding hieroglyphic omens astonished I feel"

"ATARAXIA converges its instincts, needs, egoism and enthusiasms in the act of creation that's music. Through music we rebuild the traditions and ancestral experiences of far off cultures and civilisations.

Musically we feel craftsmen of the sound, we create an unusual mélange of sacred and profane, Medieval and experimental, contemporary and ancient. We own the inheritance of history, a felt research into European legends crossing the ancient Greek and Latin myths. Contemplation, oniric spiritual experiences, regrets and remembrances, mysticism, twilight elegiac atmospheres, priestly ritual movements float in the mysterious garden of Psyche and Desire where eleonics meet the embracing echo of classic instruments.

From the beginning in the ensemble are present a mime/dancer and an "image capture" who take care of the live theatrical and visual performance. We have always given a multimedia connotation to our live events creating "whimsical landscapes" and a poetical background to music. We hope to have overcome genres in order to be "located" transversally in front of the music world.

There have always been human beings predestined to afford in the most mystic and mysterious way their existence, amplify their knowledge and world of experience, this is ATARAXIA.

Melancholy, regret and struggle are essential to create music; the musician is fragile and very strong at the same time, a vehicle of electric harmonic turbulences.

Music is a total esoteric experience; the only channel of

communication among the living and the departed, the past and the present, parallel dimensions, music allows boundless temporal voyages. Every album and performance we create is a chapter of the same book; every new chapter begins where the previous ends.

We are Travelling Musicians playing in primeval kingdoms where spiritual energies are strong and winsome.

Evanescent Warriors and Diaphanous Thinkers."

...The HISTORY

"Our band history seems to be part of two different ages, two different psychological dimensions and attitude towards life and art: before 1992 and after that date. The eighties seem to be very far, thousands years ago, we don't like to speak very much of that period, it was a very painful one. We had no means at all, I began singing without a microphone, possibly I was shouting not singing, and we had a great strength and determination in a deaf wealthy Italy where underground music was completely cut-off, where cultural music was completely cut-off too. I remember we were

many persons, 8 at the end of the eighties, we played a lot; we gave many and many concerts in very bad, uneasy quite unbelievable situations. That was the moment of fear and pain, some of us died, killed themselves, had accident, we are here with their wounds in our body and soul. It was many years ago and I don't know if it's good to describe those days. 1988-1991 has been the years of death, 1992 has been the year of rebirth in a refund cycle of nature, and in it's natural fluid. From 1994 on (the year of release of our first CD SIMPHONIA SINE NOMINE) the fight with destiny had a start, we were no more humble deceived men but fighting ones and then year after year we became channels of History and Time, our Mother and Father, we're becoming one of their voices and now we are travelling musicians, evanescent warriors and diaphanous thinkers walking along the path of Knowledge in order to find the keys to existence, everything in the right moment, not before neither after... Our main influences have been the wounds and discoveries of our lives."

MEANING OF THE NAME

"ATARAXIA is a spiritual balance, the synonym of a state of perfection that is not possible to be reached by human beings entirely. ATARAXIA becomes a state of tension and we try to open our minds to be receptive and perceptive towards the occurring of life. Creativity is the basis of our research. ATARAXIA's members feel to be mediums of Time and History (our Father and Mother), they pass through us and we become their voice. Our aesthetics are based on beauty and struggle. ATARAXIA itself is in equilibrium and wisdom. Our favourite philosophers are the Greek ones from the Hellenistic era; in particular we love and appreciate Socrates who put research not dogma at the top of life."

ANCIENT PLACES...

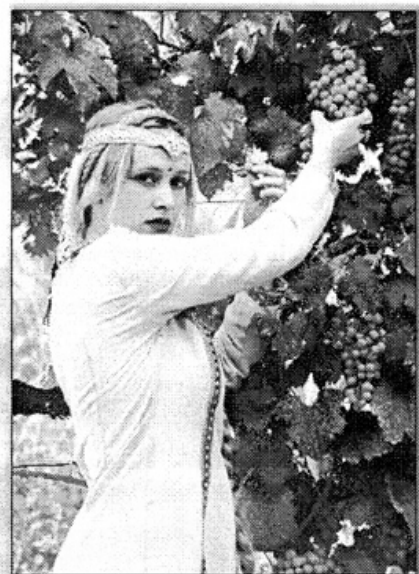
"Ancient stones and the water of the sea speak to us. For this reason we want to play and record in those places, to hear their silent voices..."

WHO WE ARE

"ATARAXIA are a few artists from Italy who explore and create music, painting/images, poetry and theatre and who decided to dedicate their lives completely to art. ATARAXIA feel to be wandering clerics and evanescent warriors who follow the path of life looking for "keys" to knowledge and wisdom. ATARAXIA are travelling musicians mainly inspired by their actual and inner travels in places that still own the nobleness and charge of centuries. ATARAXIA transmit through music what they obtained by silence, they're channels of History and Time, their Mother and Father, who let them speak and play and sing like Sybil. ATARAXIA is the inner balance, the communion with Nature."

WHO ATARAXIA ARE

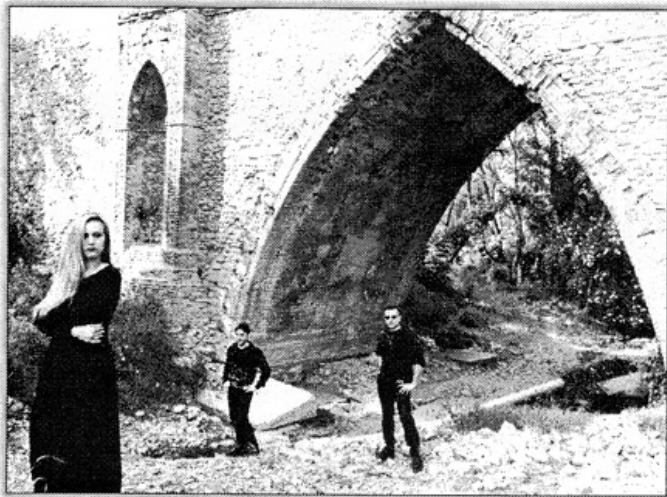
"ATARAXIA are a sort of theatrical drama consort. We express ourselves through music, images, theatrical and dance acts and scenographies. When music is born we begin creating the costumes of the mime/dancer who works with us and the choreographs and scenographies for the live acts, we also have special ritual dresses and our photographer and "captures of images" does its best to put together a sort of kaleidoscope of colours and portraits that sometimes are projected, other aims become the covers and booklet of our releases. The magic created by concerts is the great exchange of energy among the listeners, and us concerts are often held in ancient places where the subterranean currents flow. We explore and travel in primeval kingdoms... As we always say art is the divine part in each of us



and music is the most ethereal and deep form of art, the only way of communion and exchange among the past and present, the living and the departed."

LOVE FOR EARLY TIMES

"We have grown up in medieval burgs and we carry on the "oral tradition" of those times. We are wandering clerics and pilgrims who want to maintain memory and remembrances of all those souls cancelled by bigger event that annihilate the single. Someone can understand what it means to feel deeply the smell and surface of ancient stone on one's skin, to enter those places and to perceive the presence of who lived there, the pulsing fragments of ancient inhabitants or pilgrims like we are.



Furthermore we are craftsmen, we utilise our hands to create, to give nuances and we don't like to imprison knowledge channelling it in specific branch. The ancient studios were adopted in many areas and they were all interconnected: music, painting, science, math, philosophy, architecture, and alchemy. Sometimes we feel to be crossroads among the Orient and Mediterranean cultures and the Northern Celtic one, we are a land of meeting and translations, citizens of the world who bring the physical and spiritual signs of far different experiences and cultures. As you may infer we would like to live everywhere in any time in order to collect all the possible experiences. Modern Times come directly from older ones."

OUR NATURE

"We have a medianic attitude towards art and creation. This is an unconscious gift. Creation is the way to express the divine part of the human being. In the ancient Dionisiac rituals the musician was possessed by the God of Nature who spoke through him/her. We have what you could define a mystic attitude towards life, we are unconscious channels that can vibrate expressing, translating the energy around us. Ancient spirits are still living. We are not adopted in the nowadays esoteric scene, our beliefs are personal in a continuous inner growing."

OUR INSPIRATION

"The only thing is that we play driven by instinct and a voice inside us. I know that my influences come from my roots (Celtic, Latin and Greek cultures), the studies I did (historical, classical, literary, anthropological), the way I have grown (listening to ancient music because my father is a teacher of music, especially Medieval and Renaissance one) and how nature has decided to utilise me to express its own language."

OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH MUSIC

"Our connection was simply a deep passion for early, ancient and classic music. Vittorio was a deep lover of Beethoven since his early age, he's a self-taught classic guitar player sometimes it's difficult to believe it but the majority of us had their teachers in a strong love for music and a great perseverance. I attended the music school just one year when I was seven years old, to play violin but I loved singing since my early age and I didn't like the methods of the musical School so I did everything alone, my training is done by myself. Giovanni is the only musician who studied piano for 7 years and played organ in a church for some time just to have the great emotion to try such an instrument with a perfect acoustic.

We met very young (around 16 years old) and we created ATARAXIA because we felt a deep communion while playing, I always say that it was written in our personal history and destiny. While playing together we arouse the gift of creation, ATARAXIA is exactly the people

we are."

MUSICAL TASTES

"The best release I heard in the last times is "Estatic Chants of Hildegard von Bingen" by Air Ensemble, we love Madredeus (especially "O espirito da paz"), Vangelis ("1492 Conquest of Paradise" is a masterpiece), Vassillis Saleas who is able to embody in his instrumental magic music the spell of the Aegean Sea, we also love a great Italian ensemble of our town who play typically Italian medieval music they're called "Compagnia dell'asino che porta la croce". In any case we feel close to anyone is pushed strongly to create in order to fulfil his/her own destiny and life."

FAVOURITE ARTISTS

"Of course we have, we are eager of literary and figurative art. We appreciate a lot the Italian Renaissance painters like Piero della Francesca, Paolo Uccello. We love the pre-Raphaelite English current with artists like Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Morris, etc. and we love poets like your lyric ones Sappho, Anacreonte, Alceo, Ibico, and very much your contemporary Odisseo Ellitis. We appreciate a lot the French maudits (Mallarme, Baudelaire, Rembaud) and the Italian Ungaretti and Mara Paltrinieri. Musically we love most of all Diamanda Galas, In The Nursery, Madredeus, many Baroque composers like Albinoni, Corelli, Vivaldi, Handel, Marais; some contemporary composers like Prokofiev, Satie and quite all the Medieval and Renaissance music (John Dowland, Carmina Burana, Chats de la Sybille, Martini, etc.)"

LOVE FOR LITERATURE AND BOOKS

"The suggestions of a book can be easily transformed in a song giving them a new life. There have been extremely brilliant modern and deep writers in the past, they were describing universal values of human sensations in a very original and pure way, we can still hear their voices, the same being moved by early and classic music. We can translate at the beginning and after some time to read perfectly those verses, lines, notes. Art is made of 6 senses; it's not isolated in a single sense. I respect many currents of writers but especially I respect who got far from a current inventing something new, courageously and intelligently. For this reason I deeply appreciate Virginia Woolf, Sylvia Plath, Rembaud, U.Eco, Conrad, Ellitis, the Greek lyrics, Ungaretti, Neruda, Baricco, are so many, so many in the centuries that I can't remember them all..."

THE CHOICE OF MANY LANGUAGES

"We studied many languages, we simply pronounce other languages, what is greatly beautiful is the fascination of the sound, of different sounds and accents, the mystery of a culture that's not only our culture, the personality that each song can gain thank a language, not a babelic chaos of languages but a union of different idioms. French is like the pelting of the waves, German is similar to a velvet red curtain, Latin is a marble epitaph, Italian is so similar to a hidden garden behind a gate, Portuguese is a solemn ancient church but it also owns the poetry and melancholy of the waves of the ocean, English is a wood of strawberries and flowers, Greek is arcane as a forgotten civilisation and it reminds stone temples and wall-tombs."

"HISTORIAE"

"Historiae" was born in summer when we took part to many Medieval feasts in our region in Italy. The spelling places where we played, our villages that still have the architectural features of eight centuries ago and our travels in many burgs made us decide to record also something in a court of a castle, this castle is magic for us, this castle is one of the places where our concerts have been the best and the energy and forces exchanged with listeners have been the strongest. For this reason we decided to perform 3 live songs, to capture in the sound the great emotions we felt. "Historiae" is a way of collecting and remembering old legends and remembrances, it's the way we found to let all the silent people cancelled by great historical events to speak



and narrate their lives, "Historiae" is a sonorous book which carries on a sort of "oral tradition". We live in a part of Italy where the Celts met the Latins, a place where many people coming from far countries passed and stayed, a rich cradle of cultures, customs, and tradition.

We have portrayed an archaic village with narrow streets, every street converges to the centre that's a square, in this square every history disappears and gets lost so we tried to save these unique narrations before they got lost. We met many persons: some knights going towards south eastern lands, an Irish seller of material who narrated us a tragic history of love and death, a notable figure who was looking for a clement death, a jester who had left his noble family and was cursing all the mightiest and also some presences, the ones belonging to the town of the diaphanous shadows."

"ORLANDO"

"We are very proud of this mini CD inspired by Virginia Woolf's novel "ORLANDO" because it was recorded and mixed completely by ourselves. Musically and lyrically it is very different from Middle Ages music, it's something very surreal, unmoral, more linked to wave-gothic ballads but also to orchestral and lyric music, many different styles. We had a great freedom and our listeners are writing us enthusiastic letters about it. He/she came... a male, a female? He owned the shining blue of the steel in a silvery pool, he/she was a vassal sailing in the Southern Seas, and he was the moaning of the wind, of the South Western Wind... a male, a female?"

LIVE PERFORMANCES

"A concert is a sort of theatrical drama. The best performance is always in an ancient place where ancient stones and architectures give us great inspiration. Our performances usually represent our concept albums and they are not a sequence of songs but a deep research into many way of expressing ourselves through music, words, images, theatrical and dance acts and scenographies. When music is born we begin creating the costumes of the mime/dancer who works with us and the choreographs and scenographies for the live-acts, I also have special ritual dresses and our photographer and "captures of images" does it's best to put together a sort of kaleidoscope of colours and portraits that sometimes a re-projected, other times become the covers and booklet of our releases. The magic created by concerts is the great exchange of energy among the listeners, and us concerts are often held in ancient places where the earth currents flow like abbeys, castles, gardens, courts, ancient palaces, etc. We explore and travel with our listeners in primeval kingdoms..."

"OS CAVALEIROS DO TEMPLO"

"The Portuguese label Symbiose asked us to play in Portugal, then they had the idea to release a live video + CD of the event. I simply felt that it was written in our destiny. We've been three times in Portugal before releasing 'Os Cavaleiros do templo' and we were so impressed by its history and ancient building, by the atmosphere and great spirituality of some places that it was an honour, for us, try to represent our experience there through music. As we wrote in the booklet of the release "We translate in music what we received by silence". After that I came again in Portugal just one month ago and I went again to Almourol and Torralva, a sort of pilgrimage, a 'silent' recall to charge myself of energy. The release of the live box was very difficult and expensive. The recordings that were mixed here in Italy, the added images recorded by us in an ancient house here in Italy, all the images taken from Portugal, projected and filmed, all the organizative things that Luis Carlos from Symbiose had to afford, everything. Worthy things presuppose a big effort so it was. I'm very proud of that release, a tribute to the Portuguese Knight Templars, a very humble one in any way.

The only thing I regret that this release didn't find a good and wide distribution in Europe (apart Italy, Greece and I guess Portugal) as all our other releases have. We toured a lot this spring and summer and Germany, Holland, Belgium, France, everywhere people asked and asked "Os cavaleiros" because it was difficult and very expensive to find it in their land. It's the most asked release and the most difficult to be found."

"LOST ATLANTIS"

"For three years we've been working with the translation into music of the ancestral myth of the sunken land present in all the ancient scriptures of every faith, philosophy and country. Atlantis is an atavic inheritance in all of us, wherever we come from, whoever we are. Legends tell us that about 10.000 years ago, two civilisations that enjoyed great ESP powers-but at the same time owned a fascinating and dangerous technology-fought a terrible war that led them to disappear. Before being engulfed by the ocean, they left "signs" to possible future inhabitants of the earth so that they wouldn't repeat the same mistakes. We began our travelling to research these "signs"; we collected and studied ancient documents, and were deeply absorbed by the tragic history of the Minoic

civilisation of Crete and Thera that was completely annihilated by the volcano eruption of Thera 10.000 years ago (another Atlantis). With "Lost Atlantis" we want to describe the origin of mankind through these left symbols and create a pagan opera that owns a deep sacral flavour. "From chaos harmony is born and once again was chaos". An unaccountable past, possible futures, an ascetic distant sound full of nostalgia and detachment from the contingent, ancestral loss, sense of elevation, the oxygen and the lack of it, the sounds of the Mediterranean Sea and the Ocean, a visionary and apocalyptic spiral of echoes, a timeless suspension, an awful respect for crystallised things, a musical research that is mostly an inner research utilising two symbolic languages, the one of the past (Greek) and one of the future (English)."

THE SONGS

"The Early Days" a slow, embracing, atmospheric introductive piece of music accompanying the narrating voice that introduces you to the tragic enrapturing destiny of the sunken land.

"Daytia" is an euphoric, thoughtless dance before the end. Daytia was a town of Atlantis destroyed by the hothouse effect and relative heightening of waters. Liquid guitars, keyboards and a soprano voice singing in Greek language. Mediterranean atmosphere with pipes, flutes, classic guitars and timeless ethereal voices, it's called "Aperlae" that's a lycian archaeological sunken site where stone stairs disappear in the abyss and the perimeter of houses get lost in the sea. A sweet voice ends the song reciting a lyric of Sappho. This is the kind of song that syrens would have sung to men.

"Dolphins" experimental track with watery, ambient keyboards, guitars and unusual voices recalling the ultrasound of dolphins and their strange nature. Someone thinks that dolphins were creatures invented by the scientists of Atlantis, a result of biogenetical experiments. A song devoted to freshness, intelligence and instinct.

"Agartha" this is the song of the spirit. The ancient wise and the owners of knowledge found the door to enter a parallel dimension where it was possible to live after the terrible war and the disappearance of the two mythic continents, this parallel dimension is protected by electromagnetic mental energy fields, only the initiated can have a sort of slight contact with it, this is the underground reign where the ancient Godfathers have let their lineage and wisdom; musically the song can be described as a sort of ritual entrance into a sacred votive temple, the atmosphere is the one we can find in holy ancient buildings. There are flutes and sensual voices that become suddenly high and icy, warm tones and lyric perpendicular vocal ascensions.

"Fountains" is another experimental track, everything is seen from an under-water point of view. You can perceive strange beings living unnaturally under green brandish waters and communicating with unusual add sounds cries and whispers... Thrilling piece of ambient music.

"Mu-Land" is inspired by the eastern continent of Mu, its colours and perfumes.

"Oduarpa" was an Atlantidean scientist, the one who firstly tried biogenetically experiments between men and animals crossing them (represented in classic Greek mythology by syrens, man with the head of bulls, tritons, etc.). After a life of experiments he felt old and tired and looked only for a green nest Atmospheric sad song with sinister nuances and a beautiful piano passage.

"Lost Atlantis" wadding, spinning keyboards, martial drums and a soprano choir waving on the texture of notes. One of the most epic and evocative songs of the album, a riding on the waves of magma and lava that destroyed the mythic continent of Atlantis, a vision of desolated, devastated dwellings, houses like empty eyes-sockets thrown away by the force and powerfulness of fire and sea while a narrating voice asks to the sky and destiny who will be worthy of bringing the azure flower of wisdom, the hidden stern of knowledge...

"The Land Of Sand Of Gold Of Run" is a far cosmic song in a silent sad space where a never-ending night reigns. A warning for the future generations, a voice that will never be heard, a low narrating speech and a high inhuman singing that traces the definitive detachment from humanity, this voice of abandon for an uncountable time...

"Departure" a recall of the title-track, words taken from Salvatore Quasimodo's poems.

"I don't mind the harmony of waters, I'm looking nothing but dissonances, Something more than perfection, crossing the narrow arch that I know"

WHERE WE ARE GOING

"We are travelling along a path and this path has its origins in very far times, we own and we are made of those times and we're bringing those centuries in the future. Our aim is not to loose anything the past gave us as a gift, to remember who we were, what we are, who we will be. We're the voice of the many voices that got lost in centuries. Ancient spirits are still speaking."

FUTURE TIMES

"We are persons, musicians, spending their lives in the last years of the second millennium when great scientific and technologic discoveries are going to be done day after day and when communication and exchange of news is something becoming faster and faster but at the same time we are in touch day after day, hour after hour with history, ancient things, houses, customs, traditions. We see the present and the future, we live a very human and natural relation with what surrounds us and our music is the synthesis of all of this."

Ciao Francesca. After an incursion into ATARAXIA's universe I believe it is time to return to daily issues... So, welcome to 2000! Would we say we have already entered the new millenium or should we wait for another whole year? The next similar event as we have just experienced not even a month ago... will happen again only over almost ten centuries... isn't it fascinating? Do you carry inside yourselves the nostalgia of this century's last episode?

"No, we don't. I spent the night alone in my bed and for the very first time all the ATARAXIA musicians didn't spend together the New Year's day. I didn't want to pretend or force me to be excited for that occasion. I was not and for many reason. The first is that I felt a strong painful nostalgia for the 20th century, I had the strong sensation that things would have changed very fastly from that point on and my first desire was to be cut off from reality in order not to be engulfed by the fast superficiality of the coming years. The second is that consumerism, awful and continuous TV advertisement and need of amusement at all costs destroyed any poetry or excitement of the moment. The third is that I feel to be citizen of the world and I don't consider our calendar so important, many countries, religions... have their own and mine is just one of them, I know that it carries the charge of centuries, sufferings, pains, discoveries and joys but it's too limiting in any way. Last but not least I was thinking and thinking to the beginning of the 20th century, the birth of art deco and art nouveau,

our new collaborator Francesco, long endless hours spent in the airport waiting-rooms for the continuous delays, the great Spanish audience that didn't stop applauding when Giovanni tried to go down the stage after the show and they pulled him up again, the kilometres spent in the highways crossing Europe so many times with Loreena Mc Kennit soundtrack accompanying."

We still are at the beginning of the year and you have already scheduled two tours: one in Poland at Bolkow Castle and the other in Spain, Barcelona. Last few days I've talked to Alberto Monreal, the festival "Arcana Sonora" organiser who assured me it would be a musical theatrical show. You shall perform besides KULGRINDA (and the leader is the one who set foundations to Prechristian Organisation Ramouva, a 60 years Lithuanian, Jonas Trinkunas), ELIJAH'S MANTLE (ex DEAD CAN DANCE), SANGRE CAVALLUM, ROSA CRUX, SOL INVICTUS, MORPHEUS and ALLERSEELEN. Do you know or have straight relationship with those bands? Did you perform besides them in times before? How do you perceive music? Do you enjoy it?

"No we haven't. We just played 4 years ago with ROSACRUX in a festival in Strasbourg. I appreciate the musical and philosophical perspective of the majority of these bands. ELIJAH'S MANTLE's music owns something that I appreciate a lot."

Your future live performances' structure shall segregate in two parts; details? How shall ATARAXIA live look like?

"The future concerts and festivals won't be divided up into two parts as we did in the past. Choreographies, costumes and music will be mostly inspired by Middle Ages but we will perform songs from older albums as "Simphonia sine Nomine" and "Il fantasma dell'Opera", then a great deal of songs from "Lost Atlantis". We will be 5 with an increasing acoustic section (clarinet, flute, percussions like bodhrum and timpani); the voice will be two because Francesco will take part to many old and new songs. As usual the mime/dancer will be with us with new costumes and acts."

When do you plan a new album? Why a non conceptual one? Do you really think you could sum up various (I assume the more important events to yourselves) history's periods in no more than eleven tracks? Would you land me some details?

"We don't know when the new album will be recorded and released, we're beginning to work together to arrange the tracks and find the vocals. I wrote all the lyrics among the end of December and beginning of January. We hope to record it during summer. We have chosen a non-conceptual album to be free and completely spontaneous, we don't want to be so strictly linked to a theme, this time only music has to express ourselves. The new musician will give interesting nuances to the songs and there will be a balance among Medieval, Provencal, Spanish, Oriental tunes and sad classic guitar ballads. We don't want to cross history in eleven songs, that would be ridiculous, we simply want to underline our roots as crossroad of the Celtic and Latin culture, we also want to put in music our voyages in enchanting places and some physical and psychological situations that we afforded during those trips."

Francesco's arrival into ATARAXIA would change massively the band? Then how it would be like? Should it impose a sound improvement or a radical metamorphose? In fact, who is Francesco Benchini? Where did you meet him, in what circumstances? Did you programme a certain date or period for the solo album to be finished and perhaps the place where it would be edited?

"No, it won't. It will simply add many more acoustic percussions and a new interesting male voice, at least a track will feature his magic clarinet. Mediterranean influences will grow because he comes from the south of Italy a place where classic ruins and magic places still breath. Francesco is a teacher of clarinet that owns a solo project called GOR. He plays ritual, Mediterranean, Medieval inspired music and in short time a European label will release his album. We met him during our concert in Naples, he was one of the member of the support act and we felt impressed with his medieval music, they had a great energy and played all dressed like monks."

Which are the instruments you are performing with? And where from do you manage to procure those instruments?

"Our set is based on classic guitars, keyboards, flute and clarinet, cymbals, medieval timpani and drummachine."

Nicolas did a pretty good job with your site. It is indeed excellent. Is it a better mode to communicate with your fans? Is it possible for you to reply to all letters and messages you receive? I see you have also a biannual newsletter.

"Nicolas is great, there is reciprocal understanding and I guess a similar artistic perspective. He does a lot and his work has been very important to give detailed and up-to-date info to all the listeners who had great difficulties to know our concerts, to have news to get in contact with us. Really a good



all the hopes and enthusiasm and I sincerely would have preferred to live those times, just one century ago. Now I feel that everything is sad."

The last year we perceived it like running fast to an end was, as far as touring is concerned a very prodigious one. You visited countries like Spain, Greek, U.K., Belgium, Holland, France, Germany and Italy. Indeed it must be wonderful to have opportunities of travelling... Mustn't it? What was audience reaction, how did your fans accept you? Pleasant memories? Disagreeable ones?

"You say right, yes a very fast year and all of us will keep it in mind for a long time to come. Having opportunities of travelling is wonderful, exalting and terribly tiring and exhausting. There is always tension before a concert, technical problems, a great stress and we have to calm down in order to have good relations among us. Luckily we are deep friends and we know the limits of each ATARAXIA musician's personality and we usually know how to react. Voyaging is the aim of my life but when I travel for concerts there are always interviews, engagements, things to be prepared and it's difficult to have free time to visit the places. Anyway we usually keep it to have a look and get inspiration by the old stones of the beautiful European towns and villages. Our listeners gave us great welcome, a great joy and exchange of energies. Memories... the ancient stone knights looking down at us in Volkerschlachtdenkmal in Leipzig, the great enthusiasm for Medieval songs in Heidelberg, the Cluny museum in Paris with the wonderful tapestry "La Dame a le Licorne", Temple Church in London where a very elegant Lord "imprisoned" us together with the guests of a marriage celebration (all very smart!!!), the 'well-known' restaurant in the Plalca in Athens, the meeting in Napoli of

job. We reply to all the listeners and writers, it's a really hard job (for this reason all the news are directly written in the site month after month) but we feel it's fundamental to have a direct contact with people, exchange opinions, feel directly their support."

Francesca, you have graduated History Faculty. Tell me, how much influence did this fact reflect your music? You seem to have a certain passion for Greek culture... yet you are born in Italy...

"Not too much. I mean, I studied history because I had this passion (especially for Medieval History) and I wanted to know more and to have the opportunity to go deeper (I am also born in a Romanic-medieval town) but when I began playing I was very young and my university studies were a bit far. I can say that I directed myself into an historical perspective (music, university, voyages and reading in general). Latin culture seems to come directly from the Greek one, we have many common things and we study both ancient Greek and Latin languages and literature in our schools. Latin and Greek have the same importance in our classic schools. Anyway I feel the great fascination of Greek Hellenistic philosophy and I have been magically captured by the Greek and Lycian archaeological sites."

Which is the meaning of the "silence" word in your philosophy?

"Silence means meditation and contemplation, the act of cancelling everything from our mind and recharging us of energy in order to be receptive towards beauty."

I still listen and enjoy a lot even more and more "In Absentia Christi". This album has been gifted with a peculiar feature: it cannot be framed in a certain space or time. What do you think about this album now since almost five years passed? Are you still in touch with MONUMENTUM, with Roberto or even Andrea Zanetti?

"It was a great album even if a very depressing one but it belongs to the past. Anyway I was simply a guest. I am no more in contact with Andrea Zanetti, I didn't know him before recording the album, instead I hear from time to time Roberto because he released "Il fantasma dell'Opera" and we still have friendly contacts."

CAMERATA MEDIOLANENSE engaged another chapter for you. In how many other projects did you perform also and with what other band would you like to record an album? What about your partners?

"No other projects with other bands and we all prefer to work just with ATARAXIA now. The time is never enough!"

You have signed a lot of contracts with diverse labels in those fifteen years. Which one did you find most profitable? Are you satisfied of Cold Meat Industry/Cruel Moon?

"Cruel Moon/ Cold Meat Industry. Roger Karmanik is a very engaged person and has to do a thousand things but he is a spontaneous and interesting guy, he's bright because he doesn't stifle the bands working with him but takes into great consideration their music. He works well, chaotic and professional at the same time. A good thing!"

Do you think you could live only by and through music by all means? You do have a miscellaneous merchandising... a lot of CDs, videotapes, T-shirts...

"We all have part-time jobs and activities that enables us to organize tours and recordings. It's not possible to live only through our music (doing what we do) and we are happy to be in this situation because we are free and music it's a pleasure not an obligation. Anyway we would like to have more time to create, play and record."

Who are the members in every day life? Are you married? Do you have children? Tell me more.

"I'm not married and I have no children. All the members of ATARAXIA aren't married and have no children. What we're doing through music is a deep research and it needs all our energies, for this reason we like to joke and call ourselves Evanescent Warriors. If for everyday life you mean our jobs Giovanni works as assistant in a house that takes care of old people, Vittorio creates and makes iron furniture, Lorenzo is a painter, Francesco a music teacher and I'm attending some specialized musical courses and I work from time to time in a press-office."

What is your opinion as far as ambient dark wave is concerned? Could you recommend me some bands? And, in a different view, what would you advise or confide to all that shall desire to follow you when starting to set up a band?

"I love a lot the bands of the French label Prikosnovenie. I can't say anything. Everybody has to follow his own destiny we simply followed ours spending 12 years of our life, all our economical resources, all our time and creativity in this project. We can't give advices to anybody, it's too personal."

DEAD CAN DANCE had splitted and Lisa and Brendan are following

separately their personal path. Do you find it a great loss? I mean for musical scene... this breaking up might be considered as forfeiture.

"I don't believe it's a forfeiture. They simply followed their destiny and a person has to be loyal with his/herself if he/she wants to go on. Dead Can Dance gave a lot to the world, one of the most demanding bands I have ever heard. Their releases are fundamental and their split doesn't change this."

It's a non-sense to go on together if the problems can't be solved and harmony is no more present. Art needs harmony."

How can you "explain" the birth of world? Should it be something like an aleatoric mixture of chemical elements... or should have religious interpretations? Would you be so kind and patient to let me know the way you conceive: spirit body religion myth cosmos cosmogony?

"I don't want to seem impolite but I can't explain the birth of the world, I can hardly explain to myself why I am born and where I'm going. I'm not a philosopher and I don't want to say nothing about what I'm learning and trying to afford with my small experience. Anyway I agree with people who feel that the cosmos has the same laws of the living things and that we are a small cosmos inside a cosmos and many other cosmos live inside us, breaking harmony inside and outside us and the cosmos create collisions, death and rebirth. Some of the concepts you mentioned are present in our songs, slices of our experience, than can be perceived in songs like "Aperlae", "Daytia", "Agharti", "Fountains", this is our humble feeling and experience."

I must confess, I was charmed and mesmerised by syrens'song, the terrific astonishing... amazing "Aperlae"! I do appreciate for this interview. I hope for the new millenium to bring you the opportunity to visit also the geto-dacic lands... here where Zamolxe, the mighty god of my ancestors, had withdrawn into mountains... away from the world... exactly on "Kogaionon" mountain...

"We would be pleased one day to meet your lands and people belonging to it. Thank you for your interest."

LINE-UP

Francesca Nicoli: voice, lyrics, flute, cymbal;

Vittorio Vandelli: classic guitar, programming, back vocals;

Giovanni Pagliari: keyboards;

Francesco Banchini: voice, medieval timpani, clarinet;

Lorenzo Busi: mimic, dances, and theatrical acts;

Livio Bedeschi: Band photographer, technical assistance, and image research.

DISCOGRAPHY:

"Symphonia Sine Nomine" CD 1994, 40 minutes, 11 tracks, Energeia, reprinted Apollyon 1996;

"Ad Perpetuum Rei Memoriam" CD 1994, collection of songs from the 1990-1993 tapes of the band ("Prophetia", "Nosce Te Ipsum", "Arazzi"), 60 minutes, 12 tracks, Apollyon;

"La Malediction d'Ondine" CD 1995, 60 minutes, 14 tracks, Energeia;

"The Moon Sang On The April Chair/Red Deep Dirges Of A November Moon" CD 1995, 40 minutes, 8 tracks, Apollyon;

"In Amoris Mortisque" 10" 1995, one side ATARAXIA/one side ENGELSSTAUB, Apollyon;

"Il Fantasma Dell'Opera" CD 1996, 45 minutes, 12 tracks, Avantgarde;

"Concerto N.6: A Baroque Plaisanterie" CD 1996, 50 minutes, 15 tracks (11 studio tracks, 4 live tracks), Apollyon;

"Historiae" CD/PLP, 1998, 40 minutes, 9 tracks (6 tracks in studio, 3 tracks live), Cold Meat Industry;

"Os Cavaleiros do Temple-Live In Portugal" box video+CD, 1998, Symbiose;

"Orlando" MCD, 1998, Prikosnovenie;

"Lost Atlantis" CD/PLP, 1999, 50 minutes, 11 tracks, Cold Meat Industry.

Contact:
Francesca Nicoli, c.p.13-Uff.PT MO
Succ.5, 41100, Modena, Italy
E-mail: pando@misterweb.it
Home page: <http://www.ataraxia.net>



KOGAIONON 6



This band owns a legendary history perhaps older than the age of some of you but during the years they preferred voluntary or less to remain and maintain underground. If it should be characterized as cold wave, electro pop or dark wave... it is only up to your minds and hearts. What I am able to reveal for you so far it is nothing else but a few details about this French quartet followed by the latest news you can be informed with by a warrior of wave scene, Franck Lopez.



OPERA MULTI STEEL

Introduction

Franck: „In the very beginning of the band, in the early eighties, we just were three musicians, my brother Patrick, my girlfriend Catherine and I. It was and it's always quite a musical family association... Before forming the band, I played and sung in two or three folk/medieval bands singing lyrics of ancient poets and I recorded four albums before OPERA MULTI STEEL with a band called AVARIC (antique name of our birth city, Bourges, in the Roman times). Catherine sung in different choral formations singing works from Middle Age to contemporary era with a real preference for the music's of the XVI th, XVII th and XVIII th (Janequin, Roland de Lassus, Dowland, Bach, Haendel...). Patrick was a little bit more „rock“ and was member of many bands that did not remain a very long time. He was experimenting many musical styles before OMS; he even played in a punk band! Eric, who joined the band later for the recording of „A Contresens“, had also a different musical background in these times. He was fond of rock, pop and progressive bands... While reading this you must ask yourself how this curious mixture could have lead to something viable! We just have to say that we had at least one common point: we were all together hating jazz music.

On the other hand, OMS was born after a bet we made, Catherine, Patrick and I to create a band at the end of a party in a restaurant. We asked Patrick to write twelve texts for the next week and he said he would try to. Next week the lyrics were written!!! Then we decided to put music on them. At the very beginning, it was just a kind of leisure after AVARIC's split for both of us. Then it became more and more serious with the recording of our first record and the first concerts.”

Start

Franck: „We had bought a small rhythm box Roland TR 606 because we were completely fond of the first electro-pop wave and with one keyboard we bet to write and compose ten songs within one month. The wager was done and then we decided to create our own minimalist electro pop band. We added to these two basic instruments some other acoustic ones not often used in electro pop in these times such as flutes, melodic and acoustic guitars. Later, we bought a small Casiotone VLT 1, with real unique sounds. We always use it nowadays and it is part of the band's sound in many of our songs. In our first days, we must say that in and around our town, making electro pop was not the best way to interest concert's organizers. So we decided to save our money and self produced our first EP with four songs to be able to send it to radios and distributors.

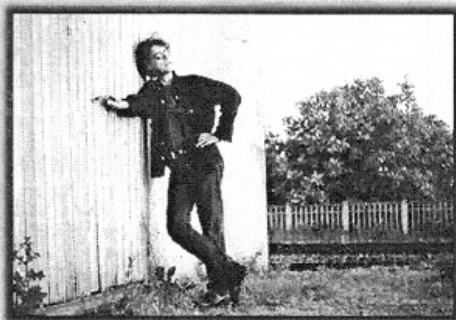
OMS history really started then.”

History

Catherine: „Even if OMS exists since a long time ago now, we are still a very confidential band evolving in what we can call the „underground“. We originally produced our first four records „Cathedrale“, „A Contresens“, „Les Douleurs de l'Ennui“ and „Stella Obscura“ on our own label (Orcadia Machina) helped by independent distributors because we did not find in these times some partners (label) in France able to trust and support our kind of music. After several years of self-production, it occurs that it would be very difficult for us to spread better than we had done by ourselves the OMS music without the help of some more strong structure that we did manage to reach. We came to the conclusion that it was very difficult for musicians to be both artists managers and financiers. So, in 1992, we decided to stop the activities of OMS. We ignore in this time that our records (above all „Cathedrale“ and „Stella Obscura“) were played since 1989 in Sao Paulo Gothic clubs and that our popularity was growing alone in this far country. In 1995, a Brazilian label, Museum Obscuro, contacted us. They wanted to make an OMS compilation for the Brazilian public because it was still difficult to purchase our albums in these times in Brazil and they felt there was a growing interest of gothic fans. This compilation called „Days Of Creation“ was a good test for the label. In 1996 we were proposed by the same label to release a brand new OMS album. For us it was a kind a second birth. This unexpected revival gave birth to „Histoires de France“. After the releasing of this album, we were invited to make two concerts in Sao Paulo (November 1997) where we could consider with our own eyes that many Brazilian „gothic people“ were singing our songs by heart!!! The gigs were two of our concert's souvenirs. Never in Europe we had such a warm welcoming. Why in Brazil, we really don't know... A kind of magic alchemy between a label ran by two OMS basic fans and the interest of some category of Brazilian people for the French language and culture (?). The other positive point is that through our Brazilian experience, our records are now more easy to purchase in Europe even if in France they are stucked „import“ (!). When our Brazilian label stopped its producing activities to concentrate on distribution, we signed for „Eternelle Tourmente“ with the German label Triton. It's our come back to Europe. Of course, as any people making music, to reach a wider audience may be a goal, but this goal is also tempered by the fact that we perfectly know since a long time that our eclectic and sometimes iconoclastic music is not a real easy-selling product!”

Goals

Franck: „Even if our records may be sometimes approached as some kind of concept, the truth is that we don't premeditate this fact when we begin to compose. Our records are before all some collections of very melodic songs in which we try to put the best ones in our mind and those that really first satisfy the four members of the band. As our musical aspirations are really diverse, our main goal is to unify this musical diversity with more or less homogeneity of treatment while creating



orchestrations and arrangements. As we are all multi-instruments, it's not as simple as if we were in a classic rock formation (voice, guitar, bass, drums...). It may be long because a wider choice of instruments is offered to us: acoustic, electric,

electronic strings, winds and percussion instruments, samplings... We don't forbid to ourselves any solution.

After this we privilege an egocentric artistic feeling of provisional satisfaction. This means that we introduce first a notion of pleasure. We must be touched by our songs to say they're good or not in our opinion beyond their differences of ambiances. But this pleasure may be different from one member to another. The reasons of pleasure may be: sadness, despair, joy, emotion, beauty, irony, stress or all that may be brought by the meaning of the lyrics, the melody, or simply the arrangements. As many people, we are looking for an unreachable perfection. Making music and writing lyrics is mainly the best way to prove to ourselves that we are still alive and able to do something different. Anyway, we would like to let the listener free to interpret our words and symbols in the light of his own culture and experience with Life."

Influences

Franck: „I think isn't only one person in one man. Each human being has several sides, sometimes opposite. The Good and the Bad for example appears from time to time and nobody has found something to oppose to that constated fact. In music it's a little bit that way. We have many different tendencies that we try to keep secret because it's not well considered in our (liberal) society to be unformatted even musically speaking. OMS is the reunion of four persons who like different styles of music and who cannot choose which one is the best and beloved one to develop first and mainly!!! So, as it's not possible for us to release each year, one OMS medieval album, one OMS gothic album, one OMS cold-wave album, one OMS electro-pop album, one OMS romantic album... (I forget some...) and to avoid frustration we try to conciliate all this in only one album even if we perfectly know that this may be a little disappointing for the eventual new OMS listeners. In our opinion, it's just the reflect of our (too) large musical tastes. Now we are currently listening mainly to the more recent albums of these different bands: DE VISION, LYCIA, WOLFSHEIM, ATARAXIA, LOVE SPIRALS DOWNWARDS, THE CREATURES, COVENANT, MESH, BLACK TAPE FOR A BLUE GIRL, VNV NATION and many others..."

Lyrics

Patrick: „When I say something, I use many sources about my readings and listenings. As Spinoza agreed, I am the product of many influences. I use to adapt ways of thinking from the past to the next millenium. Anguish, pain, regrets and sorrows mean to my opinion an adaptation to this current century. The feelings of people have something universal without being forcibly, wordly. The art of each of us in the band beats like the way of everyone's heart. I refer to the physiological individual symphony of feelings in a very interactive way, I mean between the band and the listeners. By the way, I know we are not so different from anybody. „Eternelle Tourmente" is a very common way to feel something: for example when you leave a lover after several times of happiness, you think in yourself: „Well, why did I do that kind of thing?" and in this case you improve very bad regrets that could be understood as eternal. Eternity on the booklet's front page is expressed by this white angel who tried to reach us before the fault. The two sides of personality are symbolized by two little (but already) so old at a time) children from the countryside, because we know that many, many times the Great Visions has appeared to simple hearts."

The birth of the song

Franck: „We have two ways to produce one song. First, Patrick brings

the lyrics and I try with Catherine and Eric to find a melody or harmony but our most common way to create a track lies on a synergy between our four minds, together or separate, it depends. Patrick gives motion to his perception of life through his lines and we try to refer to the same affect. Musically speaking, I sometimes propose and create gimmicks, riffs, and musical lines to be in relation with my brother's literary intentions. It happens sometimes that we don't have lyrics prepared in advance, music as well, and in this special occasion, we share and commune in our aim to translate our common perception of the world around."

Listening OMS

Patrick: „At first listening, we may accept that the listeners would feel love at first sight. Referring to the music, because of intros and bridges, we try more and more to create air stations with the main goal to really feel the music like a lightning (even if our listeners don't understand some words, expressions, tongue twisters). The lightning strike is produced by music. As you can understand now, music is light but we consolidate it with lyrics, which can be compared with the thunder; and if you have got the luck to perceive the spirit of the words by understanding French, you may link with the total storm of every song. On the contrary, if you don't understand French, only will remain the whole musical impression of notes and words melted together as a (brain) storm."

Other arts

Patrick: „In away, we musically express the exaltation of purified bodies, but in another way, I express myself in Theatre. I write the lyrics and I urge another fellow to play the text I've written on stage. My last ones were called „Aimez-moi les uns les autres" and „Voici l'heure": purified bodies in a bad taste of shape of physical considerations. I used a very special language that you may call French slang pronunciation. Franck is also a painter and experiment since a few years a pictural work attached to the movement Free Figuration. It helps him to expunge all the weight of his subconscious anguishes and pains..."

Fans

Franck: „We cannot compare French fans and Brazilian fans. We think that all is warmer in Brazil, even the welcoming of the public. We can compare our relation with Brazilian people with a kind of love story above all due to the fact that French culture and European one in general seem to be really adored by a part of you. In France, when you use French to sing your own songs, you have many problems to be accepted as something else than a variety band except if you sing some very materialistic words, and it is not our way to communicate. The main problem in France I think is to be accepted when you are not exactly one precise kind of music in particular. OMS is not easy definable in one word because we are melting too much influences: folk, pop, gothic, classic, baroque, electronic, acoustic... In France, it has always been a kind of disadvantage. Brazilian people are more open-minded. That's undeniable! In fact, several French bands are more known outside their frontier than in their own country, TRISOMIE 21 and CORPUS DELICTI are good examples among many others. We are another one."



word because we are melting too much influences: folk, pop, gothic, classic, baroque, electronic, acoustic... In France, it has always been a kind of disadvantage. Brazilian people are more open-minded. That's undeniable! In fact, several French bands are more known outside their frontier than in their own country, TRISOMIE 21 and CORPUS DELICTI are good examples among many others. We are another one."

Future

Franck: „We are since a long time really conscient that our music is not really an easy selling product for different reasons according to the heterogeneity and the difficulty to file it in a very precise range of musical style. So, we are happy to have got the ways and chances to release all the records we've done since then. We are going on composing and writing songs in the future. It's one of the things that keeps us alive since a very long time and we hope to be still there to see what lies ahead, because, as anyone, we really know nothing about future..."

Catherine: „We hope to be able to reissue next the last OMS album that has not still been mastered on CD „A Contresens". We also have many song's ideas to develop and we will keep on composing again and again, it's now obvious that it's a second nature for quite a necessity and us. We are already preparing the demos of new OMS classics or concept albums but we cannot say more for the moment. We have also been contacted for eventual concerts in Brazil. Nothing is still sure, we will see... We have composed a special track for the Tarot Compilation project run by Black Magazine and Pallace Of Worms/Dancing with Demons labels."

Hi Franck. After such presentation of your band's activity I believe it would be best to point out some ideas, words about each OMS album. What is your present attitude and opinion about these materials?

"Cathedrale", the first album that followed the four track EP (now joined to the CD version of Cathedrale) was as many first albums a "searching" record. I mean that we were discovering rhythm boxes and electronics. In these times, everything was a little bit new for us... As we came from Folk, we melt quickly some acoustic instruments (psaltry, flutes, guitars...). This fact gives to this record a kind of innocence and spontaneity. The sound was not at the top because all this was really minimalist and we were not yet very used to studio work. In spite of all these small youth imperfections, we have kept a real affection for this album that was a kind of tribute to the Cathedrale of our birth town (Bourges) as well as a kind of distancing from the well-thinking catholic education we have had in our childhood...

"A Contresens" is a real curious and atypical album. As being under various influences, it was difficult for us to choose to go in only one-way. This record is a reflection of a heterogeneity that was perhaps the true reason of our very confidential career. Some tracks are pop, some other folk... the general impression, many times after, is that we were really "A Contresens" (in the wrong way)... even if we really enjoyed the music we were playing in these times. Being on the opposite of what it is correct or normal to do is sometimes an enjoyable feeling... Eric first played with OMS on this record and the "Bach" keyboard's parts are his personal touch all along the tracks.

This album, illustrated by photographs representing monks at work or in their monastery relates to our sensation of isolation among French musical scene in these times.

"Les Douleurs de l'Ennui" shows the OMS sound becoming stronger with the addition of a drummer who came to play in addition to the programmed rhythms. Even if our sources of inspiration remained very numerous, this album is certainly the first one to get a real purpose and sound identity from the first track to the last one. For the cover, we used a painted photograph by two Parisian artists called "Pierre ET Gilles" representing a young female knight in a praying and hoping attitude...

"Stella Obscura" should have been our last album. So, we composed it like a kind of testament. We tried to put our best in it as well for the cover and music. It's the reason why we took a very long time to record and issue it (two years). It's also the reason why the design, booklet and CD itself was perhaps the more "luxurious" of all our albums. The songs were the summary of all our interrogations about life and human relations already evoked vaguely in our previous recordings. We did not know in these times that life could give later a new birth to OMS. "Stella Obscura" is the last album to have been released on our own label Orcadia Machina. It was also for us the opportunity to use on the booklet a wonderful painting by one of our favourite Pre-Raphaelite English painter: Edward Burne Jones. A Burne-Jones painting that gave its name to the record will; also illustrate our compilation "Days of Creation", issued later on a Brazilian label.

"Histoires de France" was the album of the Renaissance. The Brazilian label Cri du Chat had issued an OMS compilation (Days of Creation); the success of this record in this distant country among gothic led the label manager to ask us a brand new OMS album. As this one was first dedicated to Brazilian fans, we called it "Histoires de France". The booklet was an imitation of an old French history school manual. For this record, we decided to mix two different musical eras of the band's story while using minimalistic rhythm patterns and strong vocal and musical orchestrations. These two different orientations were the summary of the two best selling OMS albums in Brazil: "Cathedrale" and "Stella Obscura". Some songs featured on this record had been composed many times ago and it was for us the opportunity to exploit them in a better way than the demo state in which they had been abandoned after the temporary clash of the band.

"Eternelle Tourmente": The general theme of this record, the first one to be produced on a European label, is the disillusion, the lost of childhood purity and the death of guardian angels. The booklets cover shows a wounded angel carried by two children painted by Hugo Simberg. They seem to carry their own innocence to the cemetery of illusions. Half of the

songs have been rearranged from old demos chosen for their emotional link with the theme. The other half of them was composed and written in the same melancholic state of mind. In fact, it's perhaps the first time that one of our albums is inspired or guided by the power of an image."

I watched TV and took notice of some problems with meat, milk killing bacterium occurred in France... what could it mean? Should be regarded as the approaching end of the world? Are you vegetarian? Do you think nature has "planned" to revenge on humankind? The panic is an interesting sensation to be studied. Could it represent an inspiration source for your creation?

"We are not especially vegetarian people and we must say that we are not always

looking very closely the origins of what we are eating. We live in an overprotected occidental world and we have the sad habit to trust that what we eat is not harmful to us. It's perhaps a mistake because some facts let us think that many hidden dangerous practices using dangerous products among animal breeding and farming have been recently discovered. The few victims of these emerging food diseases are for the moment very minor and it seems that a real bigger number of persons are each day, and more and more, victims of smoking, loving and driving. But curiously this fact seems to be considered as sometimes quite normal!!!

I don't think that Nature has the real power to revenge against mankind. On the other hand, we are really thinking that human beings have the true power to destroy themselves and not only while making wars. The profit's race may lead to something perhaps worse than war. That's the more worrying fact of our times.

Panic is not especially a source of inspiration for us. The more obvious themes of our lyrics are the vanity of all things, the failure of religions and faiths of all sorts, the incommunicability, the unavoidable death of all of us. But it's perhaps a kind of panic."

Returning to music, I noticed you have guested Carina, known from COLLECTION D'ARNELL ANDREA on your last album. I have information you as well did collaborate on few albums with this romantic cold wave band. What can you tell me about this link?

"COLLECTION D'ARNELL ANDREA and OPERA MULTI STEEL are band's friends since a long time now. I played as guitarist and bassist on several albums of the band under the surname of Franz Torres-Quevedo. These albums are "Les Marronniers", "Villers-aux Vents", "Cirses des Champs". When we came to Brazil with OMS, we needed one more musician to play the keyboard parts that Patrick was not able to perform on stage because he wanted to be just singer to be free of movement. So we asked to Carine Grieg, keyboardist and vocalist in Collection D'ARNELL ANDREA to help us. She performed with us on stage in Sao Paulo while playing and singing backing vocals. When we recorded "Eternelle Tourmente", we naturally ask her to sing some vocal parts on this new album. It was a way to extend our stage common experience."

AVARIC was a very important chapter for you. You have released four albums having Eric as guest on your first album. What were the reasons that made this band to split apart? I have even heard that if at the beginning in quintet formula, later the band remained just a duet? What did really happen?

"The reasons of the splitting are quite simple. A band is the combination of different personalities and sometimes the differences of opinions and musical orientations are very difficult to get over. It's what happens with this band that left one after the other all the former members. Some wanted to make something very conservative and pure traditional folk and some other wanted to evolve towards something more strong and electronic. It's not easy to make constantly some concessions from each part. The only solution is sometimes the clash. It's what happened. The two last members going to more personal projects. This split gave birth to OPERA MULTI STEEL."

"Laudamus Te" was the one, which, because of the compilation edited by Pallace of Worms, brought you on ambient dark wave media's attention. Do you intent to change your style? To perform in Latin or to explore the medieval perspective? This track has nothing in common with the rest of your last album. Please give in some details concerning the other musical project, which shall be present soon at Italian label Pallace of Worms. Is it the same with the BLEEDING LIKE MINE's members?

"We have already recorded some Latin tracks on previous albums:



"Nihil Novi sub sole on" "Les Douleurs de l'Ennui" or "Benedictus" on "Stella Obscura". We have always liked the sonority of this dead language but we never intend since then to transform OMS into a Latin band because it's just one part of our numerous tastes. OMS is not really intending to change its style. If some of us decide to do something different, it will be under a different name and with different musical orientations. A more homogenous album exploring medieval and Latin inspirations is about to be issued on Palace of Worms. This kind of project is certainly more suitable with the ambient dark wave media's than an OMS album going to several directions at a time...the collaboration you are evoking with BLEEDING LIKE MINE will be my personal participation to some vocals on new tracks composed by Curt Emmer. I still don't know when this album will be issued."



Patrick is performing also in an EBM project entitled AFGHANISTAN. Details?

"As you know, even if OMS explore various musical universes among his songs, some interesting styles are not at all exploited within the band because they are not the choice of the majority. The vocal participation of Patrick with an EBM band, more specially a Dark Wave techno band, gives him the opportunity to express himself

differently, to sing with a lugubrious voice and to make music with texts by English poets. Since then, this band has not issued any official album even if many songs have been recorded. The music of this band, very different from OMS' music shows a real attraction for schizophrenic and self-destructive human themes..."

Are there some other bands into which OMS' members activate also? Who really are your partners in everyday life?

"I have also been contacted by a Brazilian duet to perform vocals on the first album of an electro-pop

Project. One of the members of this project is Alexandre Borges, one of the managers of our previous Brazilian label Cri du Chat... This band will be called THREE COLD MEN. I cannot tell you more for the moment. The recording of the songs is scheduled for this year. Time will tell..."

The '80's music comes back in force and many bands are deeply inspired by THE SISTERS OF MERCY or BAUHAUS. It seems like gothic, cold wave or even electro pop does fascinate a lot of bands and public also. As an "ancient warrior" on this scene, whom do you think about it? How do you see it? Is it positive?

"As you know, history is a kind of cyclic movement, alternating events that come back more or less often in spite of times and evolution... In the music scene, this cyclic movement is quicker than history because it is due to the fashion's phenomena. What was adored the day before is considered old-fashioned the day after... We are all victims of this fact... Anyway it's normal that the young generations discover what the elders did before. If the way they used to compose and play music seem to be for them something "new" because they were not there when this music was done, why not? It is just obvious that new bands should get inspiration from the 80's and not makes some too perfect copies of their source of inspiration. In my own opinion, I must admit to be happy of this kind of new interest for this special period of music. Even if I listen to different styles, electro-pop, gothic and dark-wave are my roots and I enjoy very much to discover new bands and to read magazines about this subject. But when these styles becomes mainstream, there are many chances for they begin to quickly collapse one more time."

Since I already called you "ancient warrior" on this particular scene, could you share with my your age? For those who have already read it has been a long time since your band was founded... it might seem there was a special certain public interested in your music. Who do you think should listen to your music? What kind of public?

"One thing is sure; the people who listen to OMS music have to be open-minded because we are not enough specially labelled in a particular style. Our sources of inspiration going from Electro-Pop, Folk, Dark-wave, Medieval, Ambient... we can reach the ears of many different kind of public. The big black point is that every musical movement is fully divided in compartments and those who try to go from one compartment to another one are sometimes penalized. Nostalgic or new discovering listeners of the 80's sounds may compose our public.

Returning to our age, we can tell you that we are not old enough, in spite of all these years, to stop playing and composing music, that's all what counts in the end."

You did not manage to enjoy a powerful promotion and reputation in Europe. Brazil seems to be the most appropriate country to your music. What do you think future shall bring in this matter? The fact you have signed with German label might change something in the actual situation... am I wrong? Please, explain a little how do you regard such signing?

"It's curious but we have never found in Europe, even in France, some label able to trust in our music. That's the reason why we self-produced our four first albums. Curiously, the interest for OMS in Europe became wider after our Brazilian signing with Museum Obscuro (Cri du Chat Disques) that was distributed in Europe by German and Italian organizations.

When our Brazilian label stopped its production activities, we were recommended to propose our demo to German labels... This led us to sign with Triton. We now have one foot in Europe and certain recognition among "gothic" scene but we really don't know what the future will be made of."

What can you relate on French music scene? Recently I had the opportunity to listen to an interesting dark folk project: ORAISON. Have you heard of them? Have you listened to?

"During the nineties, Gothic and Electro Pop French scene has been completely overshadowed by medias. There were not many labels and magazines talking about this subject in our country. But, following the German example, things are now changing little by little. Concert organizations like Sanctuary, specialized magazine like Elegy, labels like Prikosnovenie are now making this scene alive and proud to be so, even if French gothic fans prefer to listen first to English singing bands or classical Vintage albums by glorious ancestors. It is a typical French attitude to go far to ear something they could find at their door..."

ROSA CRUX, LES SECRETS DE MORPHÉE, T21, RAJNA, THE ATLAS PROJECT, CUBE LIKE PEOPLE, CLAIR OBSCUR,

CORPUS DELICTI are among the more known French reference bands among actual Gothic, Electro and Ethereal scene in our country... Unfortunately, we still don't know ORAISON."

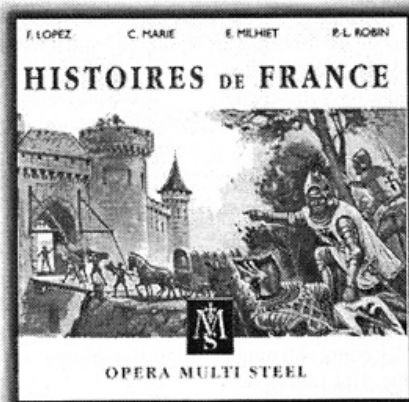
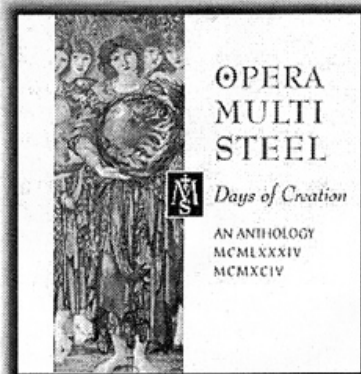
I must end our "trip" here. I do thank you for being kind and I wish you for luck in the future! What do you want the New Millenium to bring for you? Do you consider originality as an individual evolution level or as a selfish desire to express personality?

"In the case of OPERA MULTI STEEL, originality is a collective experience because without the contribution of each member to the global sound and inspiration of the band, each of us is more or less a little bit "normal". The band is one way to express things we cannot express

individually because it gives us strength, faith and the self-confidence to go on. This can answer to your both questions.

Concerning this new millenium, we must admit that we are not especially optimistic concerning the future of Mankind. It will be what Man will make with it so...

Returning to OMS and more prosaically we hope to reissue this year our second vinyl album "A Contresens" which is the last one to not have been reissued as CD."



Contact:
OPERA MULTI STEEL, La Gare.2, Route des Sauges, 18390, Savigny En Septaine, France, tel/fax: (33) 02.48.25.90.71, E-mail: opera.multi.steel@wanadoo.fr, http://perso.wanadoo.fr/opera.multi.steel/

Requiem 6

Source Of Tide



I made this interview in the late of February with Lord PZ and I hopes you shall find interesting. It seems that the Ihriel's brother wasn't too communicative with me. That's it...

Hi Lord PZ. It's time for the Winter to leave us and Spring is already knocking at the door: nature comes back to life, the grass reaches green colour, the flowers starts blooming and trees awake. Millions bugs and other humble creatures... come out from everywhere and it seems like cold should slowly withdraw; all warm colour replace the frozen ones; white is turning into green and isolation turns into communication. In such picture it is born "Ruins Of Beauty". Is it important the release date of an album? Which way? What is the season you prefer? Why so? What about Vivaldi's "Four Seasons"..., which one you like most? Would Lord PZ tell us in what way does he regard the four seasons? Would you exclusively desire for spending a few certain moments of one season or another in some certain places in the Universe?

"Hi to you to. The release-date for our new album was not that important, but we are glad it finally was brought out to the public from Candlelight. We have been awaiting this date for quite a time now. As we are a part of the Millenium-wave of the label, they had delayed it (in agreement with the band) for release after January 2000. Hence, the recordings took place in the Summer last year. For me, the seasons have different qualities that I enjoy on different levels. But I have to admit that I fancy the autumn most. I do not really know why, but it might be a good idea to read the lyrics to our song "Autumn

leaf" to get what I am talking about. As for Vivaldi, I really enjoy listening to classical as wholeness, not any particular song/theme. But I think he achieved to accomplish the different moods within the different seasons."

You were pretty busy lately with the recording of the new PECCATUM EP. What can you tell me about the result? How did it go? Are you satisfied? You have a cover version JUDAS PRIEST?

"I will not reveal too much of the thing's on the new EP of PECCATUM. We did a cover song of JUDAS PRIEST, which we tried to have the old metal sound of JUDAS PRIEST mixed together with the PECCATUM way of doing things. The rest will have to be a small secret until the launch in April."

We shall return to PECCATUM some time later. Now I wish to congratulate you for the SOURCE OF TIDE debut. Excellent album! What do you think? Are there some unsatisfying thoughts you have in mind about? Some reactions?

"Thanks for your views upon our album. I think the album went out just as we hoped for, and there are no regrets due to the recording of the album, actually."

In four years of existence SOURCE OF TIDE has changed almost entirely the line-up. Why so? Is the actual formula the most stable, the most complex? Would you be so kind to share a few thoughts with me about your partners? Each one has a personal nickname. Why so? Do they prefer nicknames better than their own names? Maybe you can explain. Why did you choose for such pseudonym? Is it somehow a certain meaning?

"Well, the old line up from SOURCE OF TIDE who is still in the band was Cosmocrator & Pendragon. In 1997 we released our first full-length album "Dawn of tides" under the banner of Nome Council. This was a project between a painter named Knut M. Nesse & SOURCE OF TIDE (Rock VS. Art) The band consisted of Cosmocrator (keys & drums), Pendragon (lead guitar) Atle Høydalen (rhythm guitar) Sven T. Dammen (vocals) & Geir Hovland (Bass). But due to personal reasons and the musical development Atle, Sven & Geir decided to leave during a two years period. Targenor, who had participated in some demo-bands with the guys, then begun handling the bass. Further on Source of tide lost their old vocalist, and I contacted them after a gig, wanting to take care of the vocals. As new band-members was involved in the development & mingling of the music, Atle decided to leave, lacking interest in the new sound of SOURCE OF TIDE. Taranis was the last member to join this line-up, taking care of the rhythm-guitars. He was tracked down by Pendragon, who knew him as a good guitarist, which would suite the new line-up and musical style of the band."

I can observe from the photo a discreet make up top hat! Should these two elements be regarded as the feature of a future fashion or is it only imagery?

"The make-up thing will be a future act of me, at least. I am not sure whether you have seen the corpse-paint I use in PECCATUM, but I usually do the corpse-paint thing when both PECCATUM & SOURCE OF TIDE are playing is having live-performances. I am not sure if we will make use of corpse-pain or discrete make-up on future photo-sessions, but you will just have to wait and see. As for the use of the top hat, I will use it on stage with SOURCE OF TIDE. It is part of the "Ruins Of Beauty" act, and therefore quite important part of the live-act."

The photo's background coincides with the one from the cover. What do those signs represent? What about the horned character with wings also? Is it demonic face angel or a demon with the wings of an angel? Is it a contrast? Duality? Paradox? Is there a certain message or a certain desire of expressing duality and paradox? The expression of confusion? What does the cover represent in fact? What is the real meaning you intended to reveal?

"The cover and the photo do represent a certain meaning. But I think the reader of our lyrics should interpret, hence the artwork has much in common with the lyrics & the name of our album. The devil on the front cover is just a metaphor for the self-destructive powers within mankind."

The moment I am writing this I listen to "The Awakening" and a few guitar tunes had reminded me of "Twilight Of The Gods". Do you like BATHORY? In other words, did you read Nietzsche's book? Is there really a God or just the fear of unknown or of the unexpected that oblige us to create

our own idols, our own inner "signs"? Human flock spirit is the prime element mostly and extremely exploited by some and throughout they could and really do rule the world. Don't you think? The panic alarm is dangerous yet fascinating... isn't it so?

"I like many of the old BATHORY-tunes, but we have not tried to achieve other than our own musical identity. I have not read Nietzsche and therefore I don't feel like discuss these issues, without any background."

Metal music might be considered and regarded as an extreme music. We have to face "tough" sensation, extreme sensation... am I right? Could you try imagining now an extreme situation? I could speculate this very year might be the "Flood Year", the year of world's end...

"I regard metal as good music. In the 80's it was not filled with sensation as there have been in the 90's. After entering of a new millenium, I think that the metal again has been less sensational. As for any floods, the end of the world etc, I can't say I am too much into such ideologies. Their inner nature is destroying themselves a bit day for day. Not with a total war or anything."

I suppose the sound of my questions rather has not much in common with the green of my spring introduction, but does it count? As if horns besides angel wings should fit together... Why did you choose for SOURCE OF TIDE name?

"I can't say too much about our name, other than I have been inspired by it to do lyrics. This is because I was not in the band when it started. But for me, it has something to do with the powers within the nature, which mankind can't destroy."

I haven't listened the first demo. How do you regard that demo having the old line-up? Was it somehow a different band performing a different sound?

"First of all, it was not a demo, but a full-length album released by the council of Nome. The council agreed upon having a project between SOURCE OF TIDE and a local painter called Knut Nesse. He did some paintings inspired by our music, and visa versa. It all ended up in the record called "Dawn of tides", printed in 500 copies. The sound is in fact quite the same, just a bit more gothic. This is because we used the same studio and the same engineer as on our new album."

The second demo has brought you the signing with Candlelight. Was it perhaps Ihshan's influence? It seems like Lee Barrett has now a huge part of Norwegian avantgarde metal elite and all bands have direct connections between themselves.

"Lee Barrett is not the owner of Candlelight records anymore. If he was, I reckon we would never been signed on it. The fact that I was in PECCATUM did help SOURCE OF TIDE the way that the label bothered to listen to our CD. But if the music had been crap, I reckon Candlelight would not have chosen to sign us. So I think the music was the main factor that we was signed. I also felt obligated to send it to Candlelight Records before sending it out to other labels; hence I was already signed with PECCATUM at the same label."

You've made recordings in Akkerhaugen and in S... studio. Which should be the difference? A lot of bands prefer Torbjorn's studio: LIMBONIC ART, MYRKSOG, MACTATUS, EMPEROR,... Why not Sound Suite, Grieghallen or Jailhouse? Or is it an agreement also with Candlelight?

"The big difference between Symphonique studio & Akkerhaugen Lydstudio is the fact that Ihshan, in Symphonique, is a musician and the sound-engineer at Akkerhaugen is not. So I think this was why we mainly chose Akkerhaugen Lydstudio. We also recorded the first album, "Dawn of Tides" there, so it was a quite natural thing to do. Akkerhaugen Lydstudio provided us, on both records with very good sound, production and mixing. So I reckon we will record our next album there, as well. Thanks to Toby for such a good job!"

Do you recall a pleasant funny moment during the recording time?

"Hmm. The most pleasant /unpleasant thing for the band was when our engineer, Toby, the rest of the band (except me) & Samoth (who was visiting us at the moment) was having fun of playing a synth-part from EUROPE's "Final countdown" into one of our songs. They where all laughing behind the Mixer of the ridicule tunes made out by the synth on top of the song. The unpleasant thing was that I was trying to record some vocal-lines, which I had tried to make as good as possible for two daze. (And really feed-up I was at that time). Then I just saw the guys sitting there, behind the window laughing 'till they almost cried. I could not hear what they where laughing about, so I got extremely pissed off on them, thinking they where laughing at me."

"Ruins Of Beauty" is very impressing and especially title; it might have also a metaphorical meaning. Is it right? You are aware I have not

the lyrics, that's the reason I dare asking you to introduce me in texts' themes. Is it a conceptual album? From music's point of view it seems like such. "Who am I?"

"Well, the lyrics were written mainly by me (except the track "Symphony of the sovereign" who's written by Taranis). The lyrics have as you suggested a close connection to the album "Ruins of Beauty". They try to make one see the life, or death, from different angels and how to cease the opportunities when it's given to you. My lyrics are hoped to be, in a humble way, just a sort of reminder to stop up life a bit, take your time to search within your own mind, for expanding into new dimensions of living. I have also chosen to use the nature as a metaphor for the wrong direction mankind is tumbling into with destroying the foundations for existence. That is why I have chosen to write a bit like a story in the lyrics in "Ode # 1 & #2" on this album. I also use the name of the band; SOURCE OF TIDE, much in the earlier mentioned lyrics, since this can be viewed upon as a resemblance to the forces not controlled by humankind. The album starts with the search for the spiritual forces within or outside each human being with the "Raven Goddess" and the last lyric where you might find the spiritual forces outside yourself unreachable and the only reliable source left is your own self. Then you might have to stop up, and ask yourself "Who am I?" But then again, the lyrics is mainly there for the personal interpretations of the viewer / listener. Hence, my "so-called" trying to explain might just give the lyrics wrong interpretations. It should therefore be seen as my personal view, not the issue behind the lyrics."

I find different elements in your sound: black, gothic, dark, heavy, an avantgarde sound, "Symphony of..." an ARCTURUS sound, for example. Yet the voice is far behind metal sphere, from black, death or gothic metal till classical true gothic and even mostly opera features. Did you by chance follow classic music studies?

"I have no other classical studies than singing-lessons with an educated Opera-singer for about 4 years or so. I have also been working as a singer in bands from 1986. I think our avant-garde expression has merged down to the fact that all of the band members like much different music, and therefore we try to influence the music as much as possible."

What would be the most important desires you have planned for SOURCE OF TIDE to happen this year? What about the future?

"First thing will be the release-party in Oslo with GRIEVANCE. After that gig we will try to focus on getting ourselves on the road in Europe. We have also started to make new material to our follow up, and I think it might be a bit more brutal sound on that album. No big changes from the "Ruins Of Beauty" album, but it will differ a bit. We also have a better opportunity to make a conceptual album now, since we have mutually agreed upon making the lyrics & the music hand in hand. So, here and now I can guarantee you all that the follow up will be even better than this album."

What else I should know about SOURCE OF TIDE that I do not know yet or you feel free to say about? Most certainly there are a lot of things I forgot questioning you or I missed...

"Well, we have begun working on our new album, both musically & lyrically, and I can reveal that it will be a bit more heavy sound on it."

PECCATUM-the thoughts carry me up to mythology, religion, history. What would be the meaning of PECCATUM? Your meaning I mean...

"My meaning is not interesting for others than me, so I will try to stick with that. But PECCATUM means many things. (Like Sin, Rise & fall etc.) The word should be open for interpretations for those who find this interesting. And I do not dare saying my interpretations is more reliable than the rest of the world's interpretations."

How is it like to perform along Ihshan and Ihriel? You know Ihshan for a long time... How is it your sister, a communicative person, does she have humour sense? Someone said once that art is not much compatible with family spirit, marriage?

"Both Ihshan & Ihriel is great person to work with, but I think you must ask them about their personality, not me. I do not see any problems with the combination of working as PECCATUM does. If one of us doesn't do what he/she should do, there will be reactions to such. We do not keep the band together because of the family relations."

Although sound and concept are extremely complex, yet guitar and voices are the prime instruments of your band. Why so? Is it so difficult to find a competent drummer? Maybe Cosmocrator? Do you regard it as supplement for the trio to complete in the future the formula with other persons?

"I think we have the ultimate line-up in SOURCE OF TIDE. Cosmocrator & Pendragon do the music, Taranis and me do the lyrics and Targenor is one hell of a bass-monster. For PECCATUM's matter we have on our EP hired session musicians, and enjoy working together with other skilled musicians. So who knows what this might be in the end."

desire or dream about?

"Lord PZ is what he appears to be within the lyrics and within the concept of the two bands. He has no other purpose than to combine the lyrical & musical elements into his created personality. And from then give the listener/viewer his total personality on stage or record what people want to seek within him. He is a fictional character created for the music and the performance. And that is all. He is a role performed by an actor on stage. I got my personal views upon those issues you want me to discuss, but I rather keep them for myself."

In China this year belongs to Dragon of Fire. Would you like to visit this peculiar country? And, by the way, do you subscribe to traditional cures for recovering or, as any other modern people, do you consider medicines (drugs) as the only way out from illness??

"It would be quite cool visiting China, and even do some gigs there, if we were allowed. And for the drugs & medicine, I rather let the educated people debate this issues."

I've heard another plane has disappeared again. Do you believe in parapsychology? Paranormal? Or Bermude's triangle? And, are you watching "X-Files"?

"I have been watching X-files, just for the relaxation of it, and I have to say I am not too much into aliens, UFO's etc. There are many things to be said about the capabilities not used in the human brain. But besides expanding to new territories of thinking & creation, I am not too much into this part of the new-age beliefs."

Nietzsche wrote: "You can only appreciate the quality a man is made have by the quantity of solitude he might bear or carry within". Do you consider yourself a lonely person? Do you agree Nietzsche's point of view?

Aren't you curious which would a politician might answer such questions?

"No, I do not consider myself as a lonely person, but there might be periods of life when some feel lonely. But then again, it is one thing believing & claiming to be such lonely person, but on the other hand people around you know this is not true. Sometimes it is just called melancholy. To say such an extraordinary person, as Nietzsche was wrong would be quite tough task for any person to defend upon. But as you could say, there are always different angels to view someone's ideological issues, and therefore I cant claim that Nietzsche had a only truth for a this point of view."

I believe we have reached the end. With no other details in my mind I myself end this chat. I wish you for a better year and may you have luck! Do you believe in luck? Fate?

Fortune? Or do you think one has only he the chance and opportunity to make one own luck. I mean only with your own hands you might "produce" your luck, right? "Final battle", final word...

"I believe in destiny, not luck. Therefore every human has to seek for, and cease opportunities when given to them."

Thanks for a good interview, and hello to the readers who bothered to read though this until the end."

Contact:
LordPZ@online.no

If SOURCE OF TIDE can be "suspected" of gothic influences, PECCATUM most certainly oscillates between symphonic, classic, black metal or, in most appropriate words, innovative metal performing a hindering sound, an exceedingly elaborated sound which is faithfully followed by profound lyrics. On stage I understood that only Tascam Dat-player could accurately measure up your requests... I have information you also hire some guitar players you use for various theatral effects. Would you make a story on this subject? I mean you should land me a few details about...

"The details are; we hired Pendragon four our European tour & a festival in Poland and we used Tommy Strand, a skilled guitarist from Oslo on the US-tour, with big success. We did not use them for their theatrical performances. We use live guitars & live vocals on stage, since we think this is the most important part of our music to be played live. I think the stage would be crowded if we hired skilled musicians for all instruments, & that is why we use two guitars and Three vocals on stage."

Which way would you imagine it might be like to perform besides a symphonic orchestra? And as it came here, what do you think about LACRIMOSA or METALLICA recordings as such up mentioned? What would be the wearing you would design for your eventual live performances?

"I think it would be nice to have such opportunities to do such big concerts, but on the other hand I reckon I will let METALLICA do their thing (As they are doing very good) rather than copy-cat their performance, because it would be a lousy show compared to METALLICA's big concerts."

What memories did you keep inside about the tour you had on American Continent? Is there something in particular you might say about the audience you have met there? Mexico, Canada are countries with a metal underground music shyly promoted in Europe. Yet, coming to earthly subjects, did you buy something from there? Some keepsakes, maybe?

"The American continent was a bit different to be in than in Europe. The audience had more of the old heavy metal style, banging their heads etc... But we where really taken good care of in the US, as a band. In Mexico people where singing along with all our song, and it was kind of amazing having 3000 kids singing along on our tunes. So we really enjoyed it."

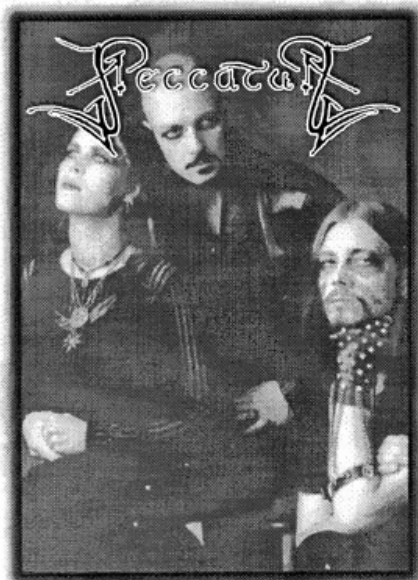
I am definitely glad to find out you still listen to old bands as BLACK SABBATH, IRON MAIDEN OR JUDAS PRIEST. Do you consider Bruce return into the band as something that relaunch IRON MAIDEN? What do you think of Ihshan's non-metal symphonic album with classical influences, "Somnium"?

"I enjoy the old heavy metal-band for what they did to metal in general. But I do not think that MAIDEN's Re-launch is anything more for me than hearing the right vocalist on the good old tunes. For Ihshan's "Somnium"; I think this is a killer of an album, and it just show's what Ihshan is capable of. One of my big favourites this year, that's for sure."

I observe Candlelight has enlarged its musical sphere promoting now bands such as AGENT STEEL or CHRISTIAN DEATH. What is your personal opinion about these bands?

"To be totally honest, I have not heard many tunes of the two mentioned bands. Therefore I can't give you other then my strictly musical view upon the bands. I think they have they're own style going & I also think they are good musicians."

Concerning SOURCE OF TIDE I've already asked you, the same about PECCATUM. What else should be left unspoken or unsaid? What kind of person is Lord PZ, perhaps? Romantic? Nostalgic? A dreamer? Idealist? Are you married? Which way do you see marriage... as a personal fulfilment or a compromise? What about gays' case? Ha, ha... Should marriage between homosexuals be the kind of liberty one would



One of the bands that impressed metal scene in the last few months was this particular Norwegian quintet that sold through Napalm Records its debut album at the last decade of the year...

The members are: Alexander Twiss-guitar, vocals; Mona Undheim Skottene-piano/synth; J.P-guitar; Rudi Junger-drums; Mikael Stokdal-synth/piano, vocals; Torp-bass (live performances). Alexander and Mona had played in TWIN OBSCENITY and released

the album "For Blood Honour and Soil" for Century Media.

The interview I made with Alexander was meant also to reveal a few things about the band and also about the musician. I delicately suggested him to develop a few subjects. And after words he had the kindness to approve answering a few questions I wanted and I hoped would have interested you. So, in other words, welcome into "Spheres Without Time".

History: "MYRIADS was formed in September 1997. In July 1998 we recorded a four tracks demo-CD which received a lot of responses and was sold out. In April 1999 we signed a recording contract with Napalm Records. We went into Mansion Studio in June and recorded our first full-length album, "In spheres without time", which was recorded and mixed in four weeks. After this the CD was mastered by Masterhuset in Oslo and released all over the world the 22nd of November 1999. We have received a lot of responses on "In spheres without time" and have had several radio-interviews. Norway's biggest metal-radio-program, Roxreyyen Mandag, have given us an interview, and we have also had interviews with a lot of the newspapers in Norway. Norway's biggest newspaper, VG, have given "In spheres without time" a review. Scream Magazine, Norway's biggest metal-magazine gave the CD 4 points out of 6. Belgium's Mindview Magazine gave "In spheres without time" 5 points out of 7. Napalm Records has done a great job for us regarding promotion, putting up one page advertisements in the biggest metal magazines in the world, like Rock Hard and Metal Hammer."

Age: "I am 22 years old. Mona and Mikael are also 22 years old. J.P. is 27 years old and Rudi is 25".

Hobbies: "My hobbies are playing guitar and singing in a male choir (one of Norway's biggest choirs including 80 men). Music is a very big part of my life and I couldn't be without it! I love listening to music, everything from black-metal to classical music. I also study philosophy as subsidiary subject on the University of Trondheim, and work in a kindergarten. I love training, and I also enjoy nature very much. I try to absorb nature as much as I can. Friends are also very important, and I use a lot of time being with friends".

Musical tastes: "I listen to a lot of different musical styles, everything from black-metal to progressive rock and classical music. Many classical pieces include brutal parts, and black-metal can include beautiful melodic lines as well. My favourite bands right now are OPETH, MY DYING BRIDE and ANATHEMA. I also like several classical pieces by Rachmaninov and Bach. The other members in MYRIADS listen to a lot of different music as well, this is probably the reason why our music is so diverse".

Duality: life & death: "I believe both life and death are two essential parts of our lives, and they are both equally important. You can't speak about death itself without mentioning life and vice versa. I think all people during life wonders and have thoughts about death. What happens after you die? That is the main theme in the song "Fragments of the hereafter" from our new CD "In spheres without time". In my opinion a death of a person, for example when someone dies of old age, can be just as beautiful as a birth of a baby. Both death and birth marks the entrance and the exit of



MYRIADS

life as we know it".

Money: "As I am now a student, I do not earn a lot of money. Neither me, or the rest of the band have received our first payment from Napalm Records yet, but I believe we will receive this in the forthcoming months. Although money is important, it is not the reason why the rest of the band and myself play in MYRIADS. The main reason is to have fun, make music and evolve as musicians".

Religion: "I view myself as an atheist, and do not believe in any gods or supernatural forces. I find different religions interesting, and many of them have good thoughts and ideas of how to live a good life, but I do not feel close to any religion.

In MYRIADS, we do not write about religion in our lyrics. They are based on dreams and philosophy with dramatically elements. We have no connection to any religion, and do not feel that religion has anything to do with our music".

Policy: "I am not much into politics. Of course, if the politicians mention cases that may interest me, I listen to them. Mostly of the time I find the politicians of Norway very boring".

Goals, ideals: "To be able to express ourselves musically, both on CD's and live. I hope we will play a lot live, since in my opinion this is when a

band really shows how good they are. Hopefully we will go on a Norwegian tour in close future. Like I said earlier, I believe we mature and make progress as musicians all the time. This is what makes it so exciting to play in a band!"

Hi Alex. How did the MYRIADS' members spend the New Year?

"All the MYRIADS' members except Rudi spent the New Year at my home in Stavanger. We had a hair-party, which basically means that all the people coming to the party has to do something funny with their hair. The guys in the band who has short hair, J.P. and Mikael (he cut off his hair now recently), had to wear a wig or a hat. It really was a lot of fun and a good entrance into the new Millennium!"



OVERFLOWER, 122 STAB WOUNDS, A WINTER WITHIN, TWIN OBSCENITY, THEATRE OF TRAGEDY are subjects that had (and still have) a lot of connections with your band. What else can you tell me more?

"MYRIADS was formed in September 1997, and both Mona and I played in the band from the start. MYRIADS has never been a side-project. I founded the band myself with the ambitions to secure a record deal, record a CD on a record label, and play/tour live. As you see my dreams have come true. The only thing missing is the touring part. We will have a Norwegian tour in week 17 with ATROX (signed to Season Of Mist). We recorded our demo-CD, "In spheres without time", in July 1998 in Mansion studio, produced by Øyvind Grødem. The demo-CD was sold out. The 9th of April 1999 MYRIADS signed a record-deal with Napalm Records. In June the same year we recorded our first full-length album, also entitled "In spheres without time". The album was produced by MYRIADS and Øyvind Grødem and mastered at Masterhuset in September. It was released all over the world the 22nd of November 1999.

In October 1997 I heard that TWIN OBSCENITY needed a guitarist. I auditioned for them, and they mentioned that they also needed a female vocalist who could play keyboard. I told them about Mona and MYRIADS, and Mona came to practise with TWIN OBSCENITY. In December 1997 we signed, together with the rest of TWIN OBSCENITY, a record deal with Century Media. In the spring of 1998 we participated on the recording of "For blood, honour and soil". In June 1998 TWIN OBSCENITY played at the music-festival "Under the black sun" in Engelsdorf in Germany. After this festival Mona and I had no more interest of playing in TWIN OBSCENITY. The reason for this was that we did not have much in common with the rest of TWIN OBSCENITY, neither musically nor socially. We quit playing in the band in July 1998 to fully concentrate on MYRIADS.

Rudi has previously played in three bands. He played in ZEPHYRUS, which was a thrash metal-band, EXCEPTION, which was a heavy metal-band and DEAD FLOWERS, which was a hard rock band. None of these bands released any demo-tapes while he played in them. JP played in MALPRACTICE, which also was a thrash metal-band. They recorded one demo-tape. In this band he played together with Frank Claussen who plays in THEATRE OF TRAGEDY and Dan Stokes, who plays in 122 STAB WOUNDS. Mikael plays in the black metal-band A WINTER WITHIN. They are now recording a demo-CD. I earlier played in a pop/rock-band called OVERFLOWER, and the band released one demo-CD while I played there.

As I mentioned earlier, Mona and I quit playing in TWIN OBSCENITY because we did not have much in common with them musically or socially. In MYRIADS we all view well social communication as the most important factor. We fit very well together socially and have a lot of fun together, also in situations, which has nothing to do with MYRIADS. We all respect each other and have our hearts in this band. We also feel that we have achieved a good technical-musical level."

Myriads is it an incommensurate, infinite, boundless term...somehow...a term with no mathematical connotation or denotation... am I right? Where from did this name come? Do you consider art, generally speaking, as being out of time, not temporal ("In Spheres Without Time")? Then, what about "fashion"?

"You are right about the meaning of "myriads". It means something countless, unlimited. It is just like if you take a look at the stars. It is not millions of stars, or billions of stars, but myriads. Mona suggested the band name because it is a reflection of its members. All the members of MYRIADS are different and like different types of music. This makes our music very diverse. All the members contribute with lots of elements to the music. We hope that when people listen to it, they feel they experience "myriads" of elements in our songs. I would strongly recommend that when you listen to "In spheres without time", you read the lyrics thoroughly and hear the album several times. Our music is definitely not background music, and hopefully it will grow better and better, the more times you listen to it. With our band name we also refer to myriads of elements in the lyrics and the CD-cover.

In my opinion the expressive in art is understood as an unlimited dimension in your inner self, as a sphere without time. One example of this is for example a drop of water that is falling. This is not a temporal situation because your memory makes you relive the situation again and again. Fashion can be temporal, at least if you view all the different clothes, which has existed in different times of man's existence. Regarding the expressive in fashion I think this also can be understood as an unlimited dimension in your inner self, and can be viewed as timeless".

What does the cover represent? ...Those animals... that weird frantic background? What did Mona intend to immortalize? What could be the connection between the cover and the MYRIADS' concept?

"The photography of our CD-cover was taken in the summer of 1999. It was taken in the south of Bali, in a cave called Goa Lava. Mona and I came to the cave at sunset and experienced ten thousands of bats flying out of the cave and towards the moon at the same time. It was a fantastic experience! Mona took several photos, both of the bats and the walls of the cave. The



colours and the cave's walls gave the picturesque effect in the photography. It is unmanipulated and in its original form. We feel the photography represents our album title "In spheres without time". This is because the bats have senses, which exceeds our own; because of these senses bats experience the world different than us, like a sphere belonging to another dimension. Many people have told us that they like the CD-cover and that it is original. We feel ourselves that we have done something different by having this CD-cover, it is not a typical metal-cover."

The only differences between your Demo-CD and the debut album are the covers and the new entry of "Fragments of the Hereafter". Both materials had been recorded in the same studio. Should there be some other elements to distinguish one accomplishment from another...maybe...Those who bought the Demo-CD should also buy this CD, is it worth it?

"The differences between our demo-CD and "In spheres without time" are more than what you mentioned. We used Mansion Studio for both the recordings. This was because we were very satisfied with Øyvind Grødem's work on our demo-CD, and we co-operate really great together with him. Øyvind Grødem is a very experienced producer. He listens to your opinions, and he asks you how you want to have the sound and the final result. He is very honest, and if he dislikes something he tells you at once. Øyvind Grødem is also very good to separate the different elements in our music. This is very important since we used 40 tracks at the most on "In spheres without time". Our music contains a lot of details, and that's why I recommend the listener to listen to our new CD many times. We also used Øyvind Grødem on both the recordings because he knew almost all the songs. Like you mentioned earlier "Fragments of the hereafter" was a new song, but we re-recorded all the songs from our demo-CD on "In spheres without time". Because of this we felt they were new because they got a much better sound. On our demo-CD we paid the studio-costs ourselves, so we were limited on how much time we could use in the studio. We used ten days to record and mix the demo-CD, and in comparison we used three weeks for the recording of "In spheres without time". We used one more week for the mixing of the CD, and a couple of days for the mastering. Since Napalm Records paid for all of this, we had much more time to do what we always had wanted to do with the songs from the demo-CD. Because of this we have more vocal-tracks on "In spheres without time", and a much better vocal-sound. You can now hear much clearer the words that we are singing and the vocals are more "in your face". The guitar-sound is more powerful, and we used more guitars for the songs. You now hear all the piano/synth-parts much clearer in the sound-picture, and they also have a better sound. The drums are triggered on "In spheres without time", and this also gives more punch to the drums. Because of all those improvements those who bought our demo-CD should definitely buy our new CD! Regarding the cover for our demo-CD, this was a drawing, which Mikael had made transposed upon photography of a water pond from a waterfall. We had much less money for our CD-cover for our demo-CD, and it was made only

on one day. For the CD-cover for "In spheres without time" we had more time to plan and do it, so we were much more happy with the final product. Sindre Kristoffersen made both the CD-booklets, and he was also much more happy with our new CD-booklet. All the photos in the CD-booklet were taken by me and Mona, and the band-photos was taken by Gerd Hegge (Rudi's girlfriend). As I mentioned earlier our demo-CD is sold out, so it is impossible to buy this CD anymore. You still can hear two of the songs from the demo-CD on our homepage as mp3-files. When you hear them you must bear in mind that the sound is a lot worse on those tracks, this is of course because it is a demo-CD."

The melancholic aura of those 5 tracks unites perfectly with the gothic and even 'doom death' elements; the voices' contrast is harmoniously created and performed; the piano, synth and the guitar dominate the sound and sometimes the battery emphasizes the music's solemnity. Yet, taking a general look, the album expresses a certain kind of sadness, an impetuous sadness... at least this is my opinion.. my impression. If your personal consideration is different please, explain a little

"Thank you for your good critique! I feel you have managed to describe our music quite well. Regarding the sadness in our music, we all relate more to this kind of music than happy music. We feel that we can express ourselves better musically and lyrically by having our music as it is. You can get rid of sadness, aggression and depressive thoughts through music, either by listening to music or composing/performing music. A lot of classical music contains elements of sadness, aggression and depression. Still, we are not at all sad persons! We all like to have a lot of fun, and try to make the best out of our lives."

Returning to voices... the mood that MYRIADS can inspire could anytime be serene and peaceful (Mona's voice) then to transform all of a sudden into a violent, aggressive yet still a depressive one... How does it work? I mean this digression, this opposition? There are still some frames where both your voice and Mona's are melting calmly, generating a feeling of floating...

"The most important factor for our music is catchy melody-lines. With several melody-lines together, from the guitars, vocals, bass and keyboards we create melody-lines that hopefully move the listener. Like you mentioned, we have a manifold sound-picture on the vocal side. I use clean-vocals and death-vocals. I also have all the spoken parts. Mona sings with clean-vocals and uses the sound of her chest. In addition to this she uses her dark, aggressive vocals. This sounds almost like a high black metal-scream, and it really gives us a definite sound. We have received many good responses for this special type of vocals. It underlines the aggression and huge despair in the music. An example of this is "Fragments of the hereafter". In the despairing moment Mona knows she is dying in an air of mystery, her vocals change into polyphonic harmony, which brings the moods of another dimension. Mikael enlarges the sound-picture even more with his black-vocals. Like you said my clean-vocals mixes with Mona's in many of the verses generating a feeling of floating. The death-vocals together with Mikael's black-vocals are a contrast to Mona's soprano. We use this kind of contrasts on the vocal-side quite a lot to fortify our music and the lyrics. By having a wide vocal-picture we feel the music becomes more exciting to listen to. The first thing you usually notice when you listen to music is the vocals. If they are bad, or boring this often affects your opinion about the rest of the music. We always have this in mind when we make music and try to make the vocals as diverse as possible."

Napalm introduces you as a mixture of TRISTANIA and THE SINS OF THY BELOVED. Could be any connection to the fact that Stavanger is a common origin to all of you? Do you find any similarities among the bands mentioned before and MYRIADS? Does it bother you such comparison? Then, how do you stand?

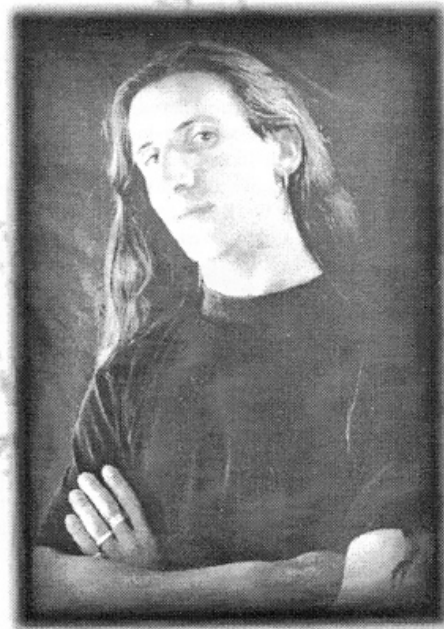
"You are right about that Stavanger is a common origin to MYRIADS, TRISTANIA and THE SINS OF THY BELOVED. I know people playing in all these bands. That Napalm Records in their promotion for "In spheres without time" (which we so far are very satisfied with) compares us to them and calls our music for atmospherically gothic metal is fine by me and the rest of MYRIADS. As I have understood atmospherically gothic metal is the most popular kind of music in Europe right now. Both TRISTANIA and THE SINS OF THY BELOVED has sold a lot of records, so that people get to know us because of the comparison with them is OK. Still, our music contains more classical elements than the music of TRISTANIA and THE SINS OF THY BELOVED. We feel ourselves that our music defies categorizing. The closest you could get to explain our music is maybe a fusion between metal and classical music. Regarding the vocals, Mona's aggressive vocals differ from the female vocals in both TRISTANIA and THE SINS OF THY BELOVED. As far as I know there are not many women doing this. Both Mona and Mikael play the keyboard. Mikael mainly plays the

keyboard-parts, and Mona mainly plays the piano-parts, but sometimes they play the opposite as well. Like I said earlier melodies is the most essential part in our music, and by using two keyboards we get a broader sound-picture than if we had used only one. In some of our songs both Mona and Mikael play piano for four hands, like in the intro of "Spheres without time". Other songs ends with two keyboards played at once, like the last part of "Spheres without time" and the outro of "Dreams of reality".

I wrote the base of most of the songs on "In spheres without time" during the summer of 1997. This was before TRISTANIA and THE SINS OF THY BELOVED received their record deals and had released any of their CD's on Napalm Records. Neither I, nor the rest of MYRIADS had heard of those bands while we wrote the songs for "In spheres without time". Both Mona and I have inspirations from classical music since we both have played classical piano for several years. J.P., Rudi, Mikael and myself have inspirations from metal since we all have listened to it a lot and played in metal-bands for many years."

The most serene track is "Dreams of reality" (7'35) and "most" complex one is "Spheres without time" (11'38). In fact, all tracks are long, why so? Describe them both musically and textually, please. Then, speak about your dreams and philosophy if you think you can disclose yourselves this for.

"I do agree with you that "Dreams of reality" is the most serene track. It has a lot of acoustic guitars and is the calmest song on our album. I do not agree with you that "Spheres without time" is the most complex track. It is the longest track, but "Fragments of the hereafter" is a far more complex song. If you listen to the verse for example, you have seven melody-lines played simultaneously, and this demanded 40 tracks in the studio. Øyvind Grødem told us that he had never used so many tracks at one time in a song before. Our songs become long because we all have so many elements we want to express in them. This suits our lyrics perfectly because we have a lot to say and philosophy about in them. If I shall describe totally all the songs musically and lyrically, the explanation would be as long as this interview alone! I will therefore explain all the songs as shortly as I can. Musically "Fragments of the hereafter" is our most complex song and all the instruments get maximum display. I actually wrote the song for piano first, and all the other instruments came afterwards. "The day of wrath" is a more simple, guitar-based song. It is more aggressive and brutal than the other songs on "In spheres without time". "Spheres without time" is a more piano-based song, which probably has the most interacting between the different vocals. "Seductive hate" is a less complex song, and probably is 50 percent dominated by guitars, and 50 percent dominated by piano/keyboards. "Dreams of reality" is, like you said earlier, our most serene track and most acoustic track. This track also has the most complex bass-lines. Lyrically "Fragments of the hereafter" dwells with the question: What will happen after you die? I have the role as a person questioning about death, not wanting to accept the fact that people die, and leave you back alone. In the end I finally accept death and manage to live with it. Mona's character is actually dying, and finally finds out what happens when you die in the end of the song. We don't answer that question, but leave it open. "The day of wrath" is basically about man's ruin and our thoughts of what will happen then. None of our lyrics have any connection to any religion, so this track contains only our own thoughts. In "Spheres without time" Mona, Mikael and I have different characters. My character asks the question: Can we be released from time? Man is bound to a definite pattern of time. In our life here on earth we are all insoluble bound to time. The pulse of our lives is unchangeable, but also our only possibility to change and evolve. Without time and without pulse, our dreams are hopeless and we will perish. I represent the despairing man which is torn apart in his elusive dreams. He first thinks that he is heading forwards in an innovative direction, but finds out that his footsteps have been trodden by others before him. Mona has the character of being in another dimension, which is forever unchangeable. This dimension contains all the dreams of man. It glides like a sphere over the world, pouring out the cosmic fantasies, which is eternalised.



All humans have common abilities like love, joy, anger, hate and pain. This is because we are all elements of the same world. Mikael's character discusses what will happen to us when we die and dissolve, we will not



perish. We will glide back to what we once were, and the atoms of our bodies will be mixed with soil and become new life. "Seductive hate" tells how short distance there is between hate and love. Contradictive factors fortify each other and there would be no hate without love, and vice versa. "Dreams of reality" deals with our reality or daydreams, and our dreams, and how important they both are to shape our consciousness and personal identity. We believe that we cannot dream without having had experiences affecting our dreams, and that the dreams

again affect our daily life. In our lyrics we use existential philosophy regarding man's life within time and space. We philosophise regarding what man would be without these frames. Feelings/moods are also very important for our lyrics. We make comparisons with nature to describe and fortify our feelings. Mona and I have discussed every sentence in our lyrics together. This is very important since we view our lyrics as 50% of our songs. We want the lyrics to fortify and melt together with our music, and are quite satisfied with the result."

Do you consider that the album should have a message for the listener? Should it be hard or difficult to trespass the MYRIADS' universe? Let us know, is it conceived or created only by you and Mona...the other three are simply only performers?

"I want to answer your last question first. NO, our music is NOT only written by Mona and me. J.P., Rudi and Mikael have just as much to say regarding the music as we have. Although I have written the base of the songs, they all become 100-times better when everyone contributes with their ideas! You wouldn't recognize the songs if you had heard them once they were written, and compared them to how they are now. Five heads thinks better than one, without doubt! In MYRIADS we all listen to each other, if someone dislikes a riff, we have to change it so everyone can be satisfied. The lyrics are, like I told you earlier, only written by Mona and me since we really work great together in the writing process and share a lot of the same thoughts. We use a lot of time on the lyrics, and it often can take a week to write the lyrics of one song. If "In spheres without time" should have a message it would be to make people see new possibilities in life. People should try to think in different patterns and get new ideas, not always doing the things you do because of routine or not thinking. We don't make our music or lyrics for other people; we only make it for ourselves. This has always been an unwritten rule in MYRIADS, and always will be. Because of this, it is very flattering that people enjoy our music. We have full freedom to do what we want, and in my opinion if bands write more commercial music because their record companies tells them so, they could just quit playing music. If their music becomes more commercial because it is a natural development for the band, the situation is different, and I think this is the best thing for a band to do in such a situation."

What can you tell us about your live performance from Trondheim? Does your live tracks have a different sound? Could you talk about a MYRIADS' show or simply only about a live performance? You were telling me something about a smoke machine...and special effects..

"Regarding our concert at Knaus in Studentersamfundet in Trondheim it went really, really well. The concert was crammed with people, there was actually more people in the room we were playing in, than its maximum capacity, and we had to have barricades in front of the stage. We were applauded to play one extra song. We were also satisfied with the effects, like you mentioned. A huge wind-machine blew smoke from a smoke-machine on the stage, so the smoke actually went in circles around us when we were playing. This happened exactly when we wanted it to happen, and it had a great effect. We also had a changing light show at

the stage, which gave a great theatrical effect. Before the concert we practised very hard for a week. Since me and Mona live in Trondheim and the rest of MYRIADS live in Stavanger, we usually practise together once a month. One day we practised 12 hours in a row, just to start again early the next morning. I am very proud playing in a band managing to achieve such a thing, and I have never witnessed anything like it in the bands I previously have played in. Live our tracks have a different sound, since you never can accomplish the same sound live that you can get in a studio. Still, we try to get as good sound as possible live, but this has a lot to do with who does the sound engineering live! When we write our songs, they are made so they can be played live. Of course we can't always include all the elements we have in our songs since we are only six musicians, but I would say we achieve to include at least 95% of it live. Our songs are more dynamic live, and maybe more "raw", in the meaning that you get a different impression of a band playing in front of you than when you listen to a CD.

Regarding a MYRIADS show it again depends at where we play. If the place has a great light-system and have good possibilities to use various effects we will have a better show than if the place has poor equipment. We try to make the best out of the situation."

What can you tell me about Trondheim's life or activity? Is it by any chance more peaceful or quiet than Stavanger?

"I think Trondheim has a better and more active "scene" compared to Stavanger. More people go to concerts here than in Stavanger. I also feel that the interest for metal-music in general is bigger in Trondheim. In Stavanger the scene of gothic metal- and black metal-bands has grown a little during the years, but still is very small. Even if the scene is small in Stavanger, many of the bands playing are very active and professional. Napalm Records have already signed four bands from the Stavanger area: TRISTANIA, THE SINS OF THY BELOVED, DISMAL EUPHONY and MYRIADS. Many big bands hail from Stavanger, like THEATRE OF TRAGEDY and GEHENNA, but the people who like different types of music do not always support each other and the various bands. There is one group of black metal-supporters/musicians and one group of gothic metal-supporters/musicians. If they all had supported each other the metal-scene would be bigger and better in Stavanger. In Trondheim I have the impression that bands are very supportive to each other. Here you actually can go to a prog-rock-concert witnessing black metal-people with full corpse paint! You can also go to a black-metal concert witnessing prog-rock-people. This is how it should be between bands."

You have received many offers but you chose Napalm. What are the reasons? The album promotion was indeed exceptional, a quality promotion, people had heard of your album a long time before its appearance; did you hope for a tour as it happened in TRISTANIA's case?

"We chose Napalm Records exactly because of their great promotional work with their bands. I saw what they had done with TRISTANIA THE SINS OF THY BELOVED, and because of this we were never in doubt that we would choose Napalm Records. They released "In spheres without time" only three months after it was mixed. Like you say their promotion for "In spheres without time" truly has been fantastic. They have had one-page full-colour advertisements in the biggest metal-magazines in the world like Metal Hammer and Rock Hard, so their promotional-work has been blameless. Napalm Records also has a great distribution, and we have received good responses from many magazines. We received 5 points out of 7 in Belgium's Mindview Magazine (the biggest metal-magazine in THE BENELUX-area), 7 points out of 10 in Canada's Unrestrained Magazine, and 8.5 points out of 10 in Canada's Rip 'N Tear Magazine. We also received 4 points out of 6 in Scream Magazine (Norway's biggest metal-magazine). We have received a lot of E-Mails from people who appreciates our music. This means more to us than the sales of "In spheres without time" itself. In my eyes the highest goal you can achieve as a musician is when someone appreciates your music. I have heard that TRISTANIA shall play in Mexico and maybe other parts in the US, so that is promising regarding for what might happen if our CD sells well. Like I said earlier, we will have a Norwegian tour in week 17 together with ATROX where we will play in Oslo, Stavanger and Bergen. Napalm Records has also offered us to play at a gothic metal-festival in Leipzig, Germany, this year. I do not know the name of the festival, but I was told that Napalm Records would have their own stage at the festival."

If your album registers very good sales you most likely would face offers coming from bigger labels. Would you give Napalm up? Justify, please your answer.

"Like I told you, we are very happy for the work Napalm Records has done for us so far. They released our album very fast and have done, and still does great promotional- and distributional-work for us. All I can say is that as long as we are happy with them, we will keep a good co-operation. The situation is of course the same for them. They are dependent that we do our work in the studio, that we answer interviews, and that our CD sells well. The most important thing for us is, like I mentioned earlier, that we have full

freedom do what we want musically and artistically. Napalm Records have accepted this, so then we are all satisfied. What I do know about the biggest record-labels, like Century Media and Nuclear Blast, is that they give you long, and not so good record-contracts. They also have, in my opinion, too many bands. This causes that the biggest bands get top priority, and the smaller ones often are forgotten. Napalm Records has grown a lot, and still grows, but they still give all their bands good promotion and distribution."

Do you regard over Norwegian metal scene as being a powerful one? Could you recommend me five UG bands?

"Yes, I think that there are many Norwegian bands that are just as professional as international acts. Norway is one of the countries that have the best and most acknowledged black metal-bands in the world. Examples of such bands are DIMMU BORGIR, EMPEROR, MAYHEM, SATYRICON AND DARKTHRONE. Regarding gothic metal, THEATRE OF TRAGEDY has toured in Europe for many years now. TRISTANIA have been on tour with ANATHEMA, TIAMAT AND MOONSPELL, and are maybe going on a tour in America. In my opinion, a lot of Norwegian music is just as well made and well played as the music of international acts. I am not really sure what you mean with UG bands, but five Norwegian bands I would recommend you are: ATROX, TRISTANIA, ARCTURUS, BORKNAGAR and ourselves." (UG=underground-ed)

How much time do yourself dedicate to MYRIADS? Do you prefer walking alone in the nature besides your girlfriend?

"The most important thing in my life is the love to my girlfriend and the time we spend together. After this comes school, I take Philosophy as subsidiary subject, and MYRIADS as the most important things. MYRIADS demands a lot from me since in addition to composing songs and writing lyrics, I do all the administrative work (interviews, contracts and E-Mail). Still, I love doing it! Music is extremely important for me, and I am lucky to get the chance in MYRIADS to play concerts and release CD's all over the world. This is a dream for many other bands without any recording contract, so everybody in MYRIADS really appreciate it and are aware of how lucky we are. I also love training, and try to keep in shape. Actually, one of the best feelings I know is after a concert where myself and the rest of the band has done really, really well. Sometimes when we have worked really hard together in MYRIADS, it is good to have a break. After we had recorded "In spheres without time", which truly demanded a lot of all of us, I went on holiday for one month. When I came back I was eager to mix the album, have it mastered and released. It is the same now. All in MYRIADS are very eager to have our Norwegian tour and to maybe play at various music-festivals this summer."

I am so curious in finding details about that gorgeous male chorus you are singing in. Could anyone as he pleases integrate in or follow this chorus?

"The choir I am singing in is called TSS, which stands for Trondhjem Student Song-association. It is a male choir that consists of 80 men, and I am singing 1. bass. We are singing everything from classical pieces to folk songs and popular songs. In October last year we had a concert where we sang "O Fortuna" from Carl Orff's "Carmina Burana". We sang together with a female choir called TKS and a symphony orchestra, and it was a fantastic experience. We were about 160 people together in the choirs and 2500 people came to watch the concert. Mona sings in TKS, by the way. To sing in the choir you have to pass an entrance examination with the conductor and 5 people from the choir. Only 50% of the people applying to sing in the choir passes this test, so I take it as a good sign that I really can sing!"

You are a student and yet in the same time you are earning your existence in a kindergarten. What's the atmosphere within? Do you like children? How would it be like to see your kid in some years, performing in a... rap band?

"I love to learn new things and philosophise about things, so studying Philosophy as subsidiary subject suits me perfect. I love children, and have learnt a lot from working with them. When you work in a kindergarten you have a big responsibility that you bring up the children right. After the parents, the most important persons for children in a kindergarten are the teacher and assistants. I have learnt a lot of how I deal with children and how I will be as a father. I am really looking forward to it when that time will come. If my son or daughter would be performing in a rap band I would support them 100%. Rap is not particularly the music-style I prefer to listen to the most, but I would support my children in everything which has with music to do, because I know how important music is for myself."

Do you think you are a positive person? Is the positivism constructive

in life? In other words, what should be easier: to sustain or to deny a thing, in fact, an idea... something, anything?

"I would view myself as a positive person. I always try to see the positive side in things, and never give up because of opposition. I would say the same of the rest of MYRIADS. We really have met a lot of resistance with this band, but we have always learnt from it and never given up. In the beginning we only had the opportunity to practise once a week since I played in both TWIN OBSCENITY and OVERFLOATER. When Mona and I moved to Trondheim to study that could also be a potential problem. Actually we have received a lot of questions about how we could continue playing together when we lived so far away from each other. This was never a problem since we have such a great chemistry in this band, and everybody has a great trust in each other. Like I said earlier, social factor is the most important factor in MYRIADS. Actually things only got better after we moved to Trondheim. We received our record deal with Napalm Records, we released our debut-CD all over the world and we are soon going on tour. Even if we play sad music we are not at all sad persons! We try to do our absolute best when we make and record our music. I mean that positivism is very constructive in life and negativism on the contrary is destructive. I would say the same as the philosopher Spinoza: You should always try to get the most positive out of your life. You should try to make a negative situation positive, try to reverse it, at least as much as you can. Spinoza also says that man is born without malice, and that the wickedness meets you as you grow up in life. You should not judge everybody, before you have confronted him or her personally. To a certain extent I agree with Spinoza, I think all people has something good in them, and that you should not judge a person too early and before you know enough about him/her."

You enjoy spending time with your friends. Could you try defining friendship? "If you are not besides me you are definitely against!" does this remark characterize you? Could this remark sometimes be suitable also for you?

"To define friendship is a really hard thing to do, but you could say it is the opposite of hostility. You have various levels of friendship, but an usual thing is that you have something in common with your friends. Not everything, but at least a few things. I think some friends you will have your whole life, while others you will have for shorter periods. Sometimes you are friends with people, who later go against you, but also the contrary can happen. I have friends, who I did not like earlier who later have become my friends. I think I have become a lot more open to meet different types of people as I have become older. If you look at MYRIADS for example, we are totally different individuals, but we fit really well together and respect each other. The statement: "If you are not besides me, you are definitely against" does not fit me at all. I totally accept that not everyone will like MYRIADS and what we are doing. We have received reviews that have been totally at the top and others that have been really bad. Humans often have totally different views of certain things and that is what makes the human race so unique! Of course if you have nothing in common at all with another person it can be hard to communicate with him/her, but I believe that you should take it as a challenge and try to get the best out of the situation."

"Love and hate are antagonistic concepts and indifference completes



somehow a triangle. Yet each of those three concepts has different and various connotations in people's axiology. What would be your own hierarchy?" I asked DECORYAH's leader in "Kogaionon" No.3. Jukka replied: "If we logically cogitate... into a singular reality two different concepts cannot exist in the same time because they would reciprocally deny themselves and would cease instantly existing, right? Yet, by negation, we might reach the solution. So when you hate, in fact you don't really hate, yet, in exchange, you definitely deny love..." What would be your answer to my

question? And how do you stand...next to Jukka Vuorinen's idea?

"I think it is hard to make a hierarchy of love, hate and indifference. Of course, different people will have different connotations of these three concepts. I would say that none of the concepts is more important than the other, but love and hate rely to very strong feelings. What is the definition of hate and what is needed to hate someone? If someone would kill your girlfriend/wife I would say it would give you the right to hate the other person, but can you hate someone for his religion? I don't think it is right to hate someone because of his religious belief, but for his acts if these are used against you in a terrible way. In "Seductive hate" we discuss how short distance there is between love and hate and that they are contradictory factors that are dependent of each other to exist. I agree with Jukka Vuorinen that love and hate can't exist in the same time, but when you love a person you often can come into a situation where you hate. Then again you often don't hate the other person, but the persons acts. When Jukka says that when you hate you don't really hate, I would like to ask him how he would define hate. To hate someone is a very strong word, but still I think there are reasons to hate, like I mentioned above. Maybe the hate in such a situation would be weaker in time? I believe this again would be different for person to person and it is almost an impossible question to answer."



Are we really the most intelligent creatures in the Universe? Could UFO's exist? Do you conceive life after death? Life could mean birth, happiness, disappointment, feeling..., meaning... sense, while death=only death. Could really death bring happiness to someone?

"Until now, as far as we know, we are the most intelligent creatures in the universe.

But we do not know the whole universe, and therefore it could exist life much more intelligent than ourselves out there. I don't believe in UFO's before I have seen one myself, but I do not reject that they might exist. It is just quite interesting that mostly of the UFO observations has been done in the US. I wonder why that is, do the UFO's like the US better than the rest of the world? Regarding life after death, we do not know what happens after you die, so it is a very interesting question, and like I have mentioned before we ask the question: What happens after you die? In "Fragments of the hereafter". There we lie the question open. Mona experiences death and knows what happens afterwards, but the answer is never told. We give an alternative answer to this in "Spheres without time" where Mikael's character says that we die and dissolve, and the atoms of our bodies will be mixed with soil and become new life. This is only a philosophical thought, but I think it is a nice way of seeing it. Regarding if death should bring happiness to someone you can look at the people who want euthanasia. For people with extreme pains I don't know if death will bring happiness, but at least a relief and final rest. If this should be legalized is a totally different question! I heard a story about a woman in the Netherlands who lost her child in an accident, and actually was allowed to meet death by euthanasia when she pledged for this in her enormous depression."

Norway's history: a people always invaded and conquered by Danish, Swedish, Germans, a shameful history for the discoverers of America, for Vikings' offspring... don't you think? Geographically, Norway is the thousand fjords, the country with the Northern European point... having a five times smaller population than Romania yet with a double surface... Are you proud of being born in Norway? What about your patriotism?

"I don't think that the things you mention are parts of a shameful history of Norway. The history is like it is anyway, it is no use to dwell more about it. Many people really care about such things, but personally it doesn't mean much for me. I want to care about our lives now and in the future. Of course you can learn from situations from the past, but I don't think you should be stuck up with them. Of course I am proud of being born in Norway and the achievements people from Norway have done now and in the past, but I am not at all nationalistic. I think this is a very dangerous term that easily can be misunderstood and linked to Nazism. None of the members in MYRIADS are nationalistic, and we do not wish to be associated with such a term."

Back to music, how does Alexander Twiss see MYRIADS' future? What will be the sound of the next album, another album? Having emphasized tendencies of gothic-rock, do having smooth voices also?

Perhaps for a greater popularity (do you see Theatre Of Tragedy!)? What would be your desire for 2000? What would you desire for the new millenium (musically and not only)?

"Regarding MYRIADS' future I think we will have a great future hopefully including many tours and CD's! Maybe we sometime will make a video as well? We really want to make a music video and have lots of ideas for it. Like I said earlier, we will have the Norwegian tour with ATROX in week 17. Napalm Records also offered us to play at a gothic metal-festival in Leipzig, Germany, in June this year. We have already started working with several new songs. It is a usual process in MYRIADS to let our songs mature for a long time. Then they can be fully developed and we can achieve the musical quality we want. We will definitely keep our death-vocals and keep the metal/classical sound, but cannot promise much more. Like I said earlier we make our music only for ourselves. We now have the full freedom to do what we want musically and artistically. If Napalm Records would ask us to make more commercial music, we would not listen to them. If we feel ourselves that our music should be more commercial, then again that is a different question. "In spheres without time" demanded a lot musically from all the members of MYRIADS. We have learned from this and become better musicians. Our new songs will be even more technically orientated. We have no limitations for our music and can always become better musicians. Our goal is to never restrict our development in this area, so we constantly will evolve as a band. We are really looking forward to the Norwegian tour in week 17, and hope that we can get the chance to play at various music-festivals this summer. Personally I hope I will get the chance to travel this summer, maybe to Egypt. I really don't know yet, but I love to travel!"



What do you think would be the meaning of an interview: to identify the musical concept's weak points or to bring into light all its forceful points? What do you think I tried to do...and what do you think I finally managed to do with your "help"?

"I definitely think the most important thing is to bring into light the positive in music. Then bands will get the chance to be noticed and will have the ability to tour more and sell more albums. Of course you can mention both positive and negative points in various music, but basically the most important thing in an interview is to focus on the bands MUSIC, because it is this playing in a band is all about! You probably tried taking a personal interview by asking a lot of questions not regarding the music. These questions were very interesting for me, and probably interesting for some people to read. An interview via E-Mail will never be as personal as a telephone-interview or a direct interview. It will always miss sudden impulses or questions that often pop up in such interviews. Still I think you managed with my "help" to make a more personal interview. It was just maybe a little too many questions?" (I don't think-ed)

It should be good-bye time by now. Otherwise our dialogue might surpass the length of your tracks. I appreciate your patience and I wish you for success into this life... How would you like to end this interview: with a question? A message? Or a simple good bye?

"I would only say that I think it is very important that as an individual you always should ask why you do the things you do in life. It is important to be aware of your actions, both regarding yourself and the people who surrounds you. If you are not aware of this you can be stuck in situations you don't want to be in, and you actually could have prevented! If you want to contact MYRIADS you can do this via E-Mail and the E-Mail-address is: x MYRIADS x@hotmail.com You can also send mail to this address: Alexander Twiss, Gamle Kongevei 50 A 7043 TRONDHEIM NORWAY. If you want, you can check out the MYRIADS' homepage which has got an AVI-video-sample and several mp3-samples from "In spheres without time". The address is: www.come.to/MYRIADS. I hope our music can open unlimited dimensions in you!"





Exactly like in MYRIADS' case, I promised myself to reveal you another band at its debut which has signed a contract with Napalm. Most certainly by the time you read this stuff must have been already released and even..., perhaps, listened by some of you. The person I've contacted and questioned is Roland Wurzer, the guy who makes the bass for DARKWELL and ANGRY ANGELS. His first project was SARCASM SYNDROME and this is one of my reasons why I asked him presenting a few brief details, followed then by some common subjects and finally ended with a pleasant - I dare saying interview. So, enjoy it!

The past:

"Sarcasm Syndrome was my first band, and was founded in 1991. First we started making some kind of thrash metal. In 1993 all changed because we had the idea recruiting a female vocalist, she was called Petra. Some tracks were recorded and a lot of concerts played but in the end of 1996 the band dissolved into nothingness as the singer and the drummer wanted to change musical direction and try their luck with progressive metal. The keyboarder, the guitarist and me wanted to move towards a gothic direction. So soon after the split I had the idea of DARKWELL and started working on the concept and collecting ideas for the sound but then came the EVENFALL Intermezzo. A guy from Italy visited a friend of mine (Fra Diavolo from the "Ablaze" magazine), Fra introduced me to the Italian guy (singer of EVENFALL). He was in a kind of emergency situation cause they wanted

to go on tour and they had no bass-player and no drummer. The solution was that Moritz (now a member of DARKWELL and a lot of other bands) and me joined EVENFALL. It was a strange situation cause we joined December 98 and the tour started 15th March 99; a lot of musical work, but no fun and no time for becoming friends. On tour came up a lot of problems cause Moritz and me realised, that the rest of EVENFALL were strange guys, treated fans like shit and behaved like "Rockstars". After the tour Moritz and me left EVENFALL but it was quite interesting playing with bands like DIMMU BORGIR and DARK FUNERAL."

Demos:

Sarcasm Syndrome released:
"Now you'll get your punishment" in 1992

"Arachnophobia" in 1994

"Obsessive thoughts" in 1995

split CD with Dreams of Sanity and two other Bands in 1996

"Through the night" - Track in early 1997

My hobbies:

"Hm, quite difficult because after the music there's not much time left but I like classic literature like Milton, Dante, Goethe but also Fantasy stuff (Tolkien, Kirchhoff, ...)."

Religion:

"Again a quite difficult question because my religion is my own philosophy which developed over the last 10 years, I cannot explain all facets in some words as it is quite complicated. I fused religion and philosophy to something quite new and personal which helps me to survive in this cruel and strange world."

Policy:

"Again a difficult question because I think politics should stay out of music but that's not so easy cause politics influences humans and humans express themselves in music but I never would directly interfere in my lyrics with politics. Important for me is that politics provides every member of our species same chances in his life but also the right to decide individualistic. Ergo perhaps the political direction most similar to my attitude would be a socialdemocratic direction but I won't say I'm a socialdemocrat."

Musical tastes:



"Long time ago I was really into classic metal (IRON MAIDEN and so on), afterwards I liked speed and thrash (SLAYER, EXODUS --> the party years) later on my mood grew darker and I was interested in medieval clerical music and later on in classical composers, and I'm still in this mood. Of the actual music I appreciate gothic bands like LACRIMOSA. I also like gothic metal like the labelmates of TRISTANIA are doing. Also, for relaxation, sometimes I listen to this pseudo heroic stuff like RHAPSODY or BAL SAGGOTH. There are also some black and death bands I like."

Hi Roland. Could you "travel" back in time, ten years ago and recall "that" younger Roland Wurzer?

"I see, you like difficult questions (I appreciate that), so I stop complaining. 10 years back in time. All what's left are impressions. The influencing time was as I worked in Italy for my cousin. He played in a metal band called SKANNERS. I talked to the musicians and the interest grew. After the job I spent my whole money on a bass guitar after that my life changed. You start to reconsider priorities in life. Life gets difficult because you express in a new way and the language is music. The result is that people start to misunderstand you and your life becomes more complicated."

I imagine you are extremely busy and agitated now since you should record two albums in a very short time. How do you feel about this fact? Do you feel, somehow, under stress? Anxious? Nervous? Can you describe your state of mind?

"Yes, I'm stressed a bit now, but also very happy to have the chance to offer my material to a wider range of people. I'm not anxious or nervous because we are prepared for the recording of the DARKWELL CD. The material is already ready and we won't change a lot in the studio."

After only a year of existing, you managed to sign a contract with such an impressive label as Napalm. What's the secret? How did you since you cannot praise yourself as having many recordings or live performances. Moreover, why didn't you sign with CCP Records...since Moritz' black metal band has already released two albums here? What is the advantage of signing instead of CCP with Napalm? What, more precisely, should I be supposed to understand? I mean wouldn't it have been simpler to sign with CCP?

"To the first part of the question: There is no secret in terms of signing a contract with a label like Napalm Rec., it was quite simple, we homerecorded a promotape and sent it to the label. They liked it and contacted us. It is true that DARKWELL only exists since one year but it is a logical progression to that what we did with SARCASM SYNDROME, even the line-up is quite similar and I think Napalm also knew our former

works. Naturally it is easier to sign a contract with a label in which a bandmember is already involved in but that is not the way we wanted to handle the case. We want a label that supports us and not signs us because of some connections.

To the recording and live question: I won't praise myself for anything but I think experience is not so important if we talk about art. On the other hand I should mention that we all did already a couple of recordings. With the exception of Alexandra everyone of us played about 50 concerts. Moritz and me did a lot of more gigs."

The style you subscribed is a very "required" and desired one. And the gothic with dark influences style, female voices, keyboards... indeed are quite a "business"... Don't you think that this reorientation depends somehow on the fashion? You have almost ten years of music experience, help me understand: to change styles means an evolution, a kind of personal maturity... or a compromise you consciously decided to adopt in purpose of breaking up the anonymity you lived in for eight years with SARCASM SYNDROME?

"Dark Gothic Metal, a further drawer, in the cabinet of music. In conclusion it is just another try to explain a kind of music. It is like the classic drawer, nobody would assume that people like Wolfgang A. Mozart and Richard Wagner shared convictions, they not even shared the same century, but both created "classical" music. All they really shared was the instrumentation. I won't compare T.S.O.T.B to TRISTANIA because they use the same instruments and female vocals. Naturally "The Gathering" were like a curiosity as they started to create metal with a female voice but I don't think that was the reason people liked the music. They liked it because it was good. I know DARKWELL is no curiosity but curiosity is definitely not the reason for us for making music. I don't have a problem if somebody claims this band sounds like the other one. For me the creation of DARKWELL was a progression, I found the combination of human resources and musical styles I desired."

Did you particularly express the will of changing the sound? Then who did? Whose idea was? Chris and Roman were also your members besides else. I know you are all same old (25-26). Let yourself relating about them.

"We agreed to finish the story of SARCASM SYNDROME in late 1996 and tried to create a new band. Both, Andy (former drummer) and Petra (former singer) left the band, as they didn't participate in the recreation. After the split we played one concert (the band was called "Cantus Noctis"). Unfortunately this attempt ended in desperation, as Daniel (former guitarist) hadn't time to continue (family) and the new singer left the band, too. The idea of DARKWELL already dwelled as logical successor in my mind but because some private stress and the EVENFALL intermezzo, the realisation took a while."

Moritz Neuner also performs in a few more bands. How long do you know each other? And what's your sincere opinion about the bands he plays in?

"I know him, I think, at least for 8 years and he is a good friend of mine. I appreciate the work of KOROVA, the music is very interesting and inspiring. The lyrics are ... I can't describe'em you have to read them. DORNENREICH is even more Black Metal, it is not really my sort of music, but they use very interesting methods to transmit their emotions."

Alexandra is the youngest of you all (20 years) yet it seems she also performed along other bands before. How did it happen so that you've decided she'd be the one? Her voice is, no doubt, a special one; I am pretty sure her voice would have great impact on the listeners. One curiosity of mine: does she study music or she's mainly a self-teacher?

"Alexandra already performed in some bands but gothic was a new field for her. As we introduced her to our material, we knew she is the one to express these songs. She studied music already since she was a child and worked professionally on her voice, she still takes lessons, learning instruments."



Chris, the keyboardist. The music itself, I think is not that aggressive as of the bands you mentioned."

Would you affirm DARKWELL should bring something extraordinary... something completely new into actual metal scene?

"We bring something completely new into the metal scene. Ideas of five further individuals who like to express themselves as human beings, musicians and composers. With our ideas we hope to inspire others or simply support their lives, just feeling our emotions."

Why did you choose for DARKWELL name? Should it be also another innermeaning (more profound) I might be not so able to perceive?

"DARKWELL is a mixture of two words. "Dark" isn't very difficult to explain. "Well" means fountain or spring. For us the name signifies the source for dark emotions we'd like to channel and compensate in our music."

Your debut album; let yourself offering me all the details, all I need to know: the studio, musical style, tracks' description or length, lyrics, concept, cover, artwork, session musicians, date release..., everything in other words.

"We'll start or started (until now) on 4th February. We'll record the disc in Germany in the "Lungfull Studios" based in Munich-Germany. We'll record 9 tracks, 3 tracks are part of a concept which fits into the structure of the whole recordings. As far as we know Lisa Klingenschmidt will design the cover-artwork. It should be released at the beginning of June."

What is your personal desire for this album? But in the future?

"I desire, expressing what we intended to express, means it should open a portal between us and the people who like our music. For us it should open the possibility to present our material live, e.g. playing some festivals in summer and perhaps a tour in autumn. For the future I don't know exactly what will happen."

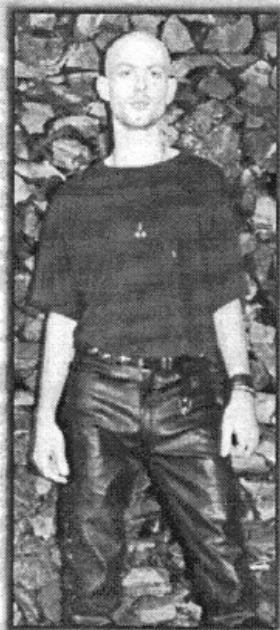
Alexander Twiss (MYRIADS) was telling me, only a few days ago, that you can only conceive the veritable talent and musicians/craftsmanship when performing live... What are your personal considerations about touring? Have you ever had to chance to see DIMMU BORGIR or DARK FUNERAL?

"I consider playing live as something very important. I like it and we want to play as many concerts as possible. We'd appreciate going on tour and if we have the possibility we'll do it. At the time when I was a live-musician for EVENFALL we supported about 50 DIMMU BORGIR-DARK FUNERAL shows, so I saw them very often. They are quite nice guys."

Now you are only a five members' band... but you don't exclude the possibility of adding some other members..., right? What instruments do you think missing you for obtaining an ideal sound? And what do you think about those numerous member bands (as PENUMBRA, HAGGARD)?

"I think we'll stay a five member band. If we have an idea introducing

new instruments we'll do it, but at the moment we are totally satisfied. I like HAGGARD and the music they are creating but it is complicated enough finding 5 members who like each other and share the same musical interest. If it works for the above mentioned bands I can just congratulate'em."



In your vision, how would it be like the fan-band relationship? Can you assure the readers and listeners you would respond each letter you received or is it more likely you would hide yourselves behind this strange screen: TIME? There are a lot of bands who enjoyed spectacular albums/sales exactly because of breaking up or destroying any real (or not) contact with their fans or press... What do you think? Lack of communication in metal scene leads to an artificial idle veneration...

"Very interesting thesis you state and it might be true. For me this case is a bit different because I don't care about putting up a strategy for gaining veneration. I simply respond to letters if I get some. Additionally, I appreciate a good relation to the press. But I don't change convictions just to guarantee that."

Let us close DARKWELL horizon... Yet... did I miss anything, forget something? What else would you feel to say?

"No I think you have put a spot on every dark corner."

In no more than a few days you shall record a material besides ANGRY ANGELS. What can you tell me about this rather brutal project? Details...

"A lot of musicians negate their past which brought them to make music. Often it was a metal band for which they bought their guitar. I started making music when I was a "true" metal fan. Later on my music taste changed but there is still a piece of heavy metal in my heart and that's why I participate and enjoy the ANGRY ANGELS project."

Austrian metal scene has prodigiously developed in last few years and bands as ABIGOR, SUMMONING, PAZUZU or D.V.K.E. had become more and more looked for all over the world. How would an inner opinion change this judgement? I mean how do you actually see that? Your reaction, point of view. And what underground bands would deserve paying attention at?

"The Austrian metal scene is a quite small one and everybody knows everybody. I think Austria created bands, which are a bit different to the German or Scandinavian, stuff. What I don't like is that the scene is very intellectual, that people are in fear they could be considered as primitive creatures by making heavy metal. The reason is that the scene is small. Very interesting beside these bands you already know would be a band called SIEGFRIED and perhaps a Tyrolian black metal band called LOST DREAMS."

It has been well observed an old styles revival... and thrash was the most popular style. Don't you think that actual listeners of melody would be quite immune from such style... imposing a certain statute for "the metal ancestors" who knew well what was about? Maybe we often meet the well known phenomenon, the conflict between generations... the gap between generations... Isn't it so?

"I agree. I consider it interesting that Neo-bands exist, because sometimes metal develops to fast, which leads to a lot of different styles. I think in every metal region there are enough unplayed tunes."

Do you consider yourself a sinner? From Christian point of view it is said that on Judgement Day all good things we do would be balanced properly with all bad things we committed... Do you conceive major differences between guilty and sin? In a jocking mode of speaking if a friend of yours (the way he is good or bad..., just a friend) "steals" your girlfriend... Who do you judge as being guilty? He, she or simply you? And who's the sinner? Which one?

"First up I don't care about the Christian point of view. As I already said, I see religion in a different way. Everyone has to judge himself and you have to decide on your own what deeds you do. To the example you mentioned: Nobody can "steal" my girlfriend because if she leaves me she has for sure a reason for it and it is her decision. Nobody committed a sin and guilt fades to nothingness."

Is the world we are living in strange and cruel? Why so? Why that view? Is it rather coloured, mellow, extraordinarily exuberant or even romantic? ... ha, ha... Don't you approve or like the world you are living in? Should it be different somewhere else? In some other world? Existence? In the same direction S. Obstfelder asked himself: "Have God sent Christ to other planets, too?"

"Waking up seeing the sunlight. It is a fact or at least seems to be reality. We deal with it and arrange the path of life we are following. The world is all you mentioned and more. What I think and feel about this world I express in music and that's the subject we are talking about."

Does equilibrium exist? In your life at least? What about equality? Up to myself... equilibrium never can be broken... is just a matter of point of reference... to which you make comparisons... What do you think? Is there a Nature as point of reference... to which you measure yourself... do you perceive yourself as a well-balanced man?

"Equilibrium exists and is all the time present. Every coin has a second side and all positives also cause something negative. I consider myself balanced well balanced would be exaggerated."

Vienna the most fascinating and wonderful European capital... ancient buildings... Danube... the Opera... the Imperial Court, the Wiener Valse,... it always smells in the air an Habsburgic nostalgia... Do I overview anachronistic mode or is just the Vienna's domination of the "ruins" of ancient times... Last year I twice passed in Vienna. First time I stayed a few days... fascinating! Do you think that monarchy is a non-evolution or an old fashioned type of leading? Should social democracy be the millennium solution? If up to me I'd say that voting means masses' leadership because their manipulation could be arranged only by a few fractions of a so-called elite... Am I wrong? Am I exaggerating?

"Vienna is beautiful city and has a rich past. Monarchy is an old fashioned type of leadership. A major statement of monarchy is that people are different because of their heritage. It determines the human way of living because it limits the human spirit which is the base of creation. Is social democracy is the millennium solution, I really don't know. I consider it important that everybody has the same chances for realising his visions. Your critics concerning voting are true but I see no alternative to the system."

Through a rather plastic expression I could say Austria is the major "culpable" for both Mondial Wars. First, in 1914, because of Franz Ferdinand, the Heir of Austrian Hungarian Empire's assassination to Sarajevo; and second because Adolf Hitler was Austrian at his origins with vague shades of Jewish.... I'd like knowing an Austrian point of view regarding this... Maybe an eventual new Mondial war would have the same origin: Austria. What do you think about war; generally... Don't you have moments when realising the planet's danger population explosion? There are over six billion of people on earth... Here from are starting all social misunderstandings and not only social but economical too having a political aura yet finding profound roots in religion...

"Normally a question I don't like to answer but I have some problems with the facts you have build in into your question."

It is true that Austria started the First World War but it is a question of reason and trigger. The declaration of war against Serbia started a chain reaction. The real reason for the First World War I think was the imperialistic-powerhunger of the European Nations, on the other side it was a problem of worldtrade.

Hitler was born in Austria and lived sometime in Vienna, tried to get into the art-academy but was rejected. During the First World War he joined the German army, not the Austrian. He started get into politics in Germany and stayed there until his death. Nobody can blame Austria for Hitler's birth. If he would have stayed in Austria perhaps the whole World War II wouldn't have happened.

Yes sometimes I have these moments but I have no solution, but perhaps it is better to fight the roots of the problem than dropping water on a hot stone."

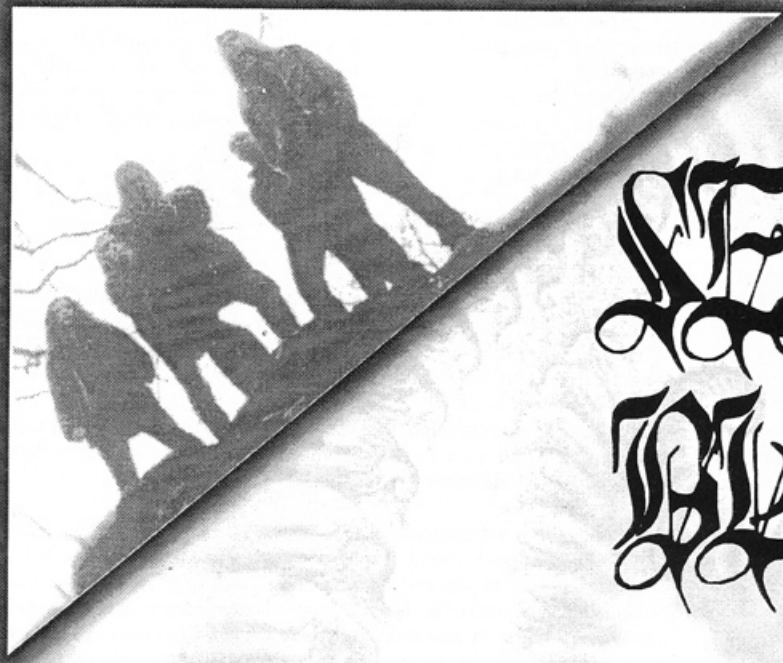
Roland, we end here our chat. May you have strength and luck! Thomas Szasz once said: "If you talk to God, you are praying. If he talks to you, you are schizofren". If I talk to you..., I am a future DARKWELL fan. If you talk to me,...

"Don't negate the wings of darkness, reality putts around you. Get strength out of the depressions you have to deal with. Listen to the music and find the tunes you enjoy."

Contact:

Homepage: <http://DARKWELL.cjb.net>

E-Mail: DARKWELLgothik@geocities.com



SEAR BLISS



An old band, a new year, I hope a new future for this great Hungarian band. So, you can find out the latest news from the head of the SEAR BLISS, András Nagy.

Hi Andras. We're entered a new year. As a few considered it-the beginning of a new millenium. Do you have a different view for the future or the present, now since we face a whole new millenium?

"Hi Doru. Actually I hate this millenium shit. I mean nothing changes because of a date. Just take a look on the fact that the earth is milliards years old and mankind exists for a couple of myriads, so the year 2000 and the Christian era itself is simply nothing compared to these great numbers. So I see no reason to celebrate it."

I remember my first approach on you almost 5 years ago, when your demo "The Pagan Winter" started to make rumours. How strangely fast did time pas by... don't you think? There were all important chapters: Two Moons, "Phantoms", "The Pagan Winter", "The Haunting", a lot of live performances... Do you feel like analysing a kind of retrospective of those events that occurred in your life? Especially I would like finding out the way you see them now, do you have a different perspective for 2000 as far as those events are concerned? Please let yourself developing as you desire...

"Yeah, time flies. Actually, things went quickly after the release of our demo in 1995. It became quite popular in the underground scene and the reactions were really promising. We sold 900 copies of it without any promotion. We were surprised quite much. We got some offers from different labels and we signed to Two Moons / Mascot Records and we recorded our first album in January 1996. Then we released "The Pagan Winter" demo on CD with a 12 minutes long epic bonus song and a beautiful cover artwork. In 1997 we went on tour with MARDUK and TSATTHOGGUA, which was definitely a great opportunity and really memorable moment in the life of SEAR BLISS. Later this year we travelled to Holland to record our second album, entitled "The Haunting". I find myself lucky that all of our releases got great responses all over the world. Today I look back with great pleasure on the things we reached so far but the path is long and we have many aims to fulfil yet."

I am quite obsessed of one particular feature: the sales for each album were more then 10.000 copies; "Phantoms" was even "the album of the month". Why did you give Two Moons up? The release of your debut album was accomplished in the same time the sublabel Mascot had set up

reconstituting itself?

"In fact Two Moons was not a correct label with us and that was one of the reason why we left them. On the other hand they turned to another direction as they started to release progressive rock albums and they were not so interested in Black Metal anymore. Actually SEAR BLISS' debut album was the first release of Two Moons and very successful one sale wise. It was 4 years ago and now Black Metal isn't that well sold, so they changed their range of interest to Progressive rock music. They were not honest to us in many ways, so we are looking for a trustable label now."

The past is a frame of our personal life, which might be sometimes a



strange trap for each of us. So, let us depart from past and explore how things go on in the present. I mean this third album... the recording, the technical details... deadline... everything. "Souldive" was my favourite track and I suppose the album should embrace a different line. A violent one... A balance between anger and desire. Shall we hear once again keyboards, the trumpet, and perhaps female voices?! Express yourself. Let us have details about lyrics, tracks... concepts...

"Yeah, this third album is going to be definitely the most violent one so far. I'm glad you like "Souldive". Actually, the whole material is in the vein of that song but with a bit more variety in the songs. Anyway, the song you heard is only a rehearsal recording. Next week we'll enter a good studio in our town to make an advance recording. We got some offers from a couple of labels, so we hope we can record the whole album soon, in the next couple of months. Anyway, it will contain seven songs and as I told you it will be more violent and fierce this time. We hope it will be out in the middle of this year, we are eager to record it. There will be not that much keyboard but the trumpet will play an important role again. It's an important component in SEAR BLISS' music. No female voice.... Never in SEAR BLISS. I think both musically and lyrically we developed and the songs have a deeper meaning. The lyrics are dark, as always but more deathlike. Yes, you are right the future is a lot more important than the past."

Concerning the band's members... I understand you had some problems in the past. I have heard that Winter returned and that you have finally found the best formula for SEAR BLISS. Would you be so kind in introducing your partners?! And back to yourself, do you consider yourself a difficult person?!

"Yes, we had some changes in the line up but I always said that it's not important who plays in SEAR BLISS. SEAR BLISS is a whole regardless of its members. No, Winter is not with us anymore, however I write music for a project, which we founded together.

As for my partners in SEAR BLISS:

Zoltán, our drummer is with us for a long time now. He played in "The Haunting" too. He is a maniac. He enjoys fast drummer. Check out our new songs and you'll hear what I mean. Together with him we are the bases of SEAR BLISS.

András, our guitar player is a very skilled musician, he played with Zoltán in the band called FARAO since 1982.

Róbert, our trumpet player is a member of a symphony orchestra in our town. He is a professional musician, so he keeps us on our toes.

We have a session keyboard player right now. He is the member of the band called Ideas and is a really good keyboard player but we are looking for a permanent member and a second guitar player as well.

No, I don't think I'm a difficult person. The fact is that I claim the maximum approach and dedication to the band. That's all I want but I'm not a difficult person."

I know you adore live performances. The most important tour of yours was the one you had with MARDUK. You performed in Germany, Austria, Holland, Belgium, Slovakia and, of course, Hungary. What can you tell me about fans? Are they different from a country to another? Tell me, to play along MARDUK was a challenge or an honour...?! Or both? What about performing along TORMENTOR?

"Touring Europe with MARDUK was a great experience. It meant a huge challenge for us. As I have seen, people were surprised by our music. You know our music is quite different than MARDUK has. It was unusual for the crowd to see a trumpet player and to hear as the enchanting sound of his instrument creates a special atmosphere. It was good to see that SEAR BLISS is not unknown in abroad. Especially people in Holland and Italy have shown big interest for our music. I really enjoyed the whole tour. The guys from MARDUK were great and it was good to meet some exciting people, to see different countries. Being a supporter you can't get everything you want but all in all I think this tour lived up to our expectations absolutely. Before this tour we had only five gigs over here in Hungary, so the biggest change was the experience we got after this tour. Travelling a lot and playing each night is quite a big challenge but it was the most memorable moment in the life of SEAR BLISS and in mine too. To play with TORMENTOR was also a great moment. They are really cool in person but they shocked the audience. For example Attila, the vocalist threw a dead fish to the crowd between each song and they looked like maniac. It was a really unique show by the way."

SEAR BLISS on stage... live... How does it look like? Is it a particular special performance? I have heard something about a girl, a snake, flames...all over... For all who had not yet a chance to see SEAR BLISS live, would you introduce us into that "peculiar" atmosphere?! I have

already closed my eyes...

"We don't play too much gigs, so it's always a bit special. We always try to give something unique on stage. Yes, if we got enough money for the show, you can see amazing pyres and that naked girl with the snake was also a special performance but too expensive to repeat it. People say that there is a strange atmosphere, which we are able to create with our music. I think two words express well a SEAR BLISS show: powerful and natural."

Tell me, the trumpet could be considered a traditional instrument?! Why don't you perform your music in Hungarian? Except a few phrases, all lyrics are in English. Is it SEAR BLISS' sound an European one? Or is it to be desired so? "In The Shadow Of The Another World" seems to be a little bit different, special I should say; does it identify with your origins?! What is your opinion next to those bands who perform in their genuine language, do they confront with self-limitation?

"We use the trumpet since the beginning. It plays an important role in our music. We don't want to perform in Hungarian. No one would understand us except our fellow countrymen. So, it's no use to sing in Hungarian. Of course we are proud of our origins but to sing in Hungarian is definitely a self-limitation. I even don't like listening to bands singing in Portuguese or French, or something."

What is your inspiration's source? Do you prefer being alone?! Solitude? Than what?



"Everything may inspire us in some ways. A special moment in your life, moods, or even if you take a look at the sky which is filled with threatening clouds, so anything. Yes, I prefer being alone and I create music when I'm alone. Solitude definitely impresses me a lot. It is one of the sources of inspirations. I can only create when I'm alone."

A lot of people label SEAR BLISS' sound as a black metal one. Does it bother you? I, myself, find only a few black elements, the others... are... simply Sear Bliss. Nothing more or less. But I have one curiosity, how would you describe your music to a person who never listened to black metal?

"Thank you for your compliments. Anyway, I don't mind if people label us black metal. It's always difficult for me to describe our music. I think it's a very dark and sorrowful music and SEAR BLISS is predestined to express our own feelings and emotions, mostly dark yet shining thoughts. We are five powerful and dark people with a message and our music is a mixture of the emotions of the different personalities found in the band."

Life is illusion... death should be reality... do you agree? In other words and different views, you do not believe in reincarnation or man's supremacy and superiority above animals... Is indeed Nature your only criterion? I assume, in these conditions, religion is not very important for you. Am I right? Or wrong? Yet you are living in a quite catholic country...

"I hate religions more than anything else. For me it means nothing."

Every religion is worthless when it becomes organized. I believe in the infinite power that rules the cosmos. It is majestic but it's not a religion with silly tales, as every religion is. Last night I was driving to home from a gig, as we played in Budapest. All the guys were sleeping, tired of the road and I was just driving. Suddenly I saw the first rays of light in the eastern horizon and it really amazed me with its beauty. The beauty of the dawn and then I realized that we are trying to be above all and that we think that a simple dawn is a part of our lives but no. We are part of the nature and we are nothing against the magic of a dawn. People think that a simple dawn is only a mood but it's a lot more. It's wonderful and these "tiny" things can give power for me. The dawn is full of power and I'm very active in the early hours. I don't know why I wrote this but I was amazed and I started philosophising inside my thoughts at that morning. I wanted to express that Nature is more important than anything else. It is our home and we always forget it. Anyway, the catholic "force" isn't that strong in Hungary. For example I was never forced to be catholic or something shit like this. It's a free country."

Do you think it can only be music for living? Do you think music is enough for living... can you live exclusively "through" and from music? What are your ideals? What would you desire for the new millenium to bring into your life?

"No, we can't live by our music. We can't earn money with that. For me it's a kind of art, true art and it is independent of money. This type of music is not for money making. Each of us got his daily work. Of course it would be cool to live by the band but we can't. All I wish is to be able to create new albums and valuable music and to tour. That's all I need to be satisfied."

What other art should reach your soul besides music? Sculpture? Painting? Design?

"Painting is also a kind of real self-expression. It impresses me a lot. It's amazing that there are people whom are able to express moods and feelings with bare colours. I appreciate it."

Everybody agreed that prostitution was one of the oldest "jobs" in the world. Along the centuries prostitution became more like an art which now is more "en vogue" as ever before... it often took extreme shapes. Do you accept vulgarity?

"I don't see prostitution as an art. It's rather a result of humanity's depravation, so I condemn it. Any sexual experience, which is not

voluntary, is valueless for me. That's how I see prostitution. It's disgusting."

Are you still reading Baudelaire? If you had to found another musical project would you choose to name it also after a Baudelaire's poem? And, by the way, what are your personal considerations about the musicians that perform in

several bands?

"I still love Baudelaire's poetry, however I haven't read it a long while. I don't think I would name my musical project after a Baudelaire's poem, however I'm involved in a project with Winter and we haven't found a name yet. When I decided to name my band "Sear Bliss", it was a momentary expression. I don't condemn musicians that perform in several bands as long as the music of their projects is valuable. It is rather exciting."

I remember wondering myself, in one of my letters to you, if the underground had became history for you, do you still recall? Do you believe that money or success can or does change people's mentality and though their behaviour...?

"Of course, money and success can exercise a strong attraction on people, so it can change people's mentality but I'm not sure that it does in every ways. I don't think it would change my mentality. It depends on one's personality."

Reading one of your interviews, one particular remark definitely amazed me: love is the final product of imagination and sexual desire? Moreover, you conceive the contradiction as being fundamental. Which means that in order to be "able" to love you also require hating, knowing hate too... Then, what about indifference?

"I don't want to tell what to do or something like this. It was only my own conclusion and I believe that hate can be so powerful like love and that love and hate got common roots in the heart of a man."

Hungary is a not so peopled country but with an impressive tradition and astonishing history. Do you see yourself as an Arpad son that halted on Panonia Valley and into whose veins is running Countess Bathory's blood?! Some kind of vampire prince who is wandering through a super technological millenium?!

"Of course, our history impresses me a lot but I'm not a vampire or something. I praise Arpad and Bathory and I respect and appreciate them but I'm not their son. It would be childish to tell it."

Are you interested in politics? Does Hungary's integration in NATO show any advantage? Kosovo's war? Would you have felt different if Hungary exists as an empire?

"I hate politics and I'm not interested in that. I don't think that the integration in NATO is an advantage, it is rather a safety in some ways but it means not too much. The Kosovo and the Chechnya war are meaningless and represent people's moral and ignorance very well. We are at the threshold of the third millenium but brainless fuckers are still holding weapons in the hand and fighting for silly reasons. We are wretched."

TORMENTOR, SEAR BLISS, and this is all we can say about Hungarian metal scene. It might be noticed also AHRIMAN from old underground. How are you regarding Hungarian bands?

"The Hungarian scene isn't that big but strong and there are a couple of unique bands. I hope they will get international recognition too. Anyway, TORMENTOR and EVENSONG have contract from abroad. They are cool. Check them out."

I do thank you for approving this dialogue. I hope our next future discussion shall be somewhere near Balaton Lake or anywhere in OUR Transylvania. Until then, stay dark! The final word belongs to you...

"Doru, thank you very much for this great interview. It was exciting to answer your complex questions. I wish you the best of luck and I do hope we will meet you in the future."

Contact: András Nagy, P.O. BOX 440, 9701 Szombathely, Hungary, phone: +36 30 2040142, fax: +36 94 331270, E-mail: colorato@mail.matav.hu





After having included this band in „Kogaionon“ precedent number I decided to invite this excellent Finnish band once again to reply my challenge by offering me a few details about themselves. The person who did accept answering my questions was Tyko Saarikko (synth, guitar, vocals and effects). If you enjoyed „Kauan“ you would most certainly find the following very interesting and important to you, if not you may easily turn the page. No offence.

TENHI

Musical tastes

“I listen to many kinds of music, which has some melancholy or sadness in them like metal, ambient, ethnic folk music to mention few. I am bit tired of the current metal scene, it lacks the new ideas it had some five years ago, only few of the old bands have kept my interest. All time favourite metal bands: DARKTHRONE, BURZUM, DANZIG, the first releases of ULVER and IMMORTAL, other good bands NAERVAER, TRANSJOIK, WIMME, HEDNINGARNA, Some good old 70' THE DOORS, LED ZEPPELIN, JEFFERSON airplane.”

Hobbies

“My hobby has always been visual arts. Also the other members of TENHI are “artistic”, in fact, we met Ilmari in an art-school. Right now I am studying architecture, like Ilkka, but I think I will concentrate more on the art-graphic. Anyway my future job is something I do with my hands.”

Religion

“I have never been part of any church, in fact I haven't been baptized at all, so god/Satan are non-existence to me. I have no interest even talk about Christianity; it is not the biggest problem on earth. It isn't any better to be slave to material possession than to some religion, consumption has become this generation's religion. I believe there is more in this life than material values, but as I stated Christianity has no part in it. But people wouldn't turn “fucking spooky and evil/dark” just if they didn't were Christians... I hope understand what I mean. I am interested in old myths and pagan beliefs, but it is a big misunderstanding that heathen people were evil and dark, they were as happy and merry as the common people today are.”

“Personally I am a big fan of lo-fi sound. We might even use old 4-tracker on future releases in some instruments to bring forth some very tasteful and juicy sounds. We aren't too happy about the sound on ‘Hallavedet’ it is far too modern and dry for our taste. We had a well-known Finnish producer Hiili Hiilesmaa recording those two tracks in hasty 12-hour sessions. We hadn't really any time to add wanted effects, we just had time for check EQ and put some basic space on songs. When recording ‘Kauan’ the situations was totally different, we had a different studio, which was more suitable for our use, booked for four weeks. We had time to experience with “live” echoes in one stony hall and other little things that made ‘Kauan’ what it is. “Kauan” is a shamanic journey through emotions of longing and sadness. It might take more than just one time for a listener to really get into it.”

Hi Tyko! What about your life? What's new? What else (since we've

last heard of each other) did you do? What about your studying? How is it like to be student in Finland? What about weather in Tampere?

“Hello again. Life is OK right now, pretty boring at the moment though. Last two weeks I draw some pictures to one magazine to earn little extra money, it was quite nice really; they gave me free beer as much as I wanted. You can believe it hard to get used to the normal life style again. Well, it is OK and easy to be a student here, the government pays your apartment rent (to a certain sum of money) and gives you money for the studies, so I don't necessarily have to go to work. The Weather has been pretty sunny recently I guess the spring queen is on her way.”

When would you recommend me an “avanto uinti”? Before or after listening to “Kauan”? How is it like to swim into extremely cold water only surrounded by ice? Has any effect really been noticed because of the hot sauna you had taken before? I confess I have no idea how I stand with my heart condition... but I would definitely enjoy picturing me in such situation either into Saimaa Lake or Inan Lake. What would be your personal recommendation? And, tell me, is it fond on a certain tradition?

“During the swimming might be perfect moment for listening to it. When you go swimming in an icy lake the water is so freezing that it doesn't even feel cold anymore, you just have this strange tickle on your skin. It really gives you the vibrations and sharpens your senses. But I have to warn you, if you want to impress your girl friend don't go “avanto uimaan” because the icy water really gets to you... hah ha. Yes, “avanto uinti” is in a way a tradition here, but it is more common just to go roll in a snow after a hot sauna.”

Yet we should return to music. “TENHI” is an old Finnish term, which might be translated and interpreted now as shaman. I know that, even before TENHI was brought to life, you used to give great importance to this term in a very significant creative period of your life. What does it mean TENHI for you? Mystical Universe? Your inner inside? The creative side of your being? Or the artistic aspect of your personality? Which way do you perceive the subtle connection that exists between music lyrics and graphics?

“That time is significant to me as “founded” my way that time. TENHI is my way of dealing with certain things that I couldn't do in any other way. It prevents the inner me from suffocation. It is not the only creative side of me, however recently it has taken the most of my time still I have other things going on all the time. Music, lyrics and graphics fulfil each other. We use lyrics in every song, no matter if doesn't contain any singing and I make drawings of the same topics as compose music or write something. This is my style and I don't claim that others should do it. For me the every piece strengthens the passions and emotions that flow from a song.”

"Our music means a journey through variety of feelings". Could you help me entering "Kauan"'s universe? This long period of time, in fact even the very meaning of Kauan term determines me to affirm that the musical style you have approached might rather be a sound landscapes. Am I wrong? Isn't TENHI, in fact, the harmony reached by the perfect embrace of visual elements and musical art?



The album conceptually gathers ancient Finnish myths ("Näkin Laulu") along various poems oscillating from visual effects created by light reflecting into the water-the cover probably-"Sauro" till subjects such as human kind or pain-the later being conceived through and by a personifying meaning ("Taival"). Which were the true motivations that impulse you to write these lyrics? Why so? Why these particular ones?

"I can't give you a direct answer, but personally I get my "kicks" from these themes, they have a motivating influence on me. So naturally, when I want to make music, which brings forth strong emotions, it deals with these topics. Many times, the old myths have been my inspirational source, in them emotion and events in nature were seen as a personalities or as their traces. I also have written something more "earthly" just to amuse myself, but those aren't meant for wider audience and aren't related to music/artwork."

Setting your foundations on ancient traditional elements you considered Finnish language must have been the most appropriate way of expressing your creation. Is Finnish a poetic language for you but mostly my question implies a comparison with other languages... Although those lyrics' translation exists the TENHI concept cannot be either comprehended or assimilated otherwise than listening to in its mother language. Should I understand also that your future tracks would be (or might) performed in the same language? Couldn't be somehow a strong inconvenience?

"Finnish is a poetic language, for me at least. I can use words in a much wider sense and in a more variable form in a sentence, than I could in English language. When I write texts I use many words, which have many side meanings, which forms other level to the lyrics, that doesn't work in the English translations. We will continue singing in Finnish it is in a way essential part of TENHI. We might do something in English but that would not go under the TENHI title. The translations on "Kauan" could have been better, I am sure we will concentrate on that matter more on our future releases."

The album must have been included also "Kielonkukkia" track but something occurred when mixing and you were forced to give it up. Otherwise we might have listened to ambient influences... Haven't we? You were telling me you had prepared another 70 minutes of music, which should be recorded this summer. What can you tell me about future? Do you intend introducing other instruments also along violin, classic piano or didgeridoo?

"Yes, the track "Kielonkukkia" was supposed to be on the album "Kauan" but we did couple of mistakes when recording/mixing it so we thought it was better to leave it for our next release. It has ambient/progressive feel to it. It is 12 minutes long so it gives you the needed time to really get in to its spheres. That song and couple other new ones will be probably released as a MCD next Autumn. We have new material enough for a full-length album but some of the songs still need arranging, the style will be the same but this time couple of the songs will be more based on the rhythm they will be in a way more "rocking" yet

being very atmospheric. I think that didgeridoo and Jew's harp will be in a leading role in one song but that is all. We don't introduce any new instruments this time, in a way we have now founded the instrumental world of TENHI so no need for changing that."

I find properly conceived the characterization your label has made for your music: folkloric, progressive rock, dark and melancholic. I myself would add a sad even depressive note to such characterization. What do you think? What impression did the album make? How was it perceived? Are you indeed and completely satisfied?

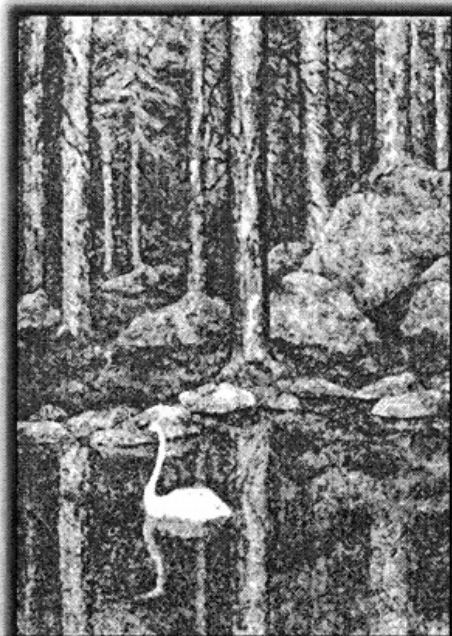
"That characterisation covers quite a big range of musical styles and sounds a bit "forced" and clumsy, but I understand that record companies have to find a brand for their bands. Yes, depressive and sad would fit to our characterization, but as I stated it is already very long, so there is no point in listing all the adjectives fitting or describing our music. The album has got very good reviews even outside "metal" circles, in couple of progressive music magazines for example. I have read only three negative reviews and over 20 excellent. The negative feedback has concentrated on the calmness and serenity of our music, but that is our style so it doesn't bother me at all. Our music isn't meant to please all. I would give 9 1/2 out of 10 to "Kauan" as there are couple things that bothers me music itself, the cover art didn't turn out in the way we planned it and the translations could have been better. MCD "Hallavedet" 7 out of 10, I was never too satisfied with our MCD. The songs don't work on the maximum level because the awful sound, it is just too modern and clear. Demo "Kertomuksia" 10 out of 10, I could have done it better at the moment, it came out in the best way possible. There are some parts I still wonder how we ever managed to work them so good. That demo is sold-out, if you have one consider yourself lucky."

"Imagine a hazy November eve in Finland. You are alone somewhere deep in the woods nearby a lake. With every breath you feel the hazy air in your lounges... breathing the mystique of the scenery deeper and deeper into your soul. Every breath carries you more and more into the old land of myths. You close your eyes and you are one with the moment, you embrace it so that it may never end... Alas! "Kauan", thou mayest never end..." Interesting presentation. Could you continue bringing TENHI into 2000 year?

"I have learned not to make too many promises, most of them won't happen anyway. But I can promise that we will make dusky emotions flow."

How did you manage to obtain signing with Prophecy? You are the first non-metal band after NAERVAER promoted by Martin's label! Could you imagine your style becoming a trend able to "give birth" sooner to some labels specialized on such styles?

"We sent our demo "Kertomuksia" to Martin of Prophecy Productions in spring/summer 1997, he was listening to it and ready to throw it in a trash-can, but luckily for us the phone rang just in the right time. Martin answered the phone and our demo was left to play in the background. Listening to that tape on the background during that phone-call Martin started to like that demo more and more. After that Martin contacted us telling that he was interested in signing us. We never get to know who that caller was, but we ought to thank him for our deal. Martin has said it doesn't matter what kind of music a band plays, if he likes it and think the band deserves attention he signs it. It would not be a surprise if some other bans started to play similar music to ours, but honestly I can't image our style becoming a trend."



Let us talk about your colleagues. What can you tell me about them? You have started besides Ilkka Salminen (guitar, vocals and drums) in 1996 recording one year later "Kertomuksia" tape, then a promo-tape and once Ilmari Issakainen (bass, guitar, grand piano, percussions and back vocals) made his presence the single "Hallavedet" appears. In September 1999

"Kauan" is released having lined up now Eleonora Lundell (violin) also. Ilmari and Ilkka have performed also in some other metal projects, yet all of you are implied in visual art...

"Both Ilkka and Ilmari has been a good friend of mine before I have asked them to join the group. I could not stand any people bringing his ideas to the band, who were not fully devoted to this. The violin and the flute player are session musicians. They don't take part in the creative side



of TENHI. It was hard to find suitable musicians for our gig luckily we got a bass and guitar player from doom-gothic metal act MOTHER DEPTH, in which Ilmari plays drums."

If you could perform live the most appropriate place for you to play would have been at the edge of a lake on a dusky summer evening only besides a few friends of yours. Why in such restricted formula? Does it sound stupid saying or imagining TENHI on Dynamo in front of 2000 people?

"The reason why I rather play with only few people around is the instant relationship between the listener and the players, that isn't so easily to recognise when there are "too many people". I like it when anyone can pick up an instrument, maybe an empty beer can, and start to jam with us. But despite this we are going to play in Germany next summer in a Gothic wave treffen festivals in Leipzig on a folk stage. I know it is quite a big event but probably in our audience there will be just couple of drunken try to find a quiet place to sleep...hah hah... in fact I think I will take a nap myself while Ilkka performs his 20 minutes long guitar solo..."

What does nature represent into your eyes? Do you respect it? What might be the meaning of respecting nature? The people majority are using it/her to set themselves free or to discharge and calm down. I wonder could nature be personified (artistically speaking of course) or must it be accepted exclusively as a normal element of our life? What can you say about the theory: "if you respect you shall be respected also"? How do you analyse it?

"Nature helps me not to loose myself, it is a higher being than us. The very soul of harmony to which humans has mostly lost their contact. I often find or notice different personalities in nature, maybe because the way I see things or like to feel them. It gives me something to think about and concentrate my creativity on. Yes, that theory works in some level, it's hard to respect something that doesn't respect you. Humans aren't here to stay."

In sculpture, graphics, painting... art is individual, it belongs to one single person thus there is an extremely wide freedom of expressing. In music, for example TENHI, I assume a lot of different compromises must be done in order to create a concept ready to please each one of you. Do you all agree for such compromises in TENHI case? Is there a certain person whose words must be final, to whom all final decisions are given? Do you picture yourself performing into a solo musical project? Is it a rule that a sum of individualities must reach a quality product?

"We try to avoid making compromises in our music. If we make too

many compromises it kills the variety, which is essential in our work. Sometimes compromises are good and even necessity but often they kill the highlights, which are only born in one peoples mind. We don't have a leading character in TENHI, although my word could be defined as final one. But all the three of us have pretty good understanding what we are doing so there haven't been yet any critical problems to be solved. I might do something on my own someday if I have need to, but that is futures issue. If a person has clear vision what he or her want to do and is capable of doing it there is no point take extra member just as a burden and mess with the idea. Take BURZUM or ISENGARD for example, both are extremely good, and I think particularly BURZUM would suffer greatly from other musicians getting involved with it."

What is your opinion regarding hippy wave? Why was not Jim Morrison accepted by society? Was he an artist? A lot of people are saying drugs were the dominant element by that time and the pacifistic protest against Vietnam war was nothing but a secondary consequence... There were many musicians that committed suicide in that period.

"That time ('60-'70) was very creative and visualizing period, and many good things happened that time. Of course, there were ideologies back then that I can't fully approve. I don't know enough of Jim Morrison to say anything crucial about him, but I like his work. It is just the way life normally goes; first there is an ideology then comes the scum who only try to benefit from it and ruins the original purpose."

What would be your desire you would demand form this life? How would you wish for spending the rest of your days? Ilkka was telling me "to bring life by creating is an excellent mode of conquer freedom". What do you think? Could freedom be divided into many other subdivisions? I mean there must be many kinds of freedom.

"I want to be as creative as possible in life, whether it is music, art or whatever. I start to feel depressed if I don't do anything "creative" for a while. I want to look back in my life and be proud of my creations in artistic genre... Finishing one creative period and moving towards the next one makes me feel certain freedom. Freedom is a natural need for all of us but, on the other hand, sometimes freedom can constrain us and give us hard time making us stressful. I am not convinced that all freedom is good."

What would you put into statements below, and what do they represent to you? Art is a conspiracy! Art must hurt! Art needs no repetition!

"Besides music visual arts are the purest form of sharing your thought in "impersonal" way. Music and visual arts fulfil each other. Art certainly don't need no repetition. I hate the modern way of analysing everything. Nowadays people try to explain everything to the bottom, at the same time killing the enchantment, mystic and the desires included in the art."

What kind of people do you want to reach with your music?

"This is always hard to answer. To put it simple, I just want to "share" my thoughts and creativity with the people who can get something out of them, and who share my views in a way."

I do thank you, Tyko, for your reply and I wish you for reaching the inspiration. Common daily things seem to overwhelm us... to exhaust us yet becoming the master of our lines somehow subduing us frequently. How would you see a day without having your usual morning café? Arena is yours...

"Thank you for this excellent interview and for the kind words. I have many things left to say through music, so at the moment there is no fear of the end of my inspirations. Truly the common things seem to overwhelm us, but we can always try to find thrills in them too, like in a simple cup of good coffee which makes our mornings shine."

Band Contact: TENHI@iobox.com

The covers of "Kauan" had unfortunate spelling mistakes on the back-cover, so here are the right song titles:

Näkin laulu	-	The chant Of Näkki
Huomen	-	Morrow
Revontulet	-	Northern Lights
Hallavedet	-	The Glacial Waters
Etäisyyskseen taa	-	Beyond Distances
Lauluni Sinulle	-	Mavourneen's Song
Taival	-	Straying
Soutu	-	Drift

Rain Fell Within

Hi Dawn. How was your album received like across US? What about Europe? Were you satisfied with Ted's promotion?

"The album is doing pretty well, especially for our first full release. We sold in one month what a lot of bands sell all together for their first release, so we are very happy with the way things are going. Ted has done a great job promoting the CD Dark Symphonies really cares about the music too. I get a lot of letters from fans outside the US, so I guess the release is doing well in other countries as well."

You founded your band on October 1996 and yet you released one single demo live and "Solemn Days". Why so? I also observe you, Kevin and Charlie only belong to the beginning formula. Will and John left being replaced by Tim (PSYCOPHANCY) and Owen (GARDEN OF SHADOWS) and for a certain period even Jay (AURORA BOREALIS). Where did this particular instability come from? Too many ideas cumulating, some certain divergences perhaps? What else (if counting what I know so far) should I know regarding the band history?

"If you were saying that a live demo and one true demo is not a lot of releases for the beginning of the band, I would have to disagree. We like to take our time writing our music and making sure it is perfect because releasing something although none of us are ever fully satisfied with what comes out. We are always trying to make the music better and better. So chances are if you heard a song from a release it isn't exactly the same anymore. Will and John were great musicians, but I don't think they have the goals for music that we do. A band can only go as far as each and every member wants it to, so in the end you are depending on everyone else in the band to want what you want, as much as you do. We had Jay fill in because he is a long time friend, and it is next to impossible to find musicians in the metal scene here. Luckily we found Owen and Tim in between bands."

I know you also performed in other bands, THE SOIL BLEEDS BLACK and WITCH-HUNT. What can you tell me about this issue? Did you "use" your voice and keyboard as well?

"For THE SOIL BLEEDS BLACK I only did some vocal work. For WITCH-HUNT I also wrote a keyboard piece."

Kevin and Charlie have played in FINAL DESCENT. I haven't heard about this band. What kind of music could it be classified as?

"FINAL DECENT existed before I knew Charlie and Kevin. My understanding is that it was death metal, but I never heard it."

On September 1999 you managed to have the signing for two albums with Dark Symphonies. The first has been already released. When do you

I have to acknowledge I heard nothing about this project until now although "Solemn Days" demo was catalogued as one of the best doom gothic materials appeared in last few years. Taking in account the fact this band made its first appearance this year with "Believe" at Dark Symphonies label, I took the liberty asking down a few question-RAIN FELL WITHIN's voice.

Although the questions were simple, I hope you'd find at least a few interesting things.

plan for another?

"Our goal is to release another album within a year. We already started writing music, and after the Milwaukee Metalfest we are going to concentrate on writing music, and playing less shows."

1998 could be considered a fortunate year for your live activity since you performed along THE GATHERING or BLACK TAPE FOR A BLUE GIRL. I know you intend touring this summer. Would you desire also for a tour in Europe, right? What could be the meaning and significance to a live performance as musician as well as in onlooker quality?

"We would love to tour Europe! I don't think that will be happening in the near future, but hopefully some day. To me, playing live is the greatest thing life has to offer. Sharing your music and your passion with a bunch of other people is the most precious gift."

Regarding gigs I understood you have a session guitar player-Jen coming from AUTUMN TEARS. What do really think about this band?

"Jen does not play guitar, she sings back up vocals for me when we play live. I love AUTUMN TEARS; I think it is very beautiful music."

Returning to "Believe". Why particularly choosing this title? I find it succinct enough, five tracks only, not even reaching 40 minutes. Wouldn't it have been best if one or two tracks from "Solemn Days" included? It is quite a shock for one to buy the album and then realizing he paid \$18 (in Europe) for listening only 38 minutes.

"We chose "Believe" for the title because the song portrays a feeling that I think a lot of people have about the world. It is of a fallen angel who has been sent to Earth on a mission to change humanity, and to end evil... only to find out that it cannot be changed, it is too far-gone. This is something I believe about the world. About the length 38 minutes is too long to be considered a mini-CD. We were hesitant of calling it a full length, but the truth is that anything over 30 minutes can be considered that. We thought about putting a "Solemn Days" song on the release, but we would really like to forget about that demo! As for

the price, I cannot control what people charge you for it. We sell it for 10 dollars US\$, and most full lengths in the US are 17 20 dollars."

From another point of view the tracks are exceedingly well conceived and quite atmospheric. The doom gothic combination I find absolutely successful rather reaching some symphonic tendencies. Those from Dark Symphonies compare you with many bands, from MY DYING BRIDE to DEAD CAN DANCE. My guide marks would be NIGHTWISH, THE GATHERING and THE 3rd AND THE MORTAL. Moreover, the sound is rather European than else. What's your opinion upon this?



"The bands mentioned are definitely some of our influences. I would agree that we have a very European sound, but I think we add a very American part to it. This can't be helped since we grew up listening to a lot of American glam rock bands..."

Speak a little about lyrics. What is all about during these five tracks (what subjects do they track about?) "Alone" I find quite special, attractive.

"I have already explained the meaning of 'Believe', but I was wondering when someone would ask me what these songs were about. The lyrics in 'False Reality' were actually written based on a rumour that was going around about us about a year ago. For some reason, there was a rumour that we were seen shooting up heroin after a local show... and this is completely false. So 'False Reality' is actually about being addicted to drugs and not wanting to be. Basically about knowing that drugs tear up your body, but not knowing how to quit. I think of the song 'Alone' as taking place in medieval times when there were arranged marriages and 2 lovers are torn apart for falling in love and the man is basically killed. 'The Sun in My Wound' is about someone who believed in God their whole life only to find out at her death that there is no God, and there is no afterlife, only cold dark death. 'Sorrow Becomes Me', although some may think it is the most peaceful of our songs, it is actually the most morbid. Her lover has died and she basically stays in the room with his dead corpse talking to it, dancing with it, and holding it like he is still alive."

The cover resembles somehow with the "Madrigal" album (SANGUIS ET CINIS). What is the significance? Perhaps you turned into an angel?

"The cover is just our portrayal of the song 'Believe'."

I admit that your voice is as much strong as expressive, as much expressive as peculiar. Did you take music lessons? And your keyboard features almost all your tracks...

"I have been singing since I was 3, and playing keyboards for almost as long. I don't think I have ever heard someone call my voice 'peculiar', but hey that's ok. I started taking opera training about 6 years ago. I do play keyboards through all the tracks, I almost never stop. I think on the recording it's hard to notice that."

You listen to multiple musical styles, various bands, from CANNIBAL CORPSE, OPETH, TRISTANIA to STING, RUSH even jazz (especially Owen), less rap and country music (for you). What could you say about metal music scene evolution? Its development might have a superficial styles profile, followed by the loss of interest, don't you think?

"I'm not really sure what you're trying to ask here but if you are asking if I think the bands mentioned had an influence on the metal scene, I think that any band that influenced a metal musician obviously had an influence on the scene. I don't think a loss of interest in the music is what makes some of these bands lose popularity... the fans who always liked them will always like them, but new fans are hard to come by when the media shoves only what they want to shove in your face. If it's one thing I've learned, people will listen to anything that MTV tells them to."

What is it like, The USA metal scene? Can you recommend me a few bands? How does it seem from America, the European metal scene?

"The US metal scene is definitely getting bigger I think. I turned on MTV2 this morning and actually saw a Death video, which amazed me

because you never see that here. The "heaviest" thing they play is KORN and I don't even want to dignify that with an opinion. The metal musicians here look at Europe and think that is where we need to be! Some other bands you should check out are WITCH-HUNT, GARDEN OF SHADOWS, FORTY DAYS LONGING, AUTUMN TEARS, MAUDLIN OF THE WELL, LONG WINTER STARE."

How do you picture the future of your band? Will you include male voices also? Will the sound change?

"We have no plans to have male vocals in the band. There are so many bands out there who have male and female vocals... and there's nothing wrong with that I love most of those bands, but we wanted to do something different. With 2 new members, their styles will be incorporated into the music we write, but we aren't going to intentionally change our sound."

What is the American life like? I see almost daily on TV horror scenes in schools, kids shooting each other, excessively themselves, generally violence. Is this freedom misunderstood?

"I have no idea what is going on with America's youth... but my theory is they are playing NOT ENOUGH METAL, and the kids are storing up their anger and going mad. No, I really don't know. Inbreeding maybe? It didn't used to be like this!"

Economically speaking, America is the greatest power worldwide. For example, Clinton's policy is influencing almost all international decisions, transforming himself into a kind of "God". Thus, in many countries from all over the world, NATO troops kill innocent people in the name of democracy. How do Americans see this kind of conflict?

"You know, I can't even give you an opinion about how most Americans view that. As for myself, and the people I know we just stay out of it. I do not think innocent people should ever be killed, but I'm not paying attention to anything political right now because it usually ruins my day."

Leaving politics for the liars, let's enter another "hemisphere". There are women who feel the need to "defulate" by shopping spending money, others trying on different clothes. Did you recognise yourself among them?

"Is defulate even a word? Uh... I'm a girl so yes I go shopping and spend money and try on clothes... but not frequently. I spend most of my time writing music."

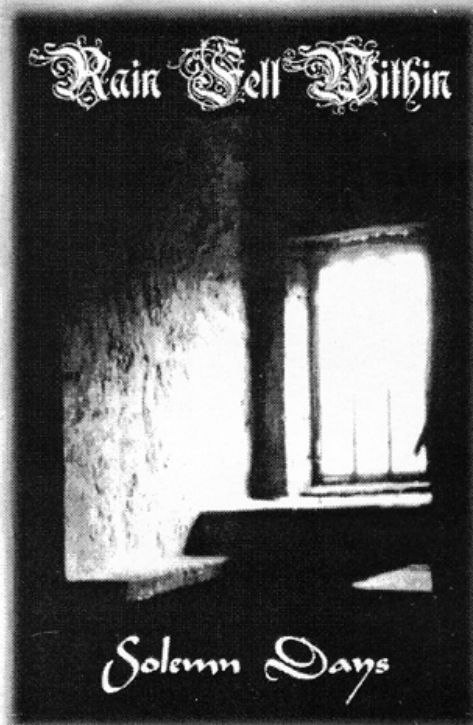
Freud said that woman is a passive element and man an active one. Do you think Freud's study is surpassed? I don't mean only the sexual behaviour. How do you conceive women emancipation?

"I think the view of women has changed but all that did was give women the right to be bitchy. That's all. And most of us are."

Dear Dawn, I do appreciate for you agreeing to such "inquisitory". I hope you would concert at least once in Europe and record as much success as possible. Is Dawn a person of joy and with a sense of humour? Could you relate a funny event occurred in your life?

"A funny event in my life? Hmmm... I can't think of anything that was funny and NOT embarrassing."

Contact: RAIN FELL WITHIN, P.O. BOX 222713, Chantilly, Virginia 20153, USA, E-mail: rainfellwithin@aol.com
www.rainfellwithin.com



Founded in 1994, the Norwegian band succeeded in a short time to make itself known because of "Disclosure in Red" album released at the end of 1998. The 1999-year meant a big success for the band so that they even came to play at Dynamo Festival. Because TRAIL OF TEARS has a lot of news to offer us I decided to question the band's leader, the vocal, Ronny Thorsen. I hope you would enjoy our discussion.



Trail of Tears

with a professional person?

"Yes, we are very fortunate to once again be able to mix the album in RS 29 in The Netherlands. Oscar Holleman is indeed a very professional producer with lots of experience, and the studio is well equipped. The album will be mixed by Oscar and myself, plus our two guitarists Terje and Runar. The date has been set for April 17th-26th, and we're very much looking forward to it."

When is the release date? What about the cover...what shall it represent? What do you expect from this album?

"Well, DSFA is aiming to release the album by the end of May. When it comes to artwork, it will be handled by Travis Smith (OPETH, PSYCOTIC WALTZ, DARK TRANQUILLITY etc). It's too early to say how the final result will turn out, but we have given him some ideas and I'm sure it will be great. We expect to take a massive leap

forward with this album as we really believe in the material. There are many factors that play a role in order to make it a success, but we're definitely optimistic about it."

Are you satisfied with DSFA collaboration? Did they help you to play at Dynamo? How is it like to perform live in front of 20.000 people?

"DSFA has done a superb job for the band. For such a small label compared to the more established ones I think it's amazing how much work and effort they have been able to lay down for us. However, we do have ambitions beyond what we've accomplished so far, and we have some new offers from other labels, which we will consider after the release. We're open for anything right now. Anthony from DSFA has contacts at Dynamo and it was he who arranged the performance there last year. It was quite an insane experience to walk out on stage in front of 20 000 people from all over the world. The fact that we did a good show helped to make it an unforgettable day!"

You promoted at least three important tours where you played along with some other known bands. Which one did you find most triumphant? I found out from Sid/ANTICHRISIS about a certain tour, which rather was not quite a success because of some organizing problem. How did TRAIL OF TEARS sound live?

"Personally I think the tour we did with TRISTANIA, THE SINS OF THY BELOVED, SIEBENBURGEN and ANTICHRISIS last year is the

Hi Ronny. You have just finished recording the new track of the album... Thus it is about nine tracks plus two additional tracks. Are you satisfied with the quality you had accomplished? Which are the major differences between "Disclosure In Red" and "Profoundemonium"? Do you continue the same gothic metal line? With heavy doom and death influences and also contrary voices? You were telling me of including also a few new elements...

"Yeah, we finished the recordings on March 5th. The album will contain, as you say, 9 songs and two additional pieces. In our opinion the material is of very high quality and we are very pleased with the way that the songs have turned out. Compared to our last album, this one is way ahead in all aspects. The main difference is that the new album will be generally heavier and I must say that tightness, arrangements and performance is improved a lot since the last album. I don't find our music to be typically gothic anymore although there are of course elements of that genre. It is too brutal and aggressive to be labelled as pure gothic/doom. Of course the musical basis is still the same, with lots the mentioned parts but I believe we have also brought in more dark, black and death metal elements and the new album, "Profoundemonium", is even more diverse than "Disclosure in Red".

Why did you choose for the same studio? Bands with a sound similar to yours prefer Sound Suite Studio. Is it a matter of distance or simply of money?

"There were many reasons why we chose to use Jailhouse Studio again for this recording. First of all it's located in our hometown, which of course is a great advantage. Secondly, it's fairly cheap and we know the producer Hans Eidskard on a personal level. Because of this, we got very much for very little. He's also a great guy to work with plus that we were satisfied with the last recording. If we were to record in Sound Suite we would have to take a lot of time off, since it is quite far away from where we live. It would also have been impossible with the studio budget we had for this recording."

Why did you choose for such title? What themes treat the lyrics of the songs? Could you make a reference at each track?

"We chose the title "Profoundemonium" because it's representative for all the lyrics. The title symbolises a certain state of mind, where you are being captured by your own thoughts. The lyrics are very personal and many of them deal with different, dark states of the human mind. It's very difficult for me to talk about the lyrics, as it would have been like revealing my whole self. I think people should try and find themselves in the lyrics instead of always thinking what I mean with them. They don't necessary have to relate to only one thing, and there's room for speculation and thought. Many would say that it's a cliché but people should make up their own interpretation of them."

After recording female voice parts you'll probably mix the album in the same studio, RS 29 besides Oscar Holleman. How is it like to work



greatest one so far. I agree with SID that some of the organising parts could have been better, for example the travelling route that was very exhausting. Also some of the venues weren't up to the agreed standard. However, we

generally got such a fantastic response it was unbelievable. We also became good friends with some of the other musicians and our performances were our best to date. Of course there were shows that we were a bit disappointed about, but overall it was just a great opportunity that I'm glad that we grabbed. TRAIL OF TEARS live is a bit unorthodox compared to other bands in our genre. We don't focused too much on the theatrical part, first and foremost we're a metal band and the shows are x-tremely energetic and emotional."

Do you consider TRAIL OF TEARS succeeded get out of underground? Could your style become a commercial one? In Norway there are a lot of bands approaching this line: THEATRE OF TRAGEDY, THE SINS OF THY BELOVED, TRISTANIA, MYRIADS... What do you think of them?

"Well, I think everybody has different views upon what the underground is. Some people think that the whole metal scene is an underground movement while others claim that the underground consists of obscure bands that never sell more than 1500 albums. I personally believe that if you can't manage to reach out to a wide audience and to actually have an income from the music, then you could be characterized as an underground band. If that's true, then we're still indeed an underground band; we have never earned money from the band yet we have a pretty large following across Europe. The range of popularity for this kind of music differs very much from each country. Some places it's labelled as commercial, other places it's "dead". Nevertheless, I think the potential to sell big, if that's what you mean, is definitely present. I would say that THEATRE OF TRAGEDY is the most commercial of the mentioned bands, but I don't mean that as something negative. I like a lot of commercial bands. TRISTANIA and THE SINS OF THY BELOVED are both high quality, superb bands, as of MYRIADS I have never heard any of their music so it's impossible for me to comment upon them."

Although you gather seven members, the formula you had when recording this new album is quite identical with the one when recording your first album. How can you characterize such stability? Please describe your colleagues, present them in a few words. Do they have another projects performing in besides TRAIL OF TEARS?

"Yes, that's true. The two recordings feature the same line-up. However, Helena has now been removed from the band because of her insane ego. She participated on the newest recording yes, but we had to tell her to leave afterwards. It's not possible to possess such an ego when you're in a band with six other members. The rest of us share the same views and wishes, and we all know each other extremely well. I guess that's the main reasons why the line-up has been this stable. As of Helena, she will be replaced by a new female singer. We have got a lot of candidates who are both interested and very talented. There will not be any lowering of the quality from that side. It's difficult for me to describe all the members in only a few words; we're actually quite different from each other even though we, as I said, share the same views with the band. As for side projects, I have not long ago done the vocals for the new SCARIOT album, called "Deathforlorn". This is a band consisting of among others Death (ex-SATYRICON) and Kobro (IN THE WOODS...). Also I did one song with BLOOD RED THRONE, which is a death metal band with among others Tchort (CARPATHIAN FOREST, ex-EMPEROR, SATYRICON and EINHERJER). None of these two bands are projects of mine though, I was only asked to do the job as a session vocalist. Jonathan and Runar have a FAITH NO MORE cover band, but they haven't played in a long time I think."

Helen has a beautiful voice. Where did you meet each other and how did you persuade her to perform in a metal band? Her musical education seems to embrace other spheres: classic music, opera...

"Indeed, she has a very good voice. That's why it's a shame that her rock star issues grew to levels that demanded her departure. She's from the same place as us and we had heard her perform in some other projects. At the time we asked her to join she didn't have a regular band, which made her available. Even though, as you said, she has other musical backgrounds, she immediately

understood the emotions intended in the music and she wanted to try something else."

A visited her site and I can say with no shades doubt she is a "remarkable" mannequin. Does she intend making a career so far? Does she combine music with fashion elements when performing live in front of an



audience?

"Everybody is entitled to an opinion. I think I should not comment this further."

NATT is the first name under which you recorded a single demo in 1994. Why did you change the band's name? There were a few changes also occurred in the line up. The second demo "When Silence Cries" was quite products now after years passing?

"We decided to change the band's name into TRAIL OF TEARS a while before we recorded the "When Silence Cries..." demo in February '97 because of the fact that the music had changed rather drastically. On the "Natt" demo (96, not 94) our approach was more basic thrash/death metal. The new members were the main reason why the music developed and we didn't feel comfortable with the old name anymore. I think our current name is more suitable to the music. The "When Silence Cries..." demo was a big success for us and landed us the deal with DSFA. It was quickly sold out."

What kind of relationship do you have with fans? Do you reply messages or letters? You own an official site and a fan-site.

"I believe we have a very good and close relationship with our fans; at least we try our best to show our appreciation. Especially after gigs there is nothing more of a kick for me than to mingle with fans and have a few beers."

That's one of the things I actually enjoy the most about touring, you meet so many cool people. As for letters and stuff, I try to answer as much as possible but both time and money have become a problem. Unfortunately I've had to pick letters that includes return postage only, it wouldn't work if I had to pay for all that myself anymore. Our two homepages (<http://members.xoom.com/tot555/> and <http://members.xoom.com/bassman2/tot/>) are obtained by people we are in contact with in The Netherlands."

At the end of last year you were invited to participate as voice in two different Norwegian bands, one power and the other death metal. Can you land me some details?

"As I mentioned earlier I did two vocal contributions for a band called SCARIOT (heavy/power metal) and BLOOD RED THRONE (death metal). The SCARIOT album contains 8 songs, while BLOOD RED

THRONE was only one song that will feature on the Nordic Metal 2 compilation, released by Necropolis Records (USA)."

What do you actually think about nowadays' musical scene? More and more bands are paying their attention to more commercial, "easy" styles





Is music the only art that can express your emotions? If not, what other art forms do you deal with and why have you chosen those?

"It's not the only art form that can express my emotion. But then again, art can be everything you want it to be. You can record farting sounds and call it art, but is it? A nice conversation could be art. Having sex could be art etc, etc."

What can you tell me about Norwegian life? I mean life in Norway... a Northern country... Why are alcohol drinks too expensive? It is said that in Scandinavian country natality decreases because of too much drinking. Should this be the very reason?

"I could have written 100 pages about this subject. However, I will not go too much into it because then I can't stop. All I like to say is that the political system in Norway is hypocritical and pathetic. A lot is ruled by the curse word known as religion. I guess it says a lot that up until recently our prime minister was a fucking priest on Valiums. Regarding alcohol, there are tons of campaigns in the name of the government telling how dangerous it is, while they (hypocritically) drag in millions and millions in taxes on this merchandise. This is just one subject in the overall twisted political ruling in this country. I have the system so far up in my throat that I have promised myself that by the time I turn 25 (3 years from now), I will have moved to a different country. The sad thing is that a lot of Europeans turn their heads to Norway, thinking that it's fucking great there. "All the cool Vikings" and "all the evil bands" etc. HA! They should try to live here themselves for a while."

As a Northern Country I believe you have to face a few emigrants. What do you think about those who consider Norwegians as an Arian people?

"To be perfectly honest with you I don't care for either this or that. Personally, I think you're Arian if your mind is clean. In that case I'm not an Arian person. Colour of skin etc. makes no difference. Our drummer for instance, is from Chile and one of our guitarists was adopted from Korea when he was a few weeks old."

Do you have beggars? If so, tell me, do you usually offer them charity? How do you conceive the act of charity? As a self-content aspect or as help you give to someone who needs or do you simply feel repulse... nausea or even pity?

"There are beggars in the cities usually. If someone approaches me and asks me for money I always ask what they're going to use them for. If they're honest and say that they will use it for booze and I have something to spare, I usually give them a little. If they claim that they will use the money for food and I know it's a lie I make sure that they remember me and never approach me again."

You had many tours around the world, in many countries. What country did fascinate you most? What did you desire visiting first? And what memories did you keep inside?

"A very difficult question indeed. Most countries have given me both good and bad experiences. The exception is The Netherlands, which I have only nice memories from. The biggest must be the Dynamo Festival. Also a gig we played two days before with BIOHAZARD, CRADLE OF FILTH and SKINLAB. All great memories. We've done a bunch of shows in The Netherlands and the response and enthusiasm from the fans is always unbelievable. Belgium is also nice. And Austria. Unfortunately we've never had the chance to play in Romania, but maybe during the next tour. We have lots of video footage from all the tours, which I occasionally bring forth."

It is time for us to follow each one his own path. Thank you for interview and may we hear of you soon. What meaning does Ronny Thorsen attach to the compromise concept? What about a musical compromise? What do you hate most?

"Compromising is something like necessary when you're in a band with seven members and all the members are involved in the musical creation. You need to find a balance that everyone can live with themselves. What I hate the most? I hate a lot of things, ha, ha!! Thanks for the interview, check out our new album "Profoundemonium" and keep the metallic flame

from gothic rock till electro pop.

"The scene in general is getting more and more commercial. Not that this is necessary bad. If a band gets big or not doesn't mean anything to me as long as I like the music. To me it doesn't matter if DIMMU BORGIR sells 500 copies or 500 000. I will listen to them all the same because of the fact that they make great music. As for people claiming certain bands of selling out, well it's a matter of definition. I think that if a band makes the music they want to make and sell many albums, it's not a sell-out. However, if a band is pushed by labels to change their musical style or whatever for the only purpose of selling more albums, and the band can't stand behind what they do, and then it's a sell-out. So in other words I can't see anything wrong in bands which turn to other styles as long as it's a natural development, and not the case of changing for more money."

What do you mostly desire to achieve with TRAIL OF TEARS? Big sales? Lots of tours? Money, popularity? To have the same path as PARADISE LOST had? Or maybe it is something else... Is it?

"Our only goal is to simply go as far as we possibly can within our own terms. If we get lots of tour offers etc. it's nothing but positive in my opinion. We will however not compromise whatsoever with others than ourselves when it comes to our musical approach."

How does Ronny Thorsen picture himself somewhere and sometimes after ten years? What would you like doing in your life besides music?

"Music is my life and I can simply not picture myself living without music. It's impossible to predict ten years from now. I mean, things occur all the time. I know though, that I will be involved with some kind of activity concerning music."

If it is up to you what would be the most important things in life? What about the most important emotions?

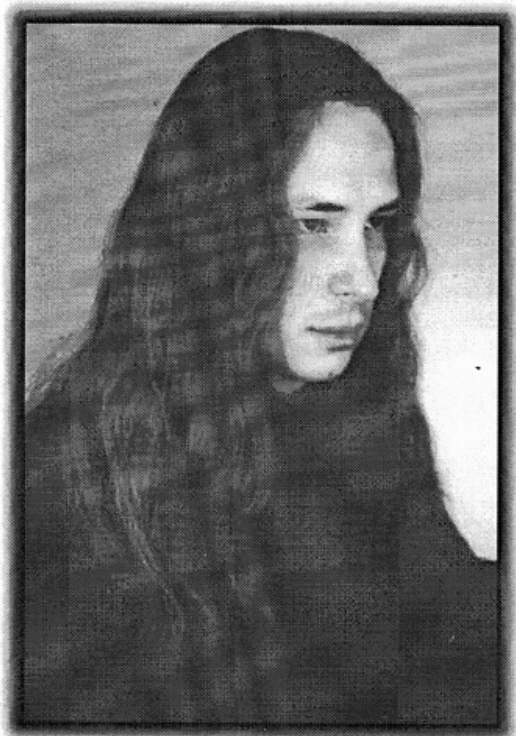
"The most important things in life are to understand towards yourself and to be able to control yourself. All emotional sides of the human nature are necessary to uphold a decent living. You can't go through life in a satisfying way without both a negative and a positive energy. These are matters that I reflect much upon in the lyrics for the new album."

Do you think that music has some kind of influence on the human soul? If so, how do you think your music affect the listener?

"All kinds of music influence the human soul. There's no question about that. People react differently to the same music, because people are different from each other. For example, some people find AQUA to be really happy music, while I get really angry if I hear their music. I get angry because I can't understand how such plastic, crappy music can make someone happy. Our music is very much based on contrasts and I think that it can bring forth several moods for the listener. They can be angry, frustrated and sad, but also uplifted in a dark way when listening to the music. I once got a letter from a girl who said that she played our music in relation to everything from having sex to throwing a party. To me that am a fantastic complement and proof that our music can have more than one purpose."



This is the first Russian band that features in the present "Kogaionon" version and the reason I decided so is due to the superb album released at Code 666, in Italy. Rustam Shakirzyanov (Orlangur) left at my disposal a few material about RAKOTH as well as regarding his solo project, UMBRAL PRESENCE, in order to reveal as much aspects and details as possible. Therefore, first of all let me lead your attention through some RAKOTH signs and then lecture the latest news Rustam has presented for us so that you could finally find out various points of view of the person who hides himself under Noctulius nickname (UMBRA PRESENCE).



History

September 1996 - the foundation of the first line-up. The band is formed by Leshy (drums), Ilya (guitars) and Fascist (vox). The first band's name - BEDEVIL. Two weeks later Rustam joins as vocalist and keyboardist. Bassist Miguel "The Blind" comes with him. Rustam offers to change band's name to RAKOTH (RAKOT was the initial spelling). In Nick Perumov's "Chronicle of Hjordvard" RAKOTH is the half-god, so-called "True Mage", who had the title Master of Darkness for using Darkness for his magic. He rose against the Young Gods accusing them of being Liars stealing mortals' freedom. After his second try he was defeated, reincarnated and bound to the world called "The Bottom of Worlds". With help of his friend, Hedin "Aware of Darkness", he returned and overthrew the Young Gods thus becoming the New God along with Hedin.

December 1996 - the band is formed completely with coming of Black as vocalist with "clean" voice and changing bassist to Den. All music is written by Rustam and Ilya, lyrics - by Rustam. Now the band has its own face - Black's clean voice and Rustam's keys. The first song created is "Return of the Nameless" (first edition). The song becomes famous (in Obninsk) long before the first gig.

February 1997 - the first concert together with DISSENTER - techno-death band. The concert represents the fest titled "Rock against chemical dependence". Needless to say that everyone (especially some members of the band) is deadly drunk. Nevertheless the gig is extremely successful. Amazingly, public seems to know RAKOTH well although no tapes are distributed yet and no gigs were given before. RAKOTH plays own early songs "Return of the Nameless" (first variant), "Unholy Temple", "One Step Beyond" (which is unrecognisably transformed into the song "Beyond" later), "Dying Realm" and STORM's "Nagellstev".

March 1997 - Tense relationship inside the band. Rustam claims to leave the band. Simultaneously Leshy and Fascist say they wanted to leave long ago. Band collapses. Fascist, Leshy and Ilya form the band they call GORBUG and play black metal.

May 1997 - Rustam decides to form new band and offers Black and Den to join. They plan to play doom with some other styles elements. Coincidentally, at the same time the band DISSENTER falls apart and its guitarist/vocalist Dy wishes to play deeper music than death metal. Den invites him to the new band, which has no name yet. New line-up: Rustam - keys & voice, Black - voice, Den - bass, Dy - guitars. Leshy offers his help with drums. The band rehearses at Rustam's garage.

June 1997 - Band is in search for the name. Many variants proposed

(MEPHISTO, UNBORN, TEARS, DOWNFALL, IN THIS ROOM), but none satisfies. Finally, Dy proposes to use the name RAKOTH again. Taking into account that old band RAKOTH doesn't exist anymore and that the name was offered by Rustam in the beginning, the name RAKOTH is accepted.

July 1997 - Leshy officially joins RAKOTH. The first demo "Tales of the Worlds Unreal" is recorded right in the garage.

August 1997 - Tape is given to A. Arzamascev, the head of Arzamascev's Music Center (later - Signal Studios). He decides to allow the band to record free at his studio. Demo tape "Dark Ages Chronicle" is recorded live, with no post-mixing, during only 4 hours. The quality of recording is that high that none believes in that short recording time and in live recording.

September 1997 - Solo-concert. As in the first case, the public knows the band well, so the gig goes perfectly. October, 1997 - Leshy suddenly leaves RAKOTH. He plays with Fascist (now Tuur) and Ilya (now Vuulko) in their band they renamed into TEMNOZOR'. They play so-called "true" pagan metal. **August 1998** - The band enters Signal Studios to record their new creation. By the strange coincidence they begin the recording at the same day which was chosen (a year ago) for recording of "Dark Ages Chronicle". It is 18th of August. After the week of work they finally can celebrate the birth of their first full-length (57 minutes) album, titled "Superstatic Equilibrium".

April 1999 - Code666 is interested in getting RAKOTH's tape. Rustam sends "Superstatic Equilibrium" to Italy.

June 1999 - Code666 offers a deal to RAKOTH.

August 1999 - The contract for recording of one album is signed.

October 1999 - RAKOTH record "Planeshift" and send masters to Code666.

The Name

RAKOTH is the character invented by Nick Perumov - the Russian fantasy writer. He became famous when he wrote his "Ring of Darkness" - sequel to Tolkien's "Lord of the Rings". I agree that Perumov's book is closer to Russian soul - there could be seen many parallels with Russ' history. But his trilogy "Chronicle of Hjordvard" is my favourite, especially the first book - "Downfall of the Gods". Two others are "The Warrior of Great Darkness" and "The Land of No Joy". The world of Hjordvard have the following structure: one level is mortals, elves trolls and such; another one is Young Gods that banished old gods from Hallowed Land and replaced them (old gods are of the Scandinavian mythology); between them are so called True

Mages - half gods which magic is the source of magical energy for mortal magicians. Also there are two brothers: Orlangur - the Spirit of Knowledge and Demogorgon - the Cathedral Spirit. True Mages use different sources for their magic. Two of them used Darkness. They are - RAKOTH the Master of Darkness and Hedin Aware of Darkness. RAKOTH rose three times against Young Gods. After the first try he was driven back to his citadel and sieged but he managed to defeat Hallowed armies and rose the second time. At the gates of Hallowed Land he's lost the battle, so the Young Gods disincarnated him and bound his soul to the world called "The Bottom of Worlds". Hedin with the help of his apprentice Hagen and Old Chroft (the Ancient God Odin) freed RAKOTH and together they conquered Hallowed Land to become New Gods. The first book tells of this third try. The second one is about the time of RAKOTH's second rebellion. "The Land of No Joy" is chronicle of Hjordvard with New Gods - RAKOTH and Hedin.

Line-up

P. Noir (former Black) - Vocals (clean, whispers, speeches, growling), flutes;

Rustam - Vocals (BM-shrieks, whispers, speeches), keys, programming;

Dy - Guitars (and a little bit of growling).

"Planeshift" concept

"It is within the word "planeshift" which has a lot of meanings. It could mean "moving to another world" or "changing the though pattern" or "transition" or any of vast number of meanings... Each of the band members has his own understanding of "planeshift", so is there any reason to speak of what it can mean for those who would listen to the album?"

The Recording

"The studio we used isn't very expensive, but quite known. Only in Moscow though. It is CDM Records studio. Many bands record their efforts there - ROSSOMAHAR, STONEHENGE, ASHEN LIGHT, CHARON, CHERNOBOG and others. We are satisfied with the studio and hope to record our future albums there as well. Otherwise, it was a hard one, especially for me. I had to travel to Moscow from Obninsk and back every day. Nevertheless, we were lucky to have such a professional engineer as Sergei. He understood everything by the half-word. I recall one day when P. Noir came to studio drunk as dirt... Thus we have those brilliant "morbid" vocal and flute parts. Hehe..."

The Music

"I think the term given by Code666, "Emotional & Epic Dark Metal", is enough. But if details are necessary then I would say that our music is a strange mix of Doom, Death, Black and even Gothic Metal with a variety of vocals, including "clear" voice, DM growls, BM shrieks, whispering and speeches, flutes, lots of keys, much acoustics. Besides, songs differ from each other that much that listening to only one is not enough to have any, even vague, idea of the music on the whole album. We don't use any folkloric elements of any particular folk. We just make the music sound in the way to express what is needed to be expressed in this particular part of song. So, we don't intend to make our music so various, it just happen so... For example, the song "Planeshift" is mostly extremal, that's because the whole song is full of scorn to "all-consuming dementia". In contrary, "Gorthaur Aulendil" is pretty melodic and sad track, since it reveals all doubts and sorrow of Sauron in the times when he didn't obtain his dismal handle yet and didn't know about his design..."

The Flute

"It is a recorder, but not wooden. It is plastic Yamaha recorder. It was hard to obtain the sound we have now, and we've made it. But we're going to add more various pipes in our next efforts - as soon as we can afford to purchase them. As soon as we learn to handle another instrument which fits the music, and as soon as we have it, we shall use it. It can be violin, pipes, shamisen, balalaika or anything else..."

The Keyboards

"Keyboards are as much important as any other instrument - guitars, bass, drums, voice, flute. We don't care about what instruments must be or must not be used in some music style - we just create music we like and use everything we can use for it. I heard some say "metal must be real metal - only drums, bass and guitars". If so, just don't call our music metal - as if we really cared..."

Drummachine?

"Not exactly drum machine. It is midi-programmed drums, which are played through professional drum module (Alesis DM5 on "Planeshift"). This approach is much better than real drum machine in my opinion. The main reason is that computer plays drums exactly in a way I want it to play. Every note with particular dynamics is played as I pointed. In addition, using the comp for drums allows me make more complicated keyboards orchestrations since I can program some keyboard parts (symphonic ones, for example) together with drums. Drummer represents a bunch of problems. First of all, it is pretty hard to find drummer skilled enough to play all the drum parts for RAKOTH here in Obninsk. Then, it will demand a rehearsal base - at present we rehearse in my own room with no inconvenience. After all, we don't want to expand the band's line-up, since three is almost perfect number for the group of people. However, maybe in the future we will change our opinion. Maybe not..."

The songs

"Planeshift (Introduction)" marks the very moment of the planeshift.

"Fear (Wasn't in the Design)" is an episode from "Black Book of Arda" by Niannah and Ylleth. It is Tolkien's "Silmarillion" through the eyes of Melkor and others. "Silmarillion" from the other side. The song represents the scene where Aule the Forger creates the salamander (Llah). And Iluvathar punishes him for that, since it wasn't in his Great Design. Melkor tries to defend Aule and challenges Iluvatar. It marks the

beginning of the unveiled feud.

"Noldor Exodus"... The title speaks for itself. "Silmarillion". Noldor leave Valinor...

"Dark Hear of Uukrul" is written as soundtrack to "The Dark Heart of Uukrul" by I. Boswell and M. Buis. The underground city-realm, Eriosthe, lives only with the support of magical Beacon, which gives energy, heat and light to all undermountain world. One of the Arcana magicians, Uukrul, usurps the power and takes the control of the Beacon. The story in the song is told by Uukrul himself.

"Og'Elend" means "heretic, non-standart, untraditional" in drowish (dark elven). The song is about the Noble Drow, Azamath of Tormtor, who refuses to worship the Queen of Spiders, Lloth (Lolth, Loethe) and chooses his own way.

"Planeshift" describes one of my personal meanings of "planeshift".

"Gorthaur Aulendil" is about the one who (on creation) got the name Artano Aulendil. Later he has chosen the name Gortkhower (Gorthaur) for himself. Later he was called Sauron... (Again - "Black Book of Arda").





"Mountain God" is an episode from N. P e r u m o v ' s "Downfall of the Gods". Hedin, Aware of Darkness, helps his Apprentice, Hagen, obtain the Sword of Blue Steel from the ancient Mountain God.

"The Unquiet Grave" is simple translation of Celtic text put on our music. It's about the man who spends all his life on the grave of his Beloved.

"Outro" leaves the listener with his own thoughts, forces him (her) to meditate about all just heard...

Differences between "Superstatic Equilibrium" and "Planeshift"

"Well, there are a lot of difference. I can't say the new one is better than "Superstatic Equilibrium" as I like them both equally, but "Planeshift" was played, recorded and mixed much more professional than the previous album. Vocals are sung in multivoice manner more often, the same for flutes and guitars. Another difference is that on "Planeshift" there was no live bass player, all bass parts were performed by computer. It doesn't mean that we will use comp for bass always. It was just an experiment. We like the result, but future use of the same effect isn't necessary. The main for us (but maybe not as much noticeable for the listeners) difference is the concept. On "Superstatic Equilibrium" it was clear and comprehensible. On "Planeshift" it's much more umbral and faint."

The shape of CD

"In fact, before Code666 hired the graphical studio to create the layout, we offered all our wishes concerning what should be there and how the CD should look. All our wishes were satisfied and the CD looks completely how I wished it to be. Except one thing - before I received our own personal CD copies, I didn't know what "digipack" means. Hehe... I wasn't disappointed."

The deal with Code 666

"Once I've received an email from them, something like "We would like to hear your music". I've sent them our promo MC "Superstatic Equilibrium". The reply was "Great, what about a deal?" That's it. We've signed the deal.

We are glad to work with Code666. Recently we were proposed a new deal by code666. It is about re-recording some of our old stuff. So it will probably be something like "Best of Superstatic... and Dark Ages Chronicle" plus (at least) one brand new song. We hope to record it at CDM during this year. There are certain advantages in being signed to small, especially newfounded label. You'll see, soon we, due to Code666, will become rich and famous, and Code666 (due to us) will become BIG record company, signing Madonna, Elton John and Pet Shop Boys. Hehehe..."

Inspiration

"I can't really say what inspires me. At some moment I just imagine some situation or have some impulse of some great feeling and want to express it. It can happen at any time. Whether I read a book or sleep (and wake up) or just meditate... I have no "melody" in my mind when I start composing - it is born in the process. I just sit down before my keys and start playing anything - nothing particular, just trying to express what is in me. Simultaneously I try to imagine how other instruments could sound. Then I just memorize all I've got to midi on my computer. Dy has his own ways to compose. When we meet I play to him what I have and he plays his creations. Then we discuss it all, change what is to be changed, compose everything together and get the result (needed to be worked through though anyway)."

Musical studies

"I finished music school as a pianist (and a choir singer) and P. Noir finished it as vocalist and flutist. In addition, P. Noir currently plays in two theatres, so he can add some real life to his clean voice (it can be heard on "Planeshift"). . Once I've visited the spectacle he participated. Brilliant, I must say. Nothing more detailed, sorry..."

Den's departure

"I can't say anything regarding to Den's departure. He has just left. Gradually, during 2 months after the recording of "Superstatic Equilibrium". No heavy feelings, we stayed friends. By the way, he was very glad to obtain "Planeshift" CD as a birthday present.

Bass parts on "Planeshift" were programmed by me and played by computer. We applied some tricks though to make it sound this live. It was the temporary decision. Not that we are going to program bass all the time in the future..."

The Russian folklore

"I used to study Russian (rather old-Slavonic) folklore and culture. I'm fond of investigating it and finding new features, unknown to me yet. However, I do read a lot about the history of other cultures. And I don't think there are many folk influences in our music. It just seems so. Folk elements are very popular in metal music nowadays and have become a trend here in Russia. Almost every newborn metal band member feels compelled to claim him (her) self "true pagan". That's why we DON'T use folk elements. We compose music we like, and if it sounds like folklore - let it be. But it's not intentional."

Hi Rustam. What do you think or feel to add regarding the presentation I made at the beginning of this interview? Do you conceive the readers would succeed making their own impression about RAKOTH' members musical profile and not just only?

"Well, it's pretty flattering that you've done such a complete representation, but I'm not sure the people will be interested in reading so much info about less-than-famous band. Hehe..."

It seems like "Planeshift" is far beyond the expectations could be imagined since now it has come to a second printing. It has been sold more than 600 copies in an extremely short time. Excellent, don't you think? And keep in mind, after this interview would be read the sales should reach a triple number! Be sure of that! Ha, ha...

"In fact, 300 copies of the second printing have been sold in the first two weeks. But it was not unexpected. I knew there would be something like that since Emiliano does his job well. However larger labels (as Nuclear Blast or The End Records) refused to license the album. The explanations were something like "The music is too uncommercial"."

Absolutely interesting in your music is the manner of combining contrasts, from melodicy and nostalgia till embracing shapes of aggressivity. The same goes to the tracks, they all are different from each other, the most complex, long and perhaps the most unlike the others is "The Unquiet Grave". How do you see all these? Could this be the future sound of RAKOTH? Will we hear also female voices along the new instruments you are going to use? What is your actual opinion about "Planeshift"? What about precedent recordings?

"We never plan our music to be complex. We just compose it and get the result. As a matter of fact, it appears complex. Also, we never plan the sound, so I can't tell you anything about the future sound of RAKOTH. We'll see (or hear) it later. Female voice will appear in our music only if it is necessary to express any particular feeling or atmosphere. We have such opportunity, but didn't need it so far. We like "Planeshift" a lot. There are some elements we'd change now, but it doesn't matter anymore since the CD is out. Our elder recordings are less professional but we like them as much as



"Planeshift". And there are some persons who prefer them to "Planeshift". As for "The Unquiet Grave", it differs from other songs that much mostly because of absolute absence of P. Noir's voice and flute. The whole song sounds like "old-style RAKOTH", something nearly "Diamond Angel II". "Diamond Angel" is the song from our demo "Dark Ages Chronicle"...

The album's cover is less intelligible. Is it about some cosmically and fantastic dimension? What should be its meaning? The artwork was performed by Mauro Berchi (CANAN, EIBONRECORDS).

"The haziness of the cover is intentional, just as the haziness of the title "Planeshift". There is no particular one meaning. It is something after the "planeshift", beyond the plane "here" or "now" or "this way". However, if one examined it carefully, he (she) would see the particular (but still hazy and unusual) picture. I won't describe it. Let each of desiring do this him (her) self."

I believe it is hard to perform live in three persons only. You have concert only twice until now. Would be expect a more intense activity for the next months so far? Should we? How does RAKOTH look like live and how would you expressly desire to look like if not already satisfied? Maybe featuring special effects, theatrical effects which might offer us also the view of P. Noir in action. It is his field...his "home", isn't it?

"We don't plan any live activity yet. But when (and if) we decide to do some live performance, we'll surely add some session musicians to our line-up. And, of course, there will be "theatrical effects". P. Noir will be responsible. Hehehe..."

You are 25 years old and your colleagues only 19. Is there a major difference of thinking, comprehension and not only between you because of such disproportionate age? The fact you are the eldest does necessarily mean you are also the band's leader?

"No, there is no leader in the band. We decide everything together. And there is a major difference of thinking between any two persons, regardless of age, so how old I am or any of RAKOTH's members is doesn't matter at all."

What else should be said about RAKOTH I unfortunately left unasked? What do you desire for this year to bring you? What do you want to accomplish?

"During this year we intend to record the album, containing heavily re-arranged versions of some songs from "Superstatic Equilibrium" and "Dark Ages Chronicle" and at least one brand new song. Then (hopefully, next year) we shall record absolutely new album. Both releases are in the deal with Code666."

UMBRAL PRESENCE should be a darker side of your personality, an aggressive one, more correctly said, Noctulius' personality. Where from this idea came and why choosing such names?

"The idea was born in the process of reading certain occult literature. No details. "Noctulius" is the Acausal Essence, one among the others. It has some features that suit me that am why I've chosen this name. And the term "Umbral Presence" describes the atmosphere of the project. It can't be obvious from the short listening, only after careful long experiencing of lyrics/music..."

You have released only "...et germinet Chaos" demo. What can you tell me about it? I indeed enjoyed, pretty much I'd say, "Noctulius" and "Atazoth". But I believe the sound is not so successful mixed, especially the voice. The keyboard/computer is the dominant element and voice is even violent, brutal. As well as in RAKOTH' case I find rather difficult to characterize your music, probably melodic dark black metal with symphonic elements. Am I wrong?

"I think it could be labelled so if not one misfit. Could music be characterized as "metal" when it contains no live guitars? Everything except the voice was performed by the computer. The mixing is not



perfect, rather terrible, but there were some problems in studio. As for "Noctulius" and "Atazoth", they are the most popular from the demo. Not my favourites though."

Although the music is quite original and enchanting you have not received any offer until now. How can you picture UMBRAL PRESENCE's future? Shall it be a solo project?

"Yes, it will remain my solo creation. However, I'm planning to invite a session guitarist to perform live guitar parts. I've received no offer because the music is too unusual to sell well. I don't think I'll get any offers in near future. It's natural. So, UMBRAL PRESENCE is only for myself."

You are living in a former Empire. Moreover, a former Mondial Power. How is life in Russia? Through TV's eyes a large part of population still lives with the Communism nostalgia. What Lenin or Stalin represent for you? Is it a reason of pride or shame for yourself the fact these two personages were Russian?

"No pride, no shame. It's just a past. I feel nothing special living in Russia. Well, one thing is my advantage - I receive royalties in US dollars and the dollar costs a lot here. So, \$1000 for me is much greater than the same \$1000 for the American. Hehe..."

I understood you are not one of those who believe vodka should be the traditional drink or, better said, you are not a vodka consumer. Do you think bear or wine can protect you from Winter toughness?

"Hmm... I don't need anything special to protect myself from winter. I live here, so I got used to the cold. But I like good wine. And drink beer."

Who do you think might deserve winning the elections? Putin maybe? He owns a positive image in Occident. Did you vote?

"Putin has already won and there was no doubt about it. I had nothing to do and decided to get a bit of entertainment, so I voted. Against all."

Enough with politics! First was Bulgaria, now Russia has become one of the most famous countries where musical piracy is very developed. How do you stand concerning this aspect? What is your opinion, how do you see this matter? I would like you presenting me from both points of view, as musician as well as buyer (listener).

"From both viewpoints I think the piracy in Russia is necessary. Few people here can afford to buy the CD for even only \$10. So if the pirates released our CD, I'd be sure our album is distributed in Russia. As a listener I prefer to buy a tape for \$1 or the CD for \$2. There are usually no lyrics in such CDs but it's easy to get them on the net."

MELISSA, STONEHENGE, TEMNOZOR', ENS COGITANS and, of course, ROSSOMAHAAR could any time number themselves among the bands who have signings in West labels. What can you tell me about Russian metal scene? What about Russian labels? Fanzines?

"From the bands you've mentioned only ENS COGITANS are signed to the western (Italian) label. TEMNOZOR' (TEMHO3OPb, if written in Russian) are signed to Stellar Winter Productions (Moscow). Others (as far as I know) are currently unsigned. I don't think there is a "scene" in Russia. There are bands, but no scene. Some are good, but the majority are (at least) unprofessional. There are also some labels but I won't even mention them. As for the fanzines, there are well-read "Rock City", "Deathrider", "Necronomicon", "Painkiller", "Music Magazine" and others. There are a lot of webzines too: "Vac Solis", "Nightsinger", "Twilight Shadows" etc..."

"Leaving this world, dimension so hollow, leaving the realm of virtue and sin I deny No chant, no prayer I need, I search for the way inside myself". Extremely suggesting words and very appropriate to an end. I do appreciate for the time you offered my magazine's readers and me and I wish for you all success in the world! Please let me know about some lakes I should not miss if being in a trip visiting Russia. Did you know Baikal Lake is the largest lake in the world?



"Actually, the largest lake in the world is Caspian Sea (which is also in Russia). It's supposed to be a sea, but it's the lake. But Baikal is the cleanest lake in the world. So, don't forget to see it..."

NIHILISTIC VOLUNTARISM. THE PHILOSOPHY

Gnoseology

"First of all, about the source of any experience and knowledge. ANY information has its source. Any experience the person gain has its way to get to the person. For example, the human being has

following ways to obtain information: five senses (sight, hearing, sense of touch, sense of taste, sense of smell); intuition; imagination; intellectual exercises; and, finally, heredity. None of five senses can be absolutely precise, they all have their own tolerance - for example, there can be a hallucination. Other sources of information are characteristic to human being and are built upon five basic senses (of another human being in the case of heredity), so they can't be exact as well. So the only possible conclusion is - there's no correct information human obtains. "There's no truth". This is the meaning of "nihilistic" in my philosophy. Socrates, proposed similar concepts with his "I know only that I know nothing", and by the solipsists, claiming that the world outside the person doesn't exist. Sometimes, however, the person needs some facts to live, to think, to act. In such case I simply claim my own truth, so the truth for me is what I want to be true. My will creates the truth for me and this is "voluntarism" in my philosophy. I also would like to emphasize that I don't consider the logic as something absolute, I don't find Aristotle's syllogism to be true. And I use the logic only when I find it profitable for my own goal (for example, now, describing Nihilistic Voluntarism). So, from any viewpoint, I am "heretic" regarding everything."

Axiology

"From all said above it is clear that all generally acknowledged and accepted values are absolutely nothing for me. I have my own values, and they are not constant, so I won't describe them here in details. I will just notice that at this very moment I appreciate human pride and intellect the most."

Ethimology

"The main goal of my philosophy is to allow me to change myself in a way I want. It gives me an opportunity to be free of any prejudices, of any moral principles, to be an Elitist, Nietzsche's Superhuman. And I respect the creed of Order of Nine Angles, which is close to my philosophy in this aspect. The principal difference is the fact that at this moment I'm not trying to change the world around me, concentrating at myself only. However, I'm going to consider it later."

Methodology

"I have my own method to reach my goal, and I won't reveal it here."

I'll notice only that it differs a bit from O.N.A.'s Seven-fold Sinister Way at present. But not very much. And I might come to S.F.S.W. after some meditation."

Symbolism

"In my creations I use attributes of O.N.A. because I respect the Order and it's creed. I agree with them in many points. I have my own understanding of Causal/Acausal, Aeonics, Dark Gods and other their concepts. And I accept their concept of the Sinister completely as it is. Due to all mentioned above I feel myself worthy of using Order's attributes and able to use them. I won't desecrate them."

Society

"I find it unnecessary for myself to follow the laws of society I live in. I do not belong to it. When I want something from society, I just pay or take it free, but never ought anything to society. I don't accept any duty to anyone, except for the duty I've laid upon myself. Democracy for me is "Reign of Herd". Fat, brainless, blind pigs choosing new more comfortable farm with more food and warmer mud... And thinking they can direct the actions of fat, brainless and blind farmer. I suppose the only society I could accept is dictatorship with me as dictator."

Christianity

"The most paradoxal religion that can be ever imagined. The religion of crucified god. They worship god that was punished like a thief. Thinking is the sin, blind faith is the virtue. I've never understood this religion and always considered Christians as weak people, whose mind and spirit needs crutches to exist. Nietzsche's "Antichrist" is the best illustration to my viewpoint."

Paganism

"Paganism is a kind of religion too, so I've never completely understood modern paganism, but it's far more glorious religion than Christianity. Real paganism are brave and proud people, so I respect them. I like studying pagan mythology and I can even accept some of their gods - not as beings, but as ideas, symbols."

La Vey and Church Of Satan

"Perhaps in the beginning LaVey had some good ideas. Some of them (very few) are in his "Satanic Bible". But now his Church of Satan is nothing but a commercial organization. Just read the document titled "Affiliation Information" at www.satanism.net/iss/cos/. You pay \$100 and join. You get T-shirts, pentagram amulets, etc. Also they claim that their members are "never involved in any criminal actions". Considering the fact that LaVey claimed total freedom in any actions for Satanist, it is clear that the CoS is a bit... hmm... insincere. Speaking plainer - hypocrite. Make your own conclusion about my attitude to CoS, taking into account all mentioned above."

Hebrews

"My attitude to Hebrews is absolutely the same with Nietzsche's. He describes it in his "Morning Rise, or the Thought of the Moral Prejudices", book "The Culture and the Cultures", chapter "The State, the Politics, the Nations", paragraph "About Israel"."

Contact: Rustam Shakirzyanov, Kaluzhskaya 2-60, Obninsk, Kaluga Region, 249020, Russia,
E-mail: Orlangur@softhome.net
www.fortunecity.com/rivendell/nemesis/341/
For UMBRAL PRESENCE:
E-mail: noctulius@antisocial.com www.noctulius.newmail.ru



I don't know if I may say the band you'll sooner read about could be considered an underground band but I certainly can assure you there would be no shades of regret if being interested in. What it would have been most natural was to make this interview before the releasing of an album thus I would have had various subjects I could have talked about. Yet I find, from time to time, quite appropriate to step out the usual standards. Thus I offer you a dialogue with one of the most interesting Polish band, a band trying to prove music of a certain quality can also be found in their country too. This is a new challenge Wounded Love Records accepted after the failure occurred in HEFEYSTOS case. Let us hope that success would be only "consequence" resulted from the cooperation between the band and Italian label. Not knowing myself very much about them I am afraid I must warn you my questions shall be rather simple and accessible enough.



you'll sign to good label."

The same should be the labels' condition since only Pagan Records seems to manage the survival. Yet what happened to Faithless?

"As I know Faithless Prod. Still exists, but I very advise signing to this label."

If my information is correct before performing in DARZAMAT you and Flauros had also performed in another black metal band: MASTIPHAL. What can you tell me about it? I know you did not keep in touch with and now you have not any connection with it anymore, but I believe it meant something for you... am I wrong?

"I played bass for MASTIPHAL. Flauros was and still is, as I know a MASTIPHAL's vocalist. You're not wrong. I did there my first musical steps. It was a good period for me as a musician. I learnt much then."

DARZAMAT was founded in 1995 and the first album was recorded in a

Hi Simon. How are you? How do you prepare yourself for facing a new spring, 2000 Year spring? Optimistically? What can you tell me about your actual state of mind? Your spiritual mood?

"I see this spring very optimistically. We're going to record new album soon. Lots of ideas were successfully realized, and this year is going to be the great one for DARZAMAT. My mood? As in the spring I feel a lot of energy and a will to work."

I visited Poland almost five years ago and to be more precise: Krakow and Katowice. Extremely fascinating towns: old buildings, medieval architecture, and lots of statues... Which town are you from? What can you tell me about Poland, how do you regard it?

"I'm from Katowice, but I don't think it's an "extremely fascinating" town. It's a typical industrial city with many smokestacks and coalmines. Nothing special in it, but my country is very beautiful. Really nice people live here. I'm very happy I was born here."

DarZamat

I must admit many bands from your country had a decisive word on European metal scene such as: VADER, CEMETERY OF SCREAM, HEFEYSTOS, LUX OCCULTA, CHRIST AGONY. What is your personal opinion about these bands? From another point of view there were many underground bands, some quite interesting, that succeeded not to impress professional labels. And I notice here PANDEMONIUM, MORDOR, CRYPTIC TALES, HOLY DEATH, BUNDESWEHR and MONUMENTUM. Do you think it is a matter of luck for some or misfortune for others? Or is it the quality difference that pointed out if success or not? Is it a disadvantage for you the fact you come from Poland?

"I like all of these bands. They play very good sounding music, especially VADER. Signing a good contract is not a matter of luck. If you play good music and believe in what you are doing, sooner or later some of the good labels will sign you. I think it's not a disadvantage, or an advantage that we're from Poland. As I said no matter where you from: if you play good music,



trio formula... Who is Kate? Did she perform in some other bands too? She owns quite an enchanting voice...

"She's from our town. She joined the band just before the recording session. We were so delighted by her voice and what she did for the album, so we asked her for staying with us. As I know she does not perform for any other band."

"In the Flames of Black Art" was recorded in 1996 in Cyber Studio and released one year later to Faithless Records. How did the public receive this album? I found it enclosed in various catalogues of distribution from all over Europe. What is your actual consideration regarding your debut?

"The public received our music very good. We were even proclaimed "most hopeful band". I think our debut album was the best thing we made yet. It doesn't mean I don't like the second MCD. It's also good, but not as good as I expected."

In 1997 Daamr and Bomba joined the band coming from an

unknown for me band: DRAGON. Thus, one year later you recorded a new product but this time only of five tracks and 26 minutes length. The MCD appeared last year at Faithless also under "In The Opium Of Black Veil" name, a product I still listen to at least at the same pleasure intensity. It is an interesting and excellent mixture of symphonic, black, romantic, atmospheric and gothic metal with an exquisite female voice and a male voice whose inflexions oscillate between gothic and black metal. The keyboard is bombastic, extremely expressive and "plainly" used (sometimes imitating even the trumpet). May I be wrong? What is your opinion?

"It's a good stuff, but as I said I like our debut album much more."

The covers you have chosen for the album are extremely expressive rather, bringing the Renaissance art to life. What do they represent? If on the first album you had chosen a man and a female, on second we face two women presented in a very weird aspect. One (the photo from promo back) is even playing at trumpet simulating obscene situations. Is it all an imagery matter or should we perceive also a tight connection straight to DARZAMAT concept? And as it came here, could you tell me what subjects are treated by Flauros' lyrics? "Beyond the World" might be a threshold we definitely must trespass in order to penetrate into DARZAMAT universe.

"The covers are connected with the lyrics and music. It's a big concept. I can't just explain you the Flauros' lyrics. Try to understand it in your way. It's really a good piece of art."

You entirely compose the music. What does inspire you? Some are inspired by nature, some by history and some by reality itself yet all treating diverse subjects such as: pain, suffering, regret, happiness, joy...

"I like to compose music by night when I'm very tired and cannot fall asleep. This state of mind is very inspiring."

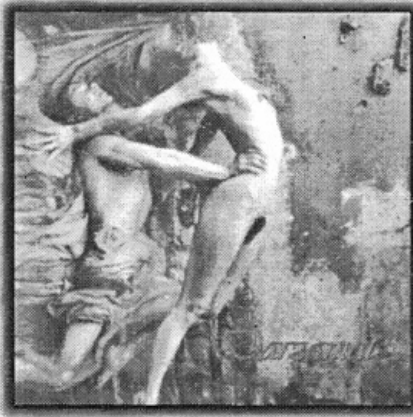
What is the meaning of DARZAMAT? And what kind of connection might be between this meaning and your music?

"DARZAMAT is goddess, which takes care of gardens. She helps us picking our greatest fruits of art."

I don't really know if "Seven Goldes Fires" appeared or not. Would you help me?

"It's released yet. It's a two-album combo. No new songs were recorded for this."

You had a signing with Wounded Love Records. When do you plan a new album? Which may do you intend it to sound? Can you offer me a few more details? Will you include some other new instruments? Some other elements, maybe? Shall we face other influences also?



routine? How do they spend free time? Are they friends or simply just colleagues in the same band?

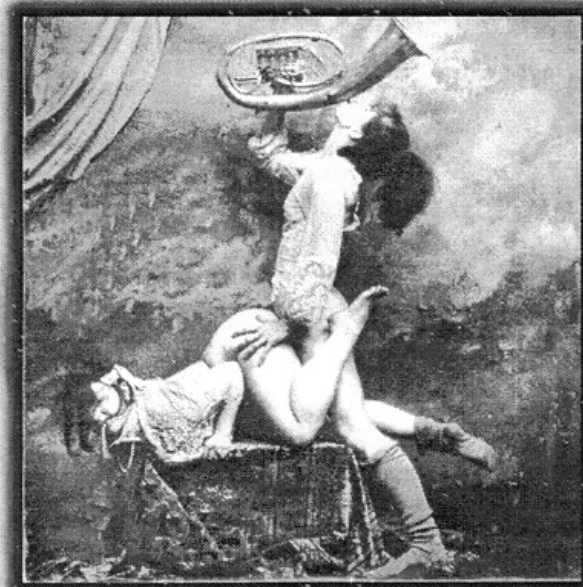
"Flauros is a journalist. I, Kate and Daamr are students. Bomba works in it's own music store. We don't meet very often each other, but we are

good friends."

What is your desire concerning DARZAMAT for this year? Is there any chance we might see you performing live? How would it be like?

"Record a good album. Chances for performing live are, but I really don't know when it could be. Maybe even this year. I don't know how it would be like, but we'll think up some unique things for sure."

Do you think the readers might have made an impression about who is and what is DARZAMAT? What else would they need to know about you? Or what else is left unsaid?



"DARZAMAT is not playing black metal. Lots of people still consider us as a BM band. It's not true."

How do you conceive terms like: passion, emotion, and ecstasy? Are they complementary? What is the meaning for passion in your eyes? What about ecstasy?

"Of course they are complementary. If you do something with a real passion you can always count on success. If not, you will do nothing."

Do you consider religion an important element for creative process? What is your personal opinion about religion? Poland is a Catholic country... The Pope is pole... Are you proud of this?

"Maybe for other people, but not for me. My opinion? People have right to believing in anything they want to. I'm very tolerant. Proud of polish Pope? Maybe a bit..."

What kind of person is Simon? Communicative? Sociable? Affable? From your answers (you gave me before this interview) I took the impression dialogue is not quite the most fascinating subject for you to approach, was I mistaken?

"I just don't like to dwell of something without reason. Straight to the point is my way of dialogue."

Are you interested in politics?

"I'm interested in politics, but don't want to talk about it. It's my private business."

I guess it should be enough for the first interview. May the New Millenium bring you whatever you longed for! Yet, coming to unpleasant situation, even worse: outrageous ones, did you ever "visited" the concentration camps from Birkenau or Auschwitz? How was it like? Do you find "educative" the actual so-called museum?

"Yes, I was in Auschwitz. It's a horrible place. We cannot let it happen again in the future."



Contact: E-mail: darzamat@pik-net.pl
http:// www.pik-net.pl/~darzamat/

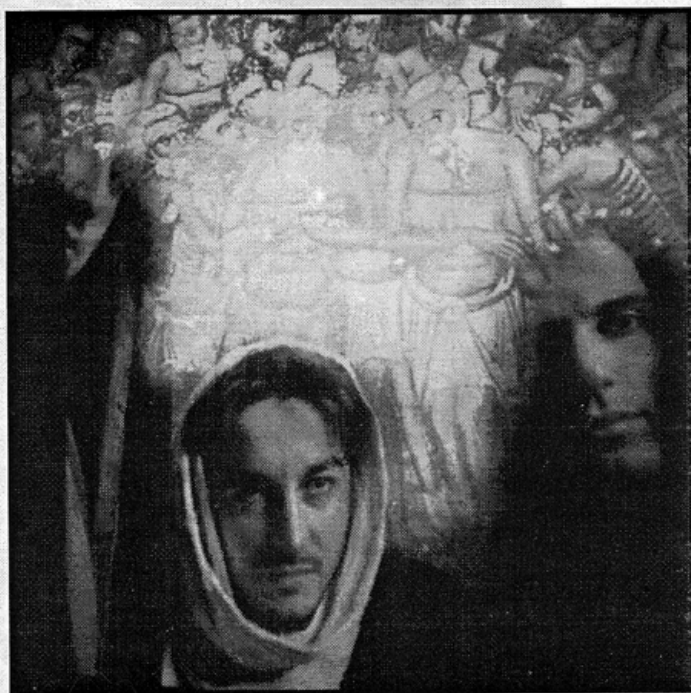
Welcome in "Kogaionon". Please enter in "crepuscular ambiance". Almost 13 years ago MONUMENTUM came to life, in 1991 Avantgarde (Obscure Plasma), in 1993 Wounded Love Records and in 1996 Soundcave. Can we wander back in time? Could you try introducing me in 80's atmosphere so that we should, little by little, following the chapters I pointed out for both of us... reach softly the new millenium...? Would you approve making some references about "Musaeum Hermeticum", DSP, Candle-light, Misanthropy, "In Absentia Christi", ANGUISH, OPTHALAMIA, KATATONIA,...

"This was a basic moment where I passed from a purely fan status to another one where I would be active musician and be running a magazine and a little label. Everything happened in coincidence (of course) of the most exciting scene era: 1987-1995 (of course the fan status started pretty much earlier!) I have today very feeble memories regarding that time to be honest. Everything happened damn hectic: the enthusiasm was higher than the stars and this involved a thousand people floating around my life (even though, I knew them only by letter or fame): bands, labels, zines editors, tape traders... In 1994-1995 the scene collapsed. A lot of people jumped in the picture smelling an easy business opportunity. The market's offer suddenly became higher than the people's demand itself (I believe) and the fans found them-

MONUMENTUM

selves blown-away by hundreds records, by the luxury of a scene where apparently everything was that damn big. The labels had to adequate... and at the end of the day, here we are: records have to sell no matter if they're great and original. Some of the names you mentioned are of course still pretty meaningful to me, but as I said, I don't really have distinct and detailed memories about that time. Thousand ones but none in particular."

As years passed by... we generally should have embraced maturity, well-founded concepts, evolution, new different points of view... What should be the inmost personal feature of your maturation? Perhaps life's deceptions transfigured irrevocably your laughter into a vague smile and also transformed disappointment into a common normality? Did somehow Roberto become a pragmatic person, a materialist one... a person who might have hidden his ideal dimension in a certain box named "Pandora"?



Could it be possible?

"I just briefly answer this one because after all this is not a personal interview, and I don't think that people is that interested to know who I am as a person. Strictly regarded to the music itself, and my involvement into that: I have become more materialist, but I would rather say that I have been forced doing so. I have lost much enthusiasm, devoured by the negative circumstances and a few sharks swimming in the pool... but still I am up and walking. Hopefully the walk will never stop. You anyway got the

point perfectly: disappointment is today a common normality. Splendid sentence."

I assumed (even somehow knew) you were not exactly a communicative person but rather opposite (should I say hostile?)... You hated answering outside's questions (let's hope you allow yourself-and myself too-an exception!). I imagine you rather prefer silence for an answer. What is silence's meaning in such particular case and generally for you? Should silence embrace a kind of isolation... an escape from normality, inner frame-sometimes polite-of disgust, a hidden one, or even deepest disdain to this very concrete and appropriate respond for the surrounding reality we're forced more or less to live in? And as for the other side of the coin-there are always two no matter what-should MONUMENTUM be regarded as your inner self-explosion? Your own violent sudden strong outburst of emotions? An unrestrained passionate even vicious or "outrageous" expansion of too much pathos?

"Yes, every time that MONUMENTUM activated, woke-up and gave some signal of life, it was like a nervous reaction of mine. If not violent. I wouldn't say I have ever been hostile. People dealing with me day by day wouldn't picture myself that way. Isolation is nice, and I often rescued in that. But... Very soon these walls started to scream and I had to leave the prison cell. "Silence is my answer"

is a policy of life and social approach that I preached and executed for too long in my life. In reality this brings you nowhere, but only back to your mental prison: living of suppositions will build a wall around you that might become impossible to climb whenever you feel doing so, whenever that prison cell is too small for you and therefore would like to give a look what's outside there. Ten years ago I thought that Silence was healing. It took me along while to fully understand that silence is disastrous in human relations of whatever kind."

How does the businessman Roberto Mammarella get along or communicate with Roberto the artist, the musician Roberto? Is it about a certain kind of degeneration into a double personality... a strange yet almost normal duality...? Would it be possible? What's the secret you discovered since you seem not be overwhelmed or eclipsed by common daily worrings, common facts, keeping your creative substance so compact... untouched even virgin? Am I wrong? I see MONUMENTUM as an attemporal project meant to last for ever which from time to time-almost a four-five years frequency-shocks the auditors... And then, what is indeed spectacular... MONUMENTUM returns into the same immune mood from any metamorphosis of time...

"Unfortunately the businessman is killing the Artist. It's all I can really say about this. I know it's a shame, but a matter of fact. I find always more difficult to hide my business subconscious. I don't think that artists should be too much bothered by financials and stuff like that. Ok, my business side has nothing to spare with MONUMENTUM, but MONUMENTUM is paying the bill anyway because it's my artistic interpretation of life. A artist can not concentrate on his drawings, sculptures, music, whatsoever, if he has no money to buy food, pay the rent and buy the materials needed to develop and express his art. Of course "the financials" is not my problem, but it's rather more mental pollution, as I would call it, that's calling me far away for that situation of intimacy where you rescue yourself in your keyboards, your guitar, and compose music."

MONUMENTUM coincides with last unedited CELTIC FROST album's title. Did you intend at the very first beginning to extend what Tom G. Warrior had consolidated at that time? How much soul did it cost you? How could you explain the authentic significance of MONUMENTUM?

"Yes, we were CF die hard fans, still being "Into The Pandemonium" the very best metal album ever released. We read some interviews, and they were oftenly referring to MONUMENTUM album as the last chapter of their history. The last chapter of a book, and then silence.... So it was damn natural for us to "symbolically" start from there, even though we were anticipating times because in fact Celtic's "MONUMENTUM" was not released at all. The authentic significance... mh... could say: something that stands up, well distinct, majestic in the crowd and that shall forever be there (like a monument) but that happens only seldom in life, and in that very moment you shouldn't miss the momentum to adore it."

Soon after the demo was finished Anthony and Mark left the band,

why? You have been together for a long time... Yet you only recorded a single demo, were you also busy by that time too? I know you recorded the demo only a few hours before leaving in army...

"Uh... how do you know all these things??? It seems like you have spent many years collecting evidences about my life! (It was my goal, ha, ha! -ed). With Anthony and Mark we had a very schizoid relationship. Anthony and I built up together this creature and spent a few years of our lives in deep community: we had such damn serious expectations from each other that as soon as something was not working all right it was like the fall of a whole generation's project. We were too serious with this. Even dramatic at times. Mark was the strangest entity of this project: never being really part of it, physically, and way too lost in his identity research. I had to record the demo with (symbolically) my uniform on, yes. This explains why the result was so bad. At that time we were school dudes and not really busy. But probably that was all we could offer to the band at that time."

The DSP offer seemed to be tempting. Unfortunately those times events messed everything and created confusion around you. Though you needed or more properly said: you've been forced to change yourselves and reorientate yourselves. I am aware it has been said and written a lot about and moreover produced a lot of money Euronymous' death but I cannot help myself not reminding of him, at least trespassing, because I know you were much closer and knew him much better than all those who had declared themselves "deeply" affected and troubled by his passing out. Could you describe him in a few words as far as you understood and appreciated him (and I know you tremendously did...)? How could he possibly offer a contract to a band that had nothing in common either with black metal or Satanism?

"I think he offered us a deal just because he liked our music, the demo I mean, and nothing else. Eventually he thought we were anyway obscure people if not "Satanist"! At least!! Eh eh. Well, what can I say about him. I tend not to judge people that I don't know very well personally, and after all, we were communicating only via letters and phone calls. By this kind of relationship all I can say that he was very charismatic person: he had a string personality, so it was like that somebody very powerful was talking. Thus he was very influential, even though after his death everybody in Norway started to fool around him and say things like he was a looser and stuff like that. When he was alive in fact everybody was obeying to him!! Eh eh. The only thing I never liked though was the way he "played" with the suicide of Dead: this story was really taken by Euronymous like a joke, with no least respect for that marvellous person that Pelle (Dead) was."

As a supplement for the previous question; In those times, big labels artificially promoted a 'past' death metal and small labels were looking one and only for black Northern bands; it was the time black metal came forth dominating among all. My question is in fact, the following: Wasn't it, no shades of doubt, a great enormous risk for a label to release a gothic, dark wave, folk and even PINK FLOYD or THE CURE influences? Were you definitely sure some label would be interested in your music? Why wasn't the album intended to be released at Avantgarde?

"You mean our album, yes. Well, on Avantgarde never because I separate the label from the band. It would be too easy to get a deal with Avantgarde (I should place two signatures on the same paper...) but realistically, I would never be sure that my music is great and stuff like that. I mean, it's rather more significant to have a label believing in my music that means is great. I wonder who would sign MISANTHROPE for example, if their main man wouldn't be the label boss of Holy Records..."

"In Absentia Christi" = "In Absentia dell Tempo". That's my personal definition of or my own interpretation for this album: somehow, out of time, behind time... originated into another different world... having no limits, no preconceptions... A concentric conceptualised album gathered

together from one single, enlightened ample splendid track not from ten. It is one single and singular WHOLE... with which you can enter a new magical extremely captivating and seductive horizon. How do you conceive the album now since almost five years have passed by? You did have exceptional partners... Francesca, Andrea...

"I also think it's like a long song, with no separate tracks. It's an album beyond times in every sense of the word because it could have been released yesterday or in 1987 and the result / impact on the people would be the same I believe. Your description is one of the best I ever got, thanks a lot for understanding this album so really well. And I'm amazed that your enthusiasm towards those musics is still alive after such a long time. Today I listen to it very seldomly. I have the typical artist's frustration that many things on that album could have done better. I have many regrets when it comes to certain performances and arrangements on that recording, but after all: this is it! And sometimes it still makes my day."

Instead of a rather deficient discography you still enjoy a great popularity gaining in time a myth, cult band. Why so? Did you communicate with fans? Do you have any idea of how many issues did you sale? Did ever the re-edition at Samoth' label take place?

"This is really a mystery: I don't know why! We were not particularly acclaimed by the critics because the album was pretty much out of any scheme and trend. The big mass of people never got into it of course, but the most refined listener, the ones who have a great and subtle taste for dark music did. And I feel like they are millions of people because we never had casual listeners: either they loved so much this album or they never gave it a try. I used to communicate with fans, ok, because I don't feel to be that distant from them: on the other hand, I always found pretty much peculiar that somebody was appreciating my music and not something granted. Samoth what? Do you mean the demo he was supposed to release on CD? No, this is out now on Necropolis Records!"



Tell me, what should be most difficult for MONUMENTUM, to create an album (I mean the music itself) or to record? Don't you appreciate spending almost eight months in a recording studio as being a far away too much time? Is it true, desire for perfection emphasizes as well the most insignificant

unconceivable details as the most important ones, or even more?

"Well let me say that for "In Absentia Christi" I have not been (of course) that long in the studio: we just recorded over the weekends thus it took so long amount of time. I personally would LOVE to compose an album directly in the studio skipping the whole rehearsals process. I would love to take, for example, one month and close ourselves in a studio in the middle of nowhere and start playing and recording everything is good. It is not difficult to record actually, I would spend a life in the studio and it gets nicer and nicer the more stuffs you lay into a song: I love to arrange songs and that's the reason why I figure myself more as a producer than a musician. I always said that I would love to compose a MONUMENTUM album, do not perform any instruments (having other people doing so) and just arrange and produce it."

Why did you consider (maybe you still do) music of a much seriousness or significance than lyrics? I'd like you to disclose yourself upon phonetic vocals harmonies... What can you tell me?

"Well, what can I say.... I don't feel I have something to say really in lyrics. It's personal stuff and I wouldn't even bother to know if somebody would read them or not. Lyrics for me are absolutely senseless if not for their part in the whole contest: it's the vocalist's instrument, that's it."

I don't think that too many people are noticing whether the guitarist is using this or that kind of scales and chords, it's just the final -immediate- result. A lyricist of course will think vice versa that he has to sing something meaningful and appropriate and yes, till that extent I wouldn't certainly write about bananas and dogs in my songs. But in the very same way, I wouldn't record a guitar solo ala Malmsteen in my songs, or wouldn't

record a double bass drums for instance. Everything must be appropriate in that whole "orchestra" even though there's no need for an excellent performance by the single musician / instrument. So yes, if I wouldn't have any inspiration to write something appropriate for a song of mine I would rather go sing only vocals harmonies, whatsoever phonetic words with no real meaning. After all I have thousands records at home but I never read one single lyric... I read books (eventually)!"

It was a rumour that a new album would be released at Misanthropy, then at Century Media... And also it was said about as embracing more atmospheric frames, even being more romantic, having various electro-pop elements... a strange combination of DEPECHE MODE and THE SMITHS... I believe you are the most appropriate person to land me the latest details concerning MONUMENTUM's future: sound, members, album title, lyrics, label, and release date... Shall it be also a great Italian wine offered to a Swedish vodka consumer?

"Eh! Many rumours, little facts though... shame on me and fuck the rest! Ok. It's a fact that after Misanthropy's demise I had some considerations about the label that could be interested in a new MONUMENTUM album. Actually I was amazed to get so many responses even though the band was missing the scenes since long time and back then was not that commercial chart breaker.... Last talks I had with Moonfog. About musical direction, I was pretty stupid to release in the press some naive statements about what I would like to reach with the band, but it was more a fan-based declaration more than a real matter of fact. DEPECHE MODE do breath in my heart but I wouldn't—even on purpose—incorporate them in my music because too many bands in the "so called" metal/gothic world already did it. So I would be frustrated to try and pay a tribute to DEPECHE MODE and then having some stupid metal journalists reviewing my album and saying that we are copying Moonspell's "Sin Pecado"! Know what I mean? (Yes, I also listen DEPECHE MODE but I'm not trying to make a cover version or an album in this manner, and the reason isn't the journalist... is only my bad artistic' side-ed). We have recorded one song "The Colour of Compassion" for the Misanthropy compilation two years ago, an instrumental one originally, that was re-recorded with Cornelius (SOLEFALD) on vocals some months ago. During the same sessions we have recorded the song "Black And Violet" for the Tribute to DEATH SS compilation CD that will be released this month (April-ed)."

How do you regard live performances? If I correctly recall you never performed live along MONUMENTUM. Why? Otherwise, do you enjoy live performances or going to? What do you think about those live performances... as ATARAXIA case? Or as in PECCATUM situation where only the guitar and voices are indeed live... the rest being supposed to rely on computer? Should it be understood as an attempt for moving the studio up on the stage?

"If we would perform live at all we would indeed over-use (abuse) of pre-recorded stuffs. It's nothing so bad after all... it's a pretty loser mentality of metal's diehard guitar masturbators that a band should perform everything true & live on the stage.... And if there is something played back with a computer than its bullshit. Well.... But anyway, no problems at all because I will never walk a stage so... ATARAXIA case? What do you mean? I love ATARAXIA records but their concerts are pretty much boring."

Misanthropy-a serious, model label which unfortunately splited out. A great loss, don't you think? There have been a lot of authentic bands promoted: ARCTURUS, MONUMENTUM, IN THE WOODS... FLEURETY...

"I don't think so, and I don't think that too many tears have been cried about this "loss". After all people are taking care about the music and the band, so a label should only guarantee certain professionalism and decent push-up to the bands. And yes, good taste in signatures. But anyway, I recognise that some of Misanthropy's bands were pretty much over the "trend limit", therefore (and pretty much consequently) the label couldn't make any better end..."

The bands' abundance imposed a far too many labels' appearance. Yet quite paradoxically... the interest for those metal styles seems to constantly decrease. What should be the reason: lack of originality? The commercial sound bands' promotion? Is mediocrity encouraged? Should be the bands' arrogance? Or simply the false musical concepts' utterance? I believe there is no time for choosing but definitely selecting... Do you think that a tight concurrence between so many actual bands or so many labels and either magazines... should be positive or constructive?

"No, I don't think that abundance means a greater quality standard: not for bands, not for labels and not for magazines. Bands, well you can hear that... Labels: ok, the concurrence forced every label to become more and more professional, there was no choice about that: either you stay in this business at these conditions or you just have to stay outside of it. There's no space any longer for amateurish labels: bands will talk with their friends in other bands and understand that there are labels giving a drastically different treatment, or they see some bands getting "success" and they wonder why they shouldn't then. But, the worst happened to magazines (I am talking about professional magazines with a monthly publication of course): suddenly they found themselves in a situation where it became impossible to deal with tens and tens of labels, all professional, all investing money in the magazine (advertisement!) and all demanding in return features about their bands / products. So, all you can see is basically that magazines like the "nice and glossy" German ones, or "Terrorizer" (UK) are now portfolios of advertisements and the big features (interviews) are of course mainly done with the bands that we know about..."

Heavy, speed, thrash, death, black, gothic were underground styles at its specific time but transformed one after another into a trend... What do you think the future has prepared for us? Ambient, industrial, retro? What styles do you think underground shall soon "manufacture"? If it's up to me, gothic term is superficially used or conceived because, for example, I see no gothic influence into TRISTANIA or DISMAL EUPHONY... Gothic is the SISTER OF MERCY... Perhaps gothic metal is a compromise we all accepted, don't you think?

"Ok, finally somebody who have the balls to scream this out loud!!!! In fact there is no meaning at all to abuse the term Gothic like it was in the last 3 years (or something). It's absolutely obscene to use terms Gothic Metal for bands like the ones you mentioned, and for many other as well, but...you see.... When a label is dealing with a band that's not playing black or death or power metal, then... They don't know what to write really... If they write "doom metal" than it's counterproductive because doom metal is the less selling genre into metal music and it's total loopy (marketing wise) to label a band doom metal!! I don't know that the future will bring us: luckily the retro-thrash metal attempt that some labels tried to launch back again some years ago has failed, and the "post metal / noise / whatsoever metal" for the moment is only a big mass phenomenon but there is no underground movement behind (I mean, you have KORN and some other bigger acts, but small labels tend not to invest in this kind of bands). We shall see..."

From magazines I could slightly read a strange irony, maybe a tendentious sarcasm addressed to Norwegian black bands. You once said that KVIST might be the No.1 band in Norway but if the opinions are different on Elm Street... than... the "top" should be decided by the others... those others... Was I wrong?

"Well, in fact KVIST delivered one of—still— the best black metal albums ever come from Norway, but it was completely ignored by the mass, and the "excellence of the scene" up there didn't pay them any attention. But, anyway, you can see that after all the so called "cream" of the Oslo scene never went that far either... except for those very famous bands that we know since ages... apart for them there's a lot of talkers and that's it... Many times they're talking shit only by envy... To say it with an example, apparently DIMMU BORGIR was one of the most hated bands there in Oslo, and nobody was talking to them etc, but the very same people paid 25.000 DEM (hell yeah !!!) to pay a support slot during the last DIMMU BORGIR European tour..."

Avantgarde Music is a label that consolidated its position in ten years long... reading the status of promoting almost singularly the European underground (why only European underground? I wonder?) with an achievement of one-two albums per month. What criterion should be enough for you to sign a contract with a certain band? Should subjectivity have an important word to say in such case? Does it have its place in the process? What bands are desired: at their first appearance or those having already released an album or even two albums released at less financial powerful labels? Could it be such Wounded Love Records case?

"It's really random I tell you... sometimes I feel like we're lacking a real signing strategy to tell the truth, because we often improvise. We have to like the band of course. If we like very much, badly like it, we will sign it no matter what even if the band is apparently not going to sell. If we do like it but nothing more, of course we wouldn't sign it, unless there are some good sales perspectives. In fact sometimes you do have to compromise (the reasons might be find in question #16!) and can't deny some

good sales... It's a wild circus out there... and it's a circus with high maintenance costs. I would love to make it big with bands like UNHOLY, THERGOTHON, DOLORIAN... but in fact they are not selling a shit. It's pretty much interesting when you get in touch with bands who already released one or two albums with some other labels are now looking for a new deal. It's indeed better than starting it up with a debut band. On the other hand... is the previous label let them go it basically means that it's no real big thing..."

KATATONIA and OPTHALAMIA were your reference bands as well as EMPEROR for Candlelight or DIMMU BORGIR for Cacophonous or NIGHTFALL for Holy or ABIGOR for Napalm... What bands do you think shall replace these ones? SOLEFALD, BEHEMOTH? Which were the best sales albums for last year? What is the Avantgarde's aim: to platform specially designed for releasing bands at their first appearance or for promoting the underground? To a prime superficial look my question could be misunderstood because the first part completes the second and reversed also. And one more last question in this particular order should be: do you affirm a certain peculiar affinity for Finnish bands? Or did I get a wrong impression?

"Ok, the Finnish bands are still the most original and crazy... we love the Finnish... shouldn't be that mysterious now.... I don't know who are our actual references: BEHEMOTH and DIABOLICAL MASQUERADE indeed have the first place when it comes to sales. The best selling albums in the last year are BEHEMOTH-"Satanica", MAYHEM-"Live in Milan", and DIABOLICAL MASQUERADE-"Nightwork". I see a bright future for OPERA IX a band that we will launch on the market on 5th of May (with their third album) as they finally have a musical maturity and with us got the chance to have a budget on their back, both on recording and promotion. The interests of distributors, labels and magazines about OPERA IX are very high now, so I am very positive about them. And, giving a look to debut bands, keep your eyes open for DIABLERIE a band from Finland that we have recently signed and that will record an album next summer. THEY RULE!!!!"

Soundcave is another Joe Ferraro's concerned project-the CULTUS SANGUINE leader. Is Soundcave the biggest European underground store record? What does it make this project to be different from others... tempting prices? What else?

"UH... how it comes that you are so well informed about us !!! Anyway, no, SoundCave is not the biggest metal store in Europe!! I suppose there are many far bigger ones in Europe, maybe in Germany. We have cool prices indeed, and you can find in the store everything a metallian would love to get from Santa Claus: CDs, LPs, shirts, spikes... inverted crosses...."

The promotion is handled by Stefania, an active person in written press. You (Avantgarde) also have an excellent site and it seems everything you attempt requires and proves high quality: Avantgarde, Wounded Love Records, Soundcave. Are you enough satisfied of your actual team? Is it the best you'd desire? What do you wish for the New Year to bring in your complex life? "The Holly Metal Trinity" in the Catholic Italy...

"Mhhh.... It's an "ok going activity" in all its forms, I couldn't say different. But I am a bit sad to understand that in this market there are precise limits that (it seems Like) we couldn't break and go further even with a double investment. Long speech really... Let's see. For the moment I kind of live day-by-day with this. Maybe in 3 years time we will sell the whole package to some idiots and open a pizzeria.... At least pizzas will always be popular and their sales will not depend on the kindness of some stupid magazines who wants to talk about them... and will not depend by the care given by some dickhead German distributor..."

What can you tell me about Italian scene, Italian labels? What about the others? What else music are you listening now? What music are you still listening?

"I will not speak about the Italian ob-scene. In particular the labels you mentioned.... I mean... c'mon !"

"In Absentia Christi" is a general expression that points out religion as being morality/slavery... How do you perceive this absence: ignorance or lack of faith (anathema)? Are you atheist or a nonreligious... even against religion person? How do you consider and regard morale liberty reported to own ego... to self-confidence and self-love?

"I have stopped considering myself in all its different possibili-

ties. I thought I would be an atheist but frankly this is too limiting, spiritually and mentally. But ok, physically yes, I live pretty much an atheist kind of life. I refused religion at a certain point of my life: if this is enough to consider myself an Atheist, than I am. Although I would observe that usually atheists are happy and proud of their lives, as they simply take it the materialist way. To me this is not enough, even though I haven't found an exit to this stagnating situation. I am a son of chaos, and therefore shall live my life in chaos."

"Love without real facts is dead". What is your vision upon "love"? Could jealousy be considered a quality... a love proof or a handicap... a primitive mode of expressing "affection"? Would you agree that true love should require a vague shade of jealousy?

"In theory not: if you are such sure about your beloved, you would trust her anyway in whatsoever situation. IN reality this is different and jealousy is a part of love, even the nice loves... My vision about love is pretty much dead. But I am the wrong one here I must say... it's not really the usual "the world is rotten, I hate the world" kind of situation. Love is not Rotten.... but as matter of fact I am not a part of it. If love is all that I have experienced, it's not big thing. But it might be also the case that I haven't found love..."

You're living in Italy, a country which history is well known all over the world. By the way, are you interested in history? Nobody can deny that's a prime reason for such tourism yours... A quite similar thing happens to be football... For some "Il Calcio" is more than a simple hobby... but rather a life style. Do you have a favourite team? Are you going to football games? What do you think, the violence registered in the rostrums should have the explanation of being the supporters nervous discharging act result or... everything is rather a manipulation... MAFIA???

"Ok, Italian history was interesting, but now for me it's normal routine. It's like people living in Paris... you know; they don't even see the Eiffel Tower anymore. It's there since ever... Il Calcio is indeed a life style as there are people talking about it everyday for hours. People getting real crazy and loosing money on it.... I stopped going to football games on regular basis many years ago. In the last five years I only went time-to-time after invitations by some friends, say one game every six months!! Now not even that much. I am not going and see football games since 2 years and I don't either plan doing so. I'm annoyed about it."

A friend from Serbia occasionally told me that by Kosovo conflict time a large part of Italians provided great information to Serbs about NATO' strategies. Could it be true? Is it? It almost started a new Mondial War... don't you think? Are you confronting with many refugees? A suppose you are sicked of Albanians...

"Yeah, there's too many Albanians here; too many. When tourists come to Milan they wonder if they have landed in the wrong country or what... What you say about the role of Italy in the Kosovo War might be true: after all Italian do have a fame of being cowards and to change their alleys in five minutes...."

Are you enjoying travelling? You've visited Norway, Greece... If I invited you on a trip in Universe... Where would you desire having the first "escale" (break)? One of last few nights I have heard in Russia the temperature recorded was -60 C. I can only imagine how much vodka was required...

"I like to travel but only in Europe. I will indeed pay a visit sooner or later to Egypt and some North-African countries as they have something that's fascinating me. But I don't think I will ever bother flying over USA or Australia, India wherever.... Ok, first and last escale would be on SATURN: to stay there forever."

We're getting closer to the end. Do you think the readers managed to have an idea of what Roberto is and especially who Roberto is...? Should it be something else to be said about you? From Christian point of view the answer is God... Yet what should be the question?

"I don't think that I am that famous and that people should be bothered at all with "who I am"! My friend, I think you're bringing this interview too much on a personal basis.... The readers will fall asleep and kill you afterwards."

I do appreciate and I indeed am thankful for accepting this long interview!!!! As a final farewell I wish you for a better new millenium! Still... Can you recommend me the best pizza? Or best spaghetti?

"Eh, thanks a lot for this great interview as well. It's nice to answer interviews that are not made in a standard way. You have done a great job! If you're doing so for every interview you do, your magazine indeed rules!! Best Pizza and spaghetti.... I have no favourite ones.... I eat all of them.... Take care!"

IN THE WOODS...



Hey amigo! You are absolutely difficult to be found! At least through e-mail I may find you time-to-time otherwise I might even think you became a ghost. At least for Europe. How are you now? How did you sleep last night? Do you still speak Norwegian? I believe in a short time when you arrive home you'd be a perfect teacher of Spanish language. What do you think about this language? How do you find Spanish? What about drinks? What do you prefer? Where and how did you spend the New Year?

"Howdy Romanian cowboy! Likewise, it was cool to hear from you again! It's been a while, thinking on how much contact we used to have via snail-mail a few years back. I'm quite fine at the moment, had an excellent sleep last night at the cheapest hostel in town, and I'm actually and currently hanging out with a Norwegian girl here in Cuzco, met her in La Paz, the capital of Bolivia, a couple of weeks ago, and while she's been trekking the mountains up here, I've been roaming around in Cuzco doing a lot of boring things, heh heh... My Spanish could be a lot better than it seems to be at the moment, and that's why I'm thinking of doing some English-teaching-to improve the Español; also because I really need the money. I think Spanish is a beautiful language, and I'm really into trying to speak fluently within a couple of years, but I need more time than I possibly have on this journey though. Preferred drinks are usually cuba libre (rum and coke), straight rum with lemon and, of course, cerveza. Pisco is not bad either. I had a bottle of the local cosqueña before I landed in front of this "computador", and it was delicious, as I haven't tasted beer for at least six days, heh heh heh.... And New Year eve? I spent that here in Cuzco as well, actually! I was sure it would be the last new years I would ever experience, because as we hung around the main plaza, there was something close to a war between some local dudes, and I was standing in the middle of the line of fire and couldn't get out. Fuck, they were throwing bombs and fire-crackers everywhere, and it turned out to be a hell of a party after all!"

What can you tell me about Peru? How is it like? Is it hot? Do you believe your ancestors might have even roots in to Incas civilizations? Cuzco (City of the Sun) and still is the centre of this ancient culture. Are you fascinated by the past of this country? I assume there is a wonderful view to be in and up the Andes... Machu Picchu, lost city of Incas, is built in the shape of enormous puma, some temples, holy stones...

"Well, Peru is a great country with a lot of fascinating culture of past and present. There are so many sites, villages and people that draw your attention, and I guess it would take years to explore. It's variety all together. At the moment, it's not really very hot where I reside. As Cuzco is situated in the range of the Andes-mountains, and has an altitude of 3500 m. above sea level, you can probably imagine that it gets pretty cold around here as soon as the sun sets. It's sometimes freezing in the evenings and at night, and it's really nice to sit outside and warm in the sun during the hours of morning. As Peru is hanging on to the southern hemisphere, winter is about to take its toll here at the moment. Not like the winter you find in Romania for instance, but more a period with lots of rain and cloudy days to go with it. No, I don't think my ancestors had any links to the Inca Empire specifically, but I know that were Vikings on these shores during the epoch the Vikings had a desire to explore. There is an ancient myth here in Peru that says there were some blonde and red-haired fellows long

What could be most interesting than an interview with a musician who is for more than ten months far away from home in a long exotic holiday far away from music press world, Europe and IN THE WOODS... too. Let us find out what Jan Kenneth does now especially year after year have surprised us with diverse complex but fascinating albums: "Heart Of The Ages", "Omnia" or "Strange In Stereo". Taking in account the fact I haven't made an interview with band for many years... I do hope you'd enjoy our discussion. Thus... on air directly from South America, Peru...

before the Inca were even reality, and that they came with peace from far up north to the Indian-cultures that resided here at the time. Many say that they were received like gods and that this ultimately led to the defeat of the Inca-empire. Because when the Spanish conquistadors came 5-600 years later, they thought it was the gods who had returned according to the myth, and thus the Spaniards had an easy task (in most of the occasions, that is) in conquering the empire of the Inca's. It is actually Cuzco that was built in the shape of a puma on the height of the mentioned empire. If you view a map over the entire city-which have grown a little since then-you can still see part of the puma-shaped city planning. There are some ruins on top of a hill right behind me, that signified the head, and that somewhere still can be viewed as they were originally! It's really maravilloso, as they say 'round here. The heaviest stone weighs more than 35 tons! And Machu Picchu? Fuck-it's incredible and it's hard to say very much more about it! Should be seen through personal eyes!"

At Geography I have learnt Peru should be divided in three different regions: Costa, Sierra (punas) and La Montana (the jungle). Have you visited them? Titicaca Lake is situated at the highest altitude on Earth. How is it really like to be there? A good friend of mine told me about a train in zigzag... Did you have a bath in Pacific?

"Like you say, Peru is divided into three regions; the Coast (la costa) which is mostly desert and beaches, the mountains (la sierra) which dwell in the centre of the country and ultimately the jungle (la selva) residing behind the mountain-range and which borders the Brazilian Amazons. I know by now Lima and some regions around a couple of towns in the mountains like Cuzco, Puno (which lay peacefully along the shores of lake Titicaca-the origin of the son's of the sun (Incas)) and a couple of other, smaller towns around Cuzco. Iquitos, which is actually the worlds biggest city without possibility to enter by car, is the only place I know from the Peruvian jungle, but it's a relaxed city and has loads of reserves and indigenous in it's nearest surroundings. When I sailed the entire amazons a few months back, I started in Iquitos and had some kind of a jungle-safari before I entered the oas. That was pretty cool! We were fishing pirania's and preparing them afterwards and we also got to see and experience many different species of animals + the use of medicinal plants. Even had a swim in the mighty Amazons! And the Pacific? Had a swim there as well, of course... The train your friend was speaking of must either be the train from the coast up here to Cuzco, or from Puno to Cuzco. I never took a ride with the first one, but the Puno-Cuzco one was quite an experience; after almost half way journey, the locomotive departed from the rest of the train, as it didn't have enough horsepower to pull the whole thing. We had to wait for an hour and a half before it returned, and everybody thought we had to spend the night up there. We anyhow reached Cuzco late at night-five hours delayed from schedule (which is barely nothing to Peruvian standards; once I took a bus-ride supposed to last for 24 hours and it ended up taking 65)."

Describe me your feelings when living among Amerindians and mestizas (half caste people)? I believe you are among the few white people. Unfortunately you have to "beg" them for a job, am I right? Tell me it

really "so far away" geographically and financially Norway this moment from you?

"Well, as the world is getting smaller and smaller, I can tell you that there's actually quite a lot of tourism down here. Especially in Cuzco, because Cuzco is supposed to be one of the archaeological capitals of the world, there's especially a lot of Americans coming here. Also you find quite a few European backpackers that travel by guidebooks, and by that find this area by reading about it in their guides. Even though the organized American tours outnumber the other groups of tourists, you'll find quite a few Europeans and Japanese people here during the months of June/July especially. Hepphepp! I've actually got a job now, and it's waiting for me to grab it here in Cuzco in a couple of weeks. I've got something going in Lima as well, so it depends on which one that'll happen first. In many ways, Peru is very far away from Norway, but here-like in any country-you find the big difference between rich and poor. Most of the poor people are Indians or have Indian origin (like what have happened to indigenous groups all over the world e.g. the north American Indians, the aborigines of Australia, the Maoris of New Zealand, indigenous of Africa and so forth). You can take a walk in Lima and find European "standards" in the rich neighbourhoods and then find the genius Latin American spirit in the poorer one's, the favela's, the slums etc. It's a world full of opposites over here, and that's something I find very fascinating: to totally different realities living so close and still so far away. I guess you'll find this easily in Romania as well, no? It's been fifteen years since I visited, so many things have changed..." (Mostly, yes-ed)

Peru was for hundreds years a Spanish conquest, thus the main religion should be Catholicism. How did you value the combination of the two different cultures, on one hand the genuine traditional one and on another hand the Christianity?

"It depends on where you go, really. In the bigger cities, Catholicism have outnumbered all ancient believes, but if you take a closer look at the small villages, you can sometimes witness combinations of Catholicism and ancient religion. You can find old rituals practiced in catholic churches and so forth, and its pretty cool and colourful compared to Catholicism alone, with it's stiff, yawning ceremonies..."

I have already asked you too much about Peru. Yet let us remain in South America starting with questioning you where from did you get the idea of pilgrimage? You started wandering far and wide almost ten months ago... aren't you missing home, friends, fjords or Kristiansand? What "cure" did you find so far?

"Actually I don't miss Norway at all. I know that the good friends I have will always be good friends no matter how long we're apart, and as I don't really have a settled place to live when I return, I don't have any home to miss. The only thing I feel missing and that I've only recently come to think of, is working together with a band again. It's relaxing to work on your own to some extent, but always cool to get input on your ideas from the rest of the band...these days, I've started looking forward to working on IN THE WOODS... SO? and NAERVAER-material again, even though I couldn't take anymore of any of them before I departed. Guess I just needed to do something completely different that music for a while in order to understand what the whole thing really was about. And now where starting to talk in "cures"? Heh heh heh.... well, I guess I've kind of managed to state a couple of points, or three along the way, but they're all to intricate and personal to try and get into here. I'm anyway feeling a lot better about things in general now than I used to do before I departed Norway."

You were telling me you slept over 80 beds until now. Alone? What phasing memories do you keep in mind regarding this continent? About over 14 countries you visited? Do you really think you would enjoy living there? Brazil fascinated you. Would you land my readers a few details concerning this "trip" (if I may call it so) a few funny things or not quite funny... happened to you while living there? I myself am curious, how is Amazonia... and to be in fact there...? I imagine the flora and fauna are indeed amazing, absolutely amazing, beyond any comparison, please de-

scribe! What about drugs?

"Well, Doru, I'm about twenty-five now and consider myself an old monk. Of course I slept alone in all them beds! What did you expect, heh? (I don't know, are you a catholic monk, maybe?-ed). Brazil is definitely the most impressive, warm and groovy country that I've ever visited, and I would really, like already mentioned, like to live there some day. I've got a secret dream about what I want to do there to make a living, but first I have to become a rock-star in order to gather the cash required, heh heh... This time, I stayed almost three months in Brazil, and I enjoyed such diverse places as amazons (strange boat-trips usually with locals that wanted to explain a whole lot about the environment etc. in Portuguese-which is not my strongest of all languages-and loads of animals + many long nights in the hammock with premium weed from the jungle of Peru...), the whole coast down to Rio de Janeiro with lots of stops in between (like the carnival in Salvador, Bahia, for instance; a week-long event that contained the wildest parties, the most beautiful women on the surface of planet earth and excellent meals and kicks to go with it...). Spent a few weeks in Rio as well, which is a crazy city with all the variation you can ever imagine and which is hard to project through only a few lines of an interview. While we were sailing the amazons, we simply just had to check out the hallucinogenic provided by "farmacia de dios"-"the pharmacy of god", as the locals chose to call it. The "only" one we could get our hands on though, was the tabac-like "ayahuasca"-a totally crazy hallucinogenic that made me travel inwards like I've never done before. The whole piece of flesh and spirit which is I, opened up and I ended up having a grand perspective upon life

thus far and the history which is yet to come. An incredible contact with the environment was also projected through the use of the plant, and I can fully understand that the indigenous still use it to gain contact with the spirits of the earth."

In our first interview made together in 1995 you were telling me you enjoyed travelling and you also already had travelled visiting many places from all over the world. What happened in the last five years? What else have you visited? I believe I heard you visited Venezuela and Australia right after "Omnia" recording. Where from did you get all that money? Could it be all from IN THE WOODS albums sales?

"I haven't really travelled extensively since then, but I've had a couple of round-trips throughout Europe, a couple of months in New Zealand (without visiting Australia in the same go) and then finally this journey that doesn't seem to finish in the first couple of weeks, heh heh... In between the travelling, I've been working. Sometimes pretty hard in order to save money for the mentioned necessity, while other periods more tranquil to focus energy and attention to music. The few money we've made with IN THE WOODS... so far, have barely covered the cost of some equipment we've bought, so I can assure you that being a musician on this level is definitely not a luxurious business"...

Slowly we are finally approaching to music. Have you listened to something lately since known the fact you are so far away from here? Or, perhaps only "Lambada"? Have you composed or played either? Did you find somehow fans of your music there? Could we expect an experimental Peruvian musical project having Jan Kenneth as guest?

"When I left Norway, I didn't bring any music on purpose, because I wanted to suck in the atmosphere of the music of Latin America and when I spent a month in Jamaica, I had an excellent opportunity to have a look and participate in the reggae/ragga-culture from the inside, which was a totally different experience than the music-culture I've grown up with. I've also come to appreciate some of the salsa when it doesn't become to cheesy and there is also a rich folklore up here in the Andes that really kicks ass when it's not commercialised! Brazil also had a lot of interesting music to reveal, both popular and African-folkloric, and as long as it kept on going through the nights, you could listen to the rhythms only and forget the often-dodgy lyrics, heh... But just to move with the sometimes trance-like rhythm's and to have a look at the chicas-which more than anything loves to shove their moves to bypasses-is a fabulous experience you'll



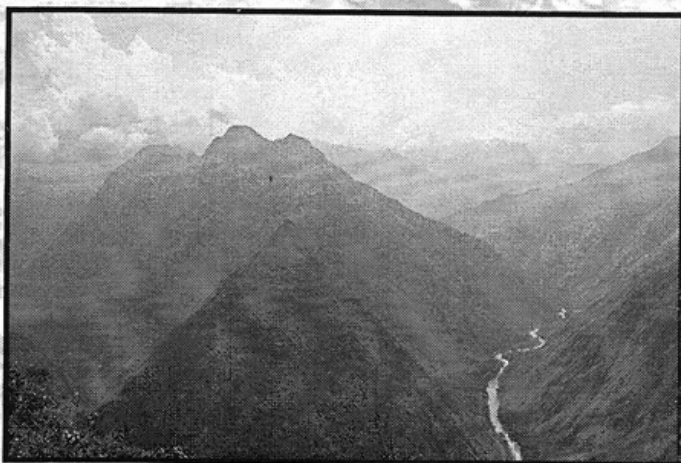
never be able to forget for as long as you live, my man!"

I would like us making an incursion back in time so that you could tell me how do you regard now the IN THE WOODS band history. There are over eight years since existing... What should be your actual vision upon IN THE WOODS? In better words, what is your regarding from another corner of the world concerning your achievements even since "Isle Of Men". Could you perform for me an exotic presentation yet real (if real and reality kept the same signification any further)?

"Like you say, we've kept IN THE WOODS... going now for about eight years. There have been many great moments to remember, but there have also been deep conflicts that become inevitable when you have a band so full of crazy personalities. So many times we've been about to break up and so many times have something weird occurred to prevent it, that I've started to believe we're almost doomed to carry the spirit of IN THE WOODS... even further in the coming years. Of course anything can happen along the way and you'll never really know, but I have a feeling that it would be unnatural to call it a day at this point. I feel we have a strong line-up at the present, and it'll be interesting to see how the next efforts will evolve... I think by releasing "Three Times 7..." these days, we're closing the first chapter of the bands story and move on to next chapter, which probably will show a new and unveiled face of IN THE WOODS..."

Can you tell me something about your tours? You've played along KATATONIA, TRAIL OF TEARS... What memories do band you to these tours? What memories do you still pleasingly keep in mind?

"We had a good time while touring Europe with VOICE OF DESTRUCTION and KATATONIA a few years back, and we also had a great time while doing a couple of smaller excursions to Germany alone. The most memorable to me, is the mini-tour we did in Germany after releasing "Omnia". We were away for about a week, and we almost didn't sleep at all because we had such a tight schedule. Bjoern (one of the guitarists at the time) were driving in the night from Hamburg to some place down



south, and I was given the job to entertain him so that he wouldn't fall asleep. I remember I was so tired that I started to hallucinate a lot of weird, outer planet movements, and we couldn't understand were all the tiredness came from as we drank litters of hot coffee as we drove; Bjoern almost fell asleep a lot of the time and I had to hit myself in the head to be able to keep him awake. The next day we realized we'd been drinking caffeine-free coffee and that it was incredible we managed to get to the next venue without injuries of any kind."

Tiziana has decided to shut down the label. Do you think Misanthropy realized a good promotion and have quality for you? You and BURZUM represented the "columns" of the British label.

"As a whole, I believe Misanthropy was a good label for us, even though the fact that BURZUM was on the same label managed to make things a bit difficult for us sometimes. Misanthropy suffered a lot of boycotting because of BURZUM, and thus this interfered with the distribution of our releases as well. I think Misanthropy did well, thinking of the possibilities and the size of the company, but as an artist there are always things you would wish your record-company could do better."

After Misanthropy disappearance, Guido offered you a signing. You really had a good relationship with him, he visited Norway, stayed at your home... after that I read a message where things got very complicated and Hammerheart become nervous and upset because of the agreement you

had considering you not so serious. In fact, what happened? Did you break your relationship with Guido? He did release your demo CD. What is your opinion about Martin's label? Is it a good advantageous signing for you the one you have with Prophecy? I cannot believe there was no interests to have come from another big labels... explain more. DIMMU BORGIR, OPETH, THE KOVENANT were perhaps more fortunate than you, was it just luck?

"The thing with Hammerheart was not really complicated at all; me and Guido used to maintain a lot of contact back and forth, but as times changed and other time-consuming interests took place, we lost it gradually (like what happened to yours and mine coll.). When the news still were hot concerning Misanthropy's calling it a day, Guido phoned me all of a sudden to see how things were. As we hadn't been in contact for a few years, I kind got into second thoughts when he said he wanted to come visit again and told that it would be cool with a visit, but not because we wanted to sign a deal-more cause of "old times friendship". Anyway, Guido arrived a couple of weeks later; we talked about an eventual deal, but didn't agree upon anything as we had to negotiate with the entire band (though this is a point we later disagreed upon with Guido.). When we a few days after his departure sat down and had a chat with all the boys and Synne present, there were disagreements to sign with Hammerheart, and as we've always kept the band on a democratic basis, we had to agree upon a label that everyone wanted to go with. Thus the choice fell upon Prophecy, a label we also had good relations with a forehand because of NAERVAER and DRAWN. We've anyhow only signed with Prophecy for one album ("Three Times..."). After that, we'll see. It'll be hard for this band to go with a bigger label, even though we've had offers, because IN THE WOODS... is a band that needs a lot of freedom and spare-time in order to make things work out the way they should."

But let's come back to your last album or, more precisely, let us return to 70 years. I am so curious, where from this passion for PINK FLOYD? What was the purpose of editing this album? It is rather a collection of tracks.

"I don't know where the PINK FLOYD fascination came from. Some of us grew up with it through our parents, while others needed to discover the band themselves. I guess PINK FLOYD survey the feeling of something indefinable and extraordinary, and that it's easy to become involved if you deal with the same subjects in life. Also this specific period have interested the band almost ever since we started, because it was a time full of innovation and limitless urges that always took music a step further, like we've always wanted to do with IN THE WOODS... and thus it became natural for us to identify with this period more than the present waves. (The 60's/ 70's, that is). When we did the first 7", covering AIRPLANE's "White Rabbit", we came to think of the idea of doing more mini's on vinyl by covering other bands from the 60's/70's and then use the b-side for re-recordings or first recordings of older songs that didn't fit in on the albums. The idea was born; we carried it through, and ended up with this collection after the third one was recorded. As most of our listeners belong to the "CD-generation", we figured it would be cool to release a laser-version as well, by adding a few more tracks more experimental than we've ever done them. It turned out to be a pretty nasty disc in the end, and like I mentioned previously, the last page of first IN THE WOODS... chapter."

I know you suffered a few changing in line up. Did any quarrels occur between you? The female voice is quite very special one. Your voice is rather unique distinct and unmistakable. What would be, in your eyes, the characteristically elements of your band? Could we regard IN THE WOODS... as a sum of persons or as a united whole whose exponent is just you? Why did you give up your nickname Ovl Svithjod? Now Jan Transit... you are indeed in a continuous "transit"...

"Heh heh, you crazy Romanian hombre! Thanks for grand compliments! Yeah, we had a few quarrels during the years, but not because we disliked each other-more because we were all struggling on personal levels and that it became hard to continue working collectively. From '92 until now, we've only lost one of the original members and gained two new; Synne (vocals), joined in '95 with her enthralling outlets and Christer joined spring of '98-just before the recording of "Strange in stereo". The most characteristic thing about IN THE WOODS... is that it's a band packed with characters. It's a really weird mix of people all together, and it's a mystery how we can keep up with each other at times. We've got so many different interests individually, and as most of us add this to the structures of the music, we usually turn out with strange combinations musically. When we started out, we sort of shared the different things that had to be done band-wise, between us. I took care of words and collaboration/outer

aspects, while others took care of the musical composing and other issues that had to be sorted. Thus I kind became the "face" of the band, and there were periods when IN THE WOODS... were issued as a one-man-project, and it didn't help trying to prove the opposite to some extent. However, it's always been a band that depended on the works and participations of us all, and could never work if you took an element or two, away. I changed my pseudonym a few years back because I found it hard at the time to identify with the young bloke that invented "ovl.s.". Now I know that little ovl. is just as important as any other "me" that have existed, and we still maintain night-long conversations to this date."

Is it too early for me to ask you when should your next album appear or it would be more correct to ask you when do you plan to return home? Do you think this year shall bring you a new album? How do you imagine it would sound like? Shall you use Latin South American tendencies (how stupid might even sound!)? I understood your colleagues have already started to compose. What would be your latest news? Could you tell me how many members of your band activate in other projects also? Please describe me your members.

"I know that the other guys are rehearsing a new album right now, but cannot provide much more info as I haven't been in contact with them since new-years. We've half-way planned to record the next album in the late, European summer and if all go as "planned" and we all manage to pack our stuff together, there might be a possibility for an early 2001-release. It's hard to say how it'll turn out, because I've only heard a couple of guitar-ideas thus far. Though they somehow draw a picture of what it'll eventually turn out like, it's difficult to reveal to much at this point other than it will be a concept-album and probably will bear the title "seed". I reckon no Latin-spirit will shine through the album, as most of it was composed way before I departed. All the members of the band are involved with other projects beside IN THE WOODS..., but we somehow maintain it as our basic "occupation" (with a couple of exceptions, that is), making the other one's branches that sometimes demands more time than IN THE WOODS... in the periods the band lay more low."

DRAWN is a project you were invited in also. What can you tell me about it? The debut album shocked me undoubtedly.

"DRAWN is the main project of Christer. We used to rehearse with them downtown Kristiansand, and when Oddvar (one of the original guitarists) left because of personal reasons, we asked Christer to help us out on "Strange in stereo". After that, he became a permanent member, even though he still holds DRAWN as his main occupation. When DRAWN signed a deal with Prophecy, they had a couple of songs they felt needed a different touch than the other one's. They asked if I wanted to try and collaborate with a few ideas, and I was happy to try something way different than IN THE WOODS..."

The same goes for SO?! Tommy told me he would intend conceiving new tracks. Whose idea was regarding this project? Can you speak me about a little about this music? The three of you are playing in other different bands, as TORST or NAERVAER.

"It was Tommy who conceived the idea about kicking off SO?!. I believe it was back in '97, or so. He wanted to gather a band with no more intentions than to have fun and make jokes, heh heh, and eventually we gathered as a trio of friends (Tommy, Spoersmaalsstein and little Ovl...). Stein composed some ultra heavy tracks that we finally recorded late '97 in order to check how it sounded on tape. As we had a crazy time and the songs turned out pretty groovy, we decided to continue. A year later, we recorded more songs and did a couple of gigs in Kristiansand according to the latest news, there are songs only waiting to be recorded and it'll be cool to have a listen to Stein's electric, groove-tunes when I return! It's true that Tommy and Stein have their main occupation with TRRST (I believe they're recording the second album right now), but as both of them make a living with music, they don't find it hard to make SO?!-jokes."

The last band I would like to mention about right now is NAERVAER. Their demo was recommended even by yourself a long time ago. How do you appreciate the music of the two of them evolved? Their debut album is still struggling to be released and for a good period of time (already a few months).

"I'm simply forced to enjoy NAERVAER, as I participate on some vocals, but I find myself fortunate to be able to view this project objectively, as Terje (NAERVAER's main-brain) takes care of most of the com-

posing. I don't know what have happened with the release of the album, but I guess it'll happen within a few months. It's a best of a weirdo and an excellent debut, so to speak."

Do you think we should mention also another band or another musical style? What can you tell me about metal scene? Are you still approving for according interviews? Tell me, do your fans still question and interest themselves about you? You own even a site.



"Though I lost most of my contact with the underground a few years back, I still kinds follow what's going on. I've got quite a few friends back in Kristiansand that keeps me up-dated with new releases etc., but I personally think that the level of quality have fallen since the early nineties. Of course we still do interviews! We try and answer them all as far as it's possible, and we know that this aspect is just as important as the music itself. We still maintain contact with the listeners, but more through the mentioned site these days, as it's cheaper and less time-consuming than snail-mail."

I am sure this interview brought you at least for a few certain moments back with your thoughts in Europe. The years are passing by we are getting older and older. How did Jan Transit change himself in last five years? His evolution... What should be its features? What about his maturation? Will you marry soon? Shall you find yourself a correct job down Kristiansand? Shall you travel any longer?

"As soon as I return to Kristiansand and Norway, I will marry, get a job as finance-consultant in a bank, pick up a loan, build a house, buy a car and get a dog, and I can assure you that I'll never leave Norway again (with the exception that I'll maybe take the boat to Denmark a couple of times a year to buy infested meat). Sounds great, heh? I don't know, hombre... things changes, life changes... of course things have changed, but it's hard to go in detail here. I usually regard our releases as diaries of different periods, because we all put so much of ourselves into the music. Maybe it's easier to have a look at them and their evolution... the only thing I feel like doing right now, is to walk out of this net-cafe, get a beer and take it easy. I'm going to return to Kristiansand this Summer, work out some music and then see if I can get a job in order to travel more as soon as some of the tasks are accomplished. Maybe I won't even do that. I don't know. Only time knows, I guess."

We had reached finally an end. Gracia! For the interview and I hope Lima would be a city ready to satisfy and offer you the required "support" you definitely need. What does the past represent for you? What about the present? I believe we cannot talk about future yet since it is not quite a palpable thing (we can only hope or assume). What is most important for you: the past, the present or the future? Otherwise the actual IN THE WOODS... music has any connection with the ad litteram signification of the name? Perhaps it remained only the suspension periods... By the way, in 1995, in "Kogaionon" you were telling me as: "Omission marks are somewhat a symbol of something which never really ends, but which continuously follows independently from time...". It seems like until now you were definitely right.

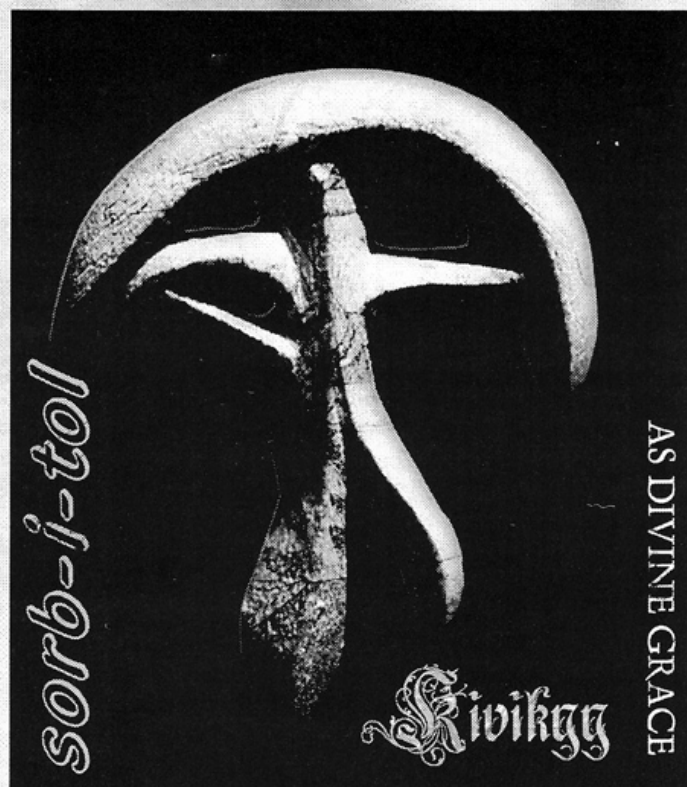
"Gracias to you as well, Doru, even though you totally made me broke with your long, time and money consuming interview... In order to answer your last question, I can only say that I'm kind forced to care for them all; past, presents and future are all as important to me as the other. They are all me, and I cannot afford to forget either one.... see you sooner or later, amigo!"

Just from the beginning I was very confused; I had no idea what title should I choose AS DIVINE GRACE, KIVIKYY or SORB-I-TOL. It's hard to perform an interview with a musician who plays in more than one project. In this very situation, my guest, Jukka Pekka Sillanpää, had decided to answer me a few questions focussed on each project he activates in. I see no reason for questioning aspects of bands' history or some other details you may read yourselves on their site, www.listen.to/asdivinegrace. For all who desire finding out certain details about AS DIVINE GRACE, their site can satisfy any curiosity of yours. That is why this present interview skips over some chapters you might have considered necessary and classic for a complete interview. Let us see how Jukka intends bringing us with the feet down on earth.

Hi. After lecturing carefully the site Alessandro Concini realized I got confused not knowing if having any point to ask any question at all. There can be found lots of information and data about each member of AS DIVINE GRACE band. What do you think about this modern technology? As for as the profession is concerned (you are an engineer) the computer is an important and necessary almost unmissed accessory. Do you think we might dehumanise ourselves? Paradoxically or not you live in a peaceful village with pitoresque views, animals surrounding you (14 goats, 4 cats and a dog, by the way which kind?)... Where does the past end and where from does the present begin... or more correctly said the future?

"Well, I absolutely agree you talking about computers and it's power of our present life, personally in my life they have very big meaning in normal life, working in my office and of course in all sector of composing music, making web-sites, making cover arts and of course communicating with my friends in Finland and abroad by email. For example in my working place, I use computer almost 7,5 hour per day, designing our products, communicating with clients, making advertises, documentations etc. Then when I come to home, I always turn my PC on at the first, check emails and then continuing with other things like cooking with my girlfriend etc. Normal things. Well, I'd say that I'm very addicted of computers in even in normal life. An other hand, computers are me just like hammer, a tool, which I need to do things, I can also be without them, but without PCs, working is difficult, that's fact. Anyway, here in countryside, where we live, especially during Summer times, sometimes electricity will suddenly stop, cause of thunder etc. So that time you just notice, that how important electricity is nowadays for people, you cannot use computers, any electric machines including music instruments etc. so you have to do everything like unplug! OK, our house is so old, that we have old type of heating system here, so that isn't a problem, we can even cook very well without electricity, so I'd say that sometimes in our life present/future stop and past begin! That's very important to me to understand that machines and electricity isn't the most important thing at all, also when speaking about composing music. I mean that you must have possibility to compose music also in "unplug" way, for example with guitar or piano or only with your own voice, your own voice is also very good tool for that. Nature and animals have also very big role in our family life, that's true and it's very important, cause by this way I can go away from this technical environment, things like that makes you more mature."

If having a second thought I remember you playing in 20 many albums in last 13th years so that very few could identify your name with a certain band. How do you perceive this "travel" from a band to another: SYNDICATE, FUNCUNT, SCEPTICAL SCHIZO, LAVRA or THIS EMPTY FLOW? Do special memories band of one or another band? Please de-



velop you ideas the way you desire.

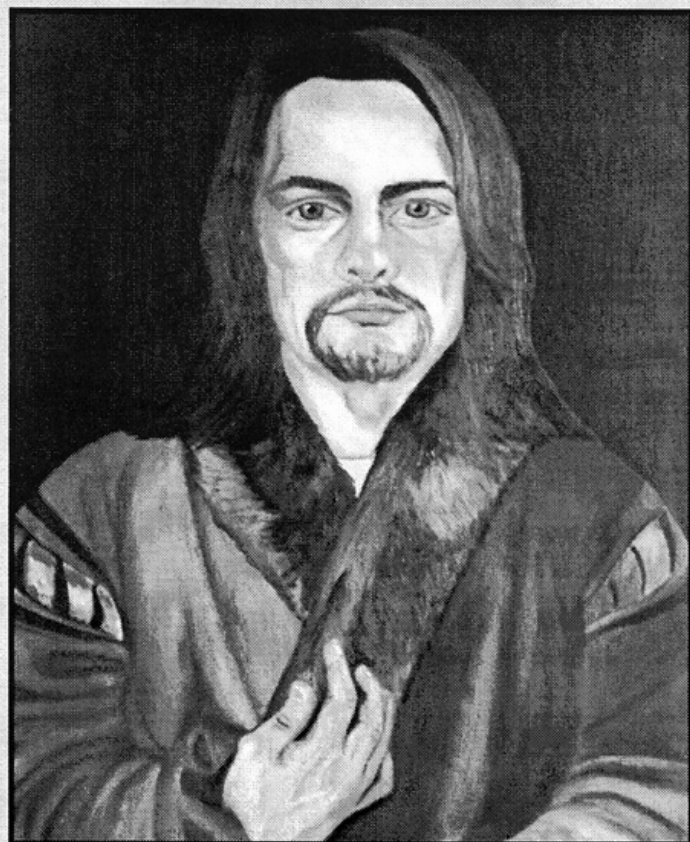
"OK, SYNDICATE was my first "real" band, I had with my brother one "band" after that one, but with SYNDICATE we made first real demos, got some good responses, sold about 200 copies and got some success in local scene. Anyway it was only like band school for me, I learned couple things like how to act with other members and if you are a member of group, you always have to make compromises. Then came FUNCUNT/F, same band, but we changed our stupid name to simple F, when we did our first official release. F was my first band that made albums and got many good responses from abroad. With that band we started working in metal-underground. Our music style and way of think how to composing was totally free, almost too free sometimes making songs sounding like totally chaos. It was totally experiment, not just normal band. We developed our style all time, which made us very unique group. I was a member of that band from 1989 to 1995, like found member at to end of this group. Why this group broke up, there were too many reasons to tell in this interview, but basically I became tired the whole thing, I wanted to make more controlled stuff plus the big reason was our guitarist and his attitude, we other wanted to replace him, but same time I became more interested also electric ambient and just tried to compose all this "free" stuff, so I just thought, fuck I want to stop the whole thing! Anyway we did couple very crazy releases during these years; I recommend checking especially FUNCUNT's second demo called "Coldeäccol" 1991 and our last release, full lenght cd called "I-III" 1994. SCEPTICAL SCHIZO/LAVRA was the same band, but we changed that older name to LAVRA before our full-length album called "Bluenothing" in 1995. Four guys founded the band in 1989; they did 4 demos with my helping hands (I recorded/"produced" them). I came to band during 1992 before our first EP. Under moniker SCEPTICAL SCHIZO we did two EP's in very slow doom style. Anyway the best releases of this band are this first EP and LAVRA's CD. After album we slowly stopped our band, basically cause our member's interest doing that kind of music died. Well in that time I had three different bands, F, LAVRA and AS DIVINE GRACE and suddenly two of them broke up, we were composing same time AS DIVINE GRACE's album "Lumo" songs and Niko from THIS EMPTY FLOW contacted me, that they wanted me to produce their "Magenta Skycode" album. I agreed that and we done it during Autumn 1995. It took me also to move from Pori to Turku and joined to THIS EMPTY FLOW I was a real member of band almost 1 year, we did couple gigs and then main man of THIS EMPTY FLOW Jori Sjöroos decided to break that band and start doing music himself under moniker FU-Tuorist. About THIS EMPTY FLOW well, I still think that it's classic release, timeless music, the main problem with this band was Jori huge ego and anyway for me it was just that I wanted help my friends, so for me it wasn't so big thing at all. For same reasons I also joined to AS DIVINE

GRACE during 1993, I just wanted to help my friends, which finally led me like some kind "brain" of that band. Well, nowadays I have step by step putting power to my solo-projects and leave AS DIVINE GRACE work to other members, cause I want that all things considering AS DIVINE GRACE promo-things etc. isn't for my responsibility."

AS DIVINE GRACE represents the band you performed in for many years. After a MCD released many years ago you managed to release during three years two atmospheric albums "Lumo" and "Supremature". What do you think of them? Could AS DIVINE GRACE be considered still a metal band? Atmospheric-yes, I might say but regarding the sound resulted on "Supremature" I believe we rather return somehow in '70's period...

"AS DIVINE GRACE is indeed the band I have been the longest time, seven years. Well, both of AS DIVINE GRACE's full lengths are my best albums (with THIS EMPTY FLOW album, which I only recorded and produced), of course my upcoming solo-projects will be in same level, even higher, but if we are talking about band's albums. About metal thing, well don't much think about these kinds of things, just try to make as good music as we can. Melodies are the most important things in AS DIVINE GRACE's music. Well the main idea to do "Supremature" was to make it sound very retro, like bands in 60's and 70's. We used many instrument well known during this period, like full tube amplifier from 50's (made by Philips), old guitar effects (fuzzes, phasers), analog synths, vocoder, Hammond organs and Rhodes electric piano + mellotron samples. We tried to make album sound like live album, playing as much as possible live without fixing all mistakes etc. By this we got more energy and feeling to music, cause we lost something like that with our first album, called "Lumo" during those very long (three years) lasting recording sessions. I think we managed to catch that feeling very well. OK, the mixing sessions we did with modern technology with 64 track Pro Tools system, but we used them keeping mind our main idea of the whole album."

If I affirm the most important element that makes you distinguish your-



selves from another bands is Hanna's voice, would you consider I might be mistaken?

"Yes, you're right, Hanna's voice is unique that's true, but of course I have to say that our musical influences are from so wide range of music styles and when we mix them together, we get our style that distinguish us to others and sometimes makes us sounding very unique. We have managed in that side better than my one previous band, F, the target has been the same with both bands, but result is totally different, with F we man-

aged to compose huge collection of good riffs, but no good songs, but with AS DIVINE GRACE we have done only good songs and melodies."

I really appreciated to characterization of your sound made by Mikko: "imagine a gothic rock dipped 4AD band à la COCTEAU TWINS or LUSH playing doom metal songs with prog rock interludes and a '60/'70's groove". Would you something else for completing it?

"I like very much of Mikko's way to describe our music style, we are in-between band, some could call us like crossover band, but I don't know, that name has so much negative vibes nowadays. Anyway my, Mikko's and Hanna's influences to AS DIVINE GRACE's music have been very important part how our music has developed during "Lumo" and "Supremature". In AS DIVINE GRACE's first MCD, music was totally normal doom metal, but after that our style has changed step by step more to that kind of mix, like Mikko described it."

How do the new tracks sound? Do you think the Marko Taipale's appearance (CIRCLE) would add a different dimension to your sound than the actual one? Shall be insisted on the contrast between the two voices? Which shall be the future sound of AS DIVINE GRACE?

"Well, some of them are same kind of stuff, we have in "Supremature", but some are more pop-stylish stuff. The biggest difference between "Supremature" material and new material, is that Hanna has been first time during the whole composing period with us trying to compose the right vocal melodies. During two albums composing and recording sessions, we did basic stuff first and then came Hanna. We haven't tried yet Marko's voice with Hanna, but that has been the basic idea to get more versatile to vocal parts in the future."

How did you manage to get together so often for rehearsal knowing how busy you are and how far away you live from the place you use to rehearsal? Should we expect a new album this year? Probably also at Avantgarde... Is it an advantageous deal? You rather had not gigs and I believe neither from now on since, besides the fact you are so busy because of your jobs, moreover you and Marko shall become fathers. Is it a nice special feeling?

"Well, I don't think we'd get new album ready during this year, mostly because of my personal projects (solo-albums and that baby-thing), we just try to make as many good songs as possible and after then we'll go to studio. We have also thought to make a demo of new songs, by this way we can discuss more about arrangements with Roberto Mammarella (the boss of A.M). We still have one record left of our Avantgarde Music deal, what we'll do after next record, I cannot say anything, perhaps we first talk with Roberto about the future and then discuss further, let see what happen. About my first childbirth, yes of course it has nice special feeling, I cannot say this more now, and I even cannot think what that child will change in our life!"

Would be something else to be said about AS DIVINE GRACE? Something you would feel like necessarily meant for our readers to find out about you?

"Well, if you like melancholic music with personal touch, then I recommend you to check AS DIVINE GRACE's both full-length albums."

I have just finished listening to "Piste" this debut of yours and I must confess I was shocked by the amazing sound: electric, ambient, movie soundtrack, strongly progressive influences, a sound which carries me back in '70's but this time reaching deeper roots than ever. Where from did this strange idea (at least for me) of SORB-I-TOL come? What should be the signification of this title? Offer me more details about this album, about tracks...

"It's great to hear that you like it! The background of the whole musical project began to bear fruits during the summer of 1994, when I bought my first analog synthesizers. I started composing very primitive types of songs, in a vein of early dark ambient bands. The first song was named as "Obesa", like song number 4 in "Piste". This song is based on the original song composed in 1994, but I remixed it during Winter 1999/2000 for the "Piste" album. I forgot these primitive songs, because I thought it would be better to concentrate more on his bands during year 1994. Next episode in SORB-I-TOL's history was Summer 1996, when I decided with one of

my friend, Mika Rintala, to make some kind of live-performance during the Pori Jazz 96 festival in Pori, Finland. The reason for that was very simple, my friends and I had a music studio in the middle of Pori centre, which was a great place to make live performances for people who were just passing by. So, I decided to compose some pieces and other things we would play live, I playing piano, hammond, two analog synths and Mika playing his self-made modular analog synthesizer. We started to play 18.7.1996 at five a.m in very confused feelings. We also told to some of their friends about this performance, which led Ari and Sami Ala-Miekkaoja to join and also play some instruments. We played together about one hour during that night, some unknown people visited also playing some bass parts. So what made that performance very unique was that fact, that it sounded very good for all members, it was absolutely the birth of SORB-I-TOL. You can find 3 edited pieces from that live performance on the "Piste" album, "Piste", "The street of Liza" and "Five a.m.". During the next 4 years I concentrated again more on my bands, but sometimes I tried to get record deal also to SORB-I-TOL, but without any success. At last during Autumn 1999 Plastic Passion, Finland decided to make a deal with me under this sorb moniker. That was the real start point ("Piste" in Finnish) for this album. At the first we planned to release the whole live performance from 1996, but after a couple of months I decided that I had to compose some new material for the album. After that decision I did 4 new songs, which start this album, "Malpaso", "Freeze!", "S is back" and "Obesa". The reason why I decided to do this was that at the same time I discovered a new music style that I really want to use in the future, some kind of mixture of influences I acquired during these years from agent movies and movie composers. The whole idea just started to live its own life making also visual look (CD-covers and this bio) in a vein of agent and police movies from 70's. I also decided to separate the whole album in two different sections, "Operation goatland" and "Operation beartown", present and live sound. I'm very crazy about the whole new music style I discovered, I have also updated my musical equipments, meaning that I have now also pro-type digital PC recording system with 2 pcs. new Pulsar soundcards putting my possibilities to next releases in totally new level, sound-wise speaking of course. So, if you like instrumental music with changes, SORB-I-TOL's "Piste" is music for you."

The cover is strange as well weird. What does it represent? I understood Ari's brother created also the artwork...

"Well, it's some kind of collage, indeed Sami Ala-miekkaoja did that layout too, and like he did AS DIVINE GRACE's both albums. Well, I gave Sami totally freedom to make that layout plus cause covers were already almost completed same time when I decided to compose these new songs, I had to change them more suitable for this agent/police-look myself, but anyway I think they fit very well of the whole album feeling."

What can you tell me about Plastic Passion label?

"It's a little label, owned by guy named Aku Mattila, same guy, who was bass-player in THIS EMPTY FLOW and a leader of old Finnish goth-rock group called SAD PARADE. Aku is very nice guy and I'm very satisfied that he wanted to make this album. Plastic Passion's biggest release has been the last THIS EMPTY FLOW album, called "Three Empty Boys". He has also released SAD PARADE's and Jori Sjöroos's Fu-Tuorist material, so basically music from his friends. As I told, label is very little and haven't much to put in promotion etc. so I have to do promotion myself, sending cds etc. but I don't mind about that, cause I'm just pleasant that I finally have done this album completed!"

What do you desire for this project to achieve?

"Commercially speaking I don't expect anything with this album, cause of the lack of label resources etc. but musically I expect much in the future and perhaps I'll get also better deal from "bigger" label, who knows what happen ... Anyway I want to make new SORB-I-TOL material soon after releasing KIVIKYY's "Kosto" album first."

The last and the most interesting project of your (if up to me) seems to be KIVIKYY. Is there a signification hidden behind this name?

"The story behind this name is that about two years ago we were visiting in old village with my girlfriend Kaisa and we were in one old factory, when one snake behind stones almost bitted Kaisa. That snake is



called hear in Finland as KYY (deadly poison viper), so mixing Finnish word KIVI (means stone) and KYY, I got that name! So, after one year ago we were visiting in old medieval Castle and again same thing, we saw one Kyy behind stones!!! Very strange, it's like a destiny."

I must admit this is the darkest project including as subjects of inspiration: nature, medieval times or Finnish legends, the history. Dark medieval music I believe it should be the most appropriate style I could describe your music. Am I wrong?

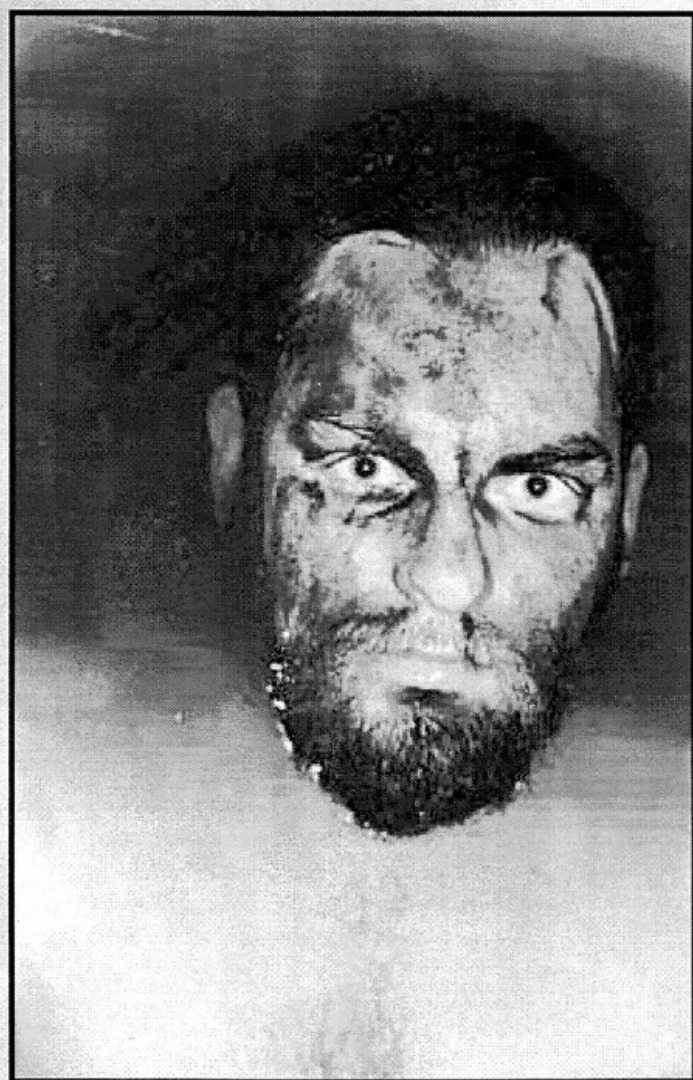
"All music of KIVIKYY based my inspiration of past times, my ancestors' history, our land history, the way how people have lived in area nowadays called Finland, through the war to present days, when we live very peaceful time, I'd say the most peaceful days of our land's history. Well, I try to make romantic music putting my way of view to the notes and it seems that it makes songs sound very dark too, but that's just positive thing, I think."

"The main idea for doing that is that I have always dreamed to make music for some kind of imaginary epic movie without moving pictures". Interesting argumentation. Can you develop it a little? Which might be the connection between KIVIKYY, Ennio Morricone and BATHORY?

"It has been my main idea during these years also with bands I have involved, making music that has also very strong visual aspect in their music. Well, it's very hard to describe, but what I'm meaning here is that when you start to listen music and concentrate it 100%, you'll get moving pictures in your mind and that music is just soundtrack for this changing "mindmovie". That state is very near of normal dream; almost dream and often you'll fell asleep very soon from this state of mind. With KIVIKYY I try to mix my influences just from Ennio Morricone's dark soundtrack music from Sergio Leone's western movies from 60's and BATHORY's epic albums to Finnish way of think and putting all together and that way get some kind of epic dreamed movie soundtrack with written novel by Juan Pablo Pena Garcia and Kaisa Vasamaa's art. I know, it's very bombastic and even ambitious project to do and I hope I'd success with it, but anyway I like to have challenges! Connection between BATHORY, KIVIKYY and Morricone isn't so far, like it should look at the first time, for me BATHORY's epic albums were the first signal to this whole project during years 1989-91, I just wanted to start making some kind of stuff like he, meaning that for example even in F's albums we had some kind of BATHORY influences. Morricone has been my fave one a long time; he has some kind of great black humour everywhere of his songs. And KIVIKYY is my own view of this kind of music."

I observe the sound is rather instrumental only from time to time your voice or Hanna's making their appearance. The track "Ääniä" is perhaps the most complex one, the voices and all the sound remind me of DEAD CAN DANCE. "The New Bells Of Konevitsa" should be the extensive track of all seven I have listened to-almost 12 minutes. "Jaakko Ilkka" and "Klaus Fleming" are two tracks treating exclusively historical themes and to be more precise it is about a warrior hero from the XVI Th century of your people's history. What can you tell me about the tracks or your future album that shall be released this Summer at Sound Riot?

"Well, indeed I want to keep my solo-project very instrumental oriented music, that's reason for style. OK, in "Kosto" will be one song singed by Hanna, but in other songs there are only background choirs and special voices, no more. About songs, "ääniä" (btw. they are just working names, in album they'll have different names) based one little part of Hanna's vocal jam we recorded 3 years ago. In that demo you have, that songs is mostly in that shape, it will be in upcoming album. Others are very raw versions. "The new bells of Konevitsa" based one traditional song from East-Finland known as "Konevitsan kirkonkellot" which tells a story of bells of one monastery. "Jaakko Ilkka" (my own ancestor from 1500, the leader of farmers) and "Klaus Fleming" based of story from the war of Hammer 1596-97. My ancestor Jaakko Ilkka fought against "Klaus Fleming" who represented The King of Sweden, living in Castle of Turku



and killed Jaakko Ilkka in last battle, cutting his head and cutting his body in little pieces. Story tells that men of Fleming showed Ilkka's body parts to farmers, that they would be loyal to King of Sweden. Very funny coincidence is that the place we have our house nowadays in Sauvo, about one km from that place, came ashore, man called Kaarle the Duke, who burned the whole Sauvo, riding with his men through that place we have house now and finally after long battle times killed Klaus Fleming in Castle of Turku. I have planned to put seven songs to first KIVIKYY album, I'll completed them during May 2000 and hope Juan Pablo Pena Garcia from Spain will get his story based my music ready also to that album, like we have planned."

I understood the artwork would be performed by your girlfriend, Kaisa and would be conceived absolutely outstanding. Do you help me with details?

"Kaisa has painted couple portraits of me with oil paints, then she uses method called etching, which was very popular medieval art style. The theme of art will be very pagan and gets symbolism from animals and nature. Only problem will be that I have so much great material, both Kaisa's art and JP's novel, that I have very hard to find suitable space for them to cd-layout, but I really hope I can manage that!"

There is a great difference between your solo projects and AS DIVINE GRACE: freedom. Inside a group (a compact one) the principal factor which might bring the success is the compromise; while being all alone you can afford doing whatever you may desire with your instruments... your lyrics... and the entire concept of the project itself. Am I wrong?

"Absolutely, I don't need to make any compromises in my solo-projects, that's true and that's the biggest reason why I really want to do these projects. In AS DIVINE GRACE for example we have 5-6 members who have own opinion about all subjects, so you really have to make sometimes even big compromises, without them we cannot complete any song. With solo-project you can always even make a new project, if some material isn't suitable to another style etc. That's just great for me, cause I really want to make different type of music, not only music suitable for one block. My only reason to make music, is the true love of music in every aspect, no making as much money as possible with my songs, like so many others really want to do nowadays. Sell their souls to the commercial devil, devil that is dressing in nice suit and selling music like sausage, without any deeper meanings."

You own many guitars and keyboards even a studio. What shall you do with all of them if ever deciding not to play anymore?

"I'll always make music that's the fact, but like I said, instruments and equipment are for me only tools to make all possible, no more. OK, there are couple instruments that I want to be buried with me in my grave like my fave old synth called Jen sx1000. If I decided one day to stop the whole thing, well I think I'll still keep all instruments."

When being 33, life should be seen more realistic, sometimes too much realistic than needed. Yet you're listening THE DOORS, THE BEATLES or URIAH HEEP. Could metal interest you no more? You seem to tend reaching soul, funk...

"New metal is for me very strange stuff, sometimes I hear it from radio or from cassettes I receive from Alessandro Concin (webmaster of AS DIVINE GRACE, Avantgarde Music and SORB-I-TOL sites), I don't know new bands by name. Personally I'm so in my own music, composing and everything, that I cannot follow metal scene. Of course I have still some those old-time faves from metal side too, especially Black Sabbath's 6 first albums I listen very often, especially their first album is for me some kind of metal bible and listen their song "Black Sabbath", it's totally doooooom and daaaaaaaark one, totally timeless music! Of course I have listened during these years different type of music, soul and funk and couple example I have always liked. My biggest all-time influence has always been Jimi Hendrix, my god number one."

If you had to choose one single instrument you would play at... which one would prefer: the guitar, the bass or synth/key?

"Well, like taking with me in deserted island? Guitar or piano and also my own voice, it's always the last instrument we all have."

We came to an end of the discussion. I do thank you for answering my questions. What do you wish for this year to bring you new? I could try helping you: to have a healthy child, to release in a short time KIVIKYY's debut, to have only success at your business... Something else?

"Yeap, something likes that, well I want to first success to my personal life and for second success for my musical solo-projects. So, I recommend you all out there to check at the first AS DIVINE GRACE's and SORB-I-TOL's albums and soon also KIVIKYY's first album called "Kosto". Good-bye and thanks."

BORKNAGAR

To myself BORKNAGAR has a great significance. The first contact I had with Øystein Garnes Brun belonged to that times when MOLESTED still existed. Since this band's history is very important I decided myself to offer you an interview performed only a few days before the new album "Quintessence" appeared. I hope you would enjoy this incursion into ancient times and then also the return to the very present days.

Hi. You have just released a new album. What are your feelings? Should it be a release a satisfaction or simply anxiety due to the fact you don't know and could not guess the fans' reactions next to "Quintessence"?

"I am very satisfied with the album and I am convinced that this is the best album we have done so far, whatsoever! To be honestly I regard the fans' reaction as something secondary. It's not meant to be an offence but obviously as long as I am satisfied with our releases myself that's basically OK, even if the rest of the world hate it...hehe... But sure, to eventually get positive feedback is cool!"

Let us travel back in time. Øystein began to play for the first time in 1990 and in 1991 has founded MOLESTED. What can you tell me about THOSE times? You've said once only from '90's you became an active member of metal scene and until then you've just read and listened much underground material... is it so indeed what were you listening by that time, which kind of idols did you worship?

"It was a great time of my life, no doubt about that! The years we did MOLESTED we really had a great time together, it was kind of based on friendship and just having fun. And somehow I miss a little bit those days when things weren't too serious, thinking about the business side of it. Well, I am a nostalgic type of guy..."

When I first got involved in the scene in '89 I must say that I was very much into ultra brutal Death Metal bands as INCANTATION, MIASMA and early GOREFEST. I was also a big fan of the local band OLD FUNERAL that was a great band!"

In MOLESTED you have played for almost five years and have released two albums. What can you tell me about the signing with Repulse, was it a good one? Death metal its special significance on metal scene yet it finally ended dying... But not for the Spanish label as well. What is your personal opinion regarding this style? You've played for such a long time.

"We signed a decent deal with Repulse Records. And I must say that it was a pity that we never came to the point of releasing an album with that label- the whole thing would have suited us perfect! I am still a big fan of good Death Metal and I must admit that some of my all time fave albums belong to this kind of music!"

I've understood MOLESTED splited out because of some colleagues' lack of interest even taking in account the fact one of them had a job that took him much of his time... almost entirely. Yet my question is: was it also because of noticing death metal presented no more or no longer the same interest?

"The reason why we splited up was really to the fact that we all was a bit fed up with the whole thing. We worked intensely for almost five years but still everything went against us. We were signed to a crappy label (Effigy Records) that almost ruined our two releases and in the end of the day the motivation was like zero. We just lost the grist, the passion for the

music..."

Although BORKNAGAR was founded in 1995, your first ideas of another musical project came in 1993. What were the motivations that impulse you to create another project? Lack of interest of your colleagues and you focussed on this new project finally guided to MOLESTED disappearing. Aren't you sorry for?

"I have always been into atmospheric music so as you said I had an idea about doing something like BORKNAGAR for a long time. But the fact that I started BORKNAGAR didn't really have anything with the split up MOLESTED to do! Of course, it is sad that MOLESTED faded but as you know nothing lasts forever!"

Borknagar is a fanciful name having no mythological signification. I am sure many people thought this name had deep roots in Viking history, into Nordic Mythology, am I wrong? Is it perhaps only a resembling to the name of a mount from the old Highland's tales, Lochnagar? Do these names have certain significations to yourself? What can you tell me more about the much too exploited Viking myths? Lot of bands are inspiring from such mythology, in fact they copy the ideas of first bands on black scene in order to become or to seem to be more "heathen". Is it a good thing? You are Norwegian, that is why I am asking you, are these your ancestors' legends?

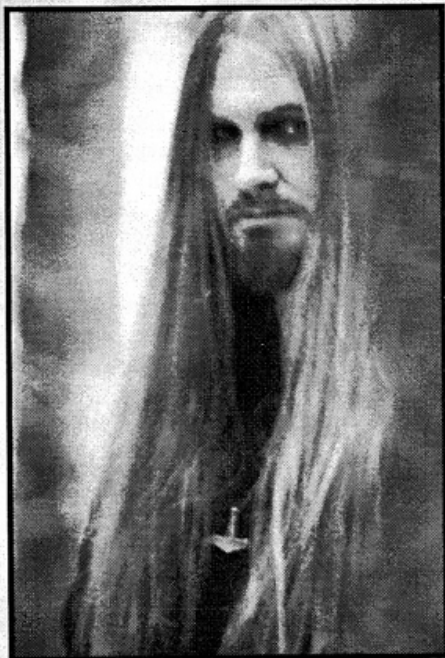
"Well, as I have said a thousand times before Borknagar is just a fantasy name, a factionary name you may say. I wanted to have a name, which represent only one thing- the band. That was the basic idea about it! I am an Odinist, so to speak, so I guess it is natural that my expression is a bit influenced but this Viking-mythology. Though, that's just a small, small part of the Borknagar approach. Be sure, there is a lot of misunderstanding and misuse of the Norse mythology in the scene. Some even mix it up with neo-nazism and Satanism and that is as wrong as it gets. Whatsoever there is no connection between the Norse mythology and these ideologies!"

BORKNAGAR has started as being a project of you, all music and lyrics being composed by you. Without having released a demo yet you soon received a signing deal. Thus you released in 1996 your debut. Was it perhaps because the members you

invited were ultra known? There are some to believe you couldn't manage to grow up so rapidly if not owning such line-up. What do you think about?

"Of course, the thing with this "all-star" line-up helped us at that time. But when we released "The Olden Domain" it was more or less a pain in the ass. All the time I had to try to convince people and the media that we actually was a band with potential and not just a scoop to make some money or whatever. By now I think we have proved that I am right!"

The album was recorded in Grieghallen Studio, one of the most famous Studios from Norway. The recording lasted almost four months. Do you have certain memories from those times? Sad or happy moments, which



was the most communicative person? The line-up was absolutely remarkable: Garm (ULVER, ARCTURUS)-voice, Grim (IMMORTAL, GORGOROTH, ANCIENT)-drums, Ivar (ENSLAVED)-keys and Infernus (GORGOROTH)-bass.

"Man, it's a long time ago and I don't remember too much from that days. The only thing is that I can't understand how I managed to create such a band... not really because of the line-up. But it takes a hell lot from you to establish a band, believe me!"

The contract you had with Malicious was very convenient by that time. Of course, Geritt Weiher did not manage to perform a great fabulous promotion, but the album was sold in over 12.000 copies. An important selling, don't you think? I know Century Media has re-edited this album for America, am I wrong? Why didn't you sign for Invasion, for example?

"Yes, the debut sold quite well. At least when thinking of the poor promotion of the release...! Right, Century Media re-released this album in the States some time ago and that is cool because Malicious Records didn't have any proper distribution channels for the US. Invasion Records was just not a good alternative and as far as I know that label have vanished now!"

Before passing to the second BORKNAGAR chapter, please tell me how do you see the debut now? What are your considerations about the style or the music's quality?

"I really still like the first album we did. Of course it doesn't really represent BORKNAGAR that much musically anymore but still I think it is an interesting and atmospheric album. It was definitely a great album of its time!"

After signing a contract with Century Media, Infernus leaves and Kai K.Lie takes his place. In such formula you enter, on May 1997, in Woodhouse Studios (Germany) and record the "The Olden Domain" album, your first material that enjoyed promotion of a certain quality. How do you see this album? I believe it is the most possibly slow album of yours with a lot of folk progressive elements... very complex. There was considered even a comparison with ARCTURUS...

"As the first album I also like this one. Musically it is better than our debut and it is probably the most atmospheric album we have done. I am really proud of that album and it became for sure an important release for the band. The comparisons towards ARCTURUS seem mainly to be based on the fact that Garm participated on this album, I guess."

Since Garm became more and more interested in his own musical projects he decided to leave BORKNAGAR, but absolutely friendly. Indeed it seems like he explores now another different territories, I believe played besides OLD MAN'S CHILD and ROTTING CHRIST yet without the vocal it was impossible don't you feel sorry?

"At that time being it was of course a pity but it doesn't border me that much really!"

So it comes the time for a prime tour, besides IN FLAMES and NIGHT IN GALES. Simen Hestnaes (ARCTURUS, VED BUENS ENDE, LAMENTED SOULS, DIMMU BORGIR), alias I.C.S. Vortex takes Garm's place and Jens F. Ryland plays the guitar parts for gigs. How was your first tour? What memories do you have from?

"Cool, but it was a completely new world for us! I realized that being on the road is hard work and puts a lot of pressure on the band. But in the end of the day it turned out to be a great experience in spite of the fact that we had to face some serious problems."

On 1998 summer you record the third album, "The Archaic Course", a material rather dominated of speed yet preserving the same traditional elements. What is your opinion about it? Is it the first album having Simen as voice? I've heard his voice was even compared with REM's. If up to me, I believe his voice is rather higher than Garm's, Simen's voice is absolutely remarkable, no doubts.

"It's a great album and I still get good vibes listening to it! Though I find this album more "relaxed" than the previous album. Guess this is the most atmospheric album we have done and ever will do... Yes, it is the first album with Simen's vocal as the main vocal. A remarkable debut for him I would say!"

As it happened before new problems in line-up occurred. In fact now Kay and Grim left and Ivar has already become a session member because of ENSLAVED activity, which meant he had to stop the collaboration with BORKNAGAR. It must have been quite a shock for you. All of a sudden you remained the only member from the beginning formula. Do you think somehow it might have been even your fault? What really happened in fact? I tend believing BORKNAGAR did not become a band but simply

remained your own project. Should I be wrong? The only gigs you had in the complete formula were those from Oslo and Trondheim, correct?

"Well, it was my fault that they got involved in the band so I guess it's also my fault that they left the band... No, seriously the whole thing was based on the fact that they didn't agree with the policy of the band, the goals of the band so to speak. It just came to a point where we could not work together anymore and what happened just happened. Maybe a result of the progression of the band... Yes, we only did those two gigs in Norway with the original line-up from the "The Archaic Course".

The tour besides NAPALM DEATH and CRADLE OF FILTH was performed without keyboard and you had on battery Justin (IRON MONKEY) as session member, Simen took the bass also. Impressions? I've heard you had to cover a bad inappropriate sound editing and a very short time to play... Yet it finally turned out to be a great success!

"Yes, this tour was a really big stunt for us. Our line-up was slightly amputated and we weren't really in the ultimate situation for doing an important tour like that. Also being an opening band for big bands like that, often means that you have to take a lot of shit. As you said, a short set, poor sound, poor light show etc. Though, it turned out to be a cool tour for us."

On May, last year you faced the most enchanting event... to travel across the ocean. Besides EMPEROR, WITCHERY, DIVINE EMPIRE and PECCATUM you performed live almost a month on the American territory. I believe you really had a good time. What memories did you bring with you? What was Nick Barker's, the battery player, behaviours; did he have an impressive appearance?

"Yes, the tour we did in the US was great! In spite of some minor problems it turned out to be the best experience that we have had as a band! Nick is a killer drummer and he is a good friend of us and for sure he had an impressive appearance!"

After an incursion through past moments we may return to present times. Before reaching the latest details, what can you tell me about BORKNAGAR's history? This band had a lot of obstacles to surpass, do you have any regrets? Do you have any idea why Grim killed himself? I know really was passionate about history...

"Yes, we have had to face a lot of obstacles that's for sure! Though, there sometimes have been difficult we have always managed to solve the problem. So what doesn't kill us, just make us stronger...hehe...! But I have no regrets, whatsoever! I only regret what I have not done... About Erik's suicide I have no comment. It doesn't concern BORKNAGAR at all as he left the band a year before he killed himself!"

Along with Lars A. Nedland's (SOLEFALD) coming, alias Lazare, at synth and also Asgeir Mickelson's (SPIRAL ARCHITECT), the band reached again a complete formula. Do you think now all members are forming a team or they still "gravitate" around your ideas? How did you find the two of them?

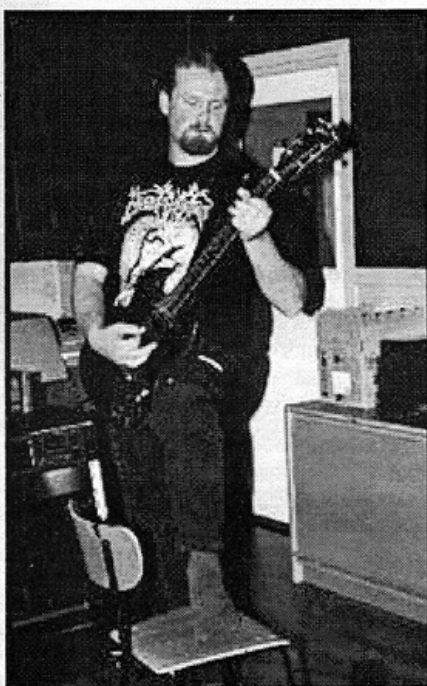
"I regard this line-up as dedicated musically and there is no doubt about the fact that we are all together about this- a team you may say! Well, we did some research for quite long time and we ended up with Lars and Asgeir. Actually Jens just called them up and asked if they were interested to try working with the band, and so we did..."

At the beginning of this year entered Peter's studio, The Abyss, and for almost a month you've been recording for the new material. I have read the details concerning the album's recording from your site. Are you satisfied with the final product? Which should be the difference between the three big studios you've recorded in the four albums?

"We are very satisfied with the final result, that's for sure! The most remarkable difference between the studios must be the fact that Abyss is the first studio we have been in where the people working there really know what they are doing. I mean, Peter and Lars have been into Metal for ages and of course we had a much better communication as working this time!"

The new album presents us ten epic metal tracks embracing black metal traditional folk tendencies. Almost different to myself was the sound of Lars' keyboard. It reminds me of the music of '70's. I can also notice the guitars can powerfully be heard and Simen's voice gained in skill and quality. From your point of view which should be the difference between the two albums?

"The biggest differences between the albums must be that the new one is much more energetic than the previous album, which was kind of more relaxed and atmospheric. Also the actual production of the new album sounds much better than all our previous recordings, in my point of view!"



“Until now I had a reference track, better said a preferred one, ‘The Winterway’ (‘The Olden Domain’), now I find ‘Colossus’ absolutely genius! During this track everything can clearly be heard, perfectly I would say, the guitars feature a special sound, Simen’s voice mesmerizes me through its contrasts, the battery floats from a point/ extreme to another, the bass confer the rhythm’s ‘verticality’ and the synth dominates from time to time certain different passages. Everything looks familiar old yet all is new indeed... Which is your favourite track?”

“Differs from day to day really. But one of my faves from the composer’s point of view must be ‘Universal’ - that song contains some of the best riffs and arrangements that I have done!”

I observe you still continue having instrumental tracks. Do they represent something for you? What purpose you had when composing such?

“I make a lot of music in the vein you are referring to so it is kind of natural to also bring some of the stuff on a BORKNAGAR recording. I have always loved to make instrumental, atmospheric songs so that is it really!”

I listened to ‘Invincible’ and Lars’ synth fascinates me, it is successfully absorbed by the alert rhythm of the track. The rhythm breakings are quite a characteristic of BORKNAGAR sound. Were from did inspiration come?

“Honestly I don’t know. Music comes by instinct and that’s it really!”

Your lyrics (now Simen’s also) treat diverse fanciful themes and are inspired from history, feelings, nature, tradition, and personal experiences. What can you reveal about each track you wrote? What is the real significance to the ‘Quintessence’? Does the album cover represent something special? What should be its connotation?

“Our manifestations should really stand for itself! You don’t ask for the ‘User’s guide’ if buying a painting... if you get my point!” (I do my best in getting your point-ed)

It is quite modern to listen to female voices, now. Do you conceive we might expect something like this from you? What about other traditional instruments such as violins, trumpet or clarinet?

“No, that’s not our thing to do really. As far as I am concerned-we going to stay to the traditional ‘metal-instruments’- we don’t need alternative instruments to make alternative music! A lot of bands fail on this matter in my opinion. You don’t appear, as an original band just because of some ‘rare’ instruments-music is spirituality!”



What would you desire more from and for this album? What about BORKNAGAR? Do you imagine yourself playing also in or for other projects?

“The only thing I really desire with BORKNAGAR is to be able to progress as a musician, to experience new fields of music. I don’t really care so much if we sell a thousand or a million records... Actually I think we have

reached a lot of the goals I had when starting the band. No, not for the moment being. But as I said before I write a lot of music and there might happen that I sometime in the future do something beside BORKNAGAR, though at the moment there is no time for such!”

I am aware that if we talk about BORKNAGAR. We must refer and mostly keep close to the present and the coming future. In fact, the music we promote now depends on the age we are. Do you think we right listen to the 9th BORKNAGAR’ album in ten years long from now? Where should sound’s evolution might lay? Into a compromise? Otherwise I believe the success would disappear and style would love its present interest recorded among fans... What do you think about DIMMU BORGIR’s popularity or their manners of approaching music... are they positive? What about CRADLE OF FILTH? I find quite interesting what ULVER or ACTURUS are trying to reach presently or, perhaps IN THE WOODS... orientation...

“As a musician one should follow one’s true desires for music and not think about what the media, fans or record companies. I respect whatever people choose to do with their music/band, but I feel sorry for them who prostitute themselves musically just because of the money of fame. In the end of the day, they are the one losing!”

Could BORKNAGAR be considered a fortunate band? You obtained rapidly a contract with Century Media.

“To be signed to Century Media doesn’t automatically make you a fortunate band. It really depends what you want to achieve with

your band and how you want to do it. We are all right being on Century Media but I know bands that have serious problems. Depends on circumstances really as in normal life!”

Your father owns quite an impressive music collection especially from ‘60’s and ‘70’s. I also have information you are a PINK FLOYD



fan. Do you still listen to such music? What do you feel about those times music? Would you be surprised if telling your music tends embrace a progressive direction? Does Simen still listen to SLAYER or TANGERINE DREAM?

“I listen to almost all kinds of music and as you referring to one of my all time favourite bands must be PINK FLOYD. But that is really the only band I am listening to from ‘that’ period... Of course, I know that we tend to reach for some progressive elements. Simen listen to both SLAYER and TANGERINE DREAM! He is a big fan of both the bands, especially in TANGERINE DREAM...”

A few years ago when E-mail did not exist we kept in touch through letters. Do you remember how difficult it was? Such late in receiving news from each other... Once computer started to dominate our life the distances and time were obviously ‘cutten’ and information became our master... what do you think about this evolution? Xhorder is really good when it comes to your site (www.borknagar.com). What do you think, am I wrong?

“Yes, be sure! Times are changing...hehe... Though, it was an exiting period of time! On many points the evolution is positive I guess. For me it is very helpful when it comes to doing the business regarding BORKNAGAR, I can’t really figure how I did it some years ago. Sure, Xhorder does a killer job!!”



How do you stand with communication? You used to consider yourself an antisocial person; you worked in a hospital or home centre-I don’t exactly remember-always isolated and preferring loneliness. Have you changed yourself since then? Who is Oystein outside music dimension? I remember you also had a cat...

“I have always been kind of antisocial. Not in the terms of being afraid of people or something, it’s just that I have always been very occupied so to speak. I just don’t have the time to hang around talking shit or drinking beers, than I prefer creative loneliness! I prefer not to share my personal life with the publicity!”

You once said Christendom’s annihilation may be done through and by two elements: ignorance and knowledge. Could you develop such ideas a little bit more specifically? What do you think of religion ‘in se’? Is it (or might be) an instrument of manipulation? Could be even a politics of spiritual, economic financial domination?

“I still stand for that saying, but this has nothing to do with BORKNAGAR!”

Dear friend, I feel I should stop right here... Otherwise I might terrorize you with my questions. Yet, what do you consider, did your fans make an idea about BORKNAGAR? What did I miss asking you and they should know about your band?

“Hmm... I can’t come up with anything...!”

I wish you all the luck in the world! I do appreciate for this interview. Some imagine life is governed by the mistakes recorded during it. Others consider learning from the mistakes they did and thus continue living the way they desire no matter what. Where do you place yourself?

“I am just true towards my will and being!”

If it weren't e-mail way of communication, most certainly I wouldn't ever succeed performing this very interview. Why so? Just because all letters sent by Tharen during last few years, inclusively audio materials, had become lost somewhere on the postal sinuous paths. I am glad and proud to reveal you now Tharen's regarding upon the music he creates and not only, of course. It is supposed to be a simple interview but containing lots of technical data.

Hello Tharen. It has been quite some time since you were performing on Austrian metal scene. ABIGOR, AMESTIGON, HEIDENREICH, DARGAARD or DOMINION are names you collaborated in the past and still do. How do you see now this musical movement, especially since being one of its old-timers? Jan Kenneth (IN THE WOODS...) was telling me last few days there was no more the same as at the beginning of '90's. What do you think?

Tharen: "It was another thing to play in a Black Metal band in the early 90's of course-there only were a few other bands, it wasn't a jungle like nowadays. In the last, let's say 5 years, Black Metal loosed permanently its mysticism as well as its credibility in many cases. On the one hand it's quite a good thing that there are so many bands nowadays, because it offers a variety of styles connected to one dark main theme. On

the other hand it is, as I said, a jungle-difficult to survey and it's damned hard to find out some bands who still live Black Metal and play good music. The overflown scene dies at the moment: Every month I

look into a magazine I see 20 new bands with uninteresting music, uninteresting statements and ridiculous looking, while acts like Emperor are going back to Death Metal again. We'll see what future brings..."

You have splited from ABIGOR in 1997. Do you regret the breaking up? Some, a lot of people, in fact, consider ABIGOR to be an Austrian black metal exponent. Are you a difficult to be handled person or it was lack of communication between you and the rest of members (firstly Thomas) which guided to such splitting? What is your appreciation concerning the actual ABIGOR's music?

Tharen: "It was anytime earlier than 1997 I splitted from ABIGOR, don't know the exactly date. Maybe I'm a "difficult to handle" person, ask the other, but for me one reason was that Thomas was that dominating in the band that there was no place for me to unfold my ideas. The other



reason was that they had an unbelievable speed in recording and releasing their albums. For me it's a far better thing to work on the CD's as a band and not to hear finished CD's and then finding my vocal lines above them.

ABIGOR never rehearsed really and for me they never had a real "band feeling" if you know what I mean. Maybe the fact that the never play live caused it-if they would do it they had to really rehearse many times. And yes, Thomas went away from Black Metal into the jungle/DUB "music" style and environment."

HEIDENREICH is another project you participated in as a guest. What can you tell me about this group?

Tharen: "I only did a few Keyboard parts on HEIDENREICH's "Death Gate Cycle". It was a project of Peter from ABIGOR because he wanted to have the freedom to make music without being dependent on another guitarist or drummer. There he came in contact with Thurisaz as a singer again who joined ABIGOR now. But HEIDENREICH is dead now, Peter concentrates fully on the new ABIGOR output at the moment."

AMESTIGON is one your most important projects. It is, if you like, the only direct connection with black metal, the rest of your projects explores different dimensions. Does this BURZUM or DARK THRONE in an Austrian version still represent interest for the fans? I understood you have already recorded a new demo tape. When do you plan a new album? Does Silenius have time also for AMESTIGON? What can you tell me about

Herr Wolf or Jörg Lanz? Please give me all details regarding the past, the present and even future of this band!

Tharen: "AMESTIGON was never planned to be a commercial hit, so I do not care about if there is an interest

out there. We released a split CD with ANGIZIA and a MCD "Höllentanz" on Napalm Records. With AMESTIGON we just have the aim to hold high the torch of original Black Metal in a time where everyone seems to try to leave this style for some crossover. AMESTIGON isn't crossover shit; it is just pure Black Metal! Maybe we release that 5-song demo MCD (~25min) limited on 100 copies by ourselves, but due to the momentary situation in the scene I don't think that we'll find a suiting label, we'll see... Silenius only took part in two songs as a vocalist, so I don't think he had timing problems, haha! Lanz and Herr Wolf are as dedicated as the rest of the band to play this kind of rough, original Black Metal and they live it of course!"

Christof (KOROVA) has lost the contract with Napalm because accepted not a few "necessary" compromises. Although you and Max know each other for many years would you agree, if proposed, to be printed on your albums' cover a sensual attractive, perhaps even nude, girl on purpose your albums should record a better sales? It seems like it has already become a fashion this ridiculous combination of black metal, gothic, vampirism and erotic. Did black metal decay or just the essence of such concept have been destroyed by the commercial?

Tharen: "Yes, it's a sad thing that Napalm Records seem to believe that nude woman on covers force the sales that much. I cannot imagine it in this scene. Maybe in pop music, but in Black/Death Metal? We had some discussions with Max about these things, but I'll never do such a ridiculous cover. I shit on this combination of Gothic attitudes and Black Metal. Separated both styles may be good, but this crossover is the last thing Black Metal (and me) needs. It's a sad thing that KOROVA aren't on Napalm any more. They were really outstanding acts, maybe too outstanding for the masses. Moritz Neuner of KOROVA will maybe play the drums on the new ABIGOR output by the way..."

DARGAARD was founded in 1997. You have conceived the first album then contacted Elisabeth Toriser and sent the CD at Napalm, after that you have almost instantly got the signing with this label. Do you consider yourself just lucky? Having no demos, no underground history... that

should be at least a kind of fortune.

Tharen: "It was really luck that Napalm signed us because I had no money to pay the studio at this time... Yes, we never had demos, but due to my activities in several bands I think that some people remembered my name and Napalm Records thought the same. I'm satisfied with our status at the moment; we get great responses from the public as well as from the metal underground. It's amazing but we get more responses from the metallers than from someone else!"

You and Elisabeth know each other since working together in ABIGOR. How did you decide yourself to include a female voice into your music and why particularly her? She has just been contacted by Sid to join ANTICHRISIS.

Tharen: "In the beginning of DARGAARD (some when after my split with ABIGOR) I didn't thought about a singer, but after I completed the material I was looking for a male or female voice to give the last polishing to the music. I knew Elisabeth from her appearance on ABIGOR's "Nachthymnen" as well as from her work for a local demo band and I simply thought her voice would fit the music perfectly. And she did. She did not only the "last polishing" but brought her own ideas for the vocal lines and so something "more completed" was created. I was really amazed as I listened to the finished CD."

What is the real significance of Dargaard term?

Tharen: "Dargaard is the name of an old stronghold that was cursed and lies forever in darkness. I think the name transports the mysticism and dark mood very well."

Where from the idea of a DARGAARD trilogy came? "Eternity Rites", "In Nomine Aeternitatis" and soon shall be released "Dissolution Of Eternity".

Tharen: "The idea lies in the lyrical concept. A theme like eternity can be handled with a single CD, it can never be explained exactly. It wasn't my intention to "describe" eternity, but to give a little look into my realm where I dwell in my dreams. I like concepts behind music and so I thought a trilogy is a good idea. What could be more interesting than a theme man will never fully understand?"



Eternity - your mark for DARGAARD concept. What does it represent for you?

Tharen: "Eternity is a collective of pure energy. It is my aim to become a non-linear existence someday."

Your music reaches diverse elements such as classical, medieval or electronic. The basic terms of the music concept are darkness, mighty, mysticism perhaps dreaming or even meditation. I still cannot imagine where from this attraction to the over-cast, dark side came?

Tharen: "Since my childhood I'm fascinated by occult, means hidden things. It's the attraction of darkness, the secrets behind the walls of time that interest me much. As I began to play black metal I always wanted this mystical touched kind of lyrics and an all-destroying music. With DARGAARD I went a step further and brought the music into this mystical direction too. It was a natural evolution for me."

The new album was considered the album of the month (February) at Napalm. How was it received?

Tharen: "Napalm proclaims all their acts who sell a little bit as the album of the month on their homepage, so it's no wonder that we were one of them."

If up to my opinion, "In Nomine Aeternitatis" just keeps the same line of the first album, perhaps more symphonic and bombastic yet preserving the fundamental elements of "Eternity Rites". Could be an advantage or a disadvantage? Why? I believe there are no major differences and no much various ideas. What do you think? How would the new album sound like?

Tharen: "I want to create this kind of music for DARGAARD. For every other music I'm creating a new band, haha. Look, in DOMINION for example I use all the ideas that don't fit my imagination of DARGAARD. May it be distorted drums or E-guitars that will never take place in DARGAARD. I'm working on the end of the DARGAARD trilogy now, and I really don't know if I'll do a 4th or 5th CD... Maybe I'll change my style a little then, but at the moment I'm just working to bring DARGAARD unique style to the perfection. Maybe I'm successful with it or not - again, future will tell."



The entire music is executed on your synth Roland XP-80. It has really become quite a fashion for all to compose music through this instrument. Which is the reason you believe made you accept no other instruments, real instruments. Do you make compromises next to the other members? Do you feel free or more than free regarding and conceiving DARGAARD as a duet?

Tharen: "Are there really so many bands out there using the Xp-80? The only guy who's using it too is Richard from SUMMONING, but he has only the rack-version but 2 other keyboards more. The most bands are using the typical Korg sounds in my opinion, but for classical sounds. Roland is the best choice for me - they're more realistic. Have you ever heard a harp on a Korg? Bäh! It would be great of course if I had an orchestra at hand, but it costs a lot of money. I have the idea for the 4th DARGAARD CD that the best songs from the first three albums are played by real musicians, but I haven't talked about with Napalm Records, so you can understand that nothing is fixed at the moment."

The album was recorded in Hoernix Studio besides Georg Hrauda. I know your specialization is exactly audio engineer. Did you let yourself guided by Georg or just made yourself everything? Do you have your own studio? Why not?

Tharen: "No, I don't have my own studio, again the price-question. I don't have the money for the whole equipment, may it be (for example) a SSL mixer or a good Shure micro. Georg Hrauda is a professional with many years of experience and helped us a lot. I did the recordings and produced the CD, but for the mixing and mastering I needed his help, because we did many things between digital and analog recording. It's not that easy to come to a more or less unknown studio and work there, as it would be yours."

The cover represents a face which age cannot be defined, painted by Elisabeth and finished by you in digitally manner yet perfect for the DARGAARD atmosphere: music, lyrics. Does it have any peculiar certain significance?

Elisabeth: "It was the perfect opportunity for us to express and transport more of the music's atmosphere; a strange kind of dark aesthetics, somehow mysterious, mystical and sublime over time... We simply didn't want to have a half-naked female vampire on the cover - the picture was my vision for the personification of our music..."

I mentioned about lyrics. You have texts written by some poets, ancient texts, a track in Latin (Ovid) and another in Greek (Alkaios). It is pleasing and fascinating to go back in ancient times to travel back through history a few hundreds years ago, even thousands (2400), am I right? What do you feel about this?

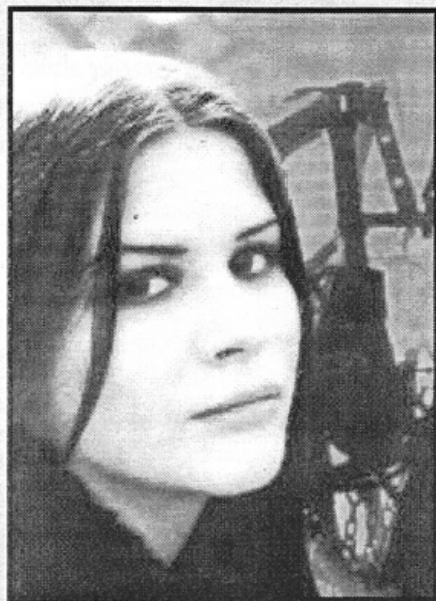
Elisabeth: "I chose these both languages, because they were the means of transporting and conserving ancient wisdom (also occult wisdom) for hundreds of years; so the sound of these languages raises certain associations. And it is a deeply touching emotion for me to revive the feelings and thoughts of a person that has been dead for centuries-it is like conquering time."

Listening to DARGAARD, the music creates around yourself strange images of another different worlds, hidden dimensions, mystical feelings,



occult horizons yet in the same time your mind seems to perceive the return back in time... Was I mistaken? Please tell me, where from DARGAARD begins existing and where should be the end of it?

Tharen: "If the audience has the same experience as you had, then they're at the right path for understanding DARGAARD. All what inter-



ests me flows into the lyrics and music of DARGAARD, may it be eternity or the void or ancient mythology and history in general. It's our intention to cause images in the brain of the listener while diving in our music and realms."

Tharen, you have taken piano lessons for six years. Do you think the activity performed during these years developed inside yourself the artistic dimension? Elisabeth, your angelic voice determines me to believe you are singing for many years. Correct me if I am wrong.

Tharen: "I really don't know if the lessons help me these days, but I know I hated them once. But my piano still stands in my house and I'm playing from time to time. Never the songs I once had to learn, but I'm collecting ideas for DARGAARD on the piano a lot!"

Elisabeth: "Well, I have sung since I was 4 years old, I have learned several instruments, but I have never taken any singing lessons; so what you hear is what has grown naturally. But it was never satisfying enough for me to perform the music of other people; the voice is also my favourite instrument for composing. Studio work and the possibility to arrange several vocal lines is enrichment for me, for sure."

Elisabeth, why do you hate so much the Austrian Folklore? Is it possible for you not to find yourself among the traditions of your people?

Elisabeth: "If tradition means the musical tradition of the Middle Ages, the cultural background of architecture and painting in our country then I am totally into it; but I absolutely cannot identify myself with the primitive, naïve and for me simply disgusting style of music that Austrian Folklore has become. If the people are happy with listening to it, all right, but this music makes me feel dumb and aggressive..."

ANTICHRISIS is a band which focuses much on love concept emphasized under "light" signification where the innocent romanticism is the key. What do you think about "A Legacy Of Love"? Could it be considered another side of your inner personality, another face of yours immortalized through and into a certain moment framed in your existence? Perhaps a more positive one, an optimistic filled with brightness kind of expression. Sid is conceiving now a new album, "Perfume", having featured as voice his wife, Dragonfly...

Elisabeth: "Well, the work with ANTICHRISIS was a great experience and I could identify myself with the influences of Irish Folklore and Metal, but there were also some parts with which I couldn't. I certainly prefer rather dark or rather mystical music; and I think with Dragonfly Sid has found someone, who totally understands and supports his ideas. So I believe it was a good decision to take her for the main vocals, wish them good luck and I'm curious what they are working on now."

What are your desires as far as DARGAARD is concerned? Is it true you intend to record an album besides an orchestra after completing this trilogy? You shall perform live in Leipzig in short time. How shall it look like DARGAARD live? You shall use, perhaps, many voices than before. Do you think on stage the concept of darkness would be remarked as well as in studio, moreover, do you think it shall dominate the audience in the same way live as in studio does? I am rather sceptical about it! I guess, perhaps with the help of a few projections of your dreams, obsessions on huge walls...

Tharen: "I'm sceptical too, concerning the audience and the whole concert, because we are playing at the Napalm Halls between two metal acts. It's a difficult thing to have the same power (and you always need power life) as a metal act. I'm not a fan of concerts in general. We engaged two more female session singers (and maybe a session keyboarder) to manage the material correctly. To express the dark feeling is a difficult thing on stage I think, maybe we'll use less light and more fog than other bands..."

DOMINION should be another project of yours, weirder and, I think, less accessible to every fan of melodic styles. Apocalyptic electronic music gathers diverse influences: ritual, industrial, ambient, and electronic. Just a curiosity of mine, where from did you get such idea of combining these influences? I know Silenius experiences now in a same way with KREUZWEG OST...

Tharen: "I'm listening to industrial and ritual for a longer time now, and I had many ideas for making a project uniting many different styles. I realized it with DOMINION, and I must say that I'm surprised by the result. Sometimes brutal, sometimes dreamy, sometimes only dark...it's an interesting mixture of course...Hope the listener's feel the same. It's heavier than DARGAARD of course, but with a lot of melody lines and different moods too."



Your debut shall be released this month. What can you tell me about it? Elisabeth is figured as female voice as well. Whom would you recommend to listen to this kind of music? What kind of people do you have in mind?

Tharen: "It will take two or three months until the release of "The Hand and the Sword" I think. Napalm do not want to release two CD's from the same artist in a shorter time... I've really got good experiences - especially with the Black Metal scene when it comes to DOMINION. The sounds may not always be metallic, but the mood and the sounds are very dark. The voice often comes distorted and the whole has an intense rhythmic."

D.V.K.E. or GRABESMOND are two projects which, even if musically not resembling much with DARGAARD or DOMINION, treats the same theme: darkness. What do you sincerely think about them? I know you are friends, even more, I understood you played along Lucia...

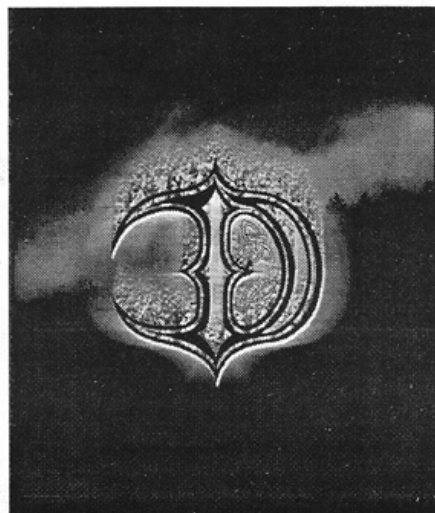
Tharen: "All the musicians of the bands you mentioned come from the same incest Black Metal circus, so it's no wonder that we all want to create dark music, even if we are not playing Black Metal. Everything else would be a 180° rotation. Lucia and me only played together on ABIGOR's "Supreme Immortal Art", but I respect her very much for her work with GRABESMOND as well as D.V.K.E. and we're friends of course."

That should be enough. Best luck in whatever you intend to achieve and may we meet somewhere in Egypt this life or perhaps the next future ones. Do you believe in life after death? Reincarnation? Do you think there might exist supernatural forces? What would you desire to find when this earthly life should end?

Tharen: "What is supernatural? All that man cannot define as natural on this earth? For me all is natural. I do not believe in a "live" after death, I'll just exist in my natural form as pure energy! Thanks for the interview! It was a really interesting one. Seems like you've read other interviews before you've written this one."

Contact:

www.dargaard.com



Here we are at the Reviews Chapter. When writing about simply or criticizing a band I find at least honest or correct to take in account as many factors as possible: history, sound, lyrics, imagery, artwork, musical references, gigs, other musical projects. The aim of a review it is not to characterization is lonely the one each listener may reach after listening to! If my subjectivism seems to be much too overflowing, just ignore it, if not, let yourselves drifted by my guidance! The date you find included in each review's end represents the day I wrote about the respective album. Even if regarding many albums my opinion might be different the moment you read these lines, I believe the review has an inherent aim as well as the art of photographing: to immortalize, in a free chosen moment a certain "image", the rest should be demagogy. Enjoy!

...AND OCEANS (FIN) – "The Symetry of I, The Circle of O" CD'99 41 min, 8 tracks (SEASON OF MIST)

Neptune's band had decided, after a first well-done product, to make things complex, especially the sound. So, as a matter of fact, we



can listen besides black metal, also heavy, thrash, death metal and even ambient e c h o e s ("Stained"). ... A N D O C E A N S makes itself different from

other bands because of that keyboard sound, very bombastic, having such a destructive battery yet maintaining a strong original melodic line. I believe I should say it is the most performed modern Finnish black metal band! (25.01)

ABIGOR (AUT) – "Channeling the Quintessence of Satan" CD'99 41min, 8 tracks (NAPALM)

For ABIGOR's fans I could say this is their eight CD but not the eight album, because right here it is about MCD's and demo's versions reedited on CD. It seems like TT and Peter K's project definitely is the most respected and well sold in wide Austria. And I tend to consider it should also be quite a profitable business for the other worldwide distributors. Should I start describing ABIGOR's sound? I believe it is identical with their earlier albums' sound. Perhaps a coming little bit more in forth, accumulating much more hatred, performing a brutal black metal with a demonic voice and aggressive guitars... An album, which shall never dishonour or disappoint those who preferred their previous ones. (25.01)

ADVERSAM (ITA) – "Animadverte" CD'99 37min, 8 tracks (SCARLET)

It is said about ADVERSAM as being the biggest hope of Italian black metal. After listening the album... I could only say that from a certain point of view the rumours indeed must be true. Why so? Because those four Italians approach black metal in a different, more violent, even raw but extremely technical manner. It is true, yet, from time to time and there they imitate DARK FUNERAL or MAYHEM. Although they released a single demo, in 1997, "The Black Diamond Gates". ADVERSAM had an unique chance of signing a contract with an important Italian label and now are trying to impose themselves through a guitar, a bass, battery and keyboards and also a voice... in front of all extreme black metal fans without trend-compromises. (24.01)

AGENT STEEL (USA) – "Omega Conspiracy"

CD'99 51 min, 10 tracks

(CANDLELIGHT)

The legendary band, founded in 1985, had determined itself to surprise us last Autumn, thus they had released a new album. Absolutely surprising for myself was Candlelight's decision to promote this album, probably the Candlelight' boss must be one of this band's fans. The material contains ten extremely fast harmoniously united with melodic tunes and a classical heavy metal which I find quite sympathetic listening or more properly said an '80's revival while bands as MEGADETH, EXODUS or MERCYFUL FATE used to rule or make the rule on metal scene. For all this style fans I write also the line up: Juan Garcia (guitars), Bernie Versailles (guitars), Chuck Profus (drums), Mike Zaputil (bass), Bruce Hall (vocals). I understood "Omega Conspiracy" would be sustained and performed along an intensive tour. You can't stop it! (25.01)

AL SIRAT (POL) – "Signa Tempori" CD'99 49 min, 10 tracks (METALSTORM)

I've received it along with LUX OCCULTA from Pagan Records, „Signa Tempori “ took me by surprise or, in better words, AL SIRAT did. I heard nothing about them before and I was curious to listen to. The metal music performed by Cola, Sersciu, Singiel and Chojniak is a technical one; thrash metal with death passages, sometimes melodic and other times quite brutal. "7.5 Liters of Water" is the most stimulating track, if up to me, and I can say that it might be even the best. The band is pretty old, but in six years of activity they only recorded two demos, "Milczysz"-sold in over 1000 samples and most of them in Germany. At first they performed a common black death metal under HELGRIND name and then a few changes in line-up followed reaching, only in 1999, the actual stable formula and also the style I've already presented in my earlier lines. (27.01)

ALTAR (HOL) – "In The Name Of The Father" CD'00 45 min, 10 tracks (PAVEMENT)

It has been some time since I have heard of these deathers. In 1992 ALTAR released "And God Created Satan To Blame For His Mistakes; after that Displeased offers them a contract during which three albums are released. "Youth Against Christ" 1994, "Ego Art" 1996 and "Provoke" 1998. The guys are playing also at Dynamo Open Air Festival, so ALTAR becomes a very known band. A few changes occurred especially in line-up and then after another few misunderstandings with those from Displeased, Edwin Kelder (v), Richard Ludwig (g), Marcel Verdurmen (g), Sjoerd Visch (dr) and Nils Vos (b) signed for Pavement. The new tracks were presented last year at Waldrock Festival and feature the same classical death metal style with very few modern influences but whatever these five approach...

might be regarded as absolutely professional. We also have a bonus track, an IRON MAIDEN cover version, "The Trooper" in death metal version with a brutal voice and heavy guitars. Interesting at listening. Thus, ALTAR proves again they deserve aligning besides death metal "foundations" of last ten years, "In The Name Of The Father" being an appropriate album for the few nostalgics (unfortunately) for a style that made such impression at the beginning of '90's. (10.04)

AMORTIS (AUT) – "Summoned By Astral Fires" CD'00 59 min, 8 tracks (LAST EPISODE)

What could be in fashion now? Simple: black gothic and death metal mixture. AMORTIS has prepared for us specifically this kind of music based a much melodiousness and atmosphere, delineating mainly different voices and a continuous keyboard. The tracks are professionally recorded (Bush D.A. Bush Studio), all instruments being perfectly and accurately heard. The former PENETRALIA has been found in 1994 and during the years had released only two demos, "A Kiss From The Dark" and "Memories Of A Ancient Time", materials well appreciated among mass media. The debut was recorded in 1998 but the mixing lasted more than a year-long: melodocity, aggre-ssiveness, and swift-ness all in an extremely heavy rhythm. I couldn't affirm those Austrians are quite genuine but their music is so meticulously performed and even conceived that I cannot help myself from recommending you to listen to this album. (27.03)



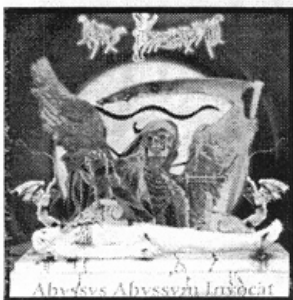
ANIMA IN FIAMME (ITA) – promo MCD'99 26 min, 8 tracks

On this MCD you can listen to some tracks already released on six compilations lately. Thus, after an industrial intro, "Ferito" we enter a medieval atmosphere, classical music, clavecin's tunes, violins, harpsichord, piano, keyboards, organ, samples, cello, baritone voices, texts in Italian (even Latin). After that, once again a few industrial ambient elements can be heard in "Il Dolore" track and in another different version of "Ferito", all in the same mystical manner so that the MCD ends with an outstanding FIRE + ICE cover version, "Michael". It is a music that brings us back a long time ago, ancient times... when kings were ruling beautiful kingdoms... I am extremely curious to listen to the debut album of these two musicians which is programmed to be released soon under "Sub Occasum Solis" title. It is also apt to be mentioned the fact

Ferruccio plays also in the folk apocalyptic band ARGINE. Contact: Ferruccio Milanese, Via G. Janelli 45/D, 80131 Naples, Italy, <http://members.xoom.com/animafiamm>. (03.05)

ART INFERNO (ITA) – "Abyssus Abyssum Invocat" CD'99 56 min, 10 tracks (SCARLET)

Reading this trio's presentation file-a brief survey-I found out interesting elements such as a mixture of CRADLE OF FILTH with Wagner,



symphonic esoteric black metal, black opera. In other words, I enter the CD, press play button: a four minutes journey trespasses me into a bizarre, infernal, shocking world and it

only was the beginning... the "Praeludium: A Porte Inferi". "The Dark Rising" is the quintessence track of the album, which makes indeed the ART INFERNO sound... the kind of music well described by Scarlet team. The album has been conceived by a few connecting tracks-intro genus-which are divinely combined with the other tracks. The result? A black metal masterpiece! "Orgiastic Dance Of Pan" is my favourite track; in 9 minutes those three members managed to define the ART INFERNO sound's elements: violent, classical, extreme, esoteric, symphonic black metal. I could only express my regret of not reaching (for listening) not even until now "Screams Of Sirens" demo in 1993 and "Among Secrets" MCD '97 (Nosferatu) materials edited under the title JOURNEY THROUGH THE DARK. (25.01)

AS DIVINE GRACE (FIN) – "Supremature" CD'99 46 min, 10 tracks (AVANTGARDE)

Founded in 1991 under MORPHEUS name, the band recorded in 1992 two death metal demos. After a while, in 1993 Autumn, Sami, Ari, Matti and Jari contacted Jukka and changed the name into AS DIVINE GRACE. Almost instantly the style is changed also, so that in January 1996 the MCD "Romantic Beatitude Of Faded Dawn" makes its appearance at Folter Records. Hanna Kalske joins the quintet and all together they modify completely the sound; in 1997 they signed a contract with Avantgarde Music and release their debut album entitled "Lumo". Although it has been sold in more 5.000 issues, the debut success did not maintain the same formula; more precisely: Mikko Lappalainen comes back in Matti's place, Jari suddenly decides giving up the music and, moreover, Jukka takes over the bass and guitar besides keyboards also. The new product presents ten melodious tracks; absolutely enchanting tracks having performed a remarkable female voice... the kind of music no one would have anything to protest against... any one would enjoy this music. Having had carefully listened to the material I realized that "Tango", "Shelter", "Ferocious" and "Be Used" denote a psychedelic feature, more progressive, more inner closed... while the rest excel through a gothic magnetism having also rock influences, a little bit more commercial. So, after listening three stimulating tracks "Your Julie", "Morbidity" and "Personal" you're entering an emphasized meditation mood, in a four tracks time you gradually come back to life... to the

light following "The Most", "Andre" and "Rhizome" tunes. The musician's desire has been the same as before: "To write timeless music that is not molded by past or future trends". Contact: PL 2, 21570 Sauvo, Finland, E-mail: asdivinegrace@destool.com (25.01)

ASHES TO ASHES (NOR) – "Shapes Of Spirits" CD'99 59 min, 8 tracks

Absolutely surprising to me is the fact this band was founded in 1992 but the first serious release was only at the end of last year. Although it is a self financed album either the sound and the booklet are of a certain quality resembling with those of the bands promoted by labels. I have questioned myself often how this band did not manage to receive any offer from the labels so far! Their music is very interesting reaching from classical music or heavy metal till gothic, doom or power metal aspects. The male voice is rather low normal and the female voice brings a warm pleasant note to the sound. We can enjoy during the tracks all kind of influences: oriental or medieval or even modern due to an intermittently used keyboard. We can also face certain melodiousness and atmosphere too... sometimes embracing melancholy or ballads' rhythms. Kenneth Brastad's voice carries my thoughts to Dan Swano's gothic projects which I listened not to for so long. The tracks are proudly structured and conceived, pretty long although not so complex creating you a pleasant state of mind and soul if listening to. I believe ASHES TO ASHES has not managed to reach any signing because their sound is so diverse, various so that it cannot be labelled inside a certain trend being hardly characterized and with a too difficult message for the fans. But I can assure you the music created by the four is rather not so Norwegian but European. No other comments, just interesting. Contact: P.O. Box 2038, N-0505, Oslo, Norway, E-mail: atoa@atoa.net, <http://www.atoa.net>. (22.04)

ATARAXIA (ITA) – "Lost Atlantis" CD'99 52 min, 11 tracks (CRUEL MOON INT'L)

I find myself confused and wondering what else should I write for you of this band after such an ample enlightened material you already had the chance to read... previously... It probably was best if keeping my first intention of not having reviews for the bands I made interviews with right in the magazine. But, anyway... ATARAXIA comes in forth with a product that has nothing in common with metal; the ethereal sunken style is difficult to be presented in only a few words. I can only try to disclose for you a secret: if you feel sad or upset, nervous or even happy, if you feel like travelling back in history or time "Lost Atlantis" should be the best solution! A masterpiece of last millenium's end! (25.01)

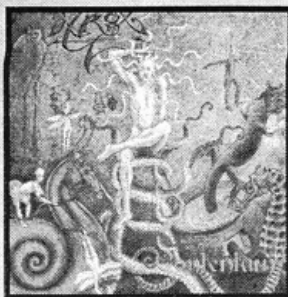


ATROX (NOR) – "Contentum" CD'00 65 min, 12 tracks (SEASON OF MIST)

If you examine thoroughly into the album's cover you can observe it's extremely com-

plex and knotty enough. The same goes for the music they play. Yet I would like to offer you a few details about ATROX. It was founded in 1988 under SUFFOCATION name. In 1991 they record "Mind Shadow" demo and two years later they release "Dead Leaves". In 1997 is released a 7"

EP ("Silence The Echoes") at Danza Ipnotica and the "Mesmerized" debut at Head Not Found. Last year Eivind, Rune, Monica Tor Arne and Hingst Hirbel



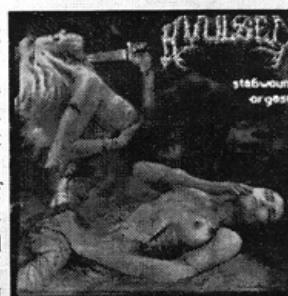
record a new album in Tico-Tico Studio, a more experimental and extravagant one leaving the classic gothic doom metal patterns. The most significant element of ATROX's music is consisted in Monica's voice, no one else than Ann Mari's sister (THE 3RD AND THE MORTAL). In better words I should characterize it as a schizophrenic gothic doom metal, precisely elaborated framing staggering astounding voices with streamy inflexions accompanied by a "sinusoidal" meandering keyboard. I believe progressive is one of the musicians' most favourite style and thus I can unburden myself affirming "Contentum" is an album exceeding much more than conceiving the metal directions. An album more than original and fascinating! (27.03)

AVERSE SEFIRA (USA) – "Homecoming's March" CD'99 64 min, 7 tracks (ARROGARE)

Is it black, is it death? Difficult to say... anyway, the Americans have decided seriously to play and this album is a successful one! The tracks are very long owning suitable inspired intros followed by dynamic passages, rapid ones where a coming from hell voice leaves you not breathing and where guitars' tunes sound rather speed metal and the battery gives the impression of thrash-death metal. Therefore... an extreme style, fast, brutal yet perfectly elaborated. It would not be more to say except the fact that the album was preceded by an appreciated demo in USA as well as in Europe, "Blasphemet sin Abset". On "Pax Dei" Chuck Salvo's voice can also be listened to, he is well known from DEATH OF MILLIONS. Contact: Arrogare Records, P.O. Box 4934, Austin TX 78765-4934, USA, E-mail: blasphomet@hotmail.com (29.01)

AVULSED (ESP) – "Stabwound Orgasm" CD'99 59 min, 12 tracks (REPULSE)

Ohhh! There is a long, long time since I have listened such brutal death metal yet of such verity... I've been used of listening the actual melodivities... so much that I



almost forgot that death metal is a style of which nonconformism can be easily recognized by listening classical bands such as DEATH, GORGUTS or OBITUARY. Once Morrisound studio from Tampa-Florida was the most wanted and desired studio, today

Grieghallen, Abyss, Sound Suite naturally took its place. Back to AVULSED, the band was founded in 1992 and along the years released three demos ("Embalmed In Blood" '92, "Deformed Beyond Belief" '93, Promo'95), a 7"EP ("Carnivoracity"). They all were re-edited last year in CD ("Seven Years Of Decay") at Quirofano Productions, a Columbian label, an album ("Eminence in Putrescence" '96) a remix of "Cybergore" '98 including also, besides death metal and a few techno elements, this new album too. Dave Rotten's voice remained unchanged, brutal as a characteristic of '80's death metal, which reminds me of Luc Lemay (GORGUTS). The artist Robert Sindermann performs the horror artwork and it suits perfectly with the aggressive message of the album. It is good news for me to find that death metal is still an option and I'm talking about death metal of quality. Personally I appreciate and sustain Repulse's effort when promoted a style on dying or already before even being born or alive for some... Contact: Dave Rotten, P.O. Box 50562, 28080 Madrid, Spain, E-mail: dave.rotten@repulserrecords.com (25.01)

AVERON (SWE) - "An Echo From Beyond" CD'99 53 min, 12 tracks (UNISOUND)

Do you wish for listening to a classic doom metal in CANDLEMASS or SOLITUDE AETURNUS style? AVERON might be the most appropriate choice. After its debut "Serenity", Ola Persson, Stefan Halvarsson, Micael Wikstrom, Per Ryberg and Anders Westling record this material in '98 Summer and, after a pretty long period, appear at Panos' label. AVERON can be catalogued as a doom metal band if it is to be about Ola's voice and Per and Micael's guitars... yet it can also be spoken about a certain modern atmosphere because of Anders' keyboard. There are 12 tracks performed in old doom metal school's style... having not much special elements. A well concluded album and nothing more or less. Contact: P.O.Box 210, 82122, Bollnas, Sweden, E-mail: averson@telia.com (30.01)

BEWITCHED (CHI) - "Dragonflight" CD'99 71min, 14 tracks (CONQUISTADOR)

The most important band from Chile has recently released an interesting material I hope you would find at least charming. After three demos "In God We Trust (The Medieval Fears)" '91, "Nemesis" '92, "Doomed" '92, the split with F-UNCUNT and "Hibernum in Perpetuum" CD'96 (Picroco Records), Doomicus, Arahn Evil and Snow had prepared a very large album, yet exceedingly worked out with an original style, I would say characteristic to metal underground which combines intelligently black with doom or even heavy, speed or thrash! On those nine tracks (excepting the intro and outro) we can have a journey from HELLHAMMER, CELTIC FROST or MERCYFUL FATE even to CANDLEMASS, WINTER or, moreover, classical music. The album includes as well three cover-version "Black Funeral", "Soul Tears" and "Serene Sorrow" belonged to MERCYFUL FATE and, respectively, HADES. BEWITCHED has not any kind of connection to Blackheim's Swedish projects and trio's music has not either anything in common with modern styles of our nowadays. It's rather a different mode of expressing extreme satanic metal. Contact: Cecilia M, Sam Buenaventura 3206, Villa Fray Camilo Enriquez, Santiago

24, Chile, E-mail: steer@rdc.cl (25.01)

BLACK LODGE (FRA) - "Inner Cells" demo CD'99 57min, 8 tracks

When I found this band site on Internet I have been thinking that Saint Vincent, the guy behind this project (and also behind S A I N T VINCENT-ambient symphonic keyboards and HURLEVENTS-black doom metal) had decided to prove and show to the whole world that black metal might have been approached from another level and direction. What did surprise me at a first succinct audition? An IRON MAIDEN cover version ("The Prophecy" absolutely intelligently interpreted yet all in all... in the Saint Vincent distinctive manner. It is a sort of TARTAROS in its French version. The electric weird black metal is absolutely unmistakable featuring a grim voice, drummachine and an aggressive keyboard. Thus, a chaotic obscure violent and avantgardist sound. The solo project has turned now into a trio since on "Prince Of Dark Cellars" MCD (and probably also on the future MCD which should appear on June) Lethe (ex-FORBIDDEN SITE) and Sir Diamargareton (DIAMATREGON) are included in. Memorize this name and look for other details to: Saint Vincent, 51 Impasse des 4 montagnes, Les Jeandiat, 38250 Villard de Lans, France, E-mail: saintvincent@caramail.com www.multimania.com/blacklodge (27.03)



BORÉAL (CAN) - "Terre De Glace" CD'98 52 min, 4 tracks (CRYOPRODUCTION)

Music on computer has become already a fashion and I don't consider it a wrong. Perhaps only from a certain single point of view, sound quality. Dave presents us a sumptuous ambient, in MORTIIS manner or last BURZUM's albums, without voice, not exactly special but comfortable at listening... creating around you and for you a peaceful atmosphere. It is about almost an hour of music on computer, perfectly arranged and conceived. There it would be one little thing to be said. Dave experiences now other two musical projects which would soon be ready: NORD and LES ÉVOCATS DU DIABLE... yet you should rather find yourselves these details. Contact: Cryoproduction, 527-B Place Copernic, Chicoutimi, Qc, G7H 6G7, Canada. E-mail: Cryoproduction@hotmail.com, boreal_nord@hotmail.com, <http://www.saglac.qc.ca/~nord/> (11.04)

BORKNAGAR (NOR) - "Quintessence" CD'00 42 min, 10 tracks (CENTURY MEDIA)

A different kind of black metal! That should be a form of BORKNAGAR's style characterization! Even if there were a few changes in line up, some desired, some imposed (Grim-R.I.P.) Rystein G. Brun had found resources to record a new material. What seems to be maintained and also the principal element that distinguishes the band from another is the epic aspect, very well emphasized during all ten tracks. If I.C.S. Vortex' voice is extremely changing, Lars A Nedland's (Lazare from

SOLEFALD) keyboard is the most exquisite instrument present on this album, I could even affirm it is the leader of the other instruments featuring an exceedingly weird sound rather coming from '70's... very complex yet quite melodic. We can enjoy the usual instrumental tracks, but this time, only two, "Inner Landscape" and "Embers". The most avantgarde epic and modern track it seems for me to be "Colossus" during which the black metal approached by these five musicians reminds me of ARCTURUS, with a clean voice, a knotty battery (Asgeir Mickelson-SPIRAL ARCHITECT), something in Hellhammer style. The rest of tracks are featuring an atmospheric melodic black metal presenting an aggressive voice, fast rhythms embracing progressive tendencies... probably due to such superb magnificent keyboard. Thus, after "Borknagar", "The Olden Domain" and "The Archaic Course", the five prove once again the inspiration is the most important element they base the music on. "Quintessence" might be regarded as a new challenge and BORKNAGAR continues to be among Nordic metal avantgarde elite besides ARCTURUS, ULVER, MAYHEM, SOLEFALD or DODHEIMSGARD. (11.04)

CHAINED AND DESPERATE (GRE) - "Eleven Angles In A Circle" CD'99 41 min, 11 tracks (HIEROGLYPH)

It took almost ten years for the debut album to be released DESPERATION DEATH was founded in 1990 and after two years changed its name editing in 1994 "Grieving For the Lost Sun" demo. Then it followed a few changes in line-up, a few tours and the recording of six new tracks which had to appear to DarkSide Records. Unfortunately the label closed and these three, all of a sudden, are in the situation of looking for other offers but this time for "Oracles From The Neither-World" demo. It seemed like Neat Metal's promises couldn't come to an end, and thus at the beginning of last year "Eleven..." is released at this young label. This was their history. The album presents us eleven black metal tracks in a traditional style featuring some guitars which remind me of ROTTING CHRIST's beginning period or, moreover, of those bands that released their albums at Unisound. This pagan metal with a death voice does not sound bad at all, it owns a certain melodiousness, some atmosphere and even a few modern elements yet the underground note is still dominant offering a certain special charm to the sound. An interesting album or, perhaps, one which might awake the nostalgias of all Greek black metal fans from '94-'95. Contact: Nick Giagiakos, C. Smirmis 49, 18547, N. Faliro, Greece, E-mail: cmains6@hotmail.com <http://CHAINED.FREESERVERS.COM.HIEROGLYPH.HTML> (12.03)

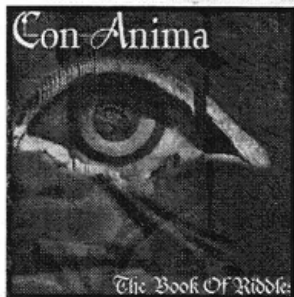
CHRISTIAN DEATH (USA) - "The Bible" CD'00 49 min, 12 tracks (CANDLELIGHT)

I remember last time I have listened to CHRISTIAN DEATH when receiving a CD from Century Media. It is not exactly the music style I am dying for therefore there are not too many details I have about Valor's project. It might be conceived a parallel with some gothic rock bands such as LACRIMOSA or GOTHIC SEX as far as bygone period or imagery is concerned but also next to the impact produced on the stage. "The Bible" encloses 12 characteristic tracks into which four are live ver-

sions. It is a strange music emphasizing in principal Valor's voice and lyrics. Thus, for CHRISTIAN DEATH' fans, the new album might be regarded as a reference one and I see no impediment to procure it if wanted. (13.02)

CON ANIMA (NOR) – "The Book Of Riddles" CD'99 44 min, 13 tracks (SCARLET)

Stian Culto-Culus, the well known ex-member of MAYHEM and THE SHADOW DANCERS...



... set the foundation of a new dark gothic project with rock heavy inflexions reaching accidentally a melancholy dramatic tragically aura. It's surprising and quite a fascination

when writing a review to an album not is able to compare to some other bands... its just CON ANIMA. S Danzo Culto proposes Amon and Embla to record an album and that's "The Book Of Riddles" story. The final outcome could be disassociated into two different divisions: one of interludes, instrumentals that are interpolated between and the others so called tracks. Along the entire length of all tracks it can abundantly be sensed the gothic atmosphere yet the dark note is given by S. Culto's voice, extremely changing from one passage to another, from one track to the other. "Eating eyes" is definitely an enchanting track yet "The Angel Of Melancholy" is the one to prove that "Book Of Riddles" is the most sensational gothic album you would need immediately to procure. (24.01)

CRYOGENIC (GER) – "Celephais" CD'99 50 min, 10 tracks (SOLISTITIUM)

One of the oldest German underground black metal bands has finally succeeded releasing its debut album

CRYOGENIC made itself known by "Ignis Occultus In..." demo and a promotape as well as because of live performances sustained besides ENTHRONED, GEHENNA or CRYPTIC CARNAGE.



Harpokrates, Jormundganden, Trismegistos, Thehemoth, Sven and Johanna recorded their debut in Spiderhouse Studio and thus those ten rapid melodic tracks appeared. A lot of Keyboards, an aggressive voice shadowed by an extremely fast battery and also from time to time a female voice are featuring this album. The most interesting track should be "Celephais" where all modern black metal elements can be found: aggressivity, atmosphere, melancholy, and melodiousness. An ...AND OCEANS German version I could say. Contact: Leo Rasche, Witzlebenstrasse 12a, 14057 Berlin, Germany. (26.01)

CRYPTIC WINTERMOON (GER) – "Age Of Cataclysm" CD'99 62 min, 13 tracks (ARS METALLI)

It simply seems like fortune finally halted in

this band since after seven years of existing they decisively managed to release the first CD. Founded in 1993, after the BLACK PROPHECIES band' dissolution, during the years the band had diverse members, the most important were

from TER-RI-BLE SOMNIUM.

Right after "Voyages Dans La Lune" demo was released, 1995, the six members released "Cryptic Wintermoon" MCD, 1997, and "Frankonian Frost" EP, in 1998. The debut is presented through a pretty booklet, professionally conceived including all tracks' lyrics and also photos with the members. This fact made me observing the keyboard is played by a woman, Andrea Walter. It's a very interesting modern music; sort of a melodic black metal symphonically modulated expressing a strong atmosphere with black voice and a very rapid battery. It is not exactly an original style but I really enjoy the combination realized between the battery rhythm and the keyboard which goes in the same way too for the guitars oscillating from heavy, gothic to black metal ("Angels Never Die"). A conceptual album well interpreted, better said, a German atmospheric black metal perfectly matched on what these style fans are desperately looking for. It reminds me a little of ATANATOS. That should be all. Contact: Ronny Dörfner, Schlesienstr.15, 95482 Gefrees, Germany. (03.04)



DAKRUA (ITA) – "Inner Wastelands" CD'99 43 min, 10 tracks (SCARLET)

This very quintet has almost four years of existence but unfortunately did not manage to record more then a promotape, in 1998, then as a consequence, they signed a contract with Scarlet. Paying all my attention in listening their music I realize that mostly what makes DAKRUA an interesting band indeed is in fact Eva Rondinelli's voice. Influenced by BLACK SABBATH, IRON MAIDEN, PARADISE LOST or ANATHEMA, those Italians are offering, through this album, ten gothic tracks power influenced with lots of keyboard, female voice, and male voice... I am not so fond on this album to say the truth and maybe it's because they tried to gather too many styles together: heavy, speed, doom, power, gothic, and death in only ten tracks. So, a lot of ideas, satisfactory results. (24.01)

DARGAARD (AUT) – "In Nomine Aeternitatis" CD'00 51 min, 11 tracks (NAPALM)

I admit I anxiously awaited for the release of this new album after "Eternity Rites" did plainly strike me. I cannot be completely sure if the impact is the same now, after listening carefully these new eleven tracks, but I can affirm with no shades of doubt that Elisabeth Toriser endures the first album direction but



this time insisting a little bit more on voice yet maintaining the same dark, sumber, ambient medieval atmosphere... If I had to compare "Eternity Rites" with "In Nomine Aeternitatis", I would say the later doesn't distinguish or have nothing particular or special. Perhaps the two were not quite "perfect" regarding the inspiration or imagination chapter. From another point of view, it is very important for you to listen to this album since DARGAARD represents an original exponent of Austrian dark scene as well as in GRABESMOND case. If you haven't listened to DARGAARD yet you should do it immediately... if you enjoyed already the first chapter, curiosity and impatience would impulse you procuring at once this new album; if you wish for aggressivity and violence, you better step out DARGAARD, that's not for you! What is DARGAARD indeed? An electronic project which calm peaceful music is "produced" with synthesizer's help, I also could mention Lisa's exceptional voice (well known from "A Legacy Of Love"-ANTICHRISIS) interrupted, from time to time, by a male dark voice (Tharen). Elite Austrian Dark Ambient! (12.03)

DARK FUNERAL (SWE) – "Teach Children To Worship Satan" MCD'00 27 min, 5 tracks (NO FASHION)

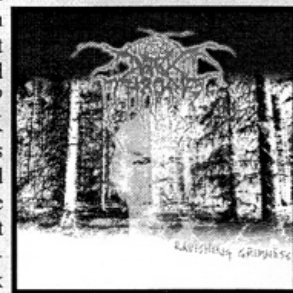
Absolutely excellent idea had those from No Fashion with the video track

"An Appren-tice Of Satan"! In fact is the single new track of these four guys, which prepares us for a new DARK FUNERAL album, coming in forth! This is a demonstration of virtuosity of Lord Ahriman, Emperor Magus Caligula, Dominio and Gaahnfaust. If the entire new album sounds in the same manner, I am already "warning" you: keep posted! DARK FUNERAL performs accurate black metal with no compromises! Excellent synchronization and indeed excellent interpretation! And, in order to capture your full attention, I announce you can see the four of them performing live in front of fans having the never-failing pigs' heads and fire games on the stage, all of these right on the video track I mentioned about. Otherwise you can listen to cover-versions of the following bands: KING DIAMOND, SLAYER, SODOM and MAYHEM. It is a MCD released now also in vinyl (10") shape especially for the collectors. (03.04)



DARK THRONE (NOR) – "Ravishing Grim-ness" CD'99 38 min, 6 tracks (MOONFOG)

Fenriz doesn't refute himself and thus releases a new devastating album; I could say a classical black metal one. And, all in all, how could it have happened else than so? Since DARK THRONE was the first band which, at the beginning at "90's" has released the black



metal album "A Blaze in the Northern Sky". The album begins with "Lifeless" a black metal track yet featuring slow tunes followed by "The Beast"; a fast sequence built on a thrash skeleton same as CELTIC FROST or HELLHAMMER. "The Claws of Time" is a melodic track, with rapid modern extents after which through "Across The Vacuum" and "Ravishing Grimness" track the sound becomes black classic, unaltered by fashion's whims or time's influences. The last track "To The Death" brings back from ancient times the atmosphere of first two BATHORY's albums... An album elaborated in the same original manner of Northern black metal! (29.01)

DEAD SILENT SLUMBER (SWE) – "Entombed In The Midnight Hour" CD'99 39 min, 7 tracks

(HAMMERHEART)

"A death metal symphony throughout wicked horror, melancholy sickness and



zombificating rituals" is the label characterization. Jens Ryder, NAGFLAR's vocal, has decided last year to experience a solo project and after one single promotape

they has signed a contract with Hammerheart. The seven tracks were recorded in Ballerina Audio Studio and mixed by Nils Johansson. The result was a modern sound, an elaborated Scandinavian death black metal, fulfilled by intelligent guitar solos, haunting keyboards, majestic choirs and even female voice ("Entombed In The Midnight Hour"). I must say it is about a musical project irreproachably conceived and achieved! Quite an exception for so many albums released in the past years that almost instantly as they were released-disappeared also. Excellent! (27.01)

DEINONYCHUS (HOL) – "Deinonychus" CD'00 49 min, 8 tracks

(ARS METALLI)

Depressive doom death metal or dark sad and slow metal! These would be the appropriate words for describing DEINONYCHUS! The music is the kind of music having no interest these days, everybody seem to prefer gothic or black metal. Marco's solo project sounds not bad at all... atmospheric from time to time, even gothic ("Moments") with a death voice of a certain aggressiveness, a lot of keyboard and that should be all. It is a music rather "hard" of a strange certain weight even funerary from here and there. That is why this music cannot be assimilated but if being in the right mood... and absolutely not joyful or a happy one. As for a comparison with "The Weeping Of A Thousand Years" or even "Ark Of Thought" ("The Silence Of December" is already other kind of style)... the fourth material is the most grave majestic and elaborated. I am afraid this style reaches interest only among those who believe not metal music started with TRISTANIA, DIMMU BORGIR or CHILDREN OF BODOM. I hope yet I am the one and only to be mistaken. Contact: Marco Kehren, fax: +31455211338, E-mail: deinonychus_nl@hotmail.com. (17.04)

DEPRAVED (GER) – "Distorted Theories" CD'00 42 min, 8 tracks

(CCP)

Death metal is alive; did not die! At least this is the prime message emphasized but these four German musicians. In almost five years since existing they have recorded only demos: "Cryptic" 1996 and "Elixirs Of Decay", promoted by them all over Europe. What did they accomplish by and with this present album? To combine successfully but not in an absolutely original manner death metal of '80's with '90's death metal offering a brutal sound, here and there rhythmical, featuring a death voice and fast guitars with death and even black tunes. Nothing new but what they composed is skillfully performed. Those who are interested can write at this address: DEPRAVED, P.O.Box 1101, 15201, Frankfurt/Oder, Germany. (26.03)

DEPRESY (SK) – "Sighting" CD'99

37 min, 8 tracks

(SHINDY)

After MCD "A Grand Magnificence" appeared in 1998, Slovaks has decided to record a new material in order to continue that they had begun two years ago. Thus, Shimi, Dragon, Elevo and Martych on May 1999 in Exponent Studio record another eight death metal tracks yet having a clearer sound, more perceptible, perhaps because of the presence in abundance of the melodic passages. It is a band that reminds me of HYPOCRISY or SEPTIC FLESH at their first albums. The debut album can be found in CD version, digipack or tape. It is a very well trimmed material, perfectly arranged which contains also a video tape "The Antichrist's Philosophy" recorded by the musicians at Beckov from Slovakia. (29.01)

DIABOLIC (USA) – "City Of The Dead" MCD'99 19 min, 5 tracks

(FADELESS)

Although appeared in 1997, DIABOLIC, has succeeded a year later to perform live at Milwaukee Metal Fest in New York! The present material is in fact the demo "City Of The Dead", now released on MCD format, having included as bonus track two tracks unreleased until now: "Encarta" and "Inborn". The band is now under the signing of Conquest Music's contract and has already released the debut "Supreme Evil". But returning to this very material, I can only say it is about a powerful death metal, dynamic performing "screaming guitars", chaotic bass yet controlled, a fast battery and a demonic voice. Shortly: American death metal! Contact: P.O.Box 9689, Tampa, FL 33674-9689, USA, E-mail: blastmasters@hotmail.com (29.01)

DIABOLICAL (PAR) – "Dominus Infernal" CD'99 48 min, 9 tracks

(ICARUS)

This album can be observed from two angles: in case we desire for listening a modern black metal DIABOLICAL is most certainly the worst choice. If we wish for travelling back in time when IMMORTAL or BURZUM were scaring even the most fervent death metal fans, then „Dominus Infernal" might be exactly the most appropriate and correct choice to make. The band was founded in 1993 under BLACK RITUAL name, then DIABOLICAL CULT and finally Diabolical. This album was recorded in 1996 and it should have been released one year later at Stormsouls. Unfortunately, the situation really mixed up so that after no longer than three years of probing, DIABOLICAL launches this present album on the market. As I was telling you before, these four musicians' music is more than brutal primi-

tive with a grim voice, underground notification, satanic messages and followed closely by the usual specific ordinary make up. It is a black metal which should have provoked waves almost three years ago... recently we shall see. Contact: Rodrigo Gonzales, Panchito Lopez No.610, Lambare-Paraguay, E-mail: xytras@mail.com. (11.04)

DRAWN (NOR) – "A New World?" CD'99 65 min, 9 tracks

(PROPHECY)

Carrying inside my heart the nostalgia of "This Is My Day" track I awaited for receiving the debut of this Norwegian project I have already remarked (and I hope you have also) since the MCD "Plan Be" had appeared. Now Christer Andre Cederberg, Per K, Dr. Dorum and Thomas presents as a new version of metal, a progressive one: psychedelic atmospheric, definitely strange which oscillates between being violent and calm rather peaceful, extreme but in the same time sublime. I must disclose myself when admitting that many guitar tunes resemble with IN THE WOODS... and Jan Kenneth's voice also reminds us, no shades of doubt, this project has, more than it seems, many things in common with the popular band up mentioned but quite through an even extensive spectrum... so that following these eight tracks you can find more than one musical style. An album of and for nostalgia, meditation, philosophy... It should be sufficient for you to listen only "Marygold" and you would realize that between agony and ecstasy there is one and only step, moreover you would feel the passing from happiness to disappointment, from life to... another life, unknown to you. Superb! Exquisite! (25.01)

DODHEIMSGARD (NOR) – "666 International" CD'99 66 min, 9 tracks

(MOONFOG)

These Norwegians have found another manner of expressing extreme metal, an unimaginable version:



psychedelic industrial technical black metal! The sound is more than complicated: guitars' tunes once strongly heard and then all of a sudden disappearing... a dizzy battery,

changing voice, intermittent rhythms, chaotic tunes, melancholic piano, abrupt keyboard, psycho passages, rock, jazz... I still cannot realize if it is about a synchronization or simply an experiment... from calm, place, serenity and nostalgia you can instantly face an intense noise, an unfettered fury, it's something having nothing in common with music or metal, out of melodiousness, out of cursiveness... just DODHEIMSGARD! Excellent! (30.01)

ECLIPSE (POL) – "Dersacharms Venomous Colours" MCD'00 26 min, 5 tracks

(BLACKEND)

The first outstanding and out of proportions surprise concerning a debut! It is astonishing how these young musicians had succeeded combining modern black metal and heavy metal with classic and atmospheric styles. It is a clear sound, guitars rather follow heavy or speed line than black, a bombastic keyboard, ravishing battery and the Chors'black voice

remarks itself specially when contrast reaches the maximum videlicet through the passages performed by an enchanting female voice. Those from Blackend compare them with EMPEROR or DIMMU BORGIR. In my opinion, if EMPEROR tends to symphonic and DIMMU BORGIR the gothic, ECLIPSE mostly tends to attain heavy obtaining a fresh black metal sound. It is regrettable the fact we can only listen to no more than three genuine tracks, each one over six minutes, the last two being some interesting instrumental sequences but not special or notable as well as what we could listen for more than 20 minutes long before. After almost three years since founded, Chors and Daamrs caution us of ECLIPSE's coming forward in forth... So, be ready the war is coming! ((13.02)



EINHERJER (NOR) – “Norwegian Native Art” CD’00 40 min, 8 tracks (NATIVE NORTH)

This material I have received from a label at its debut arrived with a track missing (not being included on), probably a technical mistake. It is very possible this album to have in fact 45 minutes. EINHERJER was founded in 1993 by Frode Glesnes and Gerhard Storesund. During the years they released many materials, “Aurora Borealis” demo/CD, “Løve Vikingaanden” 7”EP, “Dragons Of The North” CD, “Far For North” MCD, “Odins Owns Ye All” CD at labels such as Napalm, Necropolis, Necromantic Gallery or Century Media having various line-ups, yet the most relevant should be considered from the time Tchort (ex-EMPEROR/SATYRICON) was the bass player of the band. The style approached by these Norwegians is Viking metal featuring many traditional (Viking) influences, a mixture of black metal with folk music and from time to time a lot of peculiar atmosphere. The first four tracks are rather brutal with a power thrash rhythm and a shouted voice, in exchange, the second part is more atmospheric, more melodic with an entertaining sound. The album ends with a track rather gothic “Draconian Umpire” followed by a romantic ballad, “Regicide”, where, along on excellent acoustics there also can be heard a normal voice perfectly entering the exquisite female voice resonance. An extremely diversified album! I could say EINHERJER remained faithful to its own style transforming the track into hymns and metal into traditional music. Absolutely authentic! (12.03)

EMPEROR (NOR) – “Emperial Live Ceremony” CD’00 60 min, 10 tracks (CANDLELIGHT)

It is quite a great surprise for me this CD. At the first sight you believe it cannot be about anything else but a collection of this band’s

live tracks. Even so, the 9th tracks were intelligently chosen so that you could listen to various sequences from each album of the three the band released. The tracks are very well performed -the gig that took place in London on April 14, 1999-not with major differences from the studio versions featuring a professional sound without distortions or inappropriate adjustments, presenting an lshsan extremely vigorous, strenuous, a devastating Trym and an elaborated Samoth. The authentic surprise is consisted into the first track which represents, in fact, a computer data track, containing a videoclip (“I am The Black Wizards”), many photos, information about all bands and albums list of Candlelight (inclusively the merchandising) and also two E M P E R O R screensavers-one of them artistically presenting the band line up, band’s history, discography and a lot of photos with the three of them, many quite unique. It is a special CD which fascinated me perhaps because it might be the first one appeared in such absolutely complex form. I don’t even think or imagine you wouldn’t desire for procuring this very CD! It’s plainly remarkable! (18.03)



ENDURA (UK) – “Elder Signs” DCD’99 144 min, 30 tracks (RED STREAM)

One of the oldest electronic dark bands, ENDURA presents us through Red Stream help a rare tracks collection, some unedited yet all from the beginning period of the band. Founded in 1993 under AbRAXAS name, recorded in the same year, on Summer the tape “Hexe” at their own label, Enlightenment Communications, reedited one year later on CD at Nature & Art. It followed “The dark is Light Enough”, “Liber Leviathan” and “Black Eden”. In parallel “Great God Pan” is released at Elfenblut label, in 1997, the minialbum “The Watcher” at Old Europa Café and 10”EP “Biomechanical Soul Journey”. Stephen Pennick and Christopher Walton had remastered those 30 tracks in their own studio last year and thus this very DCD made its appearance. The first 11 tracks represent the album “Dreams Of Dark Waters” and the passage between 16th and 24th tracks represent “The Dark Is Light Enough”. ENDURA should be characterized as an inedit mixture of dark, ambient, industrial, experimental and also dark ritual. And, no shades of doubt, those who number themselves among those styles fans shouldn’t miss this DCD for the collection. (26.01)

ENOCHIAN CRESCENT (FIN) – “Omega Telocovvim” CD’99 40 min, 9 tracks (AVANTGARDE)

I needed three times consecutively of audition of the album in order to be able to write something right now about it. So, Grief’s project, active member in ...AND OCEANS is now at the second album recorded in Tico-Tico Studio but in a changed formula. It cannot be spoken about a certain style or a certain concept “in se” I maybe only a satanic one... is rather metal and, in better words, strong metal. We face in nine tracks from sped and thrash to black and death (“Oceanus On The Dry Land”, “V Kisinkastettu”) valences... from

screamy voices to normal ones, even chorus (“Igna Natura Renovatur Integra”)... Otherwise I fell to say it is an album with no end and no beginning, an extremely violent one. Music for the hatred-obsessed people and for those who find pleasure in war-messages! The most “quiet settled” track seems to be “Grey Skin” having rather mellow rhythms and a normal voice here and there... an almost intelligible voice. (23.01)

EQUIMANTHORN (USA) – “Lectonum Aniquarum” CD’99 64 min, 10 tracks (UNISOUND)

More than five years passed since I last have heard of this project of ABSU. EQUIMANTHORN has conquered the prestige of being a cult band an underground scene, and their music could only be defined by one single word: experimental! It could be dark and ambient, a ritualistic weirdness which hardly would deserve music definition. Better listened to in the presence of candles light... “The Ancient Selections” contains a collection of tracks from precedent demos and live recordings. Thus, first three tracks represent “Entrance to the Ancient Flame” demo 1992, “Our Master Nergal” and “Lord Of Chaos” are a live recording of Dallas’ ritual, a few tracks from “An Evening Of Blasphemous Moon Worship” and the rest belongs to “Imdugu’s Flight (Stela Of The Vultures)”, demo 1997. After releasing this album the Emperor Proscriptor Magikus’band, eight members line up, shall release this year a new material: “Second Sephira Cella”. I truth fully don’t know how many of you would desire for listening this new album, but those who enjoyed the later CD “Nindinugga Nimshimshargal Eulillra” might give a try again. (31.01)

EVENSONG (HUN) – “Of Man’s First Disobedience (Expulsion From The Divine Abode)” CD’00 44 min, 6 tracks (DISPLEASED)

The Hungarian music scene gave birth in 1997 to a band who had to impress the metal mass media only a few months later through “Lost Tales” demo. In 1998 EVENSONG managed to sign for the Dutch label and on March 1999 “Path Of The Angels” CD is released. After only one year the five musicians present us now the second album, very well knocked together formed by six long avantgarde tracks based on symphonic gothic metal with progressive elements an active synth a low normal male voice but also a powerful female voice which diverse inflexions (in last ATROX’album style) dominate the sound sharing the supremacy with the synth. The only aspect I dislike should be the linear sound characterizing all tracks. That’s why there is no difference between tracks resembling one with another, a kind of symmetry. I understood the album was conceived as a conceptual one treating biblical themes such as “Genesis”, “Expulsion of Adam and Eve” or “Erection Of Babylon”. It’s surprising for me to observe this album, after carefully listening to, could be compared with any other recording of a West Europe band owning a sound of a certain quality and a professional mixing. Contact: Mihaly Szabo, Szolo u. 97/1, H-5600 Bekescsaba, Hungary, E-mail: medibird@clender.hu. (22.04)

EVERGREY (SWE) – “Solitude, Dominance, Tragedy” CD’00 43 min, 9 tracks (HALL OF SERMON)

I never thought I would or could listen to such

complex orchestration from underground metal scene! It is, no doubts, magnificent to have the opportunity of listening these Swedish! "The Dark Discovery" was an album that even from the first audition captivated my entire attention. And not necessarily because of the heavy voice but especially because of those guitars riffs and the atmosphere created by the incandescent keyboard. After EVERGREY released its debut album at GNW (Black Sun), Hall Of Sermon had offered them a contract and thus the four (on first album were five) recorded the second album in eight weeks besides well-known Andy La Roque (KING DIAMOND). Progressive, power, heavy dark could be the most appropriate



styles to EVERGREY sound. The keyboard dominates the atmosphere entering "Solitude Within"; the guitars make such an amazing resonance with the heavy voice (personally I don't like such voice!) exactly on the choir's tunes "Nosferatu" until it reaches the angelical sounds of harp and a violin right in the ballad "Lords Mean Nothing". It is about another metal face, the other side of metal and Hall Of Sermon has proved once again that promoting metal music without no borders from gothic, rock, dark till power or progressive... should be only a quality sign. (27.01)

FALL OF THE LEAF (FIN) - "Evanescence, Everfading" CD'98 41 min, 9 tracks (DEFILED)

Although released a long time ago I believe the most correct would be telling you what I think about this album. Thus, the guys present us a melodic black death metal... something in Swedish bands' style with heavy interferences, excellent guitars even if often repeating, a keyboard full of atmosphere and a weeping and screaming voice. Nothing special but surely not ignoring. Unfortunately this album promotion was defective that should be why FALL OF THE LEAF had not the same fortune as other bands whose sound is not so different from it, such as DARK TRANQUILITY, DISSECTION or SACRILEGIUM. (22.04)

FALL OF THE LEAF (FIN) - "August Wernicke" CD'00 52 min, 10 tracks (ICARUS)

It seems like after releasing the first album the band confronted important changing in lineup which determinate the second album to be released delayed. Ignoring such technical details I wish to say this new material carries on the same line the first began but more accurately synchronized, more rapid with a much more aggressive voice, a powerful keyboard and rather much atmospheric and melodic fresh. It is remarkable we now can listen to all kind of influences from gothic or black till progressive or heavy metal. T. Tuominen's voice also proves a certain skilfulness being so diverse from aggressive and screamy till a normal dominant one. An example could be considered even the track "I Feather To The Juniper". The epic dimension is perfectly outlined through the new tracks "Machina Mimesis" should be the most representative track for this kind of music. Simplifying modern me-

lodie atmospheric death metal would be the marks of these Finnish musicians. Contact: T.Tuominen, Ursinkatu 7b 2, 20100 Turku, Finland, E-mail: Tuomas.Tuominen@nic.fi. (22.04)

FATAL EMBRACE (GER) - "The Ultimate Aggression" CD'00 41 min, 10 tracks (GUTTER)

The Gutter persons have decided to promote bands that play in old styles such as speed, thrash, doom rock or heavy metal. FATAL EMBRACE is a band which can be anytime compared with DESTRUCTION, KREATOR or the old SLAYER. Although it was founded in 1993, the band did not succeed until now to release its first album in spite of all gigs sustained along with METAL CHURCH, DESTRUCTION, GRAVE DIGGER or MOLLY HATCHET. It is classical album of thrash metal in its old manner, specially conceived for this style fans, excellently performed and which definitely has the competence of introducing us immediately into those glorious years' atmosphere. Welcome Hell on Earth! Contact: Dirk Heiland, Adlerstr.73, 14612 Falkensee, Germany, phone: 03322215040. (12.04)

FOREST OF IMPALED (USA) - "Demonvoid" CD'99 30 min, 9 tracks (REDSTREAM)

In 1992 Autumn, Dan Prawica, Andy Rusin, Mark Trela and Adrian Adamus decide to set the foundation of new death metal project and thus they record their first demo "The Dark Wilderness". Because of the recording conditions the demo wasn't one of quality-a perfect reason for the Americans to find a true performance studio where besides Mike Sheffield they record "Mortis Dei"-a demo distributed in US as well as in Europe. In 1997 the sound becomes more complex since Mike Zielinski (keyboard) joins the band and thus they record "The Seventh Dominion" demo. This is their history. The debut presents a short album including nine tracks, very entertaining melodic having black voice... featuring also a dark instrumental and a keyboard which desire would be offering a certain kind of atmosphere. Contact: P.O. BOX 346162, Chicago 11, 60634-6162, USA, E-mail: foi666@hotmail.com (27.01)

FOREVER WINTER (FIN) - "Revenge" CD'99 42 min, 11 tracks (UNISOUND)

I do not understand what these three Finnish intended to achieve performing in such style, but they definitely did not enchant me at all. It could be defined as a mixture of thrash and black metal yet rather hallow, featuring a voice rather struggled to find even tedious rhythms. The good side of this band could be that underground sound which, here and there, might resemble with old classical northern black metal such as DARK THRONE's style and an example for such could be "The Heritage" track. Otherwise, it is a music without any modern influences or tendencies and yet having neither any mode for the Finnish to prove themselves and not only the musical skilfulness. I hope I'd be wrong! Contact: Kimmo Liuksiala, Keskienskatu 6640, Fin-33710, Tampere, Finlande, E-mail: ikuientalvi@hotmail.com (30.01)

FORLORN (NOR) - "Opus III-Ad Caelestis Res" CD'00 42 min, 8 tracks (NAPALM)

I have heard from so many people these Norwegians might be considered BATHORY's successors.

As for as music is concerned NO WAY! As lyrics or conceptual orientation... pagan themes and Viking aspects seem to be the first attention and care of these three musicians. The music rather embraces a modern black metal direction: a lot of keyboard, thus atmospheric, a demonic strident voice which sometimes can be normal also giving the impression of being even hymns and guitars which sound often reminds me of ABIGOR. So, as a positive aspect as far as the sound should be regarded, FORLORN does not seem to be a Norwegian band yet neither one to be easily memorized. This band appeared in 1992 and after releasing an album at Head Not Found, "The Crystal Palace" now it is trying to impose on black metal scene by sustaining FORLORN has indeed something to say. I do not contest such but there is still one slightly bewilderment: what about originality? Otherwise, an elegant well interpreted album which shall surely satisfy the black metal fans. Contact: forlorn_1@hotmail.com. (17.04)

GEHENNA (NOR) - "Adimiron Black" CD'98 44 min, 9 tracks (MOONFOG)

GEHENNA remains the famous aggressive black metal band we all know giving up the precedent albums' atmosphere by following SATYRICON and DARKTHRONE. Being considered one of the fundamental bands on Norwegian scene I now offer you the entire discography: "Black Scared Heart" demo, 7"EP, "First Spell" MCD, "Seen Through The Veil of Dawn (The Second Spell)" CD, "Malice" CD, a collection of old tracks included in CD to Holycaust Records, "Deadlights" MCD and this album. After Sarcana and Dirge Rep's leaving GEHENNA returns to the same Norwegian rapid violent black but skilfully performed by these five Norwegians. I could not say "Adimiron Black" is an



original album but most surely is of a certain indisputable quality. The cover expresses a morbid image where on a hospital bed a woman is killed by a man who suicides himself after. I believe it is about imagery otherwise I see no connection with the meaning of band's name: that Valley from Israel, which bonds many several elements such as Ge-Hinnom, Maloch, Ahas or Manasse. Here is the actual line up: Dolgar, Sanrabb, E.N.Death, Blod, Damien. (31.01)

GLOOMY GRIM (FIN) - "Life?" CD'00 46 min, 11 tracks (HOLY)

Even from the very beginning I want to inform you I haven't listened to their first album, "Blood, Monster Darkness", so I cannot reach any comparison between the two albums. But I can assure you "Life?" is far beyond any imagination of a black metal listener because Agathon indeed presents us an original music based on a mixture of black metal and dark metal, a horror metal symphonic owning a morbid voice and funereal dramatic tents. "At The Gates" is one of the best tracks I have listened this year! Heavy guitars, a battery following almost all the rhythms from gothic rock to death or black metal, a

majestic keyboard featuring bells' sounds or piano's and a morbid voice. The recording is an exceptional one, all instruments being able to be heard very clearly where battery (drummachine) and keyboard are the dominant. Having such musical experience playing in bands as SOULGRIND or THY SERPENT, Agathon proves metal of quality can be listened anytime from Finland too. Contact: Agathon, Kestikuja 1E 47, 00650 Helsinki, Finland, <http://www.sei.fi/~agathon>. (11.04)

GODS TOWER (BLR) – "Ebony Birds" CD'99 65 min, 9 tracks (PROPHECY)

This is the first band from Belarus! I write of and my hope is it won't be the last. Strange or not quite... I most tell you these five musicians are underground for more than eight years releasing two albums "The Eerie" '97 and "The Terms" '98, both by Russian label Metal Agen. This new material contains nine original tracks, a mixture of folk till doom or even death metal. This is another proof that Prophecy chooses for itself the weirdest original yet indisputably also the most professional bands! (25.01)

GORBALROG (GER) – "Untergang" CD'99 48 min, 9 tracks (SOLSTITIUM)

This band's history is rather succinct... because Zargonath, known from VEIL OF WINTER, records the first demo in 1995 entitled "Dor-Firn-I-Guinar". Next year another two demos appear: "Nebelwald" and "Das Zepter" and after that he signs a contract with Solstitium. In 1998 he records the debut album in Spiderhouse Studio besides Mortynoth and with Harris Johns' help. The tracks are pretty long, elaborated. And we beneficiate of a German black metal as sound as well as lyrics having gothic influences ("Untergang") or melodic ("Widergeist", "Stille") rapid ("Ars Mortis") or even in BATHORY's style ("Aeonon Verwesender Anmut"). Nothing-old... yet nothing new... just atmospheric black metal. (26.01)

HEFEYSTOS (POL) – "Psycho Café" CD'98 51 min, 11 tracks (WOUNDED LOVE)

If this Polish band debut did fascinate me, this very material was a plain disappointment and not because of the music's quality but because of HEFEYSTOS' renouncement at dark dimension, from time to time depressive even nostalgic replacing it now with a commercial one, gothic rock, heavy guitars and normal voices. What these musicians did try to achieve by this album brought no shades of success to HEFEYSTOS on contrary they have lost the Wounded Love signing knocking now at Metal Mind's doors. Yet I proudly can say I found a track that surprised me: "Credo/3 Is The Key/" where the female voices strangely oscillates between Oriental rhythms and American ones in Joan Osborne's style. I am disappointed of this material but I believe there is a future for HEFEYSTOS also. Contact: Krzysztof Czop, ul. Gdanska 12/53, 84-232, Rumia, Poland. (30.01)

HELHEIM (NOR) – "Terrorveldet" MCD'00 15 min, 3 tracks (ARS METALLI)

I may begin by what I first see: an elegant digipack containing a few photos of band's members and some technical data. Here also I find out this very MCD is dedicated in Grim's memory (1969-1999) who was the battery

player for GORGOROTH or BORKNAGAR that decided to commit suicide. The first track "Helheim (Part I)" is a long intro with Nordic traditional touches I would rather name Viking ones. "Jernskogen" presents us four minutes of rapid death black metal with an extreme voice and ravishing riffs. "Cosmic Winter" seems to be the most complex track although knotty enough embracing progressive aspects with strident battery and programming, modern synth and a voice which does not cope too much with black metal even if sufficiently brutal. I haven't managed to make myself an idea of these three tracks since each one is differently presented and has diverse dimensions ready to impress us. I still keep the memory of "Av Norron Aett", an album I still listen with the same pleasure. I hope "Blood & Ice" shall be an album apt to succeed dovetailing the multitude of ideas these five Norwegians carry inside their music so that they should offer us a picked black metal. We shall see... Contact: PB. 327 Radal, 5858 Bergen, Norway, www.helheim.com. (17.04)

HER ENCHANTMENT (HOL) – "Sagas" CD'99 48 min, 8 tracks (POLAR BEAR)

Many years ago I have heard of a Dutch death metal UG band, which was following the CANNIBAL CORPSE line, entitled CRUCIFIED CORPSE. During these six years of existence, the former CRUCIFIED CORPSE have recorded two demos "Reflections From The Other Side" and "Serville To The Serene", an appearance on a Shiver Compilation, "Sometimes Death is Better3" with "Devour Thy Soul" track. Naturally, these Dutchmen have evolved a lot and taking into account '90's years fashion, they introduced inside their music also some other elements besides brutal death metal such as heavy, doom, black or female voice. The material released last year offers us eight well arranged tracks with a male voice, which oscillates between Chris Barnes and Darren White when he performed under ANATHEMA's banner, death metal tunes interrupted from time to time by melodic passages where Nienke's tender voice advances other intrinsically brilliance to the sound. "Morpheus" has reminded me of the MY DYING BRIDE beginning sound. It is a captivating interesting and well-elaborated material. It seems like Nienke's place was taken by the one who played some years besides HER ENCHANTMENT, Marije but who preferred to leave the band in 1997. The band had signed a contract with Bone Management at the end of last year so that this year might be a prodigious one for the Dutchmen also. I end my review having one single mention: this very Digipack "owns" an excellent artwork! Contact: Jasper Koenders, Citroenvlinder 18, 7423 GH, Deventer, Holland, E-mail: HerEnchantment@hotmail.com (13.02)

HYPOCRISY (SWE) – "Hypocrisy" CD'99 45 min, 9 tracks (NUCLEAR BLAST/ROCRIS DISC)

The Peter's new album is a very complex one because of the various styles and also its melodiousness. Thus, "Fractured Millenium" is a death metal track yet embracing a melodic atmospheric mood having a lot of keyboards and many guitars' solos. "Apocalyptic Hybrid" is a mixture of heavy, speed and death metal but a lot more aggressive and brutal; "Elastic Inverted Vision" tends to doom metal and "Until The End" seems to be the most interesting track with a relatively peaceful

sound, calm, slightly depressive but having a sad voice. "Time Warp" reaches sometimes thrash but power also or even grind-core tendencies mostly up to the voice. The album ends itself with a calm track, rhythmical where "warm" voice harmonically embraces guitars and keyboards' tunes, "Disconnected Magnetic Corridors". A pleasant album for the music as well as for the quality of recording. (30.01)

IMPIETY (SIN) – "Skullfucking Armageddon" CD'99 43 min, 8 tracks (DIES IRAE)

The Singapore label seems to have constantly stood out in relief exclusively extreme bands. The label has promoted rather all it was brutal and aggressive. In this present case, IMPIETY could be defined as a barbaric black death metal band, characterized by certain ferocity based on speed, brutality, and virtuosity offering to the listener an apocalyptic sound. What is indeed interesting for the band is the releasing of 7"EP "Salve The Goat" and the CD "Asateerul Awaleen" in Europe at Shivadarshana and, after this label splitted out, they released and produced a tape at Ultra Hingax Productions in Malaysia. From what they have said the debut had been sold out in more than over 4.000 copies and I am definitely convinced that all SODOM, MORBID ANGEL, INCUBUS or DESTRUCTION fans would make even the impossible to procure this new material. If you wish for knowing or understanding Shyaithan, Fyraun and Dajjal invite you to listen to this very proof of christfucking black witching metal! Contact: P.O.Box 544, Bedok Central, 914605, Singapore, Republic Of Singapore (enclose 2 IRC or die!), E-mail: impiety@cyberway.com.sg (29.01)

INFESTATION (UK) – "Mass Immolation" CD'00 36 min, 14 tracks (LUNA SOUND)

If death metal were still in fashion, most certainly I would not have had what to write about this band since most of my reviews would have had on topics particularity this style. Facing the facts, after listening only to gothic or black metal bands for more than an entire week, Stuart sends me his label first release, exceedingly brutal but if up to my opinion, welcome. There are very few death metal albums "able" or apt to enchant me right now that is why I prefer listening to the old DEATH or MORBID ANGEL albums. INFESTATION approaches death metal in its classic old version, a sort of death metal in American style, that style which brought glorious times for plenty of bands. Although they released a single EP, "Curse Of Creation", in 1998, the five had the chance of playing in the opening at ROTTING CHRIST and even DISMEMBER. Listening to INFESTATION you can any time compare it with the genuine original '80's bands: a professional clear sharp sound, a killing drums, rapid guitars and a voice oscillating between N A P A L M D E A T H, OBITUARY and CARCASS.

Three appropriate words to characterize INFESTATION sound: crush, kill, destroy! Beyond any other comments or specifications:



a sensational album! (29.03)

INQUISITION (AUT) – "Timetraveller" CD'00 51 min, 11 tracks (NSM)

After eight years since founded the Austrians can be proud of the second album release. After a debut which recorded a certain shy impact upon metal scene entitled "Krank", in 1996, the five musicians decided to release a new album and thus I have the chance to listen to now the eleven modern death metal tracks owning a skilful keyboard and a voice which various inflexions make rumours. I believe technical progressive death metal with heavy touches but of a certain atmosphere might be the principal features of this new sound. We can also enjoy tracks played either in English or German, diverse changing of rhythms, a complex sound from here and there, dominant keyboard and instruments rather pleasing at listening from time to time. If certainly deserves attention! (25.04)

IN THE WOODS... (NOR) – "Three Times 7 On A Pilgrimage" CD'00 65 min, 10 tracks (PROPHECY)

I don't even know how to begin writing this review... IN THE WOODS... is my favourite band and albums like "Heart Of The Ages", "Omnia" or "Strange In Stereo" I very often listen to. I am listening now to "Karmakosmic" track for I have no idea how many times (I lost the counting) and I still cannot help myself! This album is rather a trilogy IN THE WOODS... appeared until now only in vinyl version including also another few new tracks. The whole album preserves a rock psychedelic note, many cover-versions (KING CRIMSON, PINK FLOYD, JEFFERSON AIRPLANE, SYD BARRETT), a '60's-'70's music, yet innovative, electric, contemplative. Those who already collected the three seven-inch-es can also procure this CD in a Digipack shape having a layout made by Steven O'Maley; this material is the very proof of the rupture occurred into these Norwegians' musical Universe across metal even if the sound sometimes reminds of '90's IN THE WOODS... Absolutely superb I find the new version of "Mourning The Death Of Aase" featuring a nostalgic sound with a female voice



(Synne) for which I still did not find a term to measure the superlative! Do you think I should relate a few more also about the Jan Kenneth's classic voice? It is absolutely unique... beyond any comparison!

Although there cannot be spoken about a conceptual album, the idea those from Prophecy had to edit such CD I find utterly of genius and I am sure IN THE WOODS... fans would be undoubtedly satisfied. Concerning the album's title Jan Kenneth suggests us: "What number is three times seven? It's an ode to timeless psychedelic music in the 21st century..." (12.03)

IRON MAN (USA) – "Generation Void" CD'00 45 min, 11 tracks (GUTTER/BRAINTICKET)

The four Americans (the bass player is a woman) registered until now two albums released at Hellhound cult label, "Black Night" 1993 and "The Passage" 1994, a label known

through bands like SAINT VITUS or COUNT RAVEN. This album continues to keep the same line which is a doom metal of old style having rock influences, somehow, a reply to BLACK SABBATH. "Winds Of Change" track resembles with a rock ballad in a rather commercial version. Otherwise I can only tell you about slower passages mixed with other rapid, classical riffs and a normal voice. It is just the kind of music Rise Above label is promoting now or Lee Dorrian (CATHEDRAL) prefers. Contact: IRON MAN, P.O. Box 1821, Germantown, Maryland 20875-1821, USA. (12.04)

KEEP OF KALESSIN (NOR) – "Agnen-A Journey Through The Dark" CD'99 51 min, 8 tracks

(AVANTGARDE)

About "Through Times Of War", their first album I've written in a previous issue of the magazine, which means you should know what band is about... Northern black metal, MAYHEM style is the prime feature, which still dominates, even those eight new tracks. The former project ILDSKJAER has proved once again that evolution is quite a strange and unknown term for those musicians. I wouldn't like to be misunderstood... I did not say the album wasn't good, on contrary, it is extremely worked out and prepared, infernal rhythms skilfully performed. But, in comparison with their first album I find not too many changed elements or ideas or maybe I should say I find the same musical ideas yet presented in a different manner. It is just virtuosity's album, an album of rapidity and synchronization. But nothing more less, unfortunately... Contact: obsidian_c@hotmail.com (23.01)

KILL IT THIS (UK) – "Trinity" CD'00 42 min, 10 tracks (VISIBLE NOISE)

With all my regrets I must say this kind of music is not cup of my tea. Even if the recording and mixing quality is faultless, this modern combination of trip/hip-hop, dance, soul, hard core is rather not appealing to me. I admit these persons own an extremely diversified range of styles reaching even female voices... a dynamic style, explosive, pleasing probably in front of MACHINE HEAD, FEAR FACTORY or SLIPKNOT fans. The rest... on the scene! (28.03)

KRANIUM (PER) – "Testimonies" CD'90 60 min, 10 tracks (PLASMATICA)

The first release of this Swedish label is represented through an hour of doom music, folk and heavy metal embracing '70's tendencies with prolonged guitars and slow battery. Certain passages remind me even of LED ZEPPELIN, DEEP PURPLE or PINK FLOYD. It is not quite my favourite style the music those six musicians performed but I must say it is worth trying to be listened to. The keyboard and the piano are present as well as lots of traditional elements with enchanting sounds, a voice sometimes normal or throaty yet often exceedingly opposing an excellent female voice. The most relevant track for the description I just have made could be "El Obraje" having an over nine minutes length and including almost each of the KRANIUM's style characteristically elements. Contact: P.O. Box 55, Corroero Av. Brasil 924, Lima 5, Peru. (03.05)

LACRIMAS PROFUNDERE (GER) – "Memorandum" CD'99 44 min, 9 tracks

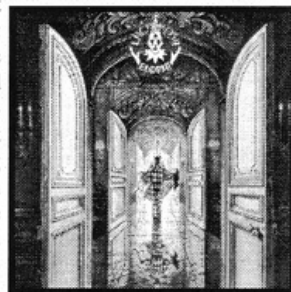
(NAPALM)

In 1993 Oliver Schmid had decided to set the foundations for a doom metal with gothic directions band, and next year he recorded a demo, which was never published. But, after Eva Stoger's appearance into the band, they rearranged the tracks including flute, keyboard and piano. At the beginning of 1995 after other modifications in the line up, Anja Hotzendorfer joined the band and together they recorded "La Naissance d'un Reve" an album released at Witchhunt Records in April 1996. Although they brightened of quality distribution and performed live besides band as DARKSEED, HAGGARD or SOULSEARCH... the band did not manage to "give up" the anonymity and thus because of time reasons... Eva left the band. She was replaced by Ursula Schmidhammer (harp). So, after accepting Napalm's offer, in December 1998 they recorded this very material in Lungfull Studio in '99th Spring. "Memorandum" is an album found on ANATHEMA's sound, depressive, a kind of slow doom metal which seems to be from time to time attuned with gothic elements... sad male voice, many prolonged guitars solo and once in a while female voices, keyboard, violin. An album which if appeared a few years ago would have mesmerised the fans of "The Silent Enigma". The originality note is gifted by the piano that, in all mellow passages, carries the listener away into classical music tunes. Contact: Oliver Schmid, Rosenstr. 23, D-83329, Waging am See, Germany, E-mail: Lacrimas.profundere@t-online.de (24.01)

LACRIMOSA (SWI) – "Elodia" CD'99 58 min, 8 tracks

(HALL OF SERMON/ROCRIS DISC)

I believe the most important element of this album should be the fact that LACRIMOSA has recorded these eight tracks along London Symphony Orchestra. Otherwise I could only mention about Tilo's music: melodic gothic rock performed in German language except "The Turning Point" track in English where Anne Nurmi's voice is predominant.



Tilo's voice is as dark as ever, a perfectly synchronized orchestration and that is or it should be all. It is rather a very complex rock opera! I don't think this album disappointed someone and I am sure many of you have already procured this album for your own collection. From another different point of view I believe the success LACRIMOSA recorded in last few years turned it into a band which sound is slightly commercial and even if now a lot more professional, I rather prefer retiring in my own room for listening to those tragic influences, nostalgic even depressive... features of the "Satura" album. (21.02)

LAS CRUCES (USA) – "Ringmaster" CD'00 43 min, 10 tracks (GUTTER/BRAINTICKET)

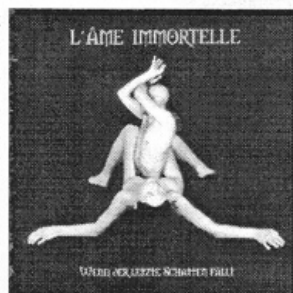
As the producer was John Perez (SOLITUDE AETURNUS) I believe other comments would be useless. It is about a doom stoner rock heaven featuring BLACK SABBATH, TROUBLE or SAINT VITUS influences. An appropriate album for each doom rock fan, no doubts. "Doom is prevalent to life, and tragedy is no joke". Contact: Mazjaz Entertainment, 203 Notre

L'ÂME IMMORTELLE (AUT) – "Wenn der letzte Schatten fällt" DCD'99

72 min, 16 tracks
(TRINITY)

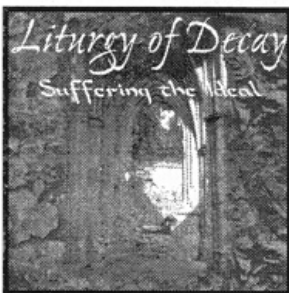
Thomas Rainer has released in 1997, the debut album "Lieder, die wie Wunden bluten", it's 13 tracks were performed in a melodic EBM dark gothic manner. Two years later the second opus "...In einer Zukunft aus Tränen und Stahl" is released yet this time the 11th tracks have much more industrial influences but still maintaining its romantic line. I feel I must confess I still listen to "Will you?" or "Place of Refuge". In 1999, Thomas Rainer, Hannes Medwenitsch and Sonja Kraushofer have prepared us a double CD, first carries the album title and second "Echoes" consists in just two so-called tracks "Echoes" and "No

Trust", the rest is nothing else but remixed tracks of such bands as DAS ICH, NOISEX or INERTIA. The exceptional artwork represents and presents two naked mannequins pictured into various positions. Both CDs are included in an elegant box "doubled" by a special poster. I have no idea what's the price for such impressive album, but I can guarantee with no shades of doubt "Wenn..." mustn't miss from your own personal collection! The first CD contains ten interesting tracks, the majority dynamic, fast, entertaining in the same romantic style, darkwave and also industrial tints featuring the same voices' contrast: the female voice delicately played while male voice is loudly screamed. The "Gefallen" and "Changes" are two club hits (being as well the most rock); "At The End" is the track that owns a disco-techno-industrial sound with both voices normally "played". "Stern" should be the single track still preserving the previous albums' line. The news might be considered the appearance of slow, melodic tracks, "Ich gab Dir Alles" offers us five minutes of depressive music... Some tracks embrace synthic pop aura getting close to Madonna's style ("Another Day", "Tears In The Rain" or "Close Your Eyes"). A complex material yet drastically "divorced" of metal. (30.01)



LITURGY OF DECAY (FRA) – "Suffering The Ideal" demo CD'99 23 min, 4 tracks

Gothic, doom, atmospheric, symphonic, sad, nostalgic even romantic... a liturgy in a metal version but extraordinary! Finally... an intelligent example of approaching music, quite differently than the bands' majority did. The key-



board is present all the time leaving the other instruments not to even "breathe", the one and only element that can "fight" against keyboards is Olivier's rather unhappy voice. The

recording is pretty good yet superficially mixed so that the guitars make themselves difficultly heard and battery sounds quite artificial. The band was founded in 1995 but only at the beginning of 1999 releases the debut demo, a material formed by four tracks somehow very resembling each other the most depressive but also the most expressive one is "Nocturnal Prayer" followed by "Dolores", this one with many more acoustic parts and perhaps featuring a pronounced tonality towards Church Liturgies. I do recommend this demo to all those who are interested to listen to something else besides gothic cliché. Superb! Contact: Olivier Luthereau, 104 Boulevard du Marechal Joffre, 92340, Bourg-La-Reine, France, E-mail: vincelod@hotmail.com, <http://www.multimania.com/liturgvofdecay> (20.03)

LIMBONIC ART (NOR) – "Ad Noctum-Dynasty Of Death" CD'99 58 min, 7 tracks
(NOCTURNAL ART)

At the beginning was "Moon In The Scorpio", followed then by "In Abhorrence Dementia" and "Epitome Of Illusions". During three years only Daemon and Morfeus managed to compose many tracks and sustain lots of gigs besides big bands: MORBID ANGEL, EMPEROR or IMPALED NAZARENE. If it should be up to me the most particular album remains "Moon In The Scorpio" as being the most successful combination of black elements and cosmic ones. The new tracks are strongly coming, in forth, very rapid dynamic expressive somehow rather linear. I cannot say anything about interpretation but being exceptional yet I believe inspiration chapter is quite a potential problem. Elaborated black metal tends now to be death metal reaching even speed metal expressions, very aggressive featuring black voice and violent guitars. Still, on this album there is a track apt to contradict my sayings, "As The Bell Of Immolation Calls" which I invite you all to listen to. "Ad Noctum-Dynasty Of Death" is yet an album which sound is indeed genuine Nordic black metal, full of hate and particularly energized only Scandinavian bands. I am afraid, yet, if the two of them do not try to impose a certain originality through the tracks they create the black metal fans might orientate to black avantgarde scene which is more complex giving up listening to classical aggressive black metal, already "consumed" because of the "legion" of new bands appeared in last few years. Contact: Daemon, Liverfd, 3243 Kodal, Norway, www.daemon.com/limbonic. (11.04)

LOST DREAMS (AUT) – "Reflections Of Darkness" demo MCD'99 24 min, 7 tracks

About this band I have heard only good things... and Andi, the band's guitar player, left at my disposal an ample material regarding L O S T D R E A M S which I can write about right now. We can enjoy a live version of the track "Believe" and then "Always Beside You", multimedia videotrack and five conceptual sequences, all of them enclosed on a self-financed accurate fine MCD with a professional layout and a cover of a certain quality. Founded in 1992, in a formula of five, LOST DREAMS had enjoyed during the years



having gigs with bands like EVENFALL or GRAVEWORM. The music seems to be a melodic atmospheric black metal, with heavy guitars, dreamy keyboard and a carnevous demonic voice but, unfortunately also with a pathetic drummer. Probably it wasn't the perfect mixing it could have been ever. Yet for a self financed material "Reflections Of Darkness" sounds pretty good but if they desire for signing with a certain label, the Austrians should definitely improve a few little details unless the quality-mediocrity contrast would become more and more pronounced. And it would be quite a shame; the band deserves all attention! Contact: LOST DREAMS, P.O. Box 48, A-6050 Hall, Austria, E-mail: lost.dreams@tirol.com www.tirol.com/lost-dreams (28.03)

LOVE LIES BLEEDING (FRA) – "Behold My Vain Sacrifice" CD'00 66 min, 5 tracks
(CCP)

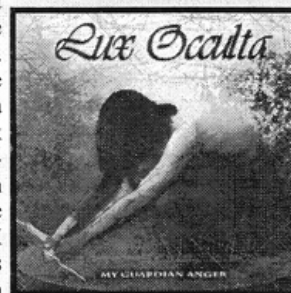
Factually it is about almost 55 minutes of music, one track relatively short, five minutes and the rest reaching twelve or even fifteen minutes. Interesting mixture of gothic, black and doom death metal, atmospheric in a symphonic manner embracing many classic music influences.

Having such length, the tracks oscillate from romantic depressive peaceful passages accompanied by an excellent soprano (Estelle) and an interesting male voice

(SUMMONING style) and guitars which diverse tunes cannot be labelled in a way or another: heavy, doom, death, black. The keyboard is at its height (Adrastis Korgan) and often there can be heard sounds resembling to a flute sound. It is a very elaborated album and I believe it shall soon receive the appreciation of these gifted musicians' work. I could say LOVE LIES BLEEDING expresses a complex dark metal, quite original in a certain measuring view, created by and for extremes: hatred, love or romanticism and despair being the key elements of this band. (26.03)

LUX OCCULTA (POL) – "My Guardian Angel" CD'99 46 min, 9 tracks
(PAGAN)

One of the most respected Polish underground bands has produced and released the third studio album that is far over the previous ones. It cannot be spoken about a classical black metal or a classical death metal since L U X O C C U L T A is looking for an extreme, original, with a lot of atmosphere, beautiful, emotional, and aggressive metal. It is music with no limits; the creation is the musicians' art of reconquering self-freedom. "Kiss My Sword" is the most extensive track (nine minutes and also a video clip) but in the same time the most enchanting one where you can embrace classic music passages performed yet in a metal manner, having a domi-



nant keyboard and a black death voice alternating often with a normal voice, even heavy. There are also tracks where, besides the elements up mentioned, a female voice successfully intercedes within... creating the perfect equilibrium of a style we could define in only two words: LUX OCCULTA. After "Forever Alone. Immortal", "Dionysos" and "Maior Arcana", Peter's band has prepared for you a new surprise. Contact: P.O.Box 8, 38-450, Dukla, Poland, E-mail: jrs@friko.6.onet.pl (28.01)

MACHINA COELI (ITA) - "Finitor Visus Nostri" MCD'99 25 min, 8 tracks

I have never heard of this product and unfortunately I could not possibly find out since Coatl M. Evil has founded this project in 1997 and the only recording he ever did is represented by this minialbum. Machina Coeli would signify "Sky's mechanism", Coatl would be (and definitely is) on Aztec term representing a fantastic creature: a snake while Finitor Visus Nostri means the border of the horizon, "beyond it there is the unknown, we shall not see". Symphonic/melodic soundtracks atmospheres, keyboard oriented Old Age Music; this would be all the characterizations of MACHINA COELI's sound. Excepting a few recitals all tracks are purely instrumental reaching a simple mixture but attractive of medieval music, ambient and modern elements some even "spatial". Although it is about a solo project, the sound is very clear and the atmosphere is fulfilled; in fact I might even say is all about a keyboard absolutely intelligently used. This MCD is an unexpected surprise for me and I believe you should try yourselves also! The booklet graphics is carefully and professionally conceived. Contact: Savoldi-Volpi, Via Ambaraga, 67, 25133 Brescia, Italy, E-mail: csavol@tin.it, <http://listen.to/coatl>. (21.04)

MAYHEM (NOR) - "Grand Declaration Of War" CD'00 45 min, 13 tracks

(SEASON OF MIST) Considering the name of the album and listening the MCD "Wolf's Lair Abyss" I was definitely convinced MAYHEM would prepare us an infernal, extremely rapid, aggressive album the only possible dimension being the virtuosity. Well, "A Grand Declaration Of War", the first track of the album warned me there was nothing like I was convinced it would be for listening. It seems like the four had changed a lot their orientation embracing now a technical original and complex music yet preserving black metal background. From far Hellhammer's battery is drifting your minds away by changing all the time especially since this particular style allows him to do whatever he desires to. The guitars and sometimes the voice are the only elements maintaining the metal dimension... or better said black metal. MAYHEM tends now to a much softer style, something in DRDHEIMSGARD manner but somehow a little more metallic. The album is framed in two parts entitled the second and the third, the first they considered to be the MCD released in 1997. If you carefully listen to the last part, "Il Principe" you would realize MAYHEM explores now different territories, offering us now something absolutely undecipherable; if I say black metal, most certainly I would be wrong, if I say it's not, I would be wrong again. The only ones qualified to characterize the style would be MAYHEM or even you. There should be also said that although the CD presents 13 tracks, the two parts include only 8 conceptual tracks the rest

might be interludes. I recommend this war declaration to all who wish for listening another kind of music. (09.04)

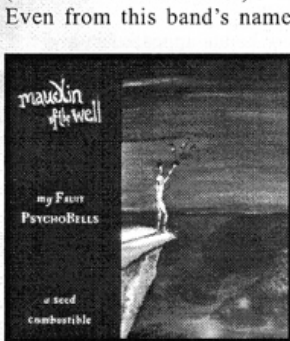
MALEVOLENCE (POR) - "Martyrialized" CD'99 31 min, 9 tracks (MAQUIAVEL)

This is another original material from a country that tries to promote exceedingly the quality of its bands. After producing and releasing the demo "Pleasure Of Molestation" and the album "Dominion", the Portuguese decide entering Fredman Studios and besides Fredrik Nordstrom record this opus, very elaborated which cannot be defined, from my point of view, either black, death or thrash, power or even heavy but still simply metal. "Thy Extremist Operetta", although an instrumental track, seems the most relevant for MALEVOLENCE because it combines melodicy with aggressiveness making possible listening from heavy metal riffs till thrash and death metal. It is an album conceived carefully, a modern one, praised by everybody, which deserves the characterization: "the latest soundtrack of sonic metal destruction". Contact: The 99th Machiavellian Dehumanisation, Vale da Fonte, Lote 11.2, Direito, 2400, Leiria, Portugal. (29.01)

MALEVOLENT CREATION (USA) - "Manifestation" CD'00 62 min, 16 tracks (PAVEMENT)

"Manifestation" is factually composed by two CDs containing 20 tracks that count almost 80 minutes of music, the last four tracks representing a video live version of the band during its last year tour in USA. It is appreciative the fact that Pavement has decided accomplishing a collection of the tracks from each album of the famous American death metal band, a band with over almost ten years of activity. I could say it is a "Best of MALEVOLENT CREATION" which allow you listening to the most veritable tracks, you can read the complete history of Phil Fasciana's band, you must see them performing live face to face with the fans. (12.02)

MAUDLIN OF THE WELL (USA) - "my FRUIT PSYCHOBELLS... a seed combustible" CD'00 58 min, 8 tracks (DARK SYMPHONIES)



Even from this band's name you can realize how strange these Americans' music is: acoustic and electric guitars, brutal voices, normal voices, female voices, piano, trumpet, battery featuring tangled trespassing, a sound covering an entire tuning dial of musical styles: from doom or death metal till progressive rock, psychedelic or even jazz shades. This declared "astral metal" presents us eight complex tracks embracing various sonorities from MY DYING BRIDE and TIAMAT until CANDIRIA, OPETH or THE TEA PARTY. It is an original album, utterly difficult to be listened to by all who desire for melodiousness or rhythms; I could only say more about this album as being a conceptual one with more or less atmosphere. Of course, it depends on what your desire is for listening to... But you should be aware it is a band apt not to be forgotten!

Contact: maudlin@geocities.com (12.03)

MYRIADS (NOR) - "In Spheres Without Time" CD'99 45 min, 5 tracks

(NAPALM)
Alexander Twiss is the one who besides Mona Skottene were performing live along TWIN OBSCENITY two years ago, in a very flourishing period for this Norwegian black gothic yet in parallel those two set the foundation for MYRIADS and not after a very long time they decided to dedicate all their free time exclusively for this new project. Thus, after a well-appreciated demo, they recorded those five special tracks in a gothic doom death manner, having intensive keyboard and also such voices that leave in shadow any instruments. I can without any doubt affirm declare "In Spheres Without Time" is a successful album yet still... something in the sound is missing, is husky. Perhaps a better-achieved combination of classical music influences with metal would lead to a future exceptional album. Until then, enjoy this debut! (24.01)

MYRKSKOG (NOR) - "Deathmachine" CD'00 44 min, 9 tracks (CANDLELIGHT)

Master V, Destructhor and Lars Petter founded the band in 1993. One year later Lars is replaced by Bjorn Thomas but not after a long time the band annuls itself. On January 1995 Master V and Destructhor decide coming back to this project and thus on May '95 they record "Ode Til Norge" demo in a portable studio with a drummachine. On April 1996 the duet is completed by Eek's joining (FUNERAL, ODIUM) and Sechtdamon's (ODIUM). 1998 is the year when MYRKSKOG enters genuine an authentic studio and records "Apocalyptic Psychotica" tape together with Savant M (DESOLATION, ARCHON, MALEFICIUM). These three tracks gain Candlelight label's attention and after a while (some time) they release the debut album. "Deathmachine" is a dynamic rapid album owning a battery of an infernal speed, guitars which riffs alternate between black and death with a violent voice and even some industrial elements ("Pilar Deconstruction"). The MYRKSKOG's definition: speediness, violence, destruction, and death... A REAL DEATHMACHINE! Contact: myrkskog@online.no (31.01)



N8 (ITA) - "Reality... Fate" CD'99 43 min, 10 tracks (SCARLET)

Determined to approach the progressive line, Andrea Palermo, Alessandro de Berti, Maurizio Favaro, Marco Pessina, Nicola Rossetti initiate ENRICO VIII/E VIII project. Embracing mostly the rock sphere, those five partners decided to change the name into N8 and signed a contract with Scarlet. What would their recommendation their files be? QUENSRICHE, ALICE IN CHAINS, DREAM THEATER and BLACK SABBATH. To describe more about N8 or to give details would be like a THE DOORS fan to comment about EMPEROR! (25.01)

NAKED SCARECROW (FRA) - S/T demo

CD'99 55 min, 12 tracks

I've listened this material for a couple of times and I must confess I haven't come to any conclusion yet. It is about a sound terribly knotty, an "alchemy" of metal and industrial featuring different kind of dimensions: some gothic, other death, black, grind, noise or industrial... I believe an experimental style would be the most polite remark I could adopt. Otherwise, a difficult mixture to be perceived by the listener... perhaps owning a signification I wasn't able to discover yet. If you have questions about this peculiar sound, Gilles will be at your disposal. Contact: Elabeth/Tomate, BP 75, 67033 Strasbourg Cedex 2, France, E-mail: elabeth@wanadoo.fr. (11.04)

NERTHUS (AUT) - "Escape From Suction" CD'00 51 min, 12 tracks (CCP)

Those from CCP are continuously discovering lots of bands of a certain quality. The black metal music interpreted by these three Austrians is a special one featuring a real atmosphere with screaming voices which reminds me of Varg Vikernes and rather medieval inter-



ludes, some of them resembling with SUMMONING or DVKE. By far the most successful track is "Escape From Suction" embracing a BATHORY style likes, very melodic, owning an insistent keyboard and guitar riffs into a medieval warlike atmosphere. Although it is the debut album (I believe it so) NERTHUS proves a certain maturity in all they do and this is the reason why "Escape From Suction" could be regarded as a step forward with the right foot. Let us see and expect what future can finally bring for us this far! (27.03)

NOCTURNAL MAJESTY (ITA) - "Orgiastic Trilogy" CD'99 36 min, 7 tracks (UNISOUND)

Its rather hard and difficult to perform a review to a band I know absolutely nothing about, trust me. Since I haven't received any presentation file from Unisound, I must step out the biography chapter. I can only inform you it is about a trio: Acharach, Vehenia and Entities, a trio fond on atmospheric black metal characterized by abundant keyboard, strange guitar tunes, a screamy voice, rhythmical tunes, even gothic and from time to time reaching rather classical tendencies. I believe NOCTURNAL MAJESTY makes itself different from other bands exactly because of these keyboards, which confers indeed a majestic feature to the sound. I understood the lyrics were written having basis such as "Necromicon", "Satanic Bible" and "The Astral Magick Composition" books. There's nothing else I might be able sharing with you. Contact: Massimiliano Paciello, Via Erta Canina 74, Florence 50125, Italy, E-mail: acharach@tin.it (30.01)

OBSIDIO (ITA) - "Praeludium To The Fall Of Heaven" demo CD'99 42 min, 8 tracks Even from the first time you listen to OBSIDIO you can realize this band has its own particular sound-modern, atmospheric, a symphonic black metal, melodic, well dovetailed with heavy, gothic or death metal tendencies, voices having multiple inflexions from normal till

screaming, intelligent keyboards, expressive guitars, shy bass (unfortunately) and a professional drums. I wonder how this band did not manage to have signings with any label profiled on modern black metal bands! It is a shame indeed for such a "hope" of Italian metal scene not to shine but remain lost into the underground! Lord Heinrich informed me a new MCD would appear at the end of this year and that he would hope for it to be one in a different manner, a more elaborated one! For me, this demo, although it's better said this album, is already very successful and thus I believe you should listen to it, too. I have no idea how much it would cost but you can write at this address: Enrico Perusin, Borgo s. Antonio 44, 33050 Fiumicello UD, Italy, phone: +0039 0431 96533, E-mail: obsidio_1999@yahoo.co.uk (28.03)



OBTAINED ENSLAVEMENT (NOR) - "The Shepherd and The Hounds Of Hell" CD'00 41 min, 7 tracks (NAPALM)

At the beginning was "Witchcraft" then "Soulblight" and now those four Norwegians had prepared us a professional production proving that Norway can advance on black metal scene the largest number of quality bands. "Acrolls Of The Shadowland" is the first track but in the same time the most distinctive exhibiting in chorus a warrior voices choir, which brings us back a few centuries ago. The remnant presents a modern band having a lot of rhythmical changings, on evil voice with a battery always in primacy. I would rather say the album awards seven tracks of war heavy black metal. I end my review mentioning that this excellent black metal product was recorded in Sound Suite Studio. (21.01)

OBTRUNCATION (HOL) - "The Callous Concept" CD'98 48 min, 12 tracks (DAMNATION)

This album was recorded in 1995 and had to be released at a French label but the things got mixed up really bad and thus only at the end of 1998 it appeared on the market. What can we expect from it? A death metal of first class, violent featuring a demonic voice, sometimes, or throaty other times, a ravishing battery and guitars in the style of the old death metal school. The album is interpreted in forth and the musicians prove real skilfulness in what they are doing. Absolutely appreciable is the work of those from DAMNATION who, in spite of all the difficulties, still continue in promoting brutal styles of the beginning of last decade: thrash, death or primitive death metal. Among the latest releases of this label I mention bands such as URN, RAZOR OF OCCAM, PENTACLE, GOSPEL OF THE HORNS or JUDGEMENT DAY. (24.04)

ONE (AUS) - "Walk The Mercy Mile" CD'99 42 min, 11 tracks (NIGHTBREED)

At last I can finally affirm listening to a 100% gothic band! Although it comes from Australia, David Wilkinson releases a new album to Nightbreed British label. His music is clear, bright, comprehensible, and transparent hav-

ing an imposing male voice (resembling with Peter Steele' voice) and a simple keyboard yet "filling" the atmosphere of this album. I can approve "Shout" cover-version of TEARS FOR FEARS as a successful one and it reminds me of another attempt of those from ATROCITY yet now gothic is the fundamental dominant element. This is another decorous proof that in kangaroo's country there are people able to compose and perform quality music. "And I live the dream of freedom never ending, as I walk the mercy mile with you". Contact: The One Axis, P.O. Box 464, Brighton-le-Sands, NSW 2216, Australia, E-mail: axis@onemusic.com.au (30.01)

OPERA IX (ITA) - "The Black Opera (Symphoniae Mysteriorum in Laudem Tenebrarum)" CD'00 51 min, 7 tracks (AVANTGARDE)

The five Italians were very prodigious and quick, after the signing with Avantgarde (on Winter) they record in Underground Studios seven new tracks and thus the first days of May coincide with the release of the third chapter of OPERA IX. More bombastic than "The Call Of The Wood" and much faster than "Sacro Culto", "The Black Opera" preserves the same occult mystic dark note yet is more elaborated than the precedent ones and much more technical. The tracks are rather shorter condensed yet full of atmosphere with a majestic keyboard, heavy guitars, death battery and a powerful voice perhaps the most expressive female voice (Cadaveria) from the actual black metal scene. The entire album is dominated by an imposing aura which proves OPERA IX is one of the most extremist Italian bands because of its sound as well as from its lyrics. To be mentioned we can also enjoy a BAUHAUS cover version "Bela Lugosi's Dead". (24.04)

OPERA MULTI STEEL (FRA) - "Éternelle Tourmente" CD'99 55 min, 22 tracks (TRITON)

I don't know how many of you have listened to one or even more albums of this quartet but if you haven't so far, it would be better to



achieve immediately any OMS' album. What you can find on all these albums is definitely out of time, fashion patterns or labels. I shall step down only for the last chapter, an album

into which Carina Grieg features as guest, she is well known from COLLECTION D'ARNELL ANDREA. If "Laudamus Te" track, enclosed also into Pallace Of Worms's compilation, express a medieval hue musically as well as for the lyrics (Latin) the rest of songs help us comprehend a large variety of styles: ethereal, folk, gothic, romantic, electropop, dark wave or cold wave. The album includes 22 tracks and 11 might be considered conceptual the rest being track of bonding tracks. The only disadvantage could be the French language into which the lyrics are performed yet, from another point of view, this fact might even more confer a certain charm and originality of the band. With no other comments, an underground non-commercial and elaborated project difficult to find an actual darkwave scene. (13.02)

PAZUZU (NOR) – "The End Of Ages" CD'99
46 min, 15 tracks
(AVANTGARDE)

Once Ray Wells left the band for going in Canada PAZUZU music has also enormously changed. Thus, if "Awaken The Dragon" pre-



sents melodious tracks, a fine mixture of dark wave and black metal in an avantgardist manner having deep roots in history and a medieval sound, the new tracks are defined through an-

other musical spectrum, a darker one, most sober this time speculating the ambient side, even the industrial one. The band is straightening towards an universe most likely MORTIIS or Cold Meat Industry's bands. There are still a few interludes reminding us of European PAZUZU ("Harpischord and Percussion Interlude", "The Haunted City"). The wide album's atmosphere is sober, pessimistic, hopeless... just an antidote for life! (23.01)

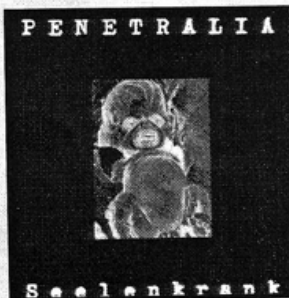
PECCATUM (NOR) – "Oh, My Regrets" MCD'00 19 min, 3 tracks
(CANDLELIGHT)

Have you listened to "Strangling From Within"? "Oh, My Regrets" is following the same line emphasizing now the vocal parts and Ihshan's synth and guitar. Ihriel's voice is now more powerful and complex, Lord PZ' voice is easy recognizable (see SOURCE OF TIDE): normal throaty rather an opera one while Ihshan's is the most violent one. It's hard to label PECCATUM music for a style or another... echoes of operas, gothic atmospheres, contemporary music and avant-garde metal. Not even a sign of classical metal. "Blood Red Skies" is an inedit JUDAS PRIEST cover version which can be admitted as a heavy metal one only because of the guitars' sound. Just techno opera symphonic... nothing from what Rob Halford & Co. used to present us! In other words, this MCD prepares us for their new album, Amor Fati" which shall be released on September. Interesting sound! (17.04)

PENETRALLIA (GER) – "Seelenkrank" CD'00 40 min, 9 tracks
(LAST EPISODE)

When I saw in my mail box the new PENETRALLIA album I was extremely curious to find out if the Germans endured or not the first album line, "Carpe Noctem (Leg-

ends Of Fullmoon Empires)" which was an atmospheric melodic black metal in CRADLE OF FILTH style. Yet my complete surprise (of my maximum I'd say) I lived indeed only after listening to "The Doctor" and then "Seelenkrank" and "Dead Girls Boogie (The Living Dead)". I sincerely do not know what to believe! It's rather an amount of experimental tracks traversing, although on a basis of gothic black death metal, even other different styles, such as techno or indus-



trial. I cannot know if it should be the best choice as I am not the one to appreciate musical orientation of musicians. What I can definitely affirm with no shades of doubt is the fact "Drink Of Drown" track is absolutely excellent... framing sorrow doom death metal tunes where two depressive but enchanting feature (Felix-CREMATORY, Claus-BLOOD) voices. I don't think "Seelenkrank" might be considered a conceptual album but rather a material to break new ground through other styles, probably more precisely and well outlined for the future albums. (27.03)

POWER SYMPHONY (HOL) – "Lightbringer" CD'00 48 min, 7 tracks
(PAVEMENT)

Gothic rock became a very looked for style and thus almost daily there are bands trying to impose themselves in order to step up on fans' preferences top. This very album, try to combine gothic, doom, heavy metal and power, epic, Celtic or classical elements. We face no news because the guitars sound metal, keyboard features the right atmosphere and the female voice, rather strong, forceful owning an expressive modulation is the element ready to prove POWER SYMPHONY approach music through a melodic gothic universe. There are passages which remind me of NIGHTWISH, but the musicians are trying to express by these seven tracks an original sound. It also can be said about a track "Song Of Men" which leaves behind the standards this style imposes, a sad ballad having roots into the past. In other words "Lightbringer" (after "Evillot" debut in 1999) is a well-arranged interesting album addressed to those who prefer bands such as LACRIMOSA, THE BREATH OF LIFE or NIGHTWISH. (10.04)

PRIMARY SLAVE (UK) – "Data Plague" CD'00 37 min, 9 tracks
(VISIBLE NOISE)

The guys from Visible Noise, the other division of Cacophonous, consider this kind of music as the new millenium metal music. If so, I must confess I shall certainly give up looking for news or simply for "new" in music preferring instead to listen to my "ancient" records. I might be too much of a conservative person and thus incapable of understanding this peculiar combination of VOIVOD and STRAPPING YOUNG LAD, so called cyber metal. Perhaps this very review should not be present right here, but I admit the possibility that some of you might also prefer these alternative styles. So, the project came to life in 1998, founded by Paul Allender (CRADLE OF FILTH) and David Palser and then Mark Royce (ENTWINED), G and Mark Giltrow (CENOBITE). After Paul and Mark Royce left, PRIMARY SLAVE has found the perfect formula in order to record this debut album labelled by some magazines as "simply the best new metal band in years". Not being the most adequate style to be criticized here I leave my responsibility up to you. You try "Data Plague" and maybe the new millennium would be much, much closer. Contact: www.primaryslave.com (23.01)

RAGNAROK (NOR) – "Diabolical Age" CD'00 54 min, 8 tracks
(HEAD NOT FOUND/VOICES OF WONDER)

This band history is rather large and during the years has released two interesting albums "Nattferd" and "Arising Realm". I wouldn't desire to seem nostalgic of the beginning times (as well as in LIMBONIC ART case) but I

prefer listening to "Nattferd". The new product offers us seven extremely brutal tracks, in old black metal style: traditional, Nordic interweaving some melodic aspects and that should be all. The eight track, "Postludium" is rather experimental and there is no point for me to count it. Jontho's band became now a trio since the vocal, Thyme has already left his members and no other members appeared not. It is remarkable RAGNAROK has returned to classic black metal, in MARDUK manner, which definitely implied a certain quality, the tracks sounds pretty good, for example. It is even better for them to have approached classic metal method without interfering modern orientations instead of composing tracks which sound would be common atmospheric... confounding themselves with the other bands. Even so they can be mistaken for other bands but at least they should choose for identifying with the fundamental bands of aggressive metal scene. Nothing new. Contact: Jontho, Box 489, 1703 Sarpsborg, Norway, E-mail: jontho@senswave.com, <http://angelfire.com/id/RAGNAROK/> (11.04)

RAIN FELL WITHIN (USA) – "Believe" CD'00 38 min, 5 tracks
(DARK SYMPHONIES)

It is surprising for me to listen to such a competitive and performant band coming a long way just from America. And not because I would have a not exactly good impression about American scene but rather because of finding RAIN FELL WITHIN's sound more likely an European band's. Dark Symphonies presents these five's music as a combination of MY DYING BRIDE, PARADISE LOST, THEATRE OF TRAGEDY, DEAD CAN DANCE or even NIGHTWISH. If up to my personal opinion I believe THE 3RD AND THE MORTAL and NIGHTWISH would be the most appropriate bands to be compared with RAIN FELL WITHIN. Its sound is dynamic, gothic rock reaching doom metal hues where joining a ravishing dominant female voice which powerful particularity harmoniously embraces the keyboard and guitars. I cannot say "Believe" represents an original, exquisite album, but I can assure you if decided listening to "Believe" you would definitely realize gothic metal of a certain quality could be performed elsewhere also, not necessarily exclusively in Europe and RAIN FELL WITHIN might be considered an American version of NIGHTWISH! (12.03)

RAKOTH (RUS) – "Planeshift" CD'00 48 min, 10 tracks
(CODE 666)

Although originated from Russia, the trio presents an album owning a professional sound, very sharp clear and well mixed. We can face through this album various tendencies: gothic, melodic, romantic ("Gothaur Aulendil"), gothic dark depressive, sad, calm ("Og'Elend"), black symphonic ("The Dark Heart of Uukrul", "Planeshift"), progressive black doom ("The Unquiet Grave") or even acoustic sound ("Planeshift-Introduction", "Outro"), presenting normal voices, screamy voices, recitations, artificial but embracing a traditional sound flute, the entire album has on basis the keyboard being released by and of keyboard/computer. Interesting! (26.03)

REBAELLIUN (BRA) – "Burn The Promised Land" CD'99 35 min, 9 tracks
(HAMMERHEART)

Brazilian death metal, extremely aggressive but exceedingly performed by the four members, a material that shouldn't be missed by all

brutal styles fans. SLAYER, MORBID ANGEL, and DEICIDE influences can be observed all over the album and their music has also a very strong impact on stage; the fans' reactions from Belgium tour were quite impressive! Decided to penetrate European scene, REBAELLIUN has released the MCD "At War" which included two tracks. This MCD was strongly supported by Hammerheart and because of their successful live performances they managed to sign a contract with Peter Van Ool and Guido Heynens' label. The album, released on 25 October, could be regarded as one of the best death metal albums of last year. REBAELLIUN is indeed a genuine war machine ready to conquer the new millennium. (27.01)

ROSSOMAHAR (RUS) – "Imperium Tenebrarum" demo CD'99 38 min, 7 tracks
Absolutely interesting black metal approached by these four musicians! It's about a well elaborated black metal with very rapid guitars and an extremely clear death metal voice. In fact, the entire material was recorded in CDM Studio, the most famous studio from Moscow and even from Russia. ROSSOMAHAR was founded in 1995 by Lazar and released until now only „Grotesque" demo in 1997 but which, unfortunately, did not benefit a required promotion. This new material is formed of six black death metal tracks of the highest quality and a METALLICA cover version. Because I had not the chance of really listening other important Russian bands I cannot appreciate a good or appropriate comparison but I firmly can affirm „Imperium Tenebrarum" can any time be considered a black metal album with no kind of borders or geographical localization but very complex and excellently interpreted! Contact: P.O.Box 52, 155597, Moscow, Russia, E-mail: rossomahaar@usa.net, <http://www.rusmetal.ru/rossomahar>. (09.04)

ROTTEN SOUND (FIN) – "Drain" CD'99 31 min, 15 tracks
(REPULSE)

If AVULSED was something I definitely enjoyed, some of you might consider that any material I received from Repulse would be excellent. Wrong! Those Finnish, although at their second album did not please me at all. It is too much for me to daily listen for crust grind death metal. Naturally, the fans of tough music may search this product because it sounds interesting, but I suppose it would be better also to see live Miko Aalto's band, the impact would be quite different, the most desired one or appropriate. Contact: Miko Aalto, Raastuvankatu 22B, 65100, Vaasa, Finlande, E-mail: Keijo.Niinimaa@nmp.nokia.com (25.01)

SABAOTH (PAR) – "Windjourney" CD'99 49 min, 10 tracks
(ICARUS)

In 1996 I was listening this band's debut and my thoughts led me to ROTTING CHRIST. Time has passed by and SABAOTH became a duet because of Zethineph's decision to leave the band in DIABOLICAL band's favour. Zethyaz, used by then with his solo project, EYESIGHT, entered the studio again along with Norrack and recorded these new tracks in a very weird version, not necessarily as music but because of the multitude of influences: black metal, atmospheric, gothic, rock and even pop. Yet at its high might probably be considered the orchestration since the voice

rarely interferes (very few lyrics). I suppose it was quite a problem for them to find an appropriate voice for such styles diversity. I would say "Windjourney" is an original modern album, which pleases your ears bit somehow rather confusing. At least for me! So is the booklet which encloses statues photos as well as some strange kind of gearing or cogged wheels! I, myself, find difficult to interpret it as a desired contrast, it should be something else made difficult to be understood! You may try at this address: sabaoth99@hotmail.com. (11.04)

SAMSAS TRAUM (GER) – "Die Liebe Gottes" CD'99 58 min, 12 tracks
(ARMAGEDDON SHADOW)

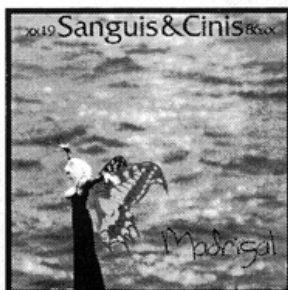
Alexander Kaschte has succeeded making his first appearance after three years since being set up and I can assure you the album is one of the most original ones I have lately been listened to. It is absolutely incredible how only three musicians can harmoniously combine brutality with classic music, black metal, gothic and shouted aggressive voices with opera



voices, even a soprano. A very complex album, extremely fast but in the same time elaborated having an indescribable sound. Alex' voice sometimes reminds me of HELHEIM's first album reaching absolutely ravishing connotations along the passages where everything seems to cape with the darkest satanic aspect, full of hate and occult messages. For the contrast, Simona Stahl's voice is an innocent angelic one. The lyrics seem to reach a profound hue, expressed by some dialogues between Samuel, Lilith and Der Erzengel Gabriel. Synthesizing we definitely can enjoy a renaissance of German black metal but absolutely different, much more complicated, complex yet a lot much more attractive enchanting. (31.01)

SANGUIS ET CINIS (AUT) – "Madrigal" DCD'99 92 min, 15 tracks
(SAD EYES/TRINITY)

Eve Evangel endures gothic rock line begun almost eleven years ago presenting us now a new excellently elaborated material. As well as in L'ÂME IMMORTELLE's case this album owns a special booklet and an elegant box accompanied by a singular poster. I listen to "Isabelle" and "Prinzessin" and I only now can realize which way SANGUIS ET CINIS managed to have so many fans and even a fan club! Set up as a solo project (Eve Evangel) the band has now four members, all of them pretty weird into such a "carnivorous" world: C. Cecilia Angel, Adore and Nick Kramer. I would have desired writing much more about this album but I've decided ending right here having only one following mention: a mixture of rock gothic and classic that can any time be pleasingly listened to.



(31.01)

SARGATANAS (MEX) – "The Enlightenment" CD'99 61 min, 12 tracks
(CONQUISTADOR)

I wouldn't say no matter what that Conquistador label's aim wasn't to be a noble one; to promote the extreme underground of South America or Central America it is indeed. But to "discover" bands who activate even since 1986 as SARGATANAS case and in 13 years to release exclusively a demo and a single MCD. I find a way too exaggerating! What can this album offer? Satanic black metal with slow passages, demonic voice and sinister orchestration... VENOM, NECROVORE, DEATH, HELLHAMMER or EXORCIST fascinates Lord Sargatanas, band's leader, and as an obvious proof his music is not so different from those up mentioned. In the end... what Alex Kurtagic (Supernal Music) does... might catch some success yet I definitely doubt that in a female voices saturated Europe or of melodic tunes... Perhaps across the Ocean the situation might be different. Contact: P.O.Box 1-521, CP 44101, Guadalajara (Jalisco), Mexico, E-mail: sargatanas@lettera.net (25.01)

SATYRICON (NOR) – "Rebel Extravaganza" CD'99 64 min, 10 tracks
(NUCLEAR BLAST/ROCRIS DISC)

Satyr and Frost had decided giving up the manner they approached on "Nemesis Divina" album and this fact I suppose brought a lot of satisfaction for their fans. The new recordings reveal us a darkened black metal, complex, symphonic sometimes but mostly violent. The tracks are rather long and not likely each other, "Prime Evil Renaissance" is my favourite. It is inedit the contrast between "Funeral March" and black tunes featured on this track! I know SATYRICON sustained a great tour promoting this album at the beginning of this year and I am sure that many of you succeeded seeing them live. What did mostly impress me of this album I guess it's the ancient underground note of the sound, which I believe, has its roots somewhere in 80's years' thrash. I do not want telling you much more about this album so that you discover yourselves the rest of the details! Yet keep in mind the recommendation those from SATYRICON made: "Correct listening at maximum volume!" (13.02)



SECRET STAIRWAYS (USA) – "Turning Point" CD'99 35 min, 10 tracks

After a prime album entitled "Enchantment Of The Ring", Matthew P. Davis now presents us a second one chapter, a calm, dreamy electronic music, a mixture of TANGERINE DREAM, KITARO or VANGELIS. I could say Matthew's music is entirely instrumental except "Voices" track where besides his voice Robin Tinker's joins also (TWELFTH OF NEVER). Thus, if you find yourselves into a meditative mood, if you wish for isolation from the overwhelming reality, which destroys you each moment of your life if you are curious of listening to a quality music composed, and performing by a synthesizer, "Turning Point" would be the most appropriate choice.

Contact: Matthew Davis, P.O. BOX 179, Baldwinville, MA, 01436, USA, E-mail: RNT6@aol.com (13.02)

SEMPITERNAL (FRA) – "Winternight Fury" MCD'99 25 min, 4 tracks

This band was founded on December 1997 by Macbeth who, six months later, recorded "Crusadess" demo. After a short while Tibor joins him and thus, on June last year they enter the studio and record these four tracks somehow in a atmospheric black metal manner but also preserving other influences. An avantgarde mixture of metal medieval and cosmic elements, especially between the tracks' acoustic interludes. I don't believe it might be considered a thin stuff, at least not regarding from the conception point of view, it is interesting to be listened to but I assume SEMPITERNAL should insist much more on the synchronization or, perhaps, an another kind of harmony between instruments and voice. Other wise, taking each part under observation it sounds good but together something is missing. It should be "monitorized" this promising band evolution. Contact: Stanislas Mettra, 82 Avenue Daumesnil, 75012 Paris, France. E-mail: sempiternal@ifrance.com (03.04)

SERAPH (AUT) – "Under The Banner Of The Pentagram" demo CD'99 32 min, 7 tracks At the beginning (1997) was "The Conquest Of God's Throne" demo and then a lot of changings in line up followed. On last year Lord Diabolus

Noctifer, Njord and Stormlord Membaris enter again the studio and record this new demo in a raw, primitive black metal way, somehow a mixture of MAYHEM and DARK THRONE without a melodic line, keyboards or other modern elements. Everything is based on rapidity and violence. It is a brutal black metal in Nordic style featuring an evil voice and that should be all. The classic black metal nostalgic fans could pleasingly listen to these tracks taking in account the fact that the recording was made into a modest studio, thus the underground note dominates SERAPH' sound. We also have a DARK THRONE cover version "Under A Funeral Moon". Contact: Chris Kummer, Heizhaugasse 12, 2460 Bruckneudorf, Austria. (28.03)

SIEBENBÜRGEN (SWE) – "Delictum" CD'00 76 min, 12 tracks (NAPALM)

After "Loreia" and "Grimjaur", the Swedish quintet has recorded a new album, following the same melodious black metal line with a penetrating male voice shadowed often by a pleasant yet not outstanding female voice. The album makes its appearance with a weird intro, "Delictum" followed by, in "Majesties Infernal", a combined successfully black metal with death passages. And it offers us a fast but rhythmic sound. First melodic signs are given by "Storms" track, here where female voice announces it and communicates rather with the keyboards than with the male voice. "Thou Blessed Be By Night" is in the same manner as "Majesties Infernal", the others seem to follow "Storms" line, some perhaps a little bit

more gothic "Thy Sister Thee Crimson Wed" or more heavy "Opacitas" included probably also a heavy metal cover version. SIEBENBÜRGEN (the Northern Version of Transylvania) presents an elaborated album... an entertaining one, filled by a certain atmosphere, but in my personal vision, a kind of too prolonged album. An album extended over a considerable time and not only. (24.01)

SIGH (JAP) – "Scenario IV: Dread Dreams" CD'99 53 min, 9 tracks (CACOPHONOUS)

Ten years ago, an underground scene it was spoken about two demos from Japan, which approached music in an original manner: "Desolation" and "Tragedy". "Requiem for Fools" was the single SIGH has released at Wild Rags and later "Scorn Defeat" at DSP (via Voice Of Wonder). At Cacophonous they release a split along KAWIR and then another three albums: "Infidel Art", "Ghastly Funeral Theatre" and "Hail Horror Hail". The new album rather gives up thrash as it was announced on "Hail Horror Hail" in heavy metal combined with black metal favour, all in a novel unrivalled version: rock psychedelic influences, female operatic, weird lullabies, dark waltzes, eclectic piano pieces. It is a very complex album and, in my opinion, pretty difficult to be listened. You should embrace a certain mood so that you could "digest" Mirai, Shinichi and Satoshi's work. The lyrics were composed by Mirai, Kiljoy (NECROPHAGIA), King (DECEASED), Damian (RITUAL CAR-NAGE) and Taiki (DEVIL). So, a very weird yet complex material. (27.01)

SIRIUS (POR) – "Aeons de Magick" CD'00 47 min, 7 tracks (NOCTURNAL ART)

"The aeons of cosmic chaos" might be the most appropriate characterization of the album. Founded in 1994 by Draconiis, first as a solo project, then coopting his fellows from TWILIGHT

(Raven and Vukodlak) the band records a prom o t a p e lately in the same year, 1998. Lord Gornoth decides featuring besides SIRIUS in Forlorn Studio and thus the debut demo is released and moreover the stuff is considered the demo of the year. Flame and Barzh joins them in 1998th Autumn and in '99th Summer-after accepting Nocturnal Art Productions's offer-the band gets into the studio and records seven new tracks, mixed lately in Akkerhaugen Studio. The album begins with a magnificent intro followed by all instruments recital and the apocalyptic voice creates for you the image of chaos, a terrifying cosmos, extremely noisy yet melodious. So, it's a black metal of the finest quality with bombastic keyboards, aggressive riffs, a violent voice and a more than fast battery. Out and away the most complex track is "Aeons de Magick", the voice reminds me of BAL-SAGOTH. I could say SIRIUS shadows EMPEROR or LIMBONIC ART line and "Aeons de Magick" is no doubt a fascinating album without any territorial borders, a black metal symphonic of the highest level, absolutely disarming in front of many actual modern bands. As for



disadvantages, the most significant I find the fact of listening SIRIUS and assuming rather a Norwegian band- thus without any trace of traditional elements, which might lead me or guide me to an even shadow of originality- than Portuguese... "The Stargate" is an instrumental, which can be successfully used in SF movie, and "Beyond The Scarlet Horizon" represents seven magical minutes... seven instrumental minutes dominated by a dramatic theatral dimension. In other words those 10 instrumental minutes reach a perfect symbiosis with the other 37 black metal minutes. The cover should be the gate you'd need entering through SIRIUS' space. Contact: www.darkmetal.com/sirius (23.01)

SKEPTICISM (FIN) – "Aes" MCD'99 28 min, 1 track (REDSTREAM)

This is another band founded almost ten years ago yet they have instead a rather limited discography: 7" EP 1992, "Aeothe Kacar" 1993, "Stormcrowfleet" '95, "Ether" '98, "Lead & Aether" '98. "Aes" track features almost an hour of funeral doom and dark slow metal in such gravity that reminds me of WINTER. So, what else can I say, a sombre morbid atmosphere, an unmissing keyboard, a pretty low battery, prolonged guitar riffs and from time to time, a depressive voice, a strange funeral in SKEPTICISM version. (27.01)

SKULL CRUSHER (AUT) – "Tormented" CD'00 46 min, 8 tracks (NSM)

Should it be considered a revival of death metal? At least this is the intention of proving coming from the five exactly from and throughout this album. The eight tracks approach death metal from two different points of view, one of technics and virtuosity and the other of brutality, aggressiveness featuring a death voice which reminds me of the times when Florida represented the mondial death metal mark! Although founded in 1990 the Austrians have released until now a single CD "The Darkside Of Humanity", in 1996. Chris and Robert's guitars are extremely rapid while backing vocal is present and the battery "communicates" perfectly with the bass in an infernal rhythm but very technical. It is an album I pleasingly listened to and which I believe shall make some impression among old death metal fans. (25.04)

SORB-I-TOL (FIN) – "Piste" CD'00 59 min, 7 tracks (PLASTIC PASSION)

For this time nothing looks like AS DIVINE GRACE or KIVIKYY. Jukka presents us a music film, old music from '60's performed by a synth imitating almost each possible instrument even trumpets! I wouldn't be surprised if imaging James Bond (Roger Moore) and a few pants in action planning a new solution for a problem occurred usually as around a beautiful young woman but tricky... It is a weird mixture of electric ambient and progressive which riffs remind me of Jimi Hendrix. Obviously SORB-I-TOL has nothing in common with metal music but all who desire entering Jukka's favourite universe could try better "Piste". My personal opinion: I enjoy living in present ages! (21.04)

SOURCE OF TIDE (NOR) – "Ruins Of Beauty" CD'00 47 min, 8 tracks (CANDLELIGHT)

The first tunes of the album, in fact of the

"Raven Goddess" track were leading my thoughts up to heavy metal, perhaps even to something more fast because the guitars left the impression of an extremely rapid album. As soon as Lord PZ's voice makes its appearance, it introduces us into a different atmosphere: dark, embracing gothic influences, symphonic or even classical but keeping a melodious and atmospheric metal style line. But let me offer you some details about this band history: it was founded on March 1996 when recorded "Dawn Of Tides" demo in the following formula: Sven Tore Dammen (vocals), Atle Hfidalen (guitar), Ger Hovland (bass), Pendragon (guitar), Gfran Flttn (drums) and Cosmocrator (keys). After some gigs the band bears a few changings in line up, thus in 1998 Pendragon (guitar, synth), Taranis (guitar), Targenor (bass), Cosmocrator (drums&synth) and Lord PZ (vocals) record in Ihshan's Studio, Symphonique, "An Ode To The Art of Self Destruction" demo. Here from everything happened indeed quickly; the signing with Candlelight, the recording of this debut in Akkerhaugen Studio and, this Spring, the release of "Ruins Of Beauty". If you did not manage to listen to SOURCE OF TIDE until now you better not lose time because this new face of Norwegian metal is no shades of doubt truly original! "The Awakening" and "Final Battle" are absolutely magnificent! You can listen to gothic, dark and metal also besides medieval influences... ancient, archaic old times ones! (13.02)

STRONG DEFORMITY (HUN) – "Racket" CD'00 47 min, 10 tracks (NSM)

Maybe it was better not to write about this album but taking in account the fact I have already included few resembling as sound bands right in to this issue there is no option for me but to describe you in a few words what these musicians desire to communicate us through "Racket": MACHINE HEAD, PANTERA, PRONG or KORN in a commercial version more heavy possibly attractive for this style fans. I understood their debut album "Power Of Pain" was considered a very good one breaking many tops. It might be so! The only thing of quality may do is only to notice the appearance of this new album. The rest... you should do it! (25.04)

SUMMONING (AUT) – "Stronghold" CD'99 64 min, 9 tracks (NAPALM)

When I spell this name I am carried away by thoughts to "Minas Morgul", that album absolutely of exception. Songs like "The Passing Of the Grey..." and "Marching Homewards" are still fascinating me even now, they still are my favourites. Obviously, like in "Dol Guldur" case it was a successful album yet still not so special as "Minas Morgul" and not so different in another point of view. Then it followed interesting minutes in MCD "Nightshade Forests" and here we are in 1999 prepared by Silenius and Protector to enjoy more than an hour of new music yet in the same manner. It is music created by synthesizer having violent voices, which, this time, are also reciting giv-



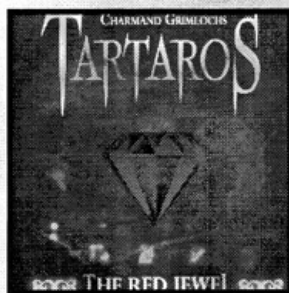
ing the sound the same originality, we were used with. A remarkable track is "Where Hope And Daylight Die" where female voice "flys" over the incredible SUMMONING atmosphere revealing to the listener a new dimension, a meditative and perhaps rather nostalgic one. Excellent! (24.01)

TAISH (AUT) – "The End Of The Trail" demo MCD'00 25 min, 6 tracks

The six tracks were recorded on March thus the sound is quite new from all points of view. I cannot compare them with any other band because I must say their sound is quite original, a melodious metal with all kind of influences from heavy metal till death, abundant keyboard, dominant guitars upon the sound and screamy voices modestly played, if up to me. It is a mixture of styles, some passages are exceedingly performed and, in fact, the ones which fill this MCD atmosphere. If we keep in mind the fact this material was sustained only by self-financial of these young musicians, I believe we can optimistically gaze to this MCD and what future might bring for them. Contact: Roland Schrotter, Fr. Engelsplatz 9/10/16, A-1200 Wien, Austria, <http://taish.8m.com>, mp3 download: <http://www.besonic.com/taish>. (25.04)

TARTAROS (NOR) – "The Red Jewel" CD'99 41 min, 8 tracks (NECROPOLIS)

"The Heritage Of Since" is Charmand Grimloch's debut demo, which, although printed in only 500 copies, captivated American label, Necropolis' attention. In 1995 the MCD "The Grand Psychotic Castle" was released and received the maximum note in "Kogaionon". That elaborated black metal is now continued by the debut album, but in a more symphonic way, even psychedelic! A terrific sound, and everything is achieved by one and only person. It is a different view of creating black metal, an original version but also enchanting. Probably the tour he had performed along EMPEROR must have impressed him so much! But anyway, keep it close to you because in a short while his other atmospheric project, THE THRILL would be promoted! (25.01)



TENHI (FIN) – "Kauan" CD'99 53 min, 8 tracks (PROPHECY)

As well as DRAWN, this Finnish band has released last year the MCD "Hallavedet", a material that likeably surprised me. Tyko Saarikko has created a new material including eight peaceful invigorating from which two are remixed. The sound has also a dark note yet melodic and melancholy is the most appropriate term or even definition for TENHI music. Besides basic instruments (guitar, bass, drums, synth) from



time to time a grand piano and a violin exceedingly make their appearance and the three voices are featuring the specific TENHI atmosphere: melancholic, dark, folk, progressive rock. (26.01)

THE KOVENANT (NOR) – "Animatronic" CD'99 51 min, 10 tracks (NUCLEAR BLAST/ROCRIS DISC)

Right after DIMMU BORGIR, THE KOVENANT (ex COVENANT) seems to be another Norwegian band decided to earn a lot of money only from black metal. I simply have no words to express my thoughts... I've no idea what to believe any more... Didn't black metal success lead perhaps to lack of interest? I've listened and re-listened this "Animatronic" album and I must confess its interpretation... is far without any reproach! A mixture of melodious black metal with gothic some cosmic elements, industrial, male and female voices, abundant keyboard, symphonic choirs... definitely a magistral sound! Moreover you can also discover even Oriental elements such as in "Jihad" track or a cover-version of a hit that was present and full-attraction of all discotheques two or three years ago all over the world, "Spaceman". We face another kind of black metal, more likely to be even commercial, more rhythmical and thus probably easily accepted by much many persons now. Yet I myself have reticence's and reserves; so, no matter what line should THE KOVENANT follow, we must admit that "In Times Before The Light", "Nexus Polaris" and "Animatronic" have shown indisputably the fact that black metal can be perfectly combined with almost any music style and, moreover, if intelligently performed could lead to an inedit sound. Still... could evolution mean also compromise? (30.01)

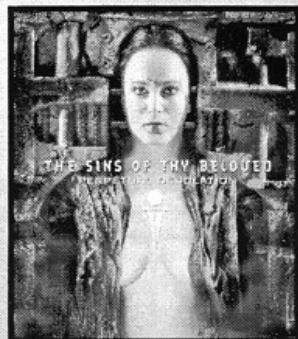
THE NARCISSUS POOL (UK) – "Life's Bitch Tapestry" CD'99 58min, 12 tracks (DARKBEAT/WINGS OF DESTINY)

The style these three musicians approached does not stir me up especially since the gothic dimension was carried extremely out till reaching a commercial shade which is techno or even dance. It is possible this style records exceeding appreciations in specific clubs but since I had not the chance to see them live the single opinion concerning THE NARCISSUS POOL remains just this unfortunate dance note. We can find also gothic industrial or electronic elements, a modest yet quite appropriate voice to this style, dynamism... all in all a mixture of styles among which I might number a few representative bands: NINE INCH NAILS, DEPECHE MODE, MARILYN MANSON or MESH. Should this be the face of the future? Contact: cissies@zetnet.co.uk. (21.04)

THE SINS OF THY BELOVED (NOR) – "Perpetual Desolation" CD'00 62 min, 9 tracks (NAPALM)

After a well appreciated album, "Lake Of Sorrow" the eight Norwegians has prepared us new sequences continuing what they started in fact with the debut, but this time leaving the slow, calm, sad rhythm in favour of one extremely rapid, very dynamic and even brutal sometimes. Yet essential is melodidity, gothic

metal, the rest of influences are something to give colour to this new sound insisting mostly on black passages. Otherwise, the same Glenn's brutal voice and also the same angelic voice of Anita, a folk hue violin extremely present and two keyboards preserving a specific atmosphere, the guitars and battery only filling the modern sound obtained by TSOTB, being the necessary instruments to complete that sound. If the eight tracks prove the band evolved a lot in interpretation chapter (yet the inspiration chapter kept down) the last track, "The Thing That Should Not Be" is, in



fact, a cover version of METALLICA which did not help me to give the maximum mark for this album. As a conclusion, "Perpetual Desolation" is a well elaborated album owning many instruments that can be well heard (Sound Suite Studio), and also contrast of voices and a gothic death metal rhythm, more commercial resembling from time to time with TRISTANIA, yet also preserving black metal or folk influences. (31.03)

THIRD MOON (AUT) – "Bloodforsaken" CD'00 41 min, 11 tracks (NAPALM)

At the beginning of last year "Aquis Submersus" debut was released at Napalm (after "Grotesque Autumnal Weepings" at CCP) and recorded

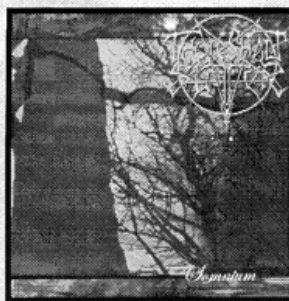
quite an appreciation. For now the Austrians has prepared a heavy dark black metal and somehow elaborated album. I did not find some extraordinary elements, but "Costal Angels" and "Obsolete Scars" tracks are interesting, a little bit more arranged and perhaps slightly over the others. Sincerely speaking "Bloodforsaken" brings nothing new to metal scene, probably these eleven tracks are the result of some famous musicians' work who experienced also this style too. But it should be remarked the guitars player's skilfulness which proves that



THIRDMOON, although is not an original band, might impose itself now into a over-saturated metal scene. (12.03)

THOU SHALT SUFFER (NOR) – "Somnium" CD'00 40 min, 10 tracks (CANDLELIGHT)

Although set up in 1991, Ihshan's project has released a single album at Samoth' label, Nocturnal Art Productions. "Somnium" has not even the slightest connection with the precedent album. If thinking over and over I find no reason for this album should be released at Candlelight. I cannot even conceive one. The sound might be considered symphonic classically influenced yet counting the fact it was accomplished by modern technology of these times we live in, I believe any parallel we might apprehend with these styles would be totally misunderstood and wrong. The album



Haendel or Bach but seen by Ihshan into an electronic adaptation. The tracks have no name all of them being illustrated uniquely by the album's concept defined "Somnium"-Dream! Could THOU SHALT SUFFER a gate forward a new trend? We shall see that. Personally this album did fascinate me and I sincerely do not know if I should recommend you or not "Somnium", but I can only simply advise you to follow your instinct and not to land your ears to others' sayings! It's the only possibility for you to intercede within "Somnium". (13.02)

THY CATAFALQUE (HUN) – "Sublunary Tragedies" CD'99 54 min, 7 tracks (KAOTIC)

"Cor Cordium" is the title of demo with which Namtar and Avar made their appearance at the beginning of the last year. Those 40 minutes of music captivate the Hungarian label, KaOtic and thus at the end of the year, on December, this debut is released. The style defined by these two Hungarians is avantgarde black metal and till reaching a certain point THY CATAFALQUE is absolutely right. There can be spoken about a peculiar atmosphere especially since Avar is no one else than Tamás Katai the person hidden behind the ambient project DARKLIGHT; there can also be mentioned violence as well as melodiousness, but the sound is rather not so pure and clear as it should be. The voice is a changing one, from screamy desperate, something in BURZUM's style till reaching a normal aspect, almost recited resembling with the gothic ones. "Rota Mundi" track reminds me of WALLACHIA pointing out a successful combination of extremely black passages with gothic, melodic rhythms. I can affirm it is a well elaborated album having long and "worked" tracks while featuring a lot of keyboard and atmosphere but also presenting more than violent and sudden changings. There are also invited two female voices which cannot be heard unfortunately unless being extremely attentive when listening this very original yet a bit too complex "Sublunary Tragedies". Contact: Tamás Katai, 6900 Mako, Nyizsnyai u.4, Hungary. (21.02)

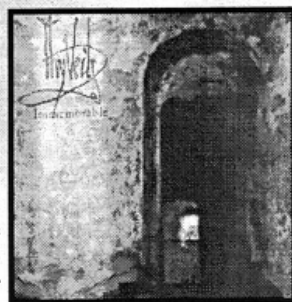


THY VEILS (ROM) – "Immemorable" CD'99 32 min, 8 tracks

In the precedent issue of "Kogaionon" I did praise Daniel Dorobantu's work performing an interview about all his activities. After "Prologue" '98 and "Against In Oblivion Of The Forgotten Abyss" '99, THY VEILS records a new material, somehow rather shorter than the previous ones but maintaining the same ambient atmosphere. Or in better words, landscape music. I might even conceive existing a parallel between THY VEILS and MORTIIS because these two persons' universes definitely resemble till one point. One sad aspect should be the fact that Daniel did not try, unfortu-

nately, introducing one or even two voices into his music... and thus the sound is a dark, dramatic, bombastic and mostly atmospheric one. You require reaching a certain mood so that you'd be apt and prepared to listen to and to understand THY VEILS. It is rather difficult penetrating Daniel's universe but if you really succeeded, fascinating would be the most appropriate term for his music. In my opinion this is the only and one serious ambient project from Romania. Cold Spring, Cold Meat Industry or Pallace Of Worms could any time fulfil THY VEILS expectations and they also could be the most appropriate labels to promote his music. Contact: O.P. 8, C.P. 709. 1900, Timisoara, Romania, E-Mail: thyveils@innocent.com, <http://members.xoom.com/thyveils/>. (30.01)

nately, introducing one or even two voices into his music... and thus the sound is a dark, dramatic, bombastic and mostly atmospheric one. You require reaching a certain mood so that you'd be apt and prepared to listen to and to understand THY VEILS. It is rather difficult penetrating Daniel's universe but if you really succeeded, fascinating would be the most appropriate term for his music. In my opinion this is the only and one serious ambient project from Romania. Cold Spring, Cold Meat Industry or Pallace Of Worms could any time fulfil THY VEILS expectations and they also could be the most appropriate labels to promote his music. Contact: O.P. 8, C.P. 709. 1900, Timisoara, Romania, E-Mail: thyveils@innocent.com, <http://members.xoom.com/thyveils/>. (30.01)



THY VEILS (ROM) – "The Diaphanous Depressions" CD'00 56min, 19 tracks

The new album sounds more accurate and professional yet being complex as well as the precedent one, a music composed on computer, a majestic elegant ambient met at Cold Meat Industry's bands, not quite original but special. It is for the first time I hear a voice exactly on the first track and I think it should be insisted on since the sound reached another subtle differentiation. I wouldn't desire me advising him to imitate what MORTIIS accomplishes yet I must say, in this particular case everything might capture a more tangible palpable dimension. As far as what else I should say... a sober atmosphere but an obscure one. It is a new challenge come from Daniel's horizon I did accept and, honestly, I have no shades of regret! Why shouldn't you try? (17.04)

TRAIL OF TEARS (NOR) – "Disclosure In Red" CD'98 47 min, 10 tracks (DSFA)

Ronny Thorsen's band succeeds to make its appearance with a very unanimous welcome album, ten tracks in a doom metal manner bearing gothic metal influences, a kind of THEATRE OF TRAGEDY (first album) but in a more like a commercial version. Although they are seven in the band, Helen Iren Michaelsen's voice presides over all (she is an opera singer) and the contrast given by Ronny's deep and screamy voice tries reminding us TRAIL OF TEARS as an extreme music performer which is strongly supported by keyboards, tough aggressive tunes. The sound is no doubt a quality sound (recorded in Jailhouse Studio and mixed by Oscar Holleman); the instruments cannot sound otherwise than perfect, but I believe that ex-NATT did nothing else but expressing through these ten tracks the entire experience gathered all together in the last years by picking from each band a few features and finally obtaining an attractive album, pleasing for ear, interesting for Norwegian gothic metal fans but absolutely not original. One of the most elaborated tracks is "Swallowed Tears", a sequence into which each instrument makes its appearance at a while... a moment you realize the band includes indeed seven persons. Id should only be said one more thing: Ivan Galdal features the artwork. (23.01)

TRANSPORT LEAGUE (SWE) – "Satanic Panic" CD'00 45 min, 11 tracks (PAVEMENT)

To be truthful hardcore bands have never fasci-

nated me even if on live performance the fans are among the most violent ones listening to B-THONG or TRANSPORT LEAGUE. Tony Jelencovich's project is more likely what he did before with B-THONG and other two quality albums (if up to the sayings of Mascot) now is released a new material formed by eleven hardcore tracks spliced with metal or heavy catchy riffs and angry/melodic vocals. "Satanic Panic" might have been a step forward acceptance of this very music style. Unfortunately or luckily I still maintain my first and in the same time the only opinion about hardcore. Maybe some other time it would be different... (12.02)

TWELFTH OF NEVER (USA) – "Blowing Bubbles Through Broken Windows" CD'99 44 min, 8 tracks
(RUNNING WITH SCISSORS)

I cannot imagine how many of you did listen to this album but I can recommend you even from the very beginning to look for the CD! What is all about? About a few musicians who



activated and still do in several other bands such as: SECRET STAIRWAYS, TEARS OV BLOOD, and SCATTERED REMNANTS. TWELFTH OF NEVER is a band character-

ized by a personal specific sound oscillating somewhere between gothic rock and dark, yet owning various influences: ambient, industrial, classic, doom, pop, blues, trip-hop, ethereal. It's rather close to LYCIA... presenting a few resemblances... what can we hear on this self-financed album? A lot of keyboard, classic guitars, peaceful steady female voice, an ethereal gothic of first class! Contact: P.O Box 7327, Fitchburg, MA 01420, USA, E-mail: info@twelfthofnever.com, www.twelfthofnever.com (30.01)

TWILIGHT GARDEN (GER) – "Sphere" MCD'99 20 min, 5 tracks
(WINGS OF DESTINY)

This digipack is excellently accomplished and I dare saying their music also reaches the same level. The five of them present us an energetic gothic rock absolutely well conceived and elaborated with abundant keyboard and a male voice of a certain and obvious quality all performed in a low note just perfect for such musical style. There can be said they do not distinguish themselves from other bands in the same line but I assure you, besides that, the sound obtained is interesting to be listened to. If you prefer gothic rock scene or wave TWILIGHT GARDEN could be exactly the adequate choice. If not, there is not reason for you to get bothered! (21.04)

TWILIGHT OPHERA (FIN) – "Midnight Horror" CD'99 43 min, 9 tracks
(CACOPHONOUS)

I consider this band an extremely luckily one because, founded in 1996, has released only two tracks "Wasted" and "Shadowdancer" yet two tracks which managed to catch English label Cacophonous attention. Thus, in 1998, the debut "Shadows Embrace The Dark" makes its appearance, an album into which death metal has found an impressive union

with black and gothic. The new tracks are more entertaining, rapid having more aggressive rhythms, a rather common style up to the fashion but it probably is a kind of music that impress much in live performances having perhaps quite an impact. What should be their style? Melodic heavy black metal having dark and even classical influences. Interesting but not outstanding. (27.01)

UNHOLA (FIN) – "Inferno" CD'00 42 min, 8 tracks
(PLASMATICA)

I have heard for a long time of UNHOLA especially knowing it is another project of some FALL OF THE LEAF's members. The band I am writing about is an atmospheric one featuring a modern black metal background with heavy melodic riffs, chaotic violence and folk elements. Yet nothing new is brought up by and throughout this material! If it were to be compared with FALL OF THE LEAF, I would say it is rather more brutal (mostly because of the voice) more rapid and featuring more relevant black tendencies than death metal. It is about an album containing all is necessary in order to be considered a professional material. Unfortunately, one of my deepest regrets for the last few years the originality is missing. Contact: M.Hyytia, Tanhuankuja 8 as.21, 23500 Uusikaupunki, Finland. (03.05)

V/A – "Candlelight Collection III" CD'99 51 min, 11 tracks
(CANDLELIGHT)

About a compilation there is not much to write except a few things about the bands included and the tracks enclosed in. In the present case there are seven bands, all having signed contracts with Candlelight: EMPEROR, AGENT STEEL, DAEONIA, MYRKSKOG, PECCATUM, SOURCE OF TIDE, CHRISTIAN DEATH. Nothing new, perhaps just a remix of "The warriors Of Modern Death" and live version of "Curse You All Men", both performed by EMPEROR. (25.01)

V/A – "Moonfog 2000-A Different Perspective" DCD'00 80 min, 16 tracks
(MOONFOG)

A superproduction! It is about a compilation of all bands "working" with Moonfog: DRÖHEMSGÅRD, SATYRICON, DARK THRONE, GEHENNA, THORNS. You can benefitate of two CDs. On first one the tracks are specially conceived for this compilation



and thus you can listen to bands in CELTIC FROST style such as EIBON (Phil Anselmo/PANTERA, Fenriz, Satyr and Killjoy/NECROPHAGIA) or classic black metal 9DARK THRONE, GEHENNA) or even a weird intro (SATYRICON). As bonus, a second CD is offered you containing the latest releases of the mentioned bands, intelligently picked up and aleatory ordered. You can find also a few details regarding the bands and a list where all Satyr's label releases are included in the booklet. A piece of collection! (03.04)

VILKATES (GER) – "Apocalyptic Millenium" CD'00 36 min, 8 tracks

(LAST EPISODE)

Founded on the NUCTEMERON band's framework in 1998 VILKATES cooptates Lord Asgaqlun (ex-DUNKELGRAFEN) and not after much time they record the "Angeldust and Blasphemy" debut, released last year at Last Episode. The new compositions were recorded in Frozen Moment Studio and carry on the precedent album line perhaps even more brutal, death and black passages being found in abundance and where tracks such as "Dying Flowers" or "Nuclear Death" are indeed pertinent examples. We also can enjoy a peaceful track-normal voice named by the four Germans "Vilkates-Part II (Symphony Of Lust And Pain)". (27.03)

VINTERSORG (SWE) – "Ödemarkens Son" CD'99 44 min, 9 tracks
(NAPALM)

After the MCD "Hedniskhjärtad" and the CD "Till Fjälls", the person who activates in parallel in OTYG also has released recently a new epic folk black metal material. It is an advantage that VINTERSORG's music is based on traditional elements ("I den Trolska Dalens Hjärtat") exceedingly integrated with the black metal ones ("Ödemarkens Son") or even with gothic ("Öfterbacken") resulting an original album with nine Northern hymns. Probably addressed firstly to those who have some knowledge of Swedish language. Absolutely charming I find "Svaltvinter" a track into which besides male voice can be distinguished also an irresistible female voice. (24.01)

VOMITORY (SWE) – "Redemption" CD'99 33 min, 8 tracks
(FADELESS)

In this present case we face an old band on underground scene but unfortunately not that lucky as some other bands. Thus, founded in 1989, the Swedish did not managed to release more than two albums in eleven years long in spite of a lot of offers they received during the years. The first demo was recorded in Summer of '92 and only a few months later Witchhunt has released a 7"EP entitled "Moribound". After releasing a promotape, VOMITORY decides entering again the studio and records the second demo, "Through Sepulchral SHADOWS". The tour in Poland determines Repulse to include VOMITORY into a compilation and in 1996 Fadeless offers them signing a contract after which the debut entitled "Raped in Their Own Blood" appears-a very welcome album in musical mass media and positively received by fans. "Redemption" is nothing but a continuation of the previous album, which is more precisely a death metal in old style, brutal, having an aggressive voice and ravishing riffs with no compromises. It seems like death metal old school still exists for some even nowadays. Contact: Urban Gustafsson, Grossbolsgatan 2B, S-667 30 Forshaga, Sweden, E-mail: vomitorty@hotmail.com. (29.01)

WALLACHIA (NOR) – "From Behind The Light" CD'99 46 min, 8 tracks
(VELVET MUSIC)

Romania can be divided in three regions: Transylvania, Wallachia and Moldavia. After SIEBENBÜRGEN and WALLACHIA I am curious which other Northern band would choose for Moldavia name. Lars Stավdal's project has released his first album after a demo, which

was reedited on MCD two years ago. What can we find on this material? Four new tracks: "The Curse Of Poenari", "Crucifictional Disinfection", "The Last Of My Kind" and "Manifesting The Beast" and the four tracks included in MCD. "The Curse Of Poenari" is the first



sequence trying to introduce you in WALLACHIA's atmosphere combining orchestral black with gothic yet maintaining the same throaty extremely violent voice.

"Crucifictional Disinfection" is a little bit faster I would rather say, melodic black metal followed then by "Arges-Raul Doamnei" instrumental. The most remarkable track is "The Last Of My Kind" having an acoustical sound here and there being performed by Lars' voice but rather reciting a few verses. I won't insist on the other three tracks of MCD but on the last one, "Manifesting Of The Beast", very rapid and brutal at first as well as melodic and atmospheric at last. An interesting album for those who listened not WALLACHIA until now but insufficient for the others who waited so many years for listening an entirely new album. Contact: Lars Stavdal, Steinvegen 3B, 7716 Steinkjer, Norway. (29.01)

WHISPERS IN THE SHADOW (AUT) - "November" CD'98 59 min, 10 tracks (MOS/WINGS OF DESTINY)

It is pretty strange to write about a material released two years ago knowing also another one has been already launched on the market. Anyway, it is worth to remind every one Ashley's project promotes a modern dark trip wave with non-commercial hints and rather slow from time to time or even sad. Taking as references bands such as THE CURE, SIOUXIE or COCTEAU TWINS, Ashley has founded this project in 1995 experiencing all kinds of versions inclusively female voices or having enclosed in line up Richard Lederer (D.V.K.E., SUMMONING, ICE AGES). After releasing an album at Oliver's label, MOS, on May 1998 Ashley enters again the studio and records this very album, a pretty long and intelligently interpreted album. Most certainly many of you have listened to it a long time ago which might mean your attention is now concentrated on turned to "A Taste Of Decay", the last release accomplished by this quartet. (22.04)

WINDS OF SIRIUS (FRA) - "Beyond All Temples And Myths" CD'00 44 min, 7 tracks (SEASON OF MIST)

The Season Of Mist's leaders say that these Frenches music is a gothic metal with FIELDS OF NEPHILIM and MORBID ANGEL influences. Moreover, their line up contains members of AKHENATON or MATUTINA NOCTEM. Thus, let me introduce this band to you, the band was founded in 1996 by Lord V.Sangdragon, Christian Bivel and Fred Puvilland, all of them former members of AMAYMON project. In the following years Michael and Cedric Ridet joined the band and shortly before the recordings Christian's place is taken by Oliver Bampa. A history relatively

simple but a music highly complex: long tracks (of six, seven minutes), an imposing sound, dominant keyboard, guitars in the gothic style, predominant drums after following slow rhythms, a depressive low voice, rather "angry", an atmosphere oscillating between entertaining gothic and grave solemn calm dramatic tunes. It might be considered an original style from all points of view which, even if I could or wanted so, I wouldn't find a comparison to measure it with outstanding! (27.03)



WINGS OF DESTINY (GER) - "Where Darkness Falls" MCD'98 28 min, 5 tracks (WINGS OF DESTINY)

After two demos and a live tape the Germans release their first MCD in 1998 conceived in five simple melodic tracks with a female voice and a commercial sound. It might be considered gothic, rock or even pop, pleasing to the ears and comfortable. I don't think they insist too much on virtuosity but rather on rhythmic. Taking in account the material was first recorded in 1997 I believe I shouldn't insist any more on details... as I see no point in that. (21.04)

WINGS OF DESTINY (GER) - "Cursed Desire" MCD'99 22 min, 7 tracks (WINGS OF DESTINY)

The new recording sound a lot much better and different, better synchronized with another female voice: Diana Alice. In fact from the old formula the only one left was Olaf Sprick, the one who founded this band and who still continues leading it. The tracks are now more various, all having as background a gothic wave melodious with a simple battery and rhythmical guitars. The sound is OK but I believe the four musicians lost from their attention one fundamental characteristic as far as this style is concerned: the force! Let us hope the new album which shall be released this year would enjoy also a vitality accurately outlined and thus WINGS OF DESTINY might rapidly reach a true recognition of their work. Otherwise, Olaf has founded his own agency through which can support the gothic scene. Among the bands he promotes are THE NARCISSUS POOL, TWILIGHT GARDEN or WHISPERS IN THE SHADOW. Contact: WINGS OF DESTINY (Entertainment, Booking & Promotion), Olaf Sprick, Stemmer Strasse 2, D-32689 Kalletal, Germany, E-mail: wings@t-online.de, www.wod.de. (21.04)

WIZZARD (FIN) - "Songs Of Sin And Decadence" CD'00 39 min, 10 tracks (GUTTER)

Teemu Kautonen, the one who during the years has founded or played in many projects (DARKWOODS MY BETROTHED, NATTVINDENS GRAAT, FURTEST SHORE), has finally decided to approach a different kind of music, older, and that is why he chooses for a combination between heavy metal and thrash. Thus, firstly is released „I am

the King" demo followed by „Wizzard" CD released at NEP/Supernal Music and „Devilmusick" at Spinefarm. Before leaving for army Teemu prepared us a new product, pure heavy metal, extremely rhythmical, normal voice which reminds me of „A Bard's Tale". There are still a few new modern elements such as keyboard and female voice into „Angel De La Barthe" track. It is interesting to listen to heavy metal in German as you may in „Nacht der Verdammten Seelen". This is an entertaining pleasing album and probably reaching a great impact on scene. Contact: WIZZARD, Box 216, FIN-40101 Jyväskylä, Finland, E-mail: Wizzard@artic.net, <http://www.sicom.fi/jeejee/wizzard>. (12.04)

WOLF (SWE) - S/T CD'00 40 min, 9 tracks (NO FASHION)

It is not about a black metal but a classical heavy metal, extremely fast, energetic in '80's bands' style having nothing special in comparison with those times. It was recorded in The Abyss Studio besides Peter Tägtgren. I don't think it has any point to relate more about this band since heavy metal was still is and definitely shall remain the most popular known and genuine style... and WOLF can proudly align to such standards! Heavy metal never dies! (03.04)

YATTERING (POL) - "Murder's Concept" CD'00 42 min, 10 tracks (SEASON OF MIST)

It seems like this material indeed enjoyed a special immense advertising on behalf of the label! Undoubtedly the four of the band are exceedingly technical and fast, the death metal they executed is one of a certain classic elegance with modern influences yet, but facing no compromises having a grunting voice and a ravishing battery (in fact Marcin is playing now with VADER in a tour besides SIX FEET UNDER). The band's history begins in 1991 but only during 1996 new audio materials appear, the most important being the album "Human's Pain" which is considered, also, the best debut from Poland in 1998. After a few gigs besides DEVILYN, KRABATHOR or COUNT DE NOTE, YATTERING succeeds having signings with Massive Management (VADER, CHRIST AGONY, HATE) who arranged them the album's recording through Season Of Mist. Violence, swiftness, energy, art = "Murder's Concept". (27.03)

PS. Ola, I am still waiting for your answers on our interview! In the next issue I hope I will include it. Till then, see you the photo of THE SINS OF THY BELOVED BAND.



MAGAZINES FANZINES MAGAZINES FANZINES

This section should have included in much more pages but various reasons determined me to write only about these materials. Let us see what future shall bring for us! Yet until then you better find out my opinion regarding the other press colleagues...

ECLIPSE (CZE) – issue #5 52 A4pag

Right from the beginning I insist mentioning this material is exclusively addressed to black metal style. Thus we can find almost 200 reviews performed only for the black metal materials from the most brutal primitive till the most modern melodic atmospheric one. The reviews are carefully made sufficiently conclusive but I admit most of them reflect different opinions from mine. Which I find absolutely natural since any one should have a personal opinion. The two of them managed to realize some successful long interviews pleasing at lecturing such as: AUTUMN, WINDIR, JUDAS ISCARIOT, EQUILIBRIUM PUBLISHING. Besides them there are some interviews a little shorter but entertaining as well with: AZURE, FROSTMOON, ENTRAILS, LORD BELIAL, AETURNUS, TULUS, WARLOGHE, LULLABY. We can also find some gigs' reviews... all of them presented into an elegant artwork of a certain quality which goes also for the printing. The entire magazine is black and white but on a very good paper. It is, I'd say, a model 'zine for UG absolutely necessary for the collection each of you might desire. Obviously the regarding of these two is rather radical: "black metal or nothing". Probably time should be the one to decide upon Blacky and Lord Ogronios' musical orientation. You can send without any worry \$6 at the following address: Eclipse Productions, P.O.Box 35, 62500 Brno, Czech Republic, E-mail: eclipse@iol.cz; <http://mujweb.cz/www/eclipse>. (14.04)

IRON (GRE) – issue #1 146 A5 pg

Panos Tzanetatos, the Unisound label's boss, has edited a new colour Greek magazine addressed only to those who are familiar with this language. What could be discovered through these pages? Rock, hard rock, heavy, speed, thrash, death, black, gothic, progressive, alternative. Thus, there are featured materials with RIOT, LEATHER WOLF, DESTRUCTOR, DEATH SS, RAZOR, GRAVELAND, DAIMONIA NYMPH, CREST OF DARKNESS, DIABOLIQUE, GRIMOIRE, VAMPIRES, ROZ WILLIAMS, tens of reviews, scene report in Athena... Unfortunately I cannot pronounce myself any further with information since this language is rather not a familiar one to me, which I am not proud, of course. Yet I believe IRON is desired to be a replication to magazines such as Metal Hammer or Rock Hard but in a much commercial manner. Contact: P.B. 66084, 15510 Athens, Hellas, fax: ++ (01) 6997840. (20.03)

IRON (GRE) – issue #2 98 A5 pg

This new issue is slimmer but somehow rather more serious sober-minded and sensibly settled than the former, giving not such prominence to commercial advertising but having a straight destination towards metal music. Once again tens reviews structured in gothic, extreme chapters and "black pages", historical reviews of myth albums, materials/interviews with and about LIEGE LORD, AGENT STEEL, GODS TOWER, ROCK BITCH (obscene photos), SABBAT, CELTIC FROST, PROSCRIPTOR. Identically as for the first issue each buyer can also benefit of one or more than one CDs released at Unisound Records.

(20.03)

METAL YOUTH (GRE) – issue #1 34 A4 pg

Presenting a format rather larger than A4, the "IRON" magazine-"sister" is released also by Panos in a colour version printed in better conditions and somehow more dynamic. Inside this magazine are entirely featured interviews, materials, and reviews about: METAL CHURCH, USURPER, MACABRE, HADES, WASP, TESTAMENT, MAYHEM, WHITESNAKE, URIAH HEEP, FLOTSAM & JETSAM. "Metal Youth" is printed in 15.000 copies. To such printing of 15.000 copies words are useless. The same address as for "IRON". (20.03)

NEGURA/MAGAZIN IDEOLOGIC AL

DACIEI (ROM) – issue #1 March'00 44 A4 pg

I am pleased and absolutely glad to be able to write about Romanian magazines of a certain admiring quality. NEGURA BUNGET's battery man, Gabi Mafa (Negru) has decided to try the metal scene's written version releasing under such name on the autochthonous market a metal 'zine. The print quality is a professional one-paper and cover-featuring a discrete, elegant and intelligent layout. The 44 black white pages contain a few extremely interesting interviews, the most complex and successful one should be the SIRIUS one followed by those with SATYRICON and DARK THRONE. Unfortunately Negru does not make the later two but most certainly deserve your attention. You can also find interviews with PENITENT, ORK, TELLURIAN BATTLEFIELDS PRODUCTION, DEMONIC and GRIMEGOD. This last mentioned one made with Tibor's band I find completely welcome especially taking in consideration the fact GRIMEGOD is about to release a new material in quite a short time. This magazine offers also three leading articles concerning subjects such as nationalism, Nordic Mythology and "Solomonarul". I find there are rather not too many reviews and moreover, relatively subjective (there can slightly also be distinguished a peculiar affinity of the editor for brutal old style materials) especially for albums where appreciatively half (25) are Rocris Disc licensed ones. I sincerely cannot anticipate the magazine's future orientation but I assume if enduring to present exclusively materials released in Romania the idea of underground would definitely disappear. The 'zine ends up with a gig's chronicle about MOONSPELL, WITCHERY, KREATOR and MANIC MOVEMENT conceived by Adi Mihailov (Bestial records). As an on the whole image of the 'zine I should avouch it is an excellent start for Negru yet I feel I must add, as far as I might say I know Gabi, he should actually insist on the mystical side as well as on the objective aspect, which I believe somehow he neglected, leaving the commercial tent to be the concern of those who succeeded to destroy what it might have been created in Romanian metal scene during the last few years. This 'zine price I find more than reasonable and appealing and I am undoubtedly sure of-in the fortunate case all 700 copies would be sold-the fact Gabi would not reach any profit. This is a hobby I hope it shouldn't become, by the time passes, more and more expensive as it seems

to turn out. Although the materials are rather "thin" "Negura" is remarkable and deserves our comparison with some other Romanian underground publications appealed until right now, except the present one you are holding in your hands this very moment (ha, ha)! Contact: C.P. 8-747, 1900, Timisoara, Timis, E-mail: mafa@mail.dnttm.ro or to Bestial Records. (20.03)

ROCKER (ROM) – issue #1 (21) 36 A4 pg

The legendary Romanian 'zine has appeared after a silence of quite some few years in a very convincing and promising way and with big hopes. The fact it has been more than nine months since I have heard nothing about the releasing of a new issue makes me believe that all people worked for this issue have just splitted out... exactly as a ultimate jerk. I hope I am wrong. What can we find across this issue? A colour cover, the rest of pages being printed on white-black newspaper, in Romanian language, various information from materials with ENYA, JOHN Mc LAUGHLIN, Mani Neumann or PHOENIX to interviews with AMORPHIS, RAISE HELL, CHILDREN OF BODOM, THERION... A few years ago this 'zine could have been considered sort of a guide; now it seems to feature a mixture of stuff for all who prefer rock. The most "tough" materials were made by Cristian Mocanu (Rocris Disc), a few simple, common interviews up to the object not preserving any characteristic detail: just interviews which might have been made by anyone, even a person who has nothing to do with metal music so far (a simple infobrief about band would have been more than enough in order to ask a few questions such as the ones Cristian did ask). Yet I hope these materials have already recorded the expected impact as well as the desired licence for Romania followed by the required sales. To such promotion... nothing else but the same sale level! There are a few dozens objective reviews fulfilled with enough details but rather too "poetic". As for as nostalgia, price or information are concerned "Rocker" should definitely be procured. It is probably the most accurate and correct manner of regarding "Rocker". All good thoughts and regards for Doru "Rocker" Ionescu. Contact: P.O.Box 63-141, Bucuresti 71200, Romania, E-mail: rockero@yahoo.com (20.03)

UNDERGROUND CHRONICLE (ROM) – issue #1 12 A5 pg

I might say this present material represents rather a newsletter totally autochthonous contain information about Romanian "ultra" underground scene and a few simple even infantile and puerile materials or interviews with IRKALLA, AVATAR, SAGA and ARGUS. The quality is rather primitive, the magazine the "zine" being copied (by Xerox) and I feel must say the technoredaction is rather null. Thus, it is still a beginning, which must be quickly improved because if Adrian goes on in the same mode it would be absolutely shameful. I understood the second issues would appear in English, also an A5 format but numbering a few more pages than this present one. We shall see that. Unfortunately, I cannot pronounce myself on any recommendation, you should decide yourselves. Adrian represents now Radical Mu-

sic also, a new label and distribution (which I hear about for the first time) that might have realized already a few materials for SAGA and soon would release two demos of some bands completely unknown (for me, at least) KISSES OF SERPENT, MONASTYR. But, what if you find out yourselves what this person really does? The address: Dan Adrian, Str. M. Eminescu 62, Ludus 4350, Jud Mures, Romania. E-mail: undergechron32@hotmail.com (28.03).

VAMPIRIA (ITA) – issue #3 54 A4 pg

Francesco Palumbo is the one who “took care” of the LATHEBRA musical project. In this present case we face an English black-white underground

fanzine featuring a print quality rather modest; better said it is about a Xerox copy of the pages listed on PC presenting an exquisite artwork only from time to time and intelligible photos (not PARAGON OF BEAUTY unfortunately). The questions seem to develop strictly musical subjects rather profound; therefore the answers are relatively short and common. It is rather an informing fanzine into which you can find details about music and members of bands such as: PRIMORDIAL, OPERA IX, AETERNUS, ABHOR, DEPRESY, TENHI, NEGURA BUNGET, PARAGON OF BEAUTY, ANGRYON, ...AND OCEANS, KRABATHOR, NOMICON, ENSOPH, GOD DETHRONED, ATARAXIA,

ABYSSOS, FURTEST SHORE, BURNING INSIDE, EBONYLAKE and DARKSIDE. Besides a material concerning Cold Meat Industry's history there can also be found over 200 albums reviews and over 150 demos, 7" EPs, 'zines... The reviews are superficially performed being insisted only on those albums that presented quite an interest for the editor (that's possible in my case too). “Vampiria” is an important underground fanzine and not because of the technical quality but due to the multitudinous addresses and information about so many bands and labels. In order to procure it \$5 can be sent at the following address: Vampiria 'zine, Via San Clemente 106, 84015, Nocera Superiore (SA), Italy. (20.03)



TAPES TAPES TAPES TAPES TAPES TAPES TAPES

ARCHAOS (ROM) – “Centuries Of Obedience” tape'00

(BESTIAL)

My opinion regarding the first two releases of this band you know perhaps from the precedent issues of my magazine: ARCHAOS played something which only they should have understood or probably liked. That ridiculous dark ambient experience seems to have disappeared since the two of them are insisting now on gothic elements, the voice is more improved reminding me of Pete Steele's voice (TYPE O NEGATIVE). Everything sounds different now, dark is pleasingly combined with the ambient aspect (never faded as now) and gothic brings the tracks' melodiousness... excepting a few tracks which insist on industrial, a style oscillating between techno and electronic yet finally perfectly integrated into the whole ARCHAOS concept. The guitars feature a very strange primitive sound while the keyboard joins other weird instruments (which I believe I hear them now for the first time). Although knotty, the ARCHAOS sound deserves to be taken in consideration and if you were as well disappointed by “Vestes Terrae” and “The Land/Love Obsession”, the new track, even if experimental, reveal another profile more profound of the two Bucharest musicians. Contact: http://www.geocities.com/archaos_band. (24.04)

ANGUISH/ICON OF SIN (ROM) – “Toward Abysses/Not My God” split tape'99 (BESTIAL)

ANGUISH presents us four gothic doom metal tracks, exceedingly elaborated and interpreted, with an proper male voice, full of atmosphere... something in the old CEMETARY or GOTHIC

manner. Although these tracks bring nothing new to metal scene, it's worth trying to listen to this material. Contact: ANGUISH, Bd Independentei Bl.9, Sc.A, ap.13, 0200 Targoviste, Romania. ICON OF SIN is much more poor than ANGUISH, the normal voice is pathetic, the throaty voice should be OK and the sound is wished to be gothic metal but I might say that a slow doom death metal would be the most adequate characterization or, at least, much closer to the truth. Even if the tracks are not successfully mixed I sincerely do enjoy the guitars' interpretation. We can also enjoy some oriental influences, an autochthonous ORPHANED LAND yet much more than puerile into “Insane” track. That should definitely be all. Contact: ICON OF SIN, Str. Avrig No.28 Bl.P1, sc1, ap.94, sect 2, Bucuresti, Romania. (15.04)

AVATAR (ROM) – “The Alchemist” tape'00 (BESTIAL)

A great surprise for me brought this material! As I was used with “Holy Infection”, their death grind core (as texts) metal demo, the material that made those four musicians known, I thought AVATAR came back in forth with another horror tracks which had no value at all for me. Well, what I just listened to now sounds absolutely different being a successful combination between modern and classical death and black atmospheric elements, even reaching progressive aspects with a grim primitive voice but quite suitable for such sound, I'd say everything is carefully performed. Perhaps if the voices' mixing were more professionally made AVATAR would have praised itself only with positive critiques. Anyway, all in all, it is laudable their intention to play differently than they

did at the beginning, two years ago, even if the sound is not quiet an original one, please, trust me, it is worth for you to try listening to these tracks. It might be even a SOLEFALD in Romanian version. Contact: <http://www.geocities.com/avatarrom/Avatar.html> (24.04)

ENDLESS (ITA) – “The Trendkiller” EP'99 (HUGINN)

What would be these Italians' intention by this very EP? The style they declared is “Pure Alcoholic Black Metal” or more correctly “Extreme Alcoholic Furry & Fuckin' beer”. Their music is rather appropriate for concerts since everything is coming from past... It is rather a noisy combination in old style between black and thrash metal. Marco de Rosa (HUGINN, SKOLL) together with his colleagues have recorded, during the three years of existing, three demos. The most important one is “Cycle”. Huginn Productions has released also a tape in live version “Live In The Castle” which I have listened too and I did not find special. You can try also at Huginn where you may find T-shirts with them. (14.04)

ENSOPH (ITA) – “Les Confessions du Mat” tape'99 (OROFARNE MUSIC)

All started under ENDAYMYNION name, the Italians release, during three years, two progressive doom metal demos “Sonnets Of Inquietude” '94 and “Thy Art” '96. In spite of great appreciations they received and the sale of over 600 copies of the two demos the band splitted up. After a very short period Giuliano, Zenone, Leonardo, Patrizia, Mahavira, Gomelio and Athos give birth to a new band and thus this present material makes

its appearance through no more than three tracks but having a length of almost 25 minutes. It is an extraordinary sound, a melancholic dimension never met until now to a debutant band, fulfilled by a certain atmosphere and a perfect synchronization. "Venice" reminds me of the old DECORYAH and old EMPYRIUM an innocent voice, Patrizia's, a dreaming flute, a depressive shouted male voice, a harmonious keyboard and weeping guitars solos. "My Gloomy Glare" continues "Venice" line, but rather in an even calmer peaceful manner, Mahavira's voice oscillating now between screams and recitations or intonations, yet the most remarkable climax is represented by an accordion which strangely identifies itself perfectly with ENSOPH sound. The last track is the most oneiric one enclosing cosmical elements, predominant keyboard and absolutely sad depressive voices even reaching "artificial tears". It is a material that strikes upon my heart which should carefully be listen to those who prefer sad or sorrow doom metal. It seems like new changing in line-up appeared once again. For the present time the band is about to end the recording of a new material, a more esoteric avangardist one, entitled "ANANKEE, a metaphysical spiral between Alpha and Omega". Back to "Les Confessions du Mat", it can be found in a tape shape as well as on MCD version. Let me relate you about its cover which I find it absolutely excellent including also entirely the lyrics of this fine accurate opus. In fact should I say any further? Contact: Cristian Luise, Via Puotti 54, 35010 Villanova di CSP (PD), Italy. (30.03)

GRIMEGOD (ROM) - "With Broken Wings"
tape'00
(BESTIAL)

I must reckon Tibor's voice was and still is my favourite one from the entire Romanian underground metal scene. Even from "Never Come Back" or "Under The Sad and Silent Sky", GRIMEGOD meant a great deal for myself and during last six years I had often the chance to listen to and to see then live on the stage, sometimes I even wrote about them. The new compositions exceed "The Darkside (Pain in another Dimension)" or "Dreamside Of Me" and are the genuine and relevant proof for the quality of Romanian doom death metal scene. And I affirm such things without any exaggeration since GRIMEGOD prove itself to be one of the oldest bands and successful that managed to attract the fans' attention, after the revolution (1989). If you carefully listen to this album you would realize GRIMEGOD has chosen for its sign the specific period of time situated between "Under..." and "Dreamside Of Me" combining the brutal aspect from the beginning with the experimental modern "computerized" one. For those who never listened to GRIMEGOD before I might try characterizing their sound such as: piano, keyboard/computer, tough melodic and "cold"/classical guitars, drummachine, throaty voice, normal voice, doom death, ambient, instrumental element... an oasis of sadness expressed through a music of the purest quality, the most inedit one. There cannot be spoken about a certain rhythm or standard, not even about that so "used" theme of contrasts... it is simply just GRIMEGOD! I don't even think it has any point to describe you the new sound, you should try yourselves and after listening to it we shall talk any further! I only regret this band did not manage to obtain a signing with some West labels although their music is far beyond the necessary standard required in order to receive such

offer. I might be somehow subjective in my criticism... that's it! "With Broken Wings" has the same goal as ever to remind us that quality music cannot be searched at the fashion column. Contact: <http://witch.drak.net/grimegod/>. (24.04)

HUGINN (ITA) - "In The Land Of The Old Hills"
demo '99
(HUGINN)

This is Marco de Rosa's fundamental project. In a precedent issue I remember writing about another demo which integrated into another different style: folk dark wave ambient. Although founded in 1993, the first demo appeared in 1996, it was untitled "From The Wind" and after another two years was released "Tales (From The Ancient Times)". If for these materials worked many colleagues of him, for the new demo Marco perform all alone at all instruments inclusively the voice. The style has radically changed being transformed from dark folk into a symphonic black metal. If being or not in fashion such change I suppose it is not the time neither the place of discussing. Essential should be the fact the tracks really sound genuine into an atmosphere which reminds me of COVENANT demo "In Times Before The Light". As this music are conceived on synth and programming the listener can enjoy an imposing atmosphere; but I have to remark the voice as being the only primitive and raw element in BURZUM style or even DARK THRONE's. It is a very successful demo; all four tracks are treating fanciful themes and shamanic experiences. The fifth track is a BATHORY cover version "Home Of Once Brave" which band is of a reference one for the musician. Contact: Huginn Productions, Marco de Rosa, Via Crespi 40, 28100 Novara, Italy. (14.04)

HUGINN (ITA) - "The Millennium End"
promo '99
(HUGINN)

Marco keeps going in the same manner yet this time the new four tracks are more rapid but atmospheric and elaborated as well. You must listen to Huginn at least for one time because this symphonic black metal, although not quite original, is definitely well executed and the harmony created by that raw voice (which seems to be able to perform normal tunes also) is absolutely inedit and welcome you should try now "Alone (with my spirit)", a nice track. (14.04)

KALTES (HUN) - "Starchariot" demo 2000
(STYGIAN SHADOWS)

After a successful demo of those from FROST, Leslie Fodor focused his activity on computer; thus for the time being Stygian Shadows means webzine, label, distribution! Let us hope it would be OK! The product I have in front of only two well elaborated tracks, "Starchariot" embraces a Nordic Sound, in DARK THRONE style with black and thrash rhythms, traditional shades, black voice and a keyboard coming from far away, somewhere distanced from. The second track, "Path Of Forces" is much more slow in BATHORY style, an imposing sound and the same thick voice (in AETURNUS style). In other words: a rather "domestic" sequence more acceptable for my ears. Retaining the fact this demo has a simple yet enchanting cover, the only thing I have to do is recommending you to attempt to listen to this material which can be procured at a price of no more than \$4 (incl. Airmail) at: STYGIAN SHADOWS, Leslie Fodor, Bartók Béla u.3, H-

2049 Diosd, Hungary, E-mail: stygianshadows@sms.pgsm.hu (short messages only-max 640 char!), Webzine at: <http://www.tar.hu/stygianshadows>. The band's address is: Kaltes@freemail.hu. (30.03)

KORRUPTION (ROM) - "Slaves Of Darkness"
tape '99
(BESTIAL)

I am very disappointed of this album. If taking in account the sound I might consider it an awfully mixed demo perhaps by primitive technical support... Although I have heard only good things regarding this band after listening this album my true opinion is KORRUPTION must most certainly seriously get to work because if they honestly desire for playing death metal there are a lot of things that need to be changed. Perhaps the battery is the single instrument wishing to confer dynamism to the sound. Otherwise there should be nothing but mediocrity. I find it an unsuccessfully elaborated exercise induced by the four musicians and I am indeed confused how could Bestial release something like that in a shape of "album". A demo definition would have been more appropriate and perhaps I could have had a more optimistically view upon it! (15.04)

KRATOS (ROM) - "Looking Behind The Mirror"
tape '99
(BESTIAL)

Do you remember "As The Shadows Fall", the album released by a Norwegian band: GODSEND? For me this album is one of the most inedit doom material of all times. Well, Dan Dron's voice often reminds me of Gunter's since being so "down" and slow I even might say funerary. These particular passages I find the best of this album although we can hear a female voice and a bombastic keyboard among others. It is about an atmospheric doom death metal absolutely well elaborated presenting a "full" sound embracing from here and there gothic metal or even pure gothic (especially the voice) aspects. I wouldn't desire comparing KRATOS with some other Romanian bands but I feel I must underline the fact this album could a West label release any time. It should be considered one of the best Romanian materials I have lately listened to and thus I strongly recommend you to look for details directly from the source: Str. Lamotesti 3-5, Bl.62, Sc.A, Ap.31, Sector 4, Bucuresti, Romania, E-mail: dandydr@hotmail.com, <http://k.kratos.tripod.com> (15.04)

MATER HADES (ROM) - "Immer" demo '99
I have never heard of this band until now although it was founded in 1997. The first demo is released in the same year, "In Frame", a collection including tracks conceived on computer. "Immer" is factually the first real demo released on market. This one features five tracks an intro and an outro strangely elaborated being almost an ambient with dark tendencies... something in Cold Meat Industry's bands style with one little remark: it seems like preserving the proportions. We can hear a male voice and also female one, lyrics in German and English languages but the entire concept this demo promotes plus other technical information are enclosed in this tape booklet. I am not sure what should I tell you more about this material; the ideas are interesting indeed yet the sound is rather faded not quite accurately defined. I understood they claim to be a gothic band. Absolutely out of question! You may try this ambient

musical experience at the following addresses: Str. Stefan Stoica No.29, Bl.19, Sc.A, ap.8, op 32, Bucuresti, Romania, E-mail: bogdan-bocsan@itcnet.ro, <http://bogdanra.cjb.net>, <http://materhades.cjb.net>. Management: Rares Ion, P.O.Box 13-9, 3400 Cluj-Napoca, Romania, E-mail: raresion@yahoo.com, <http://raresion.cjb.net>. (14.04)

NEMETON (FRA) - "Journey To Pain" demo '98 (OPN)

What about this band? The mixing was performed so badly than nothing these six are trying to do is comprehensible. It seems to be black metal featuring folk medieval tendencies with a violent voice, here and there almost normal, female voice, flutes, violin... A lot of great ideas but awfully arranged. The single track which can be distinguished from the other five is "North", a little slower yet owning the same unfortunate sound. Maybe benefiting of a qualified recording NEMETON might impose a different impact and, who knows, perhaps a signing too. Contact: Frederic Garcia, 16 cat, Les Oliviers, 13120 Gardanne, France. OPN, <http://perso.club-internet.fr/nevski/opn/>. (14.04)

ORAISON (FRA) - "Life + Death=Love + Burden" demo '99 (OPN)

If I had to refer myself to the inspiration bands of the former project ORAISON FUNEBRE... the titles would be COIL, LAIBACH, DECORYAH or CURRENT '93. This band released now its third demo, conceived in an original manner, a dark folk not so complex but melodic material. Sebastien's clear and baritone voice seems to be the only remarkable element besides, from time to time, a female voice which might most certainly develop some other inflexions. If being honest, I must say I enjoy this demo but I believe the four should make one more try in order to receive any offer from the specialized labels. The mixing is rather less successful and I must confess Alek's programming is not so clear. We can enjoy a version of „Wonderful Life”, track known as being disco-pop fans' favourite but performed in a manner only by BLACK himself understood. I do my best not to comment such since I know Sebastien's voice sounds absolutely different. Or, perhaps, the cover version was especially made for fun... Contact: ORAISON, L'Ere des Temps, BP 4 Carre Pro, 18101 Aix en Provence Cedex 1, France, <http://perso.pacwan.fr/irminul/>. (14.04)

REPUGNANT (SWE) - "Spawn Of Pure Malevolence" demo '99

Tobias Forge does the best to promote this new founded band in the most advantageous manner and thus I faced the fact of not finding available this demo except to some various distributors. What can be on this demo? Five classical death metal tracks subscripted at rapidity followed by grove voices and a fresh battery. There is nothing new to be featured on this demo yet everything is executed by these four most certainly records the best quality. The same goes for its recording. The cover is black-white, copied by Xerox, not quite special or outstanding but expressing exactly what these four are performing: a violent death metal! Contact: Tobias Forge, Skarprunnav.209, 145 64 Norsborg, Sweden, Phone: +046 08-53173121. (30.03)

REPUGNANT (SWE) - "Hecatomb" EP '99 Unfortunately there are not any differences to be mentioned between the demo and this EP, perhaps an intro announcing that REPUGNANT prepares us a new set of death metal tracks but this time embracing somehow CELTIC FROST style and also a cover version "The Usurper". Otherwise music dedicated to all who are brutality's fans, well mixed and interpreted at the highest class. (30.03)

SKOLL (ITA) - "Through The Mist We Come Back" demo '99 (HUGINN)

Melodic atmospheric black metal might be the definition for the style these five musicians interpret, the majority are also members in ENDLESS. For this material I observe everything is seriously performed, carefully. The demo (pretty long I'd say-seven tracks) is opened by an imposing intro, the rest of the tracks are dominated by keyboard and the two voices: Marco's-absolutely demonic and Simone's-more human and "digestible". SKOLL embraces a common known style, less special but pleasing at listening. Contact: Huginn or Simone Seretta, via Abbazia 4, I-28100 Novara, Italy. 14.04

THE MEADS OF ASPHODEL (UK) - "The Watchers Of Catal Huyuk" demo '99

Founded in 1998 by Metatron the band releases two demos, "The Bemoaning Of Metatron" and "Metatron and the Gleaming Red Serpent" very well appreciated. Last year appeared this new demo, a product meant to bring them the signing with Supernal Music. Concerning these four tracks I have nothing but word of recognition and appreciation, these guys offer us a medieval black metal sound with an Oriental dimension successfully mixed with gothic passages, clean and screamy voice, heavy guitars and an original keyboard. I guess it is a band you should notice as I assume it has much more to offer for the future. "Give Me Fire", their last track is a G.B.H. cover version. Contact: TMOA, 33 Lilac Road, Hoddesdon, Herts., EN11 Opg, England. (11.04)

V/A (GER) - Mailorder Compilation tape '99 (MIGHTY CASTLE)

The compilation presents a few bands, yet the majority from German underground, such as FORGOTTEN PATHWAYS, TAUNUSHEIM, MAGISTER, FUNEBRIS, SENTENTIA, PIT, DECAY, MIRKHALL or AUGUR. We can also enjoy a representative American underground band, MERDE. Patrick's idea seems pretty natural to me since these bands figure with materials even in Mighty Castle Productions's mailorder (ex-OBI Records). Nothing special, just a sum of black death or ambient bands, some featuring with better recordings, others having modest or bad ones. Yet \$2 finds a reasonable price in exchange of entering rapidly the underground this label usually promotes. Address: Patrick Kuntz, Moselstr. 12, 61440 Oberursel/Taunus, Germany, E-mail: mightycastle@gmx.de <http://come.to/mightycastle> (30.03)

VEILED ALLUSIONS (NOR) - "A Curious Dimension" tape '00 (BESTIAL/ART VISION)

Probably may of you already know whose project this is. Well, Karsten Hamre has decided to make concrete a few ideas which reminds far from

of PENITENT or ARCANÉ ART reaching this time a dark ambient neo-classical absolutely not melodious yet quite atmospheric manner. The entire music is conceived on synth, the piano parts are the most intelligible reminding me a little bit of "Melancholia". I don't find exceedingly special this project since it develops the same sober dark, instrumental line that you have got used with so far from Karsten during the years while the principal concept are the lyrics. And since I brought this subject on the table I must tell you there can be heard also some voices during two tracks of six, texts enclosed in the booklet tape. Meditative or not "A Curious Dimension" might be the connection for all who appreciate Penitent music or ARCANÉ ART. The booklet is also professionally performed; the cover and all photos are made by Karsten himself. Until you manage to procure this tape you can listen to this sound at: www.mp3.com/veiledallusions. (25.04)

VENUS FLY TRAP (UK) - "Metamorphosis" tape '99

It is about a tracks collection of last ten years Alex Novak's project, tracks featured on albums such as "Mars", "Totem", "Pandoras Box", Luna Tide and "Dark Amour". As they are no new tracks I see nothing else I could write you about. In order to enter VENUS FLY TRAP universe you may try at: P.O.Box 210, Northampton, NN2 6AU, UK, E-mail: venus-fly-trap@lineone.net, info@mpreal.com, <http://Website.lineone.net/~venus-fly-trap/>. (11.04)

VINDIRIS CHIMERAS (FRA) - demo '99

Orias is the person hidden behind this project, the same who also rules Requiem Records (www.requiemrecords.fr/st) or the atmospheric symphonic black metal project: DE PROFUNDIS (<http://www.deprofundis.fr/st>). By the way, I have listened four tracks from this band's debut which shall be soon released at Nocturnal Music entitled "Le Siècle des Cendres" and I can assure you it deserves all your attention and appreciation, it is absolutely fantastic! Returning to VINDIRIS CHIMERAS, Orias presents us seven dark ambient tracks, a sinister weird music conceived on synth with various effects, prolonged murmurs echoes, voices, recitals, bells, intonations... I would say an interesting idea ingeniously made concrete by and into music. Contact: Impasse Riquet, 13400 Aubagne, France. (22.04)



ARS METALLI

HELHEIM - "Blod & Ild" CD Black Metal from Norway
 STAR DUST - "tba" CD Gothic Metal from Austria
 SOLSTAFIR - "tba" CD excellent Viking Metal from Iceland
 LUNAR AURORA, NAGELFAR and FIFTH TO INFINITY (formerly known as VINTERKRIG from Sweden)

BEAUTY OF PAIN DISTRIBUTION, (Hammerheart Records, No Colours Records, Prophecy Productions, Adipocere Records, Millenium Records), other underground stuff (tapes, demos, CDs, fanzines), excellent prices, SUPPORT! Alexandru Brandusescu, Garoafel 17, 1800 Lugoj, Romania, E-mail: beautyofpain@mail.dnttm.ro.

BESTIAL RECORDS

NEGURA BUNGET - "tba" tape/CD (the greatest Romanian black metal)
 LUX OCCULTA - "My Guardian Angel" (pagan metal)... this release is for Romania only.
 re-releases:

WICCAN REDE - "From Transilvanian Forests" demo + 2 bonus tracks - limited to 345 copies - not available for trading! (WICCAN REDE is the first name of NEGURA BUNGET; they have recorded this demo in 1996, and then changed their band name in NEGURA BUNGET)
 GRIMEGOD - "Under the Sad and Silent Sky" first demo, now re-mastered.

BLACK LOTUS RECORDS, a Hellish label who released the following items:

HYPNOSIS - "Shadodoworld"
 OLETHRIO RIGMA - "Fight For The Innocent"
 EVENVAST - "Hear Me Out"
 SWAN CHRISTY - "Today Died Yesterday"
 MANTICORA - "Roots of Eternity"
 PHANTOM LORD - "In twilight World"
 Contact, Konstantinoupolis 72, 17236 Himittos, Athens, Greece, fax: +3019767590

BLACKEND RECORDS

REIGN OF EREBUS (UK) - "Of Blackest Magick" MCD Black Metal with male & female vocals (May)
 THEATRES DES VAMPIRES (ITA) - "Bloody Lunatic Asylum" CD Horror Black Metal (October)
 REIGN OF EREBUS (UK) - "tba" CD (November)

CCP RECORDS

DORN - "Falschheit" CD (soloproject of RIGER keyboard, black metal)
 ENID - "tba" CD (orchestral black metal)
 MAY RESULT - "tba" CD (melodic power, classical)
 SEPTIC CEMETERY - "tba" CD (death metal)

CENTURY MEDIA

CEMETERY 1213 - "The Beast Divine" CD (May)
 ANGEL DUST - "Illuminate The Darkness" CD (May)
 TANKARD - "Kings Of Beer" CD (May)
 THE GATHERING - "If then else" CD (June)
 STUCK MOJO - "Declaration Of A Headhunter" CD (June)
 PANZER - "Thane To The Throne" CD (June)
 THE GATHERING - "tba" CD (July)
 DARK TRANQUILLITY - "tba" CD (July)
 RYKER'S - "From The Cradle To The Grave" 2CD (July)
 STEAMHAMMER - "tba" CD (July)
 I also recommend you: FLOWING TEARS (GER) - "Jade" DigipackCD (Gothic Metal with female vocal), NOVEMBRE (ITA) - "Classica" CD (progressive death metal, in vein of OPETH), OLD MAN'S CHILD (NOR) - "Revelation 6666-The Curse Of Damnation" CD (Norwegian Black Metal, excellent!!!)

CODE 666 RECORDS

NEW EPHEL DUATH OFFICIAL WEB-SITE! www.ephel.cjb.net make a visit, and be prepared for the new, upcoming debut-Digi-CD titled "Phormula"! 8 MASTERKILLING SONGS OF NEW-SCHOOL BLACK METAL! Release-date: late may 2000. Check the mp3 at www.mp3.com/ephelduath (still at the first position in the top 200 black metal charts non-stop since September 99!!!!). Still available the debut-Digi-CD of RAKOTH - "Planeshift", which was a VERY BIG success in the underground-scene, with their amazing Extreme-Fantasy-Metal! New, Official Web-Site available from

June 2000: www.rakoth.cjb.net

COLD MEAT INDUSTRY

BRIGHTER DEATH NOW - "May all be Dead" CD. Second coming of the amazing double-LP set, including 1 remixed track from the 7".

SANCTUM - "New York City Bluster" CD Live recording from USA.

IRON JUSTICE - "Manufacture of Consent" LP (limited to 500 copies), June. The debut LP from these guys- lofi power-electronics! Pre-order now!!!!

RAISON D'ETRE - "The Empty Hollow Unfolds" CD. Dark factory noises combined with trademark chanting monks.

ARCANA - "...the Last Embrace CD" (14th May). Dark orchestral manifesto.

MZ.412 - "Legion Ultra" 7", June. Limited edition of 2x412 copies, black or white vinyl.

GOETHICA - "Night thoughts" CD (Cruel Moon), June. A surprise from Italy, decadent, dark etherial ambient.

ORDO EQUILIBRIO (ROSARIUS) - "Make love and war" CD, Delayed! Release delay was to expect.... new announcement shortly.

INSTITUT - "A great day to get even" CD, June. Hard rhythmic industrial!

DAMNATION RECORDS

SEVERE TORTURE (Dutch brutal death metal band with 2 members who are also active in CENTURIAN) - "Pray for Nothing" 7" EP, limited to 500 handnumbered copies.

DARK SYMPHONIES

AUTUMN TEARS (US) - "Love Poems For Dying Children - Act 3 - Winter And The Broken Angel". After three years in the making... the third epic chapter in the "Love Poems for Dying Children Saga" shall finally be unleashed. The new masterpiece from AUTUMN TEARS... "Winter and The Broken Angel", a monumental epic of love, death, and betrayal will finally see the light of day. Milestones above their previous work, the new album promises the richest melodies and painfully tragic themes interpreted through the neoclassical ensemble of dark music, angelic, etherial voices, duets, chorus, and triumphant atmospheres reflecting desperation and emptiness. First 5000 copies come in limited, full colour, beautifully illustrated slipcase box. Prepare for the long awaited return of AUTUMN TEARS. To be unveiled on May 25, 2000. In silence we wait....

LONG WINTERS STARE (US) - "The Tears of Odin's Fallen". Dark Symphonies is proud to announce that we have just signed Dragon Flight recording artists LONG WINTERS STARE. After the success and recognition of their last album, "Before the Dawn, So Go the Shades of Humanity", with the combination of Classical music, progressive influences, and Doom/Death Metal, LONG WINTERS STARE have weaved their sound into their own Symphonic Dark Metal style. Live string passages, lush keyboard arrangements, contrabass and classically based piano backdrops create a surreal atmosphere, while thick, plunging guitar work emphasize the power of the LONG WINTERS STARE sound. Interacting Brutal Death growls, spoken verse and Operatic lyrics help create their diverse atmosphere. Their forthcoming album for Dark Symphonies to be released in May/June 2000, promises to be nothing short of compelling. They have just gained a new female vocalist, Deirdre Faith who solemn, haunting voice adds another dimension to their already compelling music. The band promises that their new material will be their finest ever, telling the epic story of the Valkyries. This 63 minutes opus includes a 20 minutes Funeral Doom dirge track. Prepare for one of the finest and most unique metal offerings this year. The picture is now complete and LONG WINTER STARE will keep the struggle alive for all the great forgotten heroes of the Odianic World. Guest Vocals by Lord IMPERIAL from KRIEG!!! Available 6/1/00

EARACHE RECORDS

Earache are proud to announce the reissue of a long-deleted and much sought-after album from a remarkable Swedish band, the members of which now reads as an All Star Death Metal line-up-Michael Amott (CARCASS, SPIRITUAL BEGGARS, ARCH ENEMY), Fred Estby and Matti Karki (DISMEMBER) and Johnny Dordevic (ENTOMBED) under

the banner of CARNAGE. This seminal one-off album "Dark Recollections" was originally released on the Earache imprint label Necrosis Records in 1990, and this 10 years anniversary reissue celebrates one of the founding bands of the Swedish death metal scene. Completely remastered for extra heaviness, and repackaged with personal liner notes and archive photos from Michael Amott, "Dark Recollections" also treats us to five bonus tracks taken from the band's two demos previous to the album, never released before on CD.

FLUTTERING DRAGON RECORDS is a Polish dark ambient industrial label who released a lot of albums of bands such> ONTARIO BLUE, PUISANCE, WIERZBA, UMBRA, TRIPWIRE, ILDFROST, SIMPLY DEAD. A challenge for COLD MEAT INDUSTRY! Contact: www.serpent.com.pl

GUTTER RECORDS

AZOTIC REIGN - tba / tba
 FINAL BREATH - Flash Burnt Curcifixes / July
 ENDART - Planet Rock / July
 BLOOD RED ANGEL - The Language Of Hate / July
 MINDFIELD - Deviant / July
 WIZZARD - Tormentor (Wimph Reaper) MCD / July

HALL OF SERMON

LOVE LIKE BLOOD - "Enslaved + Condemned" CD, German Gothic Rock, the best band from this country, (June)

THE BREATH OF LIFE - "Silver Drops" CD, after "Taste Of Sorrow" and "Lost Children, a new Wave album with an excellent Isabelle Dekeyser voice, (June)

DREAMS OF SANITY - "The Game" CD (Autumn)

HEAD NOT FOUND

TROLL - "The Last Predators" CD (May)
 PARADIGMA - "The Beckoning Of Lost Light" CD

WINDIR - "tba" CD (Autumn)

ENSLAVEMENT OF BEAUTY - "tba" CD

GRIEVANCE - "tba" CD

JESTER RECORDS

ULVER - "Perdition City/Music to an Interior" CD (May)

ARCTURUS - "tba" CD (Autumn)

ESPERANZA - "tba" CD (Autumn)

LAST EPISODE / SERENADES RECORDS /

DAWN OF DREAMS are new on Last Episode. They play melodic Swedish-style Death Metal á la IN FLAMES & Co. Some of you might already know them from the first Rock Hard „Unerhört“-Sampler or their MCD from 1997. The debut album „Darklight Awakening“ will be released in June and we are sure that the melodic-aggressive songs and the varied voice will finally help to give them the well-deserved attention!

There's another newcomer on Last Episode: it is JACK FROST from Austria who play a gloomy mixture of Gothic and Doom Metal which makes you depressive enough to believe that the world must come down any moment. Peter Steele sends his regards! Those of you who have heard their cover version of „Lady in black“ from their last album „Glow dying sun“ knows what I'm talking of. By the beginning of June the band will enter the studio to record a new album which is supposed to be released in autumn.

„Ne Christ“, the new album of NOKTURNAL MORTUM, will be released on June 19th. Last Episode was taken with the hard but melodic song material á la Emperor and therefore licensed the album spontaneously. According to the band's label The End Records „Ne Christ“ is a mixture of their two previous albums.

EKTOMORF from Hungary fire a proper salvo of Thrash Core with socio-critical lyrics on their new album „Kalyi Jag“. Apart from heavy riffs they also use Roma folk elements and acoustical „breaks“ to make the heavy stuff easier for the listener. „Kalyi Jag“ will be released via Last Episode in Germany on May 29th, they are seen as the Hungarian counterpart of SEPULTURA.

The Swedish Gothic Metal band GRAVE FLOWERS is new on Serenades Records, their debut album „Solace me“ will be released on May 29th. Some of

the songs are dreamy and remind one of LAKE OF TEARS, others are more into Rock. The pleasant voice of vocalist Matte Andersson lends the album another positive aspect concerning cosy hours for two.

Last but not least Last Episode has signed another newcomer called *THE BLOODLINE* which is the side-project of DAS ICH- and THE DREAMSIDE bass player Roman Schoensee (Ex-PYOGENESIS). Their musical style can be compared with old PARADISE LOST and MY DYING BRIDE. „Paralyzed“ is the name of the album and will probably be released in July.

NAPALM RECORDS

THE SINS OF THY BELOVED Homevideo
MORGENSTERN - "Feuertaufe" German Middle Age Band! (May)

MACTATUS - "The Complex Bewitchment" (May)
DISMAL EUPHONY - Homevideo (May)

DOMINION - "The Hand And The Sword" Electronic Dark Wave (June)

KREUZWEG OST - "Iron Avantgarde" Industrial Project with Silenius (ABIGOR, SUMMONING) and Martin Schirenc (HOLLENTON, PUNGENT STENCH). (June)

NOCTURNAL ART PRODUCTIONS

Out 29th of May:

TIDFALL - "Circular Supremacy" CD Norwegian Black Metal / www.deemon.com/tidfall

RED HARVEST - "Cold Dark Matter" CD Apocalyptic Cyber Metal / www.redharvest.com

NOCTURNAL MUSIC

UNDERTAKERS (ITA) - "Vision Distortion Per- version" (Italian Brutal Death reality, CD contains also a multimedia track with the video Dead Man Walking made by T. Sibon, well known for his work on CANNIBAL CORPSE, IN EXTREMO)
LET ME DREAM (FIN) - "Greyscales" CD (Gothic Dark Metal ... the great come back after the debut on '95 for Adipocere)

MUSTAN KUUN LAPSET (FIN) - "Prologi" CD (Raw & Melodic Black Metal)

GUIDANCE OF SIN (SWE) - "Acts" 7ep (Swedish Death n'roll, ex A Canorous Quintet)

NATRON (ITA) - "Unpure" MCD (Brutal Death) ... AND OCEANS (FIN) - "The Dinamic Gallery" + "The symmetry of I..." gatefold LP (Black Metal)

SPLIT KUUN LAPSET / AZAGHAL (FIN) - SPLIT CD (Black Metal)

PAGAN RECORDS

WITCHMASTER - "Violence & Blasphemy" CD/LP - Satanik Speed/Black/Thrash attack!!! JUNE

TRAUMA - "Suffocated In Slumber" CD - new album, high quality Death Metal.

TRAUMA - "Comedy Is Over" CD - re-release of band's debut, very first time on CD!

VARATHRON - "His Majesty At the Swamp" CD/LP - re-release with bonus tracks

PAVEMENT MUSIC

ASTROQUEEN will be hitting the studio with King Diamond guitarist Andy LaRoque on May 29th to begin recording their Pavement Music debut. Of course this recording will be heavier than Messiah Marcolin's stomach after devastating the local Burger King. For those of you not in the know, ASTROQUEEN are from Gothenburg Sweden but are far from the generic "Gothenburg Sound". Just imagine Jackie Brown getting it on with Fu Manchu and Russ Meyers... ASTROQUEEN will also play the Westgöta Festival in Trollhättan Sweden on May 27th. Other bands on the bill include DISMEMBER, THE CROWN and HARDCORE SUPERSTARS. The planets will align on May 5th. Coincidence? I think not. The Astros are coming!!

POWER SYMPHONY are now looking for a tour so if you have any leads please advise. They will play the Headbangers Ball festival in Hamburg Germany on Saturday, July 15th alongside METALIUM, GODDESS OF DESIRE, PARAGON, POVERTY'S NO CRIME... Reactions to POWER SYMPHONY's "Lightbringer" CD has been nothing short of great. Believe the hype on this one folks. Michela D'Orlando is a METAL GODDESS in the making. No false "Cute Pop Singer" here.

ALTAR are confirmed for the Silesia Festival in the Czech Republic playing alongside the likes of DARK FUNERAL, KRABATHOR, and VITAL REMAINS. They will either play on Friday, July 14th or Saturday, July 15th. Stay tuned for more details.

We are also looking to have ALTAR on the road. Any leads are appreciated.

The next releases from Pavement Music will come from CJSS and BESEECH. Both records are now completed and covers from both have been provided by Travis Smith known for his work on OVERKILL, NEVERMORE, OPETH, DEATH... Expect heavy metal in its purest form from CJSS. Their new release is titled Kings Of The World and was produced by guitar great David T. Chastain. The BESEECH release is titled "Black Emotions" and is a far cry from their debut released on Metal Blade last year. BESEECH has come a long way in their craft of Goth influenced metal.

PLASMATIC RECORDS

MOONSORROW - "tba" CD

MIDIAN - "tba" CD

PROJEKT RECORDS

PROJEKT 100 The Early Years 1985 - 1995. "In planning this CD, I tried to recreate an era. A time when Projekt was young and our artists were widely unknown. Rather than put together a predictable "best of" to commemorate Projekt's 100th release, I have chosen to create The Great Lost Projekt Compilation. A reflection upon an era gone by, for those fans who have been with Projekt since "the early days"... or an introduction to bands perhaps missed, if a newcomer. Included are never before heard tracks from Projekt's first two acts: LYCIA and BLACK TAPE FOR A BLUE GIRL; as well as unreleased mixes from ATTRITION, EDEN, LOVESLIES CRUSHING, and SOULWHIRLING SOMEWHERE; early mixes from THANATOS and TERRACE OF MEMORIES; an unreleased track from O YUKI CONJUGATE; and a rare mix from the popular new kids: LOVE SPIRALS DOWNWARDS." Sam Rosenthal-Projekt Records Manager

PROPHECY PRODUCTIONS

PARAGON OF BEAUTY - "Seraphine-Far Gone Glean" CD-melancholic tragedies

NAERVAER - "Skiftninger" CD (pure mood and emotions)

ORPLID - "Orplid" CD (German acoustic folk music)

SCARLET RECORDS

THY MAJESTIE

This is a new big sensation from Italy!!! Superb epic-symphonic power-speed metal in the vein of RHAPSODY & BLIND GUARDIAN!!! THY MAJESTIE just finished the recording sessions of their debut album "The Lasting Power". A fantastic concept full of majestic atmospheres, real opera-choirs (performed by "THE TEATRO MASSIMO CHOIR" from Palermo/Sicily), impressive orchestral arrangements and enchanting melodies. After RHAPSODY, LABYRINTH and VISION DIVINE there's another Italian metal act ready to explode and its name is THY MAJESTIE! Release Date: 28th August 2000

SORG

The Norwegian gothic-doom sensation SORG just finished the recording-sessions of their second album (the first on SCARLET) "Enigma Grotesque". Majestic doom, with gothic influences supported by an incredible female vocals and gloomy-fevered male voices. SORG is without doubt an original band that combines ethereal and evocative atmospheres with pounding rhythms and a very obscure feeling. High-tech musicianship enriched with violins and other strange instruments!!! Their style can be described as avantgarde gothic-gloomy metal. Can you imagine a mix between THE 3RD AND THE MORTAL, early-PARADISE LOST ("Lost Paradise"-era!!!), CANDLEMASS and MORBID ANGEL?!! Just give a listen to SORG new album "Enigma Grotesque"! Release Date: 28th August 2000

ABORYM

After the successful debut "Kali Yuga Bizarre", the most extreme metal band from Italy is currently in the Temple Of Noise Studios (Rome) to record the new album. Attila Csihar the well-known legendary vocalist of MAYHEM's cult album "De Mysteriis Dom Sathanas", is now the one and only official singer of the band. No album and song titles are available at the moment, what we can say is that ABORYM are preparing for the true black disciples something special, something never-heard before. BEWARE!!! Release Date: 25th September 2000

SEASON OF MIST

CULTUS SANGUINE vs. SETH-War CD (June)

SYRINX (Melodic Progressive Metal)-CD (Autumn)
DESTROYER 666 (Black Metal)-CD (Autumn)
ANATA (Death Metal)-CD (Autumn)
GRIFFIN-CD (Autumn)

SO? is a Norwegian Power metal with the members of IN THE WOODS ..., NAERVAER and TORST. They released a demo CD, 8 tracks, 46 minutes, excellent sound! Contact: PO BOX 7029, Vestheiene, 4674, Christian sand, Norway.

SOUND RIOT

HOLOCAUST (SWE) - "Hellfire Holocaust" MCD - Hellish Death Metal (Out in May)

INCINERATOR (SWE) - "Thrash Attack" MCD - Speed/Thrash Metal (Out in May)

SVARTSYN (Sweden) - "His Majesty" CD - Grim Black Metal. 2nd full-length (Out in June)

KIVIKYY (FIN) - "Kosto" Digipack-CD - Medieval Music w/ Jukka of AS DIVINE GRACE (Out in July)

PRONTER (GER) - "Herzschlag" CD - Neue Deutsche Härte ala Rammstein (Out in June)

WISH (Holland) - "www.wish-2013.nl" MCD - NIN meets Marilyn Manson w/ Bart ex-THE GATHERING (Out in August)

Roland (DARKWELL)

"Concerning DARKWELL debut I think we'll release 1st of September. The album was recorded in the German based Lungfull Studios, it will be about 44 minutes long. It contains 9 songs; 3 songs belong to a trilogy to follow a little concept. The other six songs are stand alone but all circles around dark but thinkfull topics. ANGRY ANGELS will release the debut album "Axeodus" on the 1st of July. The release party will take place on 23rd of June in Wörgel/Tyrol with special guests GODDESS OF DESIRE."

Alexander Twiss (MYRIADS)

"Regarding our Norwegian tour with ATROX, we played in Oslo Wednesday the 26th of April, in Stavanger Thursday the 27th of April and in Bergen Friday the 28th of April. The tour was a great success, and the best gig was probably our concerts in Stavanger. The club we played in was nearly full with people, and we (MYRIADS) received a great response and had to play an extra song. We are maybe going to play at Norway's biggest music-festival, Quartfestivalen, this year and are hoping to play at other big festivals in Europe."

Ronny Thorsen (TRAIL OF TEARS): "I got home today (May) after spending 10 days in Studio RS 29 in Holland with the mixing of the new album, and the sound is so intense I can't believe it. We are 666 % satisfied with the end result. The album will be postponed until after the summer because of some final details that remain."

KOROVA have dissolved last month. A good-bye message from Christof, the leader of the band: "You can have a special Vinyl-Version of our Debut Album "A Kiss in the Charnel Fields" with personal Dedication for a Postage & Package-Coverage of DM 10. Just send me a Letter (Peter-Siegmairstr.29 - 6176 Völs - AUSTRIA)".

...AND OCEANS have signed a deal with CEN-TURY MEDIA. They will enter in Astia Studio in Lappeenranta/Finland in September to record third full-length album.

JÄÄPORTIT is a very interesting band from Finland who received great responses from media after "Kauan Koskematon" tape/CD released in '99. If you want to hear synth, computer, sampling, voice, or ethereal and transporting synthesizer darkwave, visit <http://jaaportit.cjb.net> or the site of Noitavasara Distribution (Väinämöisentie 35 96300 Rovaniemi, Finland): <http://noitavasara.cjb.net>; you also find there a lot of other interesting news and up-coming releases.

TE DEUM is a very interesting doom death metal band with classical influences, male and female vocals, very atmospheric. They have a demo released in '99. Contact: Rua Combatentes do Ultramar, 79, Aruil, 2715-247, Almagrem do Bispo, Portugal, www.angelfire.com/myband/teudem.

Check these interesting sites!!

<http://listen.to/crest>

<http://empiria.cjb.net>

http://come.to/ac_zine/

<http://anaon.free.fr>

<http://redrival.com/hardnheavy/feature.htm>

www.dozendoses.com

<http://www.multimania.com/darkwave>

<http://www.wingsofdeath.nu/soundriot>

<http://www.antichrisis.de>

<http://www.mascot-provogue.com>

<http://www.oberon-online.com>



