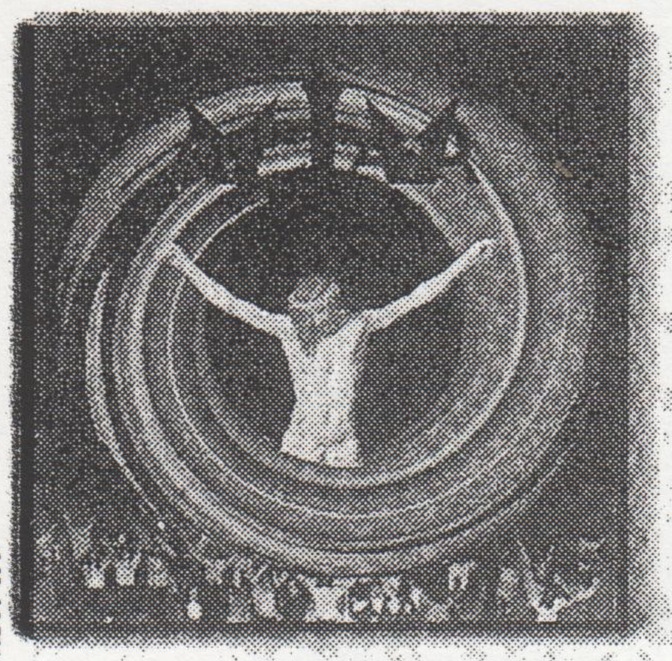
Avalanche

m a g a z i n e

NAPALM DEATH
GOREFEST G.W.A.R
ANATHEMA OBITUARY

MEGABRUTALITY



ALTAR

MIND-BLOWING BRUTAL POWER OF HOLLAND'S LEADING ATHEISTIC BAND



EXPANDING THE HORIZON OF THE DARK, GUIDED BY ULTRAFAST METAL



WAYWARD BRUTAL DEATH WHICH WILL SET NEW STANDARDS IN METAL



ANTICHRIST SUPERSTAR

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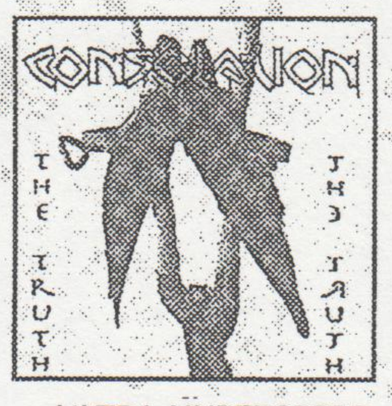
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DISPLEASED RECORDS

1 IRC FOR HUGE MAILORDER CATALOGUE



Hello Maniacs,

Welcome to another edition of Avalanche magazine.You will notice some (again!) differences with the previous zine. For example:
The new professional lay-out done by our new colleague, Ruud Essenburg.
Concert-reviews
much more interviews.

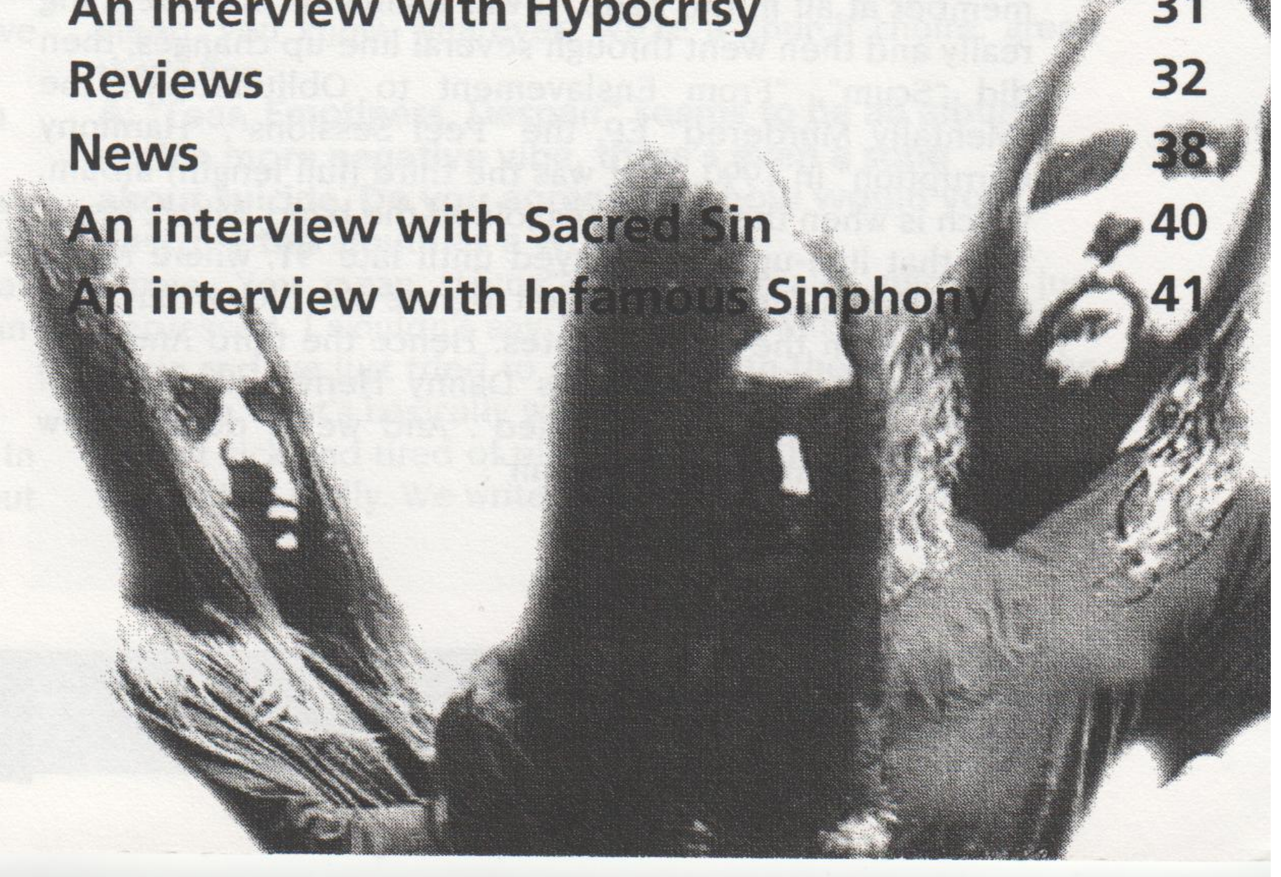
Well,I personally think that we are in the right direction.Our plan,to make a magazine which contains just material only for the true metal fans,becomes reality. You could be surprised that we printed an interview with Yngwie Malmsteen.The reason we printed this interview was because we think and hear (and know for sure),that many bands are influenced by this guitar-miracle. Further,read the very interesting interviews we did with;
Obituary, GWAR, Anathema, Gorefest and Napalm Death.

We did recieve some letters from readers with the question why there's no readers chart.OK, we thought about it.Of course we want to do a chart but only when we recieve enough personal charts.So send these charts to us!!
When you have more ideas or suggestions write us. Well that's about it, enjoy the zine and hope to hear from you. There has been a change in adress.The adress of Avalanche Entertainment stays the same.
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Major records • Jivaros records • Holy records • Trechoma productions • Wrong Again records• Avantgarde records • Rage records • Spinefarm records • Summit records • Gun records • T.N.T records • Foundation 2000 • Institute of Art records • Concrete records • Nosferatu records • Avantgarde music • Osmose productions •

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Napalm Death

I still remember the day I first heard Napalm Death. I was over at a friend's who kept his CDs stacked with the rear end to the front. Anyway, those were still the early days of CD so he (and I) still bought vinyl by the wagonload.
"Now this is something you've got to hear," he said as he put on an LP he had taken from a rather ugly-looking greenish cover. That day, April 30th 1988, I heard the fastest drumming I had ever heard, the most hellish voice ever, and generally the most extreme load of noise it had ever been my disfortune to sense. Little did I suspect then that six years later to the week I would be sitting in the same room as these guys (or at least the respective replacements of the original band members) and meet the band that is probably still one of the most extreme original bands to date.

It is Sunday, May 8th 1994. Me and photographer Erwin (the same guy that was with me when we interviewed Paradise Lost in the previous issue of Avalanche) get backstage and find that, even though we're on the guest list, the bands know of no interview dates. A minor fuck-up on behalf of Earache, but it's the kind of thing you get used to. Added to that the fact that the whole shebang arrived at Tivoli, Utrecht, two hours too late, I think we were lucky to actually be able to have the interviews in the first place. After quite a bit of a delay, at 19:30, we are lead into a more or less secluded room with Mitch Harris (guitar) and Shane Embury (bass). Shane is a hair-standing-out sturdy dude with a fairly heavy Yorkshire accent. Mitch was more quiet, and someone who somehow seemed to use the the word "fuckin'" with same innocense and frequency as "very". The room, unfortunately, was the location of the very (er...fuckin') loud Tivoli doorbell.

Avalanche: Right on. Let's kick off with the most cliché of questions: A band biography in the tiniest conceivble nushell.
Shane: You probably know everything there is to know about Napalm. There isn't much to tell you, really, apart from that the band was formed 1981 and that it didn't develop a musical style until '86 and with the release of the first album ("Scum", ED.) there ceased to be an original member at all in the band, it was mainly an attitude thing really and then went through several line-up changes, then did "Scum", "From Enslavement to Obliteration", the "Mentally Murdered" EP, the "Peel Sessions", "Harmony Corruption" in 1990. That was the third (full length) album, which is when the Americans joined the band, Mitch, Jesse, and that line-up kinda stayed until late '91, where Micky (Mick Harris, drums, ED.) left before we did a tour with Sepultura in the United States. Hence the third American came in the band which is Danny Herrera, a friend of Jesse's, with "Utopia Banished". And we've done a new one, "Fear, Emptiness, Despair".

A: What are your places and dates of birth?
Mitch: (A heavy American accent if ever I heard one) I was born in New York, Oct 31st 1970.
Shane: I was born in a place called Broseley, in Shropshire, 40 miles from Birmingham on the 27th of the 11th 1967.
A: What were the first albums you ever bought?
Mitch: I answered this question yesterday actually. The first album I bought...well I bought three albums in one day actually. It was Pink Floyd "The Wall", a Blondie 7" and Bruce Springsteen "Hungry Heart", and I was fuckin' chuffed. I was, like, 8 years old, 1978, or something like that.
Shane: My mum used to buy me records when I was about 5 or 6. I was into a band called Slade, and Gary Glitter, the Sweet, the Osmonds as well actually, the Osmonds were pretty cool.
Mitch: Yeah, I was chuffed for the Osmonds too. I was younger, you know.
Shane: The first album that I would actually have bought that sortof changed my musical taste was "Never Say Die" by Black Sabbath and "Killing Machine" by Judas Priest, "Jailbreak" by Thin Lizzy.

by Richard Karsmakers



A: What did you do before you entered the music biz?
Shane: Just the usual working thing. I worked in a factory. I left school when I was 16. I did like an eve training scheme for a year to try and teach you a trade, which I wasn't interested in at all. I did this shift working thing in this really crappy factory, like machine metal work, really average stuff. At the same time I'd learned to play drums actually. I started off as a drummer and only later started with the bass. That was kinda what I was doing.
Mitch: Me, I started when I was in highschool still, I started my first band. I used to go to school but in the summers I used to hang wallpaper and also play with the band. I had a band called Righteous Pigs in Las Vegas, and otherwise I would just work, hanging wallpaper, and doing construction work and shit like that before I joined Napalm.
A: In what kind of neighbourhood did you live?
Shane: Where I was born it was a really, really, really small village, you know, very quiet, the sort of place where you could keep your door open, you didn't need to lock your door. Everyone knows everybody. It's kinda sad in a way, 'cause everyone is sortof very much expected to do the same, you know, sortof tradition. Everybody's expected to be married by 21, they end up working in these similar sort of places. Very narrow-minded, and I found it very racist. In the village I was brought up in actually there wasn't one black person. That was kinda sad actually. I moved to Birmingham about five years ago and since I got out of it I feel much happier, to be honest. My parents are pretty cool and there are a few cool people around, but for the most part it's a very narrow-minded place, very, very small. A countryside type thing, you know.
Mitch: I lived in New York until I was 10. I lived in Queens which at the time wasn't a very bad neighbourhood, but by the time we left it was pretty violent, pretty dangerous, a lot of robberies and street crime and stuff like that. It was generally a nice place to grow up though. And then when I was 10 my parents moved to Las Vegas. I went with them, obviously, and then that was totally a shock to the system because it was, like, you live in the desert in the middle of nowhere. There is nothing around. You have your city and then there's nothing around for something like 200 miles. You have to have a car to get anywhere and it's very hot. But now the town has grown a lot and it's easier to get around. When I grew up there there was not much at all for anyone to do if you're under 21.
A: How did Napalm Death get the first album released?
Shane: Basically just because, at the time, Earache was a very, very small label anyway, and the guy was friends with us. It was like a logical thing. "I've got a record label out and this is my friend's band, I'm into it, I'll release it". No sortof like great demoing. It was just a case of the first year of his record label and, like, the third release. And we knew the guy very well. It was just a logical step.
A: Did you consciously decide it should be extreme so that it had its own niche in the market?
Shane: It was just kinda the way it turned out. It's what we were doing at the time. The stuff that we listened to resulted in that at the time. Just hard-core sortof death metal, thrash stuff, you know. There was no sort of 'great plan' involved.
A: Were you angry at the world?
Shane: No, not angry at the world. I just have frustrations in mind, things that piss me off. And obviously Iwrite about them. It's not because I'm angry at the world, it's because I'm angry at certain things.

A: Doesn't that become more difficult as you go on? It seems obvious that the more music you make the better off you are.
Shane: In some ways it's more frustrating at some points. I mean there's a sheer endlessness of topics for me to write about when I'm in a depressive mood. I'm not a depressive person, I'm quite happy a lot of the time. But the lyrics that I write, or that Barney writes, tend to be those moments when you're at a low point. That's always going to be that way because there's always going to be times when I'm feeling low. It gets more frustrating the more you carry on actually. You're trying to put your music across to people and you get positive reactions and negative reactions. And the negative feedback you get frustrates you.
A: After "Harmony Corruption", did you feel like outside factors pushed you back into making more hard-core music?
Mitch: As much as it was a negative reaction it was, like, the most successful Napalm album so far. The new album I think will be more successful, but, you know, as much shit as we took, it surely fuckin' frustrated us, you know, to have all this criticism.
Shane: I don't know, the whole thing about "Harmony Corruption" was just the way it sounds. 'Cause sound-structure-wise it's not different in shape or form from "Mentally Murdered". I just think it didn't sound like Napalm Death. To emphasize that point, with "Utopia Banished" everybody thought we had returned to the old style, but in fact that album is far more technical than "Harmony Corruption" but it *sounds* like the earlier stuff. Not to insult the fans or the people in general, they know what they want, but they hear the sound more than the music that's going on, you know, the beats, I think. People recognize sounds and rhythms more than actual structures of songs. And so with "Utopia" people said "Oh yeah, they're going back to their old style" which really wasn't the case at all. It was more technical but also a bit faster which they recognized maybe as typically Napalm Death. Some people think this new album is more technical than "Utopia" but I think it's a lot more basic.
Mitch: (To Shane) Last night I met someone who said it was a lot more basic.
Shane: The drums are more dynamic, but riff-wise it's much more basic I think.
A: How do you feel about the time, around when Napalm Death had achieved popularity, when even faster bands proudly proclaimed Napalm Death was like a church cho re compared to them?
Share: (Smiles) We're a church choire. It doesn't really bother us. I get flattered when people say that they're influenced by Napalm Death and I get pissed off as well but things like that, well, they're not going to make me lose any sleep, you know, whatever. We're a church choire, great, that's fine.
A: "Fear, Emptiness, Despair" seems to be an album with a more negative vibe, there's even a song about suicide. Do you agree? And how would you describe the album as a whole?
Shane: You mean "Hung"? It's not really suicidal, just depressed. I wouldn't say it's suicidal. Musically it's more basic and we just tried to progress with the beats and the rhythms. That's basically what we're trying to do, you know, we got sick and tired of playing fast all the time. It's become boring, really. We write albums as a reaction to thing.,

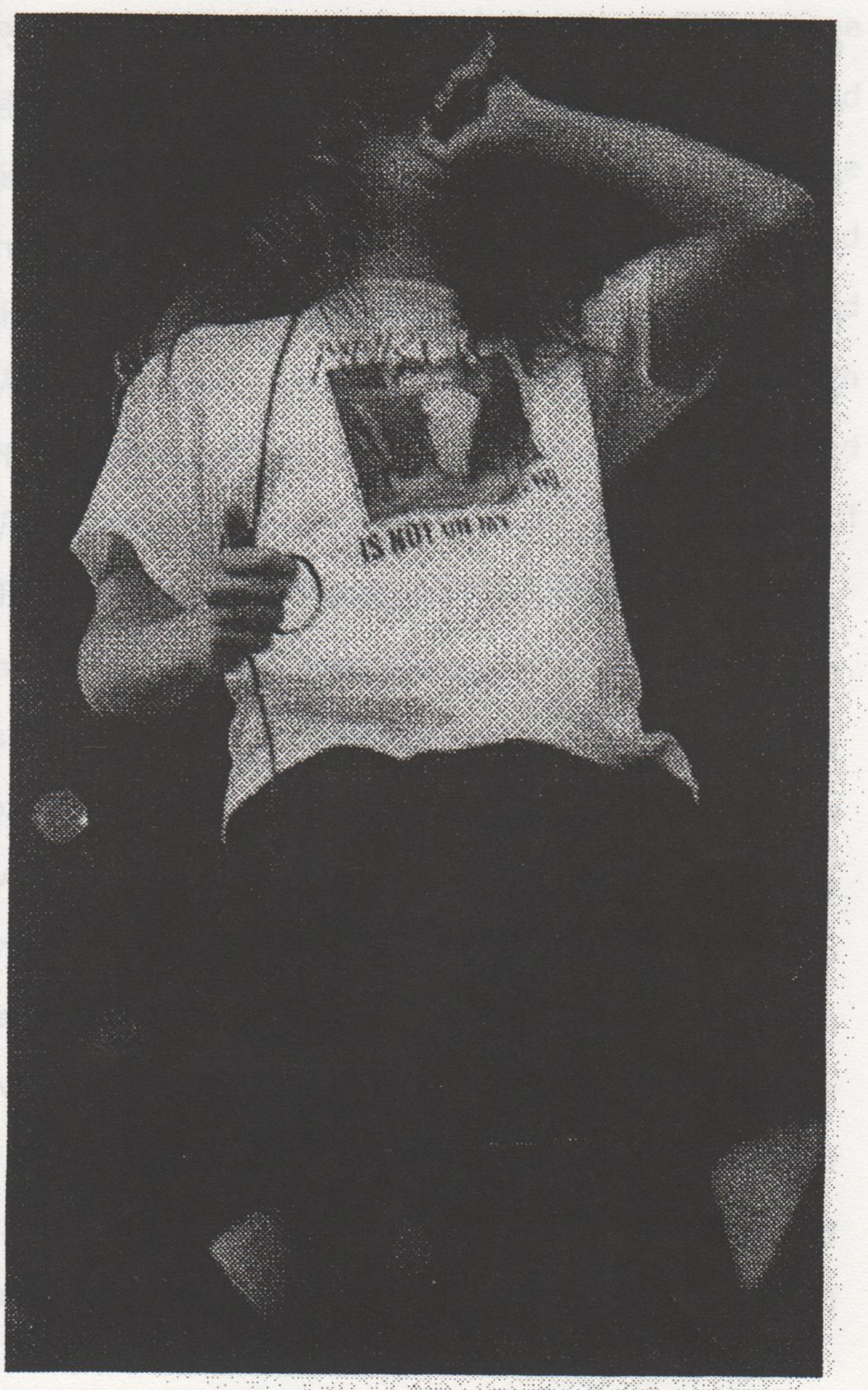


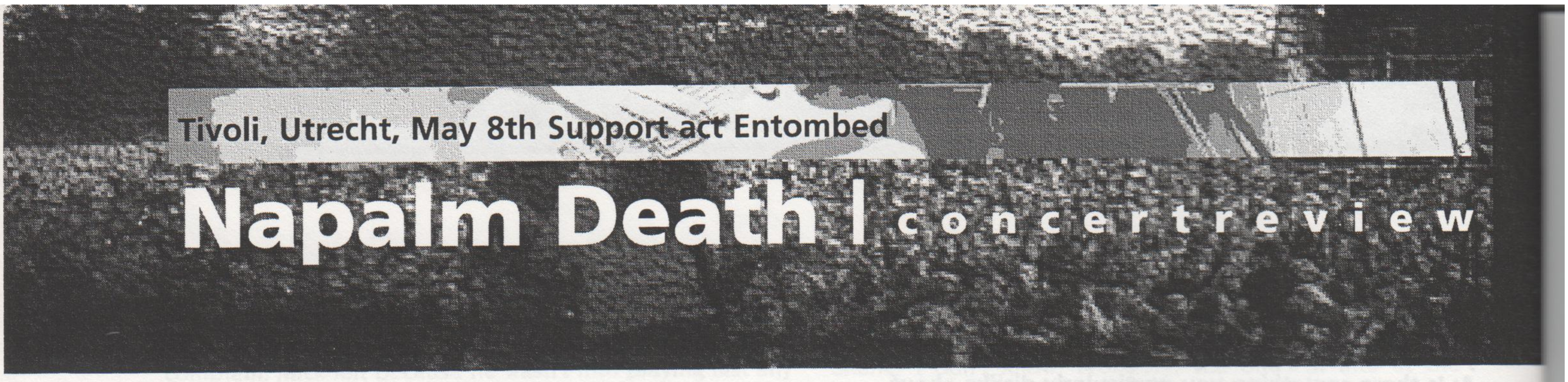
A: How did Danny's arrival change the band?
Mitch: When Danny came in the band we got back some of the faster stuff. We told him to play fast and he didn't complain. Mick left because he wasn't into playing fast any more. We still had "Utopia Banished" in our system. That's what we wanted to play at the time. We got 22 songs written, totally extreme, fast intensity. That's what we wanted to do and Mick left.
Shane: I don't know if it was the right album to do or the wrong album to do, but it just happened that we had 22 songs, you know, and we're not one of these rock bands that scraps an album. These were the songs we got and we were into, so do it. Mick left and Danny came in. That was, like, two years ago and it's out of our system now. With "Fear Emptiness Despair" we had this new, well, concept, where we first pick up beats and then do the riffs. It gets sortof more accessible beats, really. We still keep the riffs really heavy, you know, intense.
A: In the "FED" liner notes I read something about it having been remixed. Was someone not content with the original mix?
Mitch: Yeah. The first mix was a little disappointing, you know, we spent a lot of time on it and we got home and it didn't sound right.
Shane: It was kinda strange, we were almost fighting an uphill battle from day one of mixing. We were racing against time, straight away. You have to be critical but I think maybe we were too critical, you know, analysing things and re-analysing, and, you know, you think you got to a point where you'd mixed a track and get back after while and say, "Nah, let's do it all over again". So we took Colin (Robertson, ED.) in. He was, like, an old friend of ours, a producer who's done quite a lot of stuff with us, and kinda let him get on with it, which was better I think. We're probably too close to the sound to be judgmental about it.
A: Some people say Napalm Death should have changed their name because there's only one original band member, Shane, left. Have you ever considered changing your name?
Shane: I wasn't on "Scum" actually (even though his picture is on the CD liner, ED.). It was kinda hard because Micky wasn't the original drummer. Before they recorded the B side of "Scum" - because the A side was actually kindof a demo at first. There just ceased to be an original member before "Scum" even was released.
Mitch: When the B side of "Scum" was recorded the original members of Napalm left and Mick went on with Lee (Dorrian, vocals, ED.) and Bill (Steer, guitar, ED.). And Shane wasn't on there, it was Jim. But Shane did the tour for "Scum".
Shane: They asked me to play guitar for Napalm Death on the B side of the "Scum" album and I turned it down and Bill jumped in. When it came out, that's when I joined and I decided I wanted to play bass.
A: But what about those people claiming you should have changed your name?
Shane: I can't see why actually. Why is it that in millions of other bands line-up members come and go, there's bands that have changed totally. Pantera is a classic example, right, they were a glam metal band for something like six albums and all of a sudden they go "Yeah, we're heavy now". If I was into Napalm Death, which I am, I was into Napalm Death even before I joined the band, members could come and go. If it's very frequently then something's wrong, but if a band retains its core and style, and it's still extreme and still heavy, why change the name? We could change the name, but we'd still sound like Napalm Death.
A: What's your most favourite Napalm Death track?
Shane: I don't know. Probably, the one I'm into at the moment, is "More than Meets the Eyes". A little different for Napalm. I like "Contemptuous" as well.
Mitch: I like "Hung". That's still my favourite. Shane: I like "Hung" as well. A: And what is your least favourite track?
Mitch: "Unfit Earth". Shane: "Unfit Earth". We'll never play it. Never have, never will.
A: Why did you record it then?
Shane: I don't know. (To Mitch) Why did we record it?
Mitch: Micky wrote it, Micky played it, and we just went with the flow. We didn't realise how fuckin' weak it was.
Shane: At the time we did "Unfit Earth" we didn't even think about it. It just happened, I guess. By the time we recorded the album we decided we didn't like the track.
A: What do you think is the most underestimated aspect of your music?
Shane: The potential to cross over. The potential to be accepted by a lot of different trends of people. I think we could branch out to an awful lot of different styles of fans, really.
Mitch: I'd agree on that.
A: Which item of your CD collection now left at home do you most sorely miss on tour now?
Mitch: (Smiles smugly) I brought it with me. I brought thirty CDs and, right now, my favourite is Björk. I'm totally into her. I only got into her recently.
Shane: I can't really think of one now. I think I brought most.
Mitch: The new Soundgarden. I'm glad I brought that with me too.
Shane: I went through a period where I haven't been playing much music recently. Usually I always get a need to play a Cardiax album, which is one of my favourite bands, totally unknown sortof weird punk progressive band. There are always some points in a tour when I want to play the Cardiax. I didn't bring it with me this time so that's probably something I'm going to miss.
A: What are your favourite bands?
Shane: Hard to say. I've got too many. Bands like Sonic Youth, Cardiax, Skinny Puppy, Cocteau Twins, stuff like that really.
Mitch: It's hard to say, too, man, I've got like a list of like 30 or 40 things that I totally totally love, you know. There's Soundgarden and Björk but there's also Jane's Addiction. I always loved Jane's Addiction. And Smashing Pumpkins.
Shane: Too many bands.
A: Mitch, what's your favourite guitarist?
Mitch: Probably...I like Dave Navarro of Jane's Addiction. His style is pretty cool, pretty unique. As far as my influences go, you know, from the beginning, there's Slayer, Metallica, Venom, Exodus, Destruction, Kreator, Sodom, all that shit. Pentagram from Chili that's my all-time favourite, the guy that I developed my guitar style around. They had some demos out and stuff, but they never had an album come out.
A: And your favourite bass player, Shane?
Shane: I like the guy from Primus (Les Claypool, ED.), and I like Geddy Lee as well, from Rush.
Mitch: (Sounding suggestively evil) Cronos... Shane: I sortof modelled myself on Cronos 'live', probably. Not to the point of sticking my tongue out, but I mean, you know.



A: Is the story true about his having left the music scene and having set up a fitness school?
Shane: Yeah, pretty much. He still does his band, you know, kindof, but he's into the fitness thing now. I guess, you know, shit happens. I guess you get bored maybe.
A: Is there something you particularly dislike about the music industry?
Mitch: I hate to see a record company spend so much money on a band that's just a pile of shit, you know, something they think is gonna be huge but could never be huge, and they spend all this time and money on a band when there's, like, lots of bands that are very talented and deserve the push.
A: Is Earache guilty of this, too?
Mitch: No, Earache pretty much pushes the right bands. Besides Napalm they push, like, Carcass and Entombed and Godflesh and stuff, and they release other stuff where they put out a little press for one month and that's it.
I had a question specially for vocalist Mark "Barney" Greenway. Perhaps the others could answer it for me.
Does Barney use any sound effect machinery on his voice?
Shane: Not really, no. He tried a couple of effects for the weird spoken parts, but the actual growly voice is going natural.
A: How would you label your own music as a whole?
Mitch: We prefer not to. I guess we throw in different, new elements to make it harder to classify, basically. I'd like to call it just "Napalm Death". In the future, with the progression of the next albums we'll be even harder to classify but still very heavy, very extreme. We'll have a little bit of everything.

And that ended the interview and started a photography and CD liner signing session. It was pretty difficult to find the other members of the band as well, but eventually the whole thing worked out. We had spotted Barney several times already and suddenly we also bumped into Jesse who had a totally inconspicuous Danny trailing. After that, Erwin and me left the backstage area to procure a spot right in front of the stage where support act Entombed would start playing in about an hour's time.





Tivoli, Utrecht, May 8th Support act Entombed

Napalm Death | concertreview

When I interviewed Paradise Lost, mid March, the Tivoli stage manager had already told me there would probably be a Napalm Death gig at some later date. I was glad to notice this wasn't a false rumour when I saw the posters hanging in Utrecht a month or so later. I got a ticket and at the same time started to try and get an interview done. This interview thing worked out, so I could even sell my ticket to a friend too (interviewers generally get put on the guest list too). After having interviewed Napalm Death (an experience covered in a separate article, elsewhere) I got to the main hall where people where gathering already. I could get right up against the stage, virtually at the middle. Camera ready. I had been in a similar position about a year prior when they performed at "Het Paard" in The Hague, and it had been severely intense. I just hoped my camera (and my f*@king glasses - I swear I'm going to get contact lenses soon!) would survive.

A mere five minutes late, Entombed kicked off. The mass of people that had thus far been standing in the back now came up to the front. It was a fairly intense concert, even though it was only about 45 minutes long. They played some stuff off their latest album ("Wolverine Blues", "Hollowman", "Out of Hand"), their latest EP ("Serpent Speech") and some older classics such as "Stranger Aeons", "Sinners Bleed" and, to wrap things up, the ultra-classic "Left Hand Path". They probably played more, but I had to divide my attention between fending off a few stage divers, protecting the camera, taking snapshots, stretching out my hand in between song so they could put a guitar pick in it if they wanted, and listening to the music. The band seemed to be having fun, plenty of smiles as opposed to the sortof grim looks on their faces when I had previously seen them and the positively boring attitude heard on the "The Truth Beyond" bootleg (see elsewhere). In the end I indeed procured a guitar pick - Alex Hellid's - and off I went backstage to interview the band. This interview experience is covered in full elsewhere in this issue.

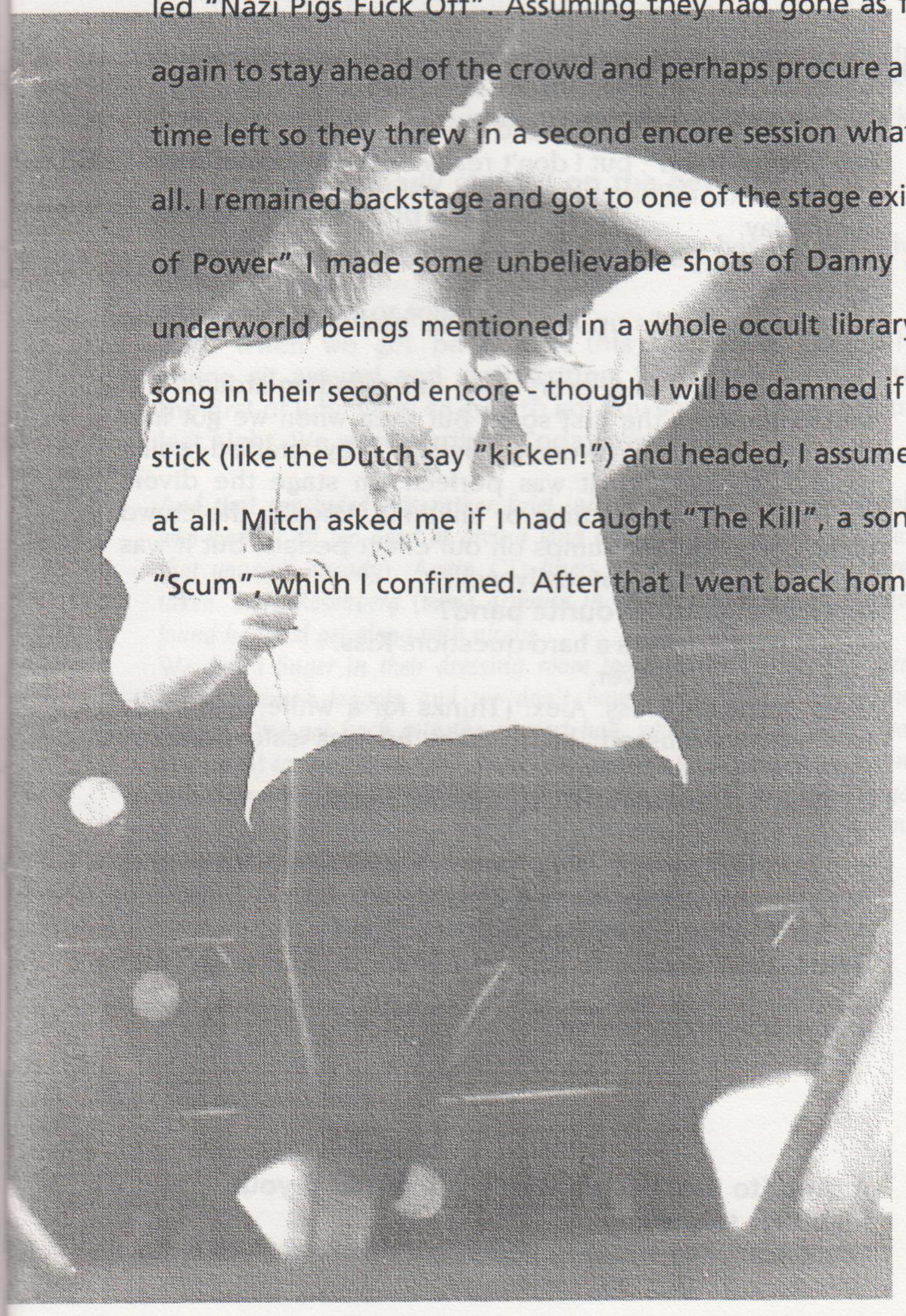
After having interviewed Entombed I went straight back into the hall where Napalm Death was already playing their fourth song or something. Next was "The Kill" - great! Same as with Entombed, the band seemed to be having great fun. Barney banged his head a lot more than usual, and they were obviously having a great time, possibly with the exception of guitarist Jesse Pintado. It was quite a different experience from what I would have thought after remembering the "Live Corruption" video. Stagediving was extremely intense now. At the sides people were constantly getting on the stage, diving off again in the middle. At one time I got one straight in my face, sending me reeling, knocking off my glasses and nearly making an imprint of my camera on my nose (I had been about to make a picture and hadn't seen him coming). I've been walking around with a bruised nose for three days, and at the moment it felt like I had at least two teeth knocked out as well as a bloody nose. Awesome! Masochism rules!

Erwin made the most awesome dive of all. He made a take-off run starting at the drumkit and then flew clean over the entire mosh. Quite an awesome sight, and it's a miracle he didn't half kill the group of people he crashlanded

by Richard Karsmakers



on. Christ, it looked as if he was taking a running leap into a swimming pool - no holds barred, full-on gravity onslaught. Think about the ground when it hits you, not before. If Douglas Adams' theory about flying is correct, he would surely have flown now; his mind was clearly not focussed either on the floor nor the prospect of hitting it. I can't remember all the songs they played, but I know I heard them all brilliantly. Sound volume was the usual Tivoli too-loud- ness, so I had earplugs in. There's nothing like earplugs, I can tell you, to make sure you hear everything almost as if from a live CD. Anyway, some of the tracks that cling to mind were "Remain Nameless" (a most excellent track), "Contemptuous" (personally I think this is the worst song they've ever composed), "More than Meets the Eye", "I Abstain", "Unchallenged Hate" (my favourite track off "From Enslavement to Obliteration"), "Hung" (the most poignant song off "F.E.D.") and "Scum". They did about 15 songs before the first encore. This first encore consisted of three songs, amongst which one Dead Kennedies cover I think was called "Nazi Pigs Fuck Off". Assuming they had gone as far as they were prepared to go, I dashed off backstage again to stay ahead of the crowd and perhaps procure a drum stick. As it turned out, however, they still had some time left so they threw in a second encore session what with the crowd having displayed utter enthusiasm and all. I remained backstage and got to one of the stage exits, close to Danny's drumkit. When they kicked off "Siege of Power" I made some unbelievable shots of Danny drumming as if haunted by the combined demons and underworld beings mentioned in a whole occult library filled with Necronomical tomes. They played a second song in their second encore - though I will be damned if I know which it was - after which Danny gave me a drum stick (like the Dutch say "kicken!") and headed, I assume, for the showers. By the way, he didn't strike me as tired at all. Mitch asked me if I had caught "The Kill", a song that I had told him earlier was my favourite track off "Scum", which I confirmed. After that I went back home to try and sleep off my adrenalin overdose.





Entombed

When I arranged the Napalm Death interview, to be found elsewhere in this issue of Avalanche, I thought I might just as well get an interview with Entombed, too, as they were supporting said semi-legendary band. Besides, Entombed is a great band with a few classic death metal tracks under its belt. After having seen them play, I went backstage with a few friends. We didn't want it to take too long, as we realised Napalm Death would probably already have started playing by the time this would be wrapped up anyway. I for one definitely didn't want to miss too much of it. After waiting for the guys to regain their breath and freshen up a bit, Earache's Karen introduced us into the smaller of the two Tivoli dressing rooms. We sat down with Uffe Cederlund (guitar) and Nicke Andersson (drums), both topless and still panting slightly. Behind us, totally soaked T-shirts were hung out to dry. The other band members were around as well, but seemed initially disinclined to talking. I sat down with the Walkman located strategically where all sounds available would be faithfully recorded.

Avalanche: OK. Let's get going with the usual band biography lark. What did you do before Entombed or, rather, Nihilist was started?

Uffe: (A bit surprised at the fact that I knew about this Nihilist thing) Before we were in Nihilist we were in a couple of different bands, some metal bands, hardcore, what ever.

Nicke: Nothing really happened with those bands. We were all really young.

Uffe: We grew up together and stuff. Nicke: Yeah, we got together and then we changed the name to Entombed. There was another band called Nihilist, I think, and we liked Entombed better anyway.

I realised this interview wasn't going to be quite as verbose as, for example, that with Napalm Death. There were painful silences when I was waiting for more to be said, with them waiting for the next question. Maybe this happened because of their lack of ability to speak English very well, or perhaps just because they had a low interest threshold. I continued.

A: Now we're at this biography stuff, could you tell us your places and dates of birth?

Uffe: Stockholm, 3rd of October '71.

Nicke: I was born in Stockholm also, on the 1st of August '72. Alex (Hellid, guitar) walks in, sortof half-dressed. Nicke asks him his place and date of birth.

Alex: 23rd of May '73. In Stockholm yeah. Can I go now (laughs)? I told him he was excused if he wanted, and proceeded to the next question:

What were the first albums they ever bought?

Nicke: For me it was...I don't know which one I bought first...but the first album I got was "Rock and Roll Over" by Kiss. I was very young so you got money once a week and I saved that and bought another Kiss album. I don't remember which, because in two years I bought all of them.

Uffe: Probably Kiss or something as well.

A: Which of your songs do you like best?

Uffe: Everything.

Nicke: Maybe one day like...(thinks of a name, then, a bit disappointing)...one song and another day another song. I like "Out of Hand", but I don't really have any favourites.

Uffe: It's, like, different every day. "Out of Hand" was pretty cool today.

A: What did you think of tonight's crowd response, by the way?

Lars-Goran: (Looks up from writing, enthusiastic) That was cool!

Uffe: They were, like, everybody was standing around and watching during the first song. But then when we got into the title song, "Wolverine Blues", they started going around. It was cool. It was perfect. On stage the divers didn't give us a hard time or anything. Usually the crowd comes on stage and jumps on our effect pedals, but it was great. Everything went really well.

A: What is your favourite band?

Nicke: (Lying) That's a hard question. Kiss.

Lars-Goran: Piledriver.

Uffe: Upset on Cross. Alex: (Thinks for a while, this really has him nonplussed, he thought he was safe from my questions so far) ZZ Top.

A: Who's your favourite drummer, Nicke?

Nicke: The Slayer Hippy from Poison Idea (again, not sure if I got this correct, their Swedish accent doesn't make things any easier for me to transcribe, ED.).

A: Who's your favourite guitarist, Uffe?

Uffe: Mascis, the guy in Dinosaur Junior. A: And yours, Alex (I got him unawares)?

Alex: (Grins) Tony Iommi.

A: And (to Lars-Goran, who's still writing) your favourite singer?

Lars-Goran: Roy Dixner (I hope I got this correct, ED.) from

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Devastation, a band from Chicago.
Nicke: You probably don't know them. They never released an album.

A: What band(s) is Entombed's music most influenced by?

Nicke: Probably Slayer, Celtic Frost, Devastation from Chicago, Repulsion, Autopsy.
Beer is handed around. Grolsch, of course. It tastes so much better than the stuff you get at Tivoli's regular bar, which I strongly suspect it watered down. The conversation transforms into a discussion of the forthcoming Autopsy album.
Uffe: The new Autopsy album will be the best. It will be called "Shit Eater".
Nicke: On the cover there will be a picture of someone eating shit.
Lars-Goran: It's cool.

A: Now Entombed is getting more famous, you're becoming more and more part of the music business. Is there something you particularly dislike about it?

Nicke: Everything except playing. The music industry sucks, you know. The only thing that's good is playing, meeting other bands, getting free beer. The rest sucks.
Uffe: Too much business.
Nicke: Too much politics.
Uffe: It's not enough fun.
Nicke: The business has taken away the fun sometimes. In the background, Napalm Death takes to the stage. They kick off with my favourite "Harmony Corruption" track, "Suffer the Children".

A: Have you already started on the new album, or are you thinking of ideas for it?

Uffe: We have a couple of songs ready. We haven't thought about it that much.
Nick: Five songs or something.
Uffe: When we get back from this tour we're probably gonna sit around and start writing. We'll be touring until the first of July. Only 48 gigs to go. You should have seen us last night. We were terrible. Today was great.

And that concluded this rather brief interview with a bunch of people who weren't all too good at giving long answers (but you could notice that yourself already). Again CD liners were taken out and pictures taken. Lars Rosenberg (bass) dropped in with a girl he seems to have found he could get along with nicely.
We didn't linger in their dressing room too much (after all they were self-proclaimed faggots and we don't have eyes in the back of our heads!). We got back into the concert hall, where Napalm Death was just about to start "The Kill", the fourth song or something of their concert. So we hadn't missed that much actually. And at least we had got to meet Entombed. To use their words, this was a cool experience. And rather good entertainment, too.

SELECTED ENTOMBED DISCOGRAPHY

"Left Hand Path" [Earache 1990]

"Clandestine" [Earache 1991]

"Crawl" [EP; Earache 1991]

"Hollowman" [EP; Earac]

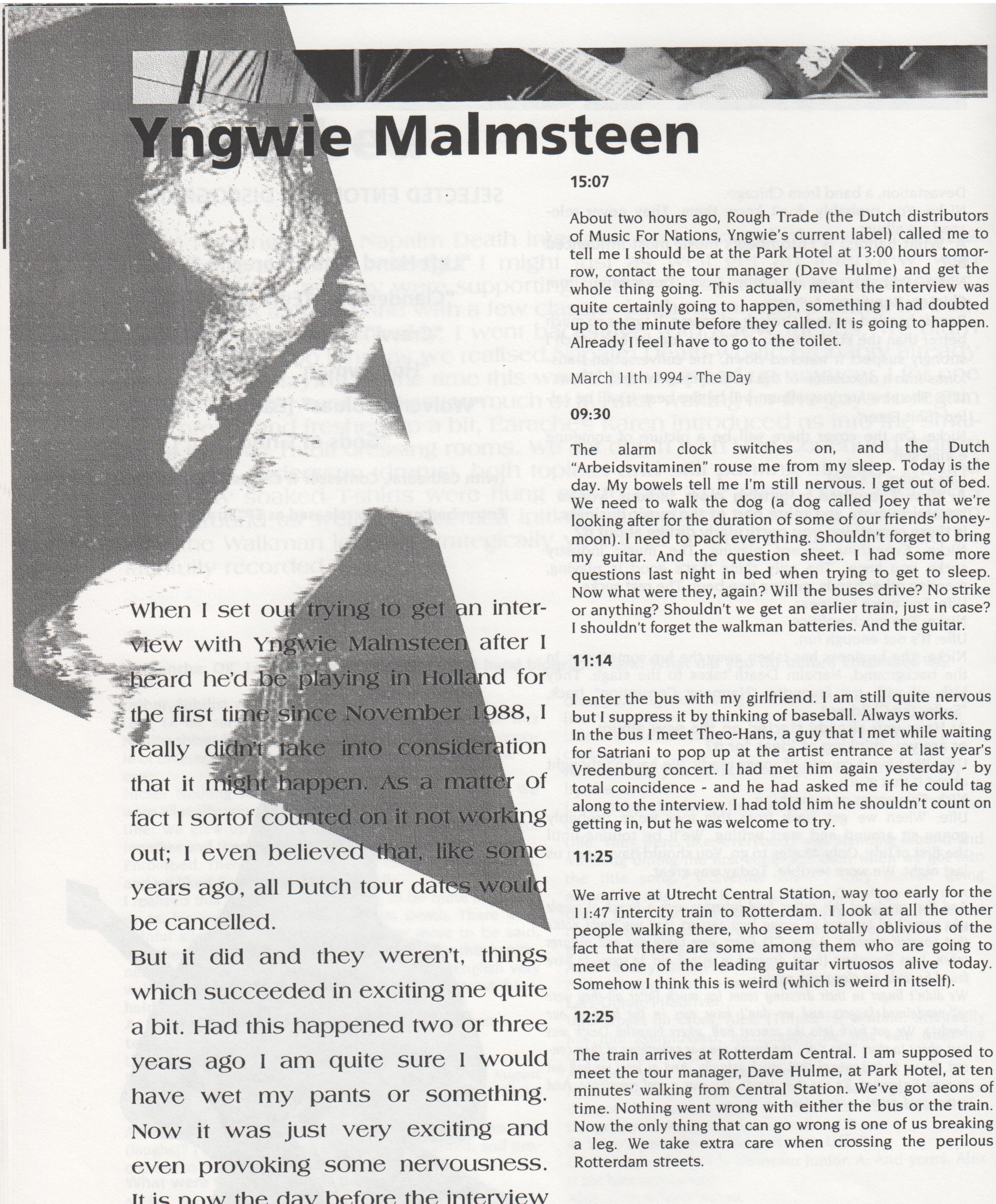
"Wolverine Blues" [Earache 1993]

"Gods of Grind"

(with Cathedral, Confessor & Carcass, Earache 1992;

Entombed part also released as EP"Stranger Aeons")





Yngwie Malmsteen

When I set out trying to get an interview with Yngwie Malmsteen after I heard he'd be playing in Holland for the first time since November 1988, I really didn't take into consideration that it might happen. As a matter of fact I sortof counted on it not working out; I even believed that, like some years ago, all Dutch tour dates would be cancelled.

But it did and they weren't, things which succeeded in exciting me quite a bit. Had this happened two or three years ago I am quite sure I would have wet my pants or something. Now it was just very exciting and even provoking some nervousness. It is now the day before the interview May 11th 1994, just past three in the afternoon. I believe this whole thing might be worthy of a real-time article.

15:07

About two hours ago, Rough Trade (the Dutch distributors of Music For Nations, Yngwie's current label) called me to tell me I should be at the Park Hotel at 13:00 hours tomorrow, contact the tour manager (Dave Hulme) and get the whole thing going. This actually meant the interview was quite certainly going to happen, something I had doubted up to the minute before they called. It is going to happen. Already I feel I have to go to the toilet.

March 11th 1994 - The Day

09:30

The alarm clock switches on, and the Dutch "Arbeidsvitaminen" rouse me from my sleep. Today is the day. My bowels tell me I'm still nervous. I get out of bed. We need to walk the dog (a dog called Joey that we're looking after for the duration of some of our friends' honeymoon). I need to pack everything. Shouldn't forget to bring my guitar. And the question sheet. I had some more questions last night in bed when trying to get to sleep. Now what were they, again? Will the buses drive? No strike or anything? Shouldn't we get an earlier train, just in case? I shouldn't forget the walkman batteries. And the guitar.

11:14

I enter the bus with my girlfriend. I am still quite nervous but I suppress it by thinking of baseball. Always works.
In the bus I meet Theo-Hans, a guy that I met while waiting for Satriani to pop up at the artist entrance at last year's Vredenburg concert. I had met him again yesterday - by total coincidence - and he had asked me if he could tag along to the interview. I had told him he shouldn't count on getting in, but he was welcome to try.

11:25

We arrive at Utrecht Central Station, way too early for the 11:47 intercity train to Rotterdam. I look at all the other people walking there, who seem totally oblivious of the fact that there are some among them who are going to meet one of the leading guitar virtuosos alive today. Somehow I think this is weird (which is weird in itself).

12:25

The train arrives at Rotterdam Central. I am supposed to meet the tour manager, Dave Hulme, at Park Hotel, at ten minutes' walking from Central Station. We've got aeons of time. Nothing went wrong with either the bus or the train. Now the only thing that can go wrong is one of us breaking a leg. We take extra care when crossing the perilous Rotterdam streets.

12:40

We arrive at the hotel. It wasn't exactly a ten minutes' walk, but we're early anyway. Nobody swiped us with their cars, and on the way we even saw that Nighttown, the concert venue, still exists. I start believing that actually this thing is

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beginning to be reality.
All in all, my nerves have inflicted on my bladder a perverse desire to unleash its fluids. I quickly find the nearest available toilet. This is rather more precarious then some of you might think. First of the Park Hotel is a really classy hotel, Hilton-ish, and I feel severely out of place in a regular T-shirt and black "Dynamo Open Air" boxer shorts. Also, they use some sort of very artistic way to indicate where the toilets are. I find them in the end, and with a genuinely pleasing smell entering my nostrils (this was the first toilet I ever been in actually smelling like a pleasure garden) and Richard Clayderman pleasing me aurally, I relieve myself. This is the obligatory reference to my bodily fluid system that I tend to have in each real-time article. There won't be any more, at least not in this article.

12:53

"Is that Mats?" Theo-Hans says as someone with long black hair descends a flight of stairs. Indeed it is. I walk up to him and ask him if perhaps he could be bothered to sign some CD liners. Mats Olausson, keyboard player with Yngwie Malmsteen ever since "Eclipse", proves a totally friendly dude (as would the others, later). He has no problem signing all that we wish to be signed. He even told us when the soundcheck would be so that we could meet the others as well if we wanted to. After bidding us farewell he disappears again.

12:55

I walk up to the reception desk and announce my arrival. I tell them of my appointment with Dave Hulme. Two minutes later Dave is downstairs, a middle-aged man wearing a "U.F.O." T-shirt. He checks out the bar, finds a nice secluded corner and tells us to take a seat there while he's getting Yngwie. We sit down.

13:07

He walks in, and I have to admit I am suddenly getting a nerve attack of sorts. We introduce ourselves. Dave sits down at the bar and gets us a drink. I need a beer, definitely, so I ask one. Yngwie sits down, too. He's not half as fat as I had imagined he'd be, just a bit of a second chin. We chat a bit, and suddenly the nerves go and I feel perfectly at ease. He's a totally relaxed dude, not at all the person the press would have us believe. I know this is a cliché thing that I've read in the Malmsteen Militia Fanclub magazine several times before, and I even know I always frowned on those very remarks, discarding them as half-lovesick remarks of utter adoration and semi- worshipping. Not so. I believe they, like mine, could be quite true. To the sound of background elevator music I start the interview.

Avalanche: In what kind of town were you born?
Yngwie: Stockholm. I was born in Stockholm, Sweden.
A: What is your fondest memory of Stockholm, or Sweden?
Yngwie: Well, it depends, because I grew up sortof er...I grew up at my mother's house, of course, OK, so we lived in a house, nice house, you know, with forest and stuff, but you had to go on the subway for half an hour to go to the city, which I did "every day" from the point that I was about 11 I did it every day, because I had my recording studio...I started very early, you see. What I liked a lot was just being able to compose a lot of music and basically be free to do what I wanted to do. And my mother wasn't the person to tell me "OK, you gotta do this, you gotta do that, you should wear your hair like that", you know. I was very lucky that way. That's what I like about Sweden. And then eventually I moved into the city, and lived there until I was 16 and moved to America when I was 19.
A: When did it become obvious that you were laid out to become a guitarist?
Yngwie: I think I never had a doubt in my mind, really. I started playing about 24 years ago, and from that point on, really, I knew it. I knew this is why I'm here. This is why I'm alive. And I still feel the same way.
A: There's this story about the two tape decks with different speeds, hence your incredible playing speed. Is it true?
Yngwie: This is true. It's actually true. The funny thing was I was so relentless about what I was doing, I would constantly, well, record what I played. And I had this thing that if I don't play better the next day than I did the day before, something was really wrong. (With feeling) I'd fuckin' kick myself, "No, I gotta be better, I gotta be better". I was, like, totally fanatic about it, you know. Completely fanatic. My recorder in the rehearsal place was a tape machine that ran at 4...em...4.75 I think. And there's another international speed, 4.80 I believe, which is different. This was before I had perfect pitch and shit like that so I used to come home and listen to what I did and was going, "Hmmm...pretty good, pretty good", and the next morning of course I'd go ahead and play again and I thought my guitar was out of tune because it's so fuckin' cold in the subway, you know, so I'd just tune it up again, you know, to the new pitch, and I played to that. And I went like "wrrr, wrrr" (fingers flying), and go "man, that's fast" and that escalated it. Actually this is one of the really few things that are true about me. There's so many things said about me that are just complete fuckin' bullshit.
A: What was the first record you ever bought?
Yngwie: The first album I got I didn't buy, I got it for my birthday. It was Deep Purple's "Fireball", on my eighth birthday, and from that point on I had no doubt in my mind what I wanted to be. That album fuckin' kicked my ass, you know. You know how it starts, right? With the bass drum like that. It was, like, '71, and nobody played like "that". I did listen to Jimi Hendrix before them, and my sister was a big influence on me because everything she'd listen to I'd listen to too. She was six years older than me. And she's the one who said to me, on the 18th of September 1970, she said, "come and look at the TV," and they showed Jimi Hendrix setting his guitar on fire, the same day he died, you know, because it was on the news. And I already had a guitar, I got it on my fifth birthday, and I started playing on it the same day.
A: What was the first guitar you had?
Yngwie: It was an acoustic guitar, you know, a cheap acoustic guitar.
A: What was the first electric guitar you had?
Yngwie: That was also a cheap electric guitar. I don't remember what it's called, you know, it's one of those very cheap fuckin' things, about 50 bucks or something, no, probably not even that much, 25 or something. But it worked great, and I would customize it, you know, I'd put a tremolo bar on it, and put different pickups in it and shit like that.



A: Scallop?
Yngwie: I didn't do that particular one. I did that when I started working in a shop, I was about 14, as an apprentice, you know. And I saw this 16th century lute, you know, and instead of frets it had the wood carved out like this (makes a dulled "U" form with his fingers). I thought, "Hmm, that looks interesting", so I just did it and I liked it and since then I've done it.

A: You mentioned "Fireball" just a while ago, but which CD do you miss most now because you left it at home?
Yngwie: Em...I don't listen to music, you know. I brought some of the classical ones with me. Paganini, of course, Vivaldi. I don't really listen much to music because all I do is travel and do interviews. That's all I do, it's my job. I do 6 or 7 interviews a day.

A: As to your own records, which do you think is your least favourite of your own records - excepting Steeler and Alcatrazz of course?
Yngwie: (Laughs) Alcatrazz I actually liked. A: Why don't you play any of the old songs then? Yngwie: Well, that's a very good question and I will give you a
very good answer. I constantly get shit about my shows being too long. They're, like, 2 hours and 20 minutes. And I "still" don't play all the songs I want to play, you know. On this last tour we played "Hiroshima Mon Amour", but with 7 solo studio albums it's hard to choose which ones to play. The record company tries to push me, they say, "play all the new songs", but I don't want to play only the new songs, I want to play some of the classics too, the kids want to hear them too, "Far Beyond the Sun" and shit like that, which I do.

A: You still like playing that?
Yngwie: Oh yeah, it's a blast every night. Because, you know, the song is really the biggest challenge every night, because it has to be so...(sniffs his nose in contemplation)...intense, and also the guitar solo which is...never the same. You see, I improvise everything, so to me nothing gets stale.

A: What is your favourite pre-"The Seventh Sign" song?
Yngwie: It's hard to say, you know, because I always say, when they ask me "so which one is your favourite song", I go, well, "Have you got children? Yeah, well, which one is your favourite child?" And they say "Well, no, I like them all," you know. The same thing. The music is my children. And another thing is that I don't put something on an album that I don't really like. I never had a filler song. I always like everything.

A: Could you hazard telling me which you like best of "The Seventh Sign" songs then, perhaps?
Yngwie: That question is definitely the hardest to answer. I think that album has such an extremely wide variety of types of songs. I mean compare "Prisoner of Your Love" with "Pyramid of Cheops" for instance, it's very very different. But they are all strong in their own sense, so I couldn't say I like either one [most]. With this album there is absolutely no way I could say I like one track more than another. There's a few songs that I do prefer to play live, for instance "Seventh Sign", "Never Die", "Crash & Burn", "Forever One" are the songs that sound best on stage. We've been trying to play "I Don't Know" - doesn't come across live. We tried to play "Meant To Be" - does not come across live. In *my* opinion, that is. "Pyramid of Cheops" is really good, live. Basically, if you listen to the album there's one guitar, one keyboard player, there's one bass player and there's a singer and a drummer. It's a very...it's not live, but it's an album that you could play live, you know. Which I like, 'cause I've done albums where there's been so many fuckin' overdubs that...(loses track of what he wanted to say).

A: You mean "Live in Leningrad"?
Yngwie: "Live in Leningrad" has a couple of small fix-ups, yeah, it does. There's a couple of fix-ups on the live album, which everybody does. However, I want to tell you something. We just did, on this last Japanese tour, well, a month ago, we filmed the whole Budo Kan show - 18 cameras, 48 track recording - and we didn't fix up *one single thing*. It will be released in June. Nothing, *nothing* is touched. It's completely like the show, every fuckin' thing. And, you know, there's a couple of little booboos, but, you know, I like it. I mean, I decided that this time I'm not gonna fix anything. Joe Lynn Turner just about resang the whole fuckin' album. He was fired, OK? I redid some of the rhythm guitars because the string broke or something like that, or it was a little bit sloppy, but the solos weren't overdubbed. On this one I did nothing, not a fuckin' thing. What I did was I took the tape and sat together with this guy - he's from here actually, Erwin...Erwin something, what was his last name, he's Dutch... Anyway, him and me just sat down and mixed what's on there. Didn't redo any vocals, didn't redo any guitars, nothing. Not a fuckin' thing.

A: Will the songs you performed at the Leo Fender memorial concert ever be released commercially, on an EP for example, or as bonus tracks somewhere?
Yngwie: I thought it was a really shitty show but, then again, I mean, I didn't mean to [play]. I just had a few beers and said, "fuck, of course I'm going to contribute to this," you know, so I just went up and did it. It wasn't a serious thing at all.

A: It may be interesting as a collectors' item though.
Yngwie: I'll tell you what may be worth released as collectors' item, which is gonna happen too, which is my 16 tracks stuff that I recorded before I recorded this album, and one of those 16 track songs actually appears on the Japanese pressing ("Angel in Heat", ED.). I sing lead on that. And they're gonna release a song I've just recorded for a Japanese wrestler. It's gonna be a "steam song" as he walks out. He's not a Sumo Wrestler, it's called...something..."shoot wrestling" I think. It's like American professional wrestling but they do it for real. They really kick the f...you see teeth flying and shit, you know. Anyway, so, it's true. I do that, and there's gonna be one extra song, and there's gonna be two live tracks on that. That's only going to be released in Japan, and I heard there's something like 300,000 pre-sold.

A: You're quite a success in Japan - as opposed to Europe, you might say.
Yngwie: We should change that, shouldn't we? The Japanese are very guitar-oriented. I wanna say this, and I don't wanna come across the wrong way, you know, but this is a mere fact, not just something that I'm saying. A mere fact. From "Fire & Ice" on, no western artist, including Metallica, Guns'n'Roses, Michael Jackson, Cher, you name it, no western artist, "any" western artist, ever has sold more records than I have in Japan. "Fire & Ice" went straight number one, double platinum in four days, and now it's, like, triple platinum. I mean Guns'n'Roses sell like 45,000 copies there, which is good...(pauses for dramatic impact) I sell 400,000. I have no idea why that is. As to the situation in Europe, I'm doing everything I can. I'm doing



every interview I can, the shows, and I think the record company is going to concentrate a bit more on promoting me, which hasn't happened before. For many fuckin' years, man, I've been working real hard on this, you know, and I still don't think I have something like proper success, really.

A: "Tribute to Jimi Hendrix" albums are fairly popular, for example those by Randy Hansen and Paul Gilbert. Since you're quite a fan of Jimi hendrix, too, wouldn't you like a go at such a project, too?

Yngwie: Not really, no. I think that's overdone. Everybody asks me, "do you ever wanna do an acoustic album," or "do you want to do a blues album", or an album that's only classical, or "do you wanna do an album that's only instrumental," and the answers to all these questions are the same: No. I have no desire at all to do that. I want to do albums like "The Seventh Sign", that has songs that go somewhere and that say something and that have the instrumental passages as well, the classical guitars, sitar even, you know, I like that too, and bluesier stuff like "Bad Blood" and stuff. I don't like to do one album that all the fuckin' same. I like to do albums that have a lot of different avenues. It's like, you know, "Hairtrigger", you know, is, like, fuckin' punching out, you know, but then you have "Forever One" that's a more delicate song. I don't like to have albums that have the same shit over and over, you know. I don't like them. Bands like Judas Priest and AC/DC and all these bands, I personally like them, but I wouldn't do an album the way they do, that is so the same, you know.

A: You're also quite a fan of Ritchie Blackmore (ex-ex-ex Deep Purple). Some people even say you've got a Blackmore fixation. Have you ever met him?

Yngwie: Many times. Actually, he's a fan of me. No, of course, you know, I love Deep Purple. That was, like, a "huge" influence on me when I was young. No question about it. I think maybe that they live at lost right now, especially with the new addition of the guitar player. I think that's a shame. I mean Joe Satriani's a "good" guitar player but he doesn't fit [in] Deep Purple, that's just the way it is. He doesn't fit [in] the concept of Deep Purple. First of all he's using humbucking pickups which is a fuckin' sin. If you wanna play Deep Purple music you don't use humbucking pickups, you use single coil.

A: Have you seen the "Rising Force '85" live video and were you content with the way the video editors have fucked it up video- wise?

Yngwie: I've seen it a long time ago. It's pathetic. But the new one won't be like that, the Budo Kan one. From what I've seen so far it's really good. A lot better, a lot better than that.

A: Now for a question that so far you've answered with "Well, I don't listen to guitar players that much"...

Yngwie: Well, I don't (smiles).

A: ...the question is: Who are your favourite guitar players?

Yngwie: (Heaves a deep sigh, probably this is still a difficult question) Oh god (laughs). I like Alan Holdsworth. Al DiMeola is very good. Uli Jon Roth (ex-Scorpions, ED.) is good. Early Blackmore stuff, like from "Made in Japan", was extremely good. Em...I mean...that's about it really. I don't listen to guitar players. I *used* to when I was younger but I don't do it anymore.

A: What is your favourite guitar?

Yngwie: The Fender Stratocaster. I have one that I've had for, like, 18 years, that I don't bring on tour any more. It's the one on the cover of my first album. That one.

..At this moment the background music transforms into a non-vocal version of "Lambada". The music is truly revolting, worse than Richard Clayderman actually, so I retract my earlier statement with regard to that.

Yngwie: We played that at my wedding ("Lambada", ED.). Anyway, that one's a '71 cream Strat with maple neck, then I have a '56 that I also used to use a lot. I also left that one at home. But I have 175 guitars. A lot of guitars. I try to make sure that each one I use on stage is a very good one. They wear out really quickly because I kick them around a lot.

A: How many guitars would you estimate become, let's say, redundant, due to excessive wear during a tour?

Yngwie: (Some sadness in his voice) I just broke a 1960 one, and sometimes I set my guitars on fire. But those are not the main ones. Beyond repair, maybe 5. Not beyond repair, maybe 10.

A: Is there a person in the music industry which one day you'd really like to meet?

He thinks for a long while. I add "except for Jimi Hendrix" to keep things going.

Yngwie: (He grins) I do like a guy called Ian Anderson (from Jethro Tull, ED.) a lot. I've never met him. I worked with people that worked with him a lot, such as Barrymore Barlow and some of the crew people. I know him a little bit through that. But Ian Anderson is a fuckin' genius, you know. It's just the way he always does the coolest arrangements and stuff, and a lot of stage presence.

A: Suppose I would want to be Malmsteen II. What would I have to do? Any tips for the next generation?

Yngwie: You have to understand that when it comes to my approach to this, it's not only playing guitar, you see. It's much, much more than that. I wouldn't call it spiritual, but it's something that I don't really have control over, when it comes to my compositions and also my improvisations. It's very hard for me to give anyone advise because nobody ever gave me any advice. I did an educational video once, but that's a kindof silly one anyway because you won't learn anything from it. It's just me sitting down and saying, well, "here's this one thing," and I go "wrrt wrrt wrrt" and, "this is the same again but a bit slower", "wrrt wrrt wrrt", and, "OK, here's another one". I've never been taught anything so I don't exactly know how to teach, except for the fact that I can tell you exactly which scales to use, and which notes to use in certain chord progressions, you know, which I think is very self-explanatory anyway. You can learn that just by listening.



A: Religion.
Yngwie: It could be a very good thing for some people, but religion could also be a very bad thing. I think that religion is very [much] commercialized, especially Christian religion in America, with the TV preachers and stuff, which is totally wrong. "Send us money so I can buy a gold Rolex!" But I mean I don't believe in a specific religion, even though (moves some the assorted chains and stuff on his arms and neck) I have something like fifty crosses on. I believe there is something, definitely something. Before I went to the States some of the recordings I did were some of the heaviest blackest shit. I mean devil- worshipping fuckin' lyrics and the heaviest, darkest riffs, and fast riffs, like death and thrash and all together, but with classical influences also. That's the way I used to do things, then. "Lucifer's Friend" and "Voodoo Nights", I had songs like that. I actually think that influenced some of the bands that do it today. I never heard someone do that before I did it. [Black] Sabbath did it, you know, but not to that same sound.

A: Polygram.
Yngwie: I think they fucked me around a lot. I think that they could have probably made me a lot bigger success if they would have wanted to. I wasn't Def Leppard, I wasn't Bon Jovi, you know, I was Yngwie Malmsteen and I was on the same label and they made so much fuckin' money with those other bands that they really didn't care about me. So I moved on to Electrica... electric... (stumbles over the word, unscrews his tongue) Elektra. And that was even worse. They were even worse. I could not believe it, this just had to be a fuckin' joke, you know. They completely ignored me. Most people didn't even know the album was out. I explain what I've heard of the "Cowboys From Hell" Pantera home video, where they accidentally stumble into him at a hotel and he is offered an impromptu donut which he rather explicitly refuses, after which he moves into the elevator with some babes and Pantera scratches a message - something along the lines of "fuck off Malmshit poser fag" - on the back of his tour van.
Yngwie: (Frowns, but sees the humour - I think) Hmm... that's interesting.

And with that I reached the end of the interview, at around 13:45, which means we had taken rather longer than the alotted time. For the last twenty minutes I had already seen a journalist standing around (of "Watt!", a Dutch rock music magazine). However, next we first wanted some stuff signed - my guitar and rather a lot of CD liners (Theo-Hans had brought something like 20 CDs with him, that needed to be signed both in the liner and on the actual CD itself). I could see Dave getting a bit edgy, I think, but there's no problem. After saying goodbye we went to have a chat with Dave to see if we could meet the other members of the band. Again, this would be no problem. We had to make sure to be at the artist entrance of "Nighttown" at around 16:00 and we could get backstage and witness the whole soundcheck thing as well (mainly because we were also members of the Malmsteen Militia and wearing our Militia T-shirts!). But that experience is to be found elsewhere in this issue.

SELECTED YNGWIE MALMSTEEN DISCOGRAPHY

In Steeler
"Steeler" (Shrapnel 1983)
In Alcatrazz
"No Parole From Rock'n'Roll" (Rocshire/Polydor 1983)
"Live Sentence" (Rocshire/Polydor 1984)
As Yngwie J. Malmsteen's Rising Force
"Rising Force" (Polydor 1984)
"Marching Out" (Polydor 1985) "Studio/Live '85" (EP; Polydor (?) 1985; not available on CD)
"Rising Force - Live '85" (Polydor 1985)
"Trilogy" (Polydor 1986)
"Odyssey" (Polydor 1988)
As Yngwie J. Malmsteen
"Trial by Fire: Live in Leningrad" (Polydor 1989)
"Trial by Fire: Live in Leningrad" (Video; Polydor 1989) "Eclipse" (Polydor 1990)
"Eclipse Double Pack" (Japanese double CD edition; Polydor 1990) "Fire & Ice" (Elektra 1992) "The Seventh Sign" (CMC 1994)



Premonition

In their home town of Arlington, Texas, a band called Premonition was born in the year 1988. Its intention? To make music that would change a lot of people's personal views of the world. With theit new demo, "Brutal Healong", they make you understand that part of Pantera and ZZ Top is coming to a new life in another band that is bound to show the world they are ready! I had a chat with guitarist Kirk about their new demo tape.

Avalanche: "Brutal Healing" is your second tape after "Visions of Emptiness". Is it much different from the first?
Kirk: Hell, yes! It's different in many ways; it's a lot heavier, more aggressive, in your face kind of heavy shit!
Avalanche: Kirk, your music shows parts of Metallica (most like on the album "And Justice..."). Were you that much influenced by them?
Kirk: Yeah, we were influenced by Metallica, but who wasn't? They have opened all the doors with their first album "Kill 'em All" so a lot of bands knew that something new was going to happen.
Avalanche: The music on "Brutal Healing" is really powerful and energetic, does this affect your live performances?
Kirk: Sometimes it does. At nearly every show we have one or two instances of fights breaking out. The fans just get so into the music and so fucking aggressive, they start fighting in the pit, which is OK by us and them, but the clubs we play in are not always that thrilled by these situations!
Avalanche: The lyrics on "Brutal" are very aggressive and sometimes anti-society. Why?
Kirk: Well, let's face it, society is fucked up these days. There is murder, death and famine going on all around the world today. In today's society you can't even trust your own neighbours, you never know who is going to just snap and wipe out everyone in his path, so we are forced to create and live within our own little groups. The lyrics are written about issues like behaviour in society, psychotic issues, tragedies in life and obsessions with death!
Avalanche: One of the songs on "Brutal Healing" is "Induced Psychosis". Did you study (insane) people for this song?
Kirk: It's funny you ask that. Our singer was committed to an insane asylum, two years prior to joining the band. So that song was written due to his past experiences!
Avalanche: The recording/engineering of your demo was done by Tim Grugle, known from his work with Metallica and Testament in his radio show. What brought you together?
Kirk: We met Tim through some fellow musicians around Dallas. We heard some of the bands he had engineered in the past, so we thought he was the one to work with. We are already planning on using Tim again on our next project.
Avalanche: What about the David O'Brien management?
Kirk: Currently we are looking for a new management and label for our next tape/CD!
Avalanche: Are there plans for a tour, maybe Europe?
Kirk: We are working on the next tape that will be released in the U.S.A. and Europe and after that we will see what happens although we really would like to go to Europe because of all the sales and support we have gotten from over there. But once again we just have to wait and see what happens.
Avalanche: Could you respond to the following phrases...Brutal Healing.
Kirk: Brutality at its finest!
Avalanche: Premonition.
Kirk: A new band arising from the depths of Texas!
Avalanche: Metallica.
Kirk: The older Metallica albums. Hail to Cliff's days!
Avalanche: Beer.
Kirk: The drink of tomorrow, Heineken rules!
Avalanche: Death Metal is dead.
Kirk: Who the fuck says that? Bring him to me!
Avalanche: Michael Jackson.
Kirk: Faggot!!

by Jesse Vermunt



Obituary

Obituary was one of the bands to perform at Wâldrock, July 9th 1994. On my wishlist of bands I wanted to interview they were quite far up, ever since getting into touch with them around, say, winter 1990.

The day was progressing. It had rained some time earlier but the whole rest of the day seemed to promise dry and sunny weather. I roamed backstage most of the time when no interesting band was playing, an act I believe we refer to as "vipping". 'Backstage' is actually far too ornamental a word for the mess behind the large stage, off limits to the general audience. Basically it was a farmer's backyard filled with parked cars, Trans Am Trucking vehicles and tour vans, between which some people kicked around a soccer ball and other ambled around nervously in search of something or other. Rather deep trenches had formed themselves where heavy trucks had ploughed through the sodden earth - a perfect place to sprain your ankle.
Anathema had finished playing and Skintrade was due to appear next. After downing another beer for courage I started talking to some official-looking people, asking them whether perhaps they were aware of Obituary having arrived already. This band was not scheduled to appear on stage until somewhat late in the evening but, as chance would have it, they had already arrived.

I was guided into a large shack. It was quite cool, on the contrary to outside, where it was sometimes a bit stuffy. Half of the ramshackle building, most of its windows broken, was occupied by stacks of hay, and there were even a few chickens that scattered away as we walked through. A bit further down provisional walls had been made of ropes and hanging sheets. All bands had their dressing rooms here, with the exception of Gwar (they were housed in a special army tent at the other side of the backstage area). Band name labels identified these dressings rooms, and as one sheet was flapped open I was ushered into the Obituary dressing room. Mitch of Napalm Death (who does a project together with some member of Obituary, called Meat Hook Sheet I believe) was talking with some of the guys. I had trouble recognizing them. All long hair has been gathered in ponytails and stuck under baseball caps, and Frank Watkins (bass) had cut off most of his hair altogether. Trevor Peres (rhythm guitar) didn't look his usual evil stage self and John Tardy (vocals) looked altogether too small, too normal. I was introduced to Donald Tardy, drummer, and we were guided to a van outside where we could commence the interview in relative peace and quiet. I was sweating quite profusedly, what with there being no breeze in the van to cool me down and there being enough sun to do some proper heating. With the Skintrade soundcheck in the background I started the interview.

by Richard Karsmakers



Avalanche: Well, Donald, what's your place and date of birth, and do you know that of any of the others?
Donald: Miami, Florida, January 28th 1970. My brother was born in the same place, Miami, Florida, on March 15th 1968.
A: Before you were in Obituary the band was called Xecutioner. But what did you do before that?
Donald: Um...I was a junior highschool student. I was very young at the age we actually started the band, 1983 was when we first started it as Xecutioner. I was 13 years old, so I was still going to school and basically being a young kid. We were all very young at the time when we met. We were just kids, friends hanging around, that wanted to be in a band.
A: Why was the name changed?
Donald: Because when we were gonna release our album there was already a band from Boston called Executioner, from Boston, Massachusetts. We knew we had to change it before we did the first album, so that's why we thought of an appropriate name. And at the time that was Obituary.
A: What can you tell us about the forthcoming album, "World Demise"?
Donald: The new album has 12 songs. It was produced by Obituary and Scott Burns and help-mixed by my live sound man, Big Shirt (?, ED.). So it's a combination of these that brought the production together. I was pretty excited about the new album because we've gone through a lot of shit, I think, using Morrisound every time, if you're familiar with it, if not, it's just a basic...we were...you know this is our fourth album using Morrisound and Scott Burns and a lot of people on the last album said they think we should have changed to try and make maybe a better album. We're really confident in our decision of going into Morrisound. We knew we had 12 songs for the new album, we went in there, we had quite a few different things ideas-wise, we had some samples that we have going throughout the songs, some songs that we wrote just for the samples, em, just a little different in, how can you say, in the song style, in the writing of the songs, there's maybe just a twist, a little more groove to the music and maybe just not so fast, maybe not a million-mile- an-hour bass drum but still songs that are very heavy but [that] are very easy to listen to for everybody in the crowd.
Around this time the chauffeur of the bus, who had been eating his luncheon and not distracting us at all, is being joined by another guy who promptly starts discussing things with the man in Frisian. Instead of entering a discussion starting off with "Hey, would you mind? We're doing an interview here," I continue.
A: Does the new album sound more 'live', what with your live man being involved in the mix?
Donald: The album was recorded a little bit more 'live', I think, because for one thing we didn't sample the snare drum and the toms and shit like we did on one of our albums. We did play live; I played my drums live in the studio, and the way we miked it has a lot of philosophy on what would sound good live. And we took that to the studio and really used that to the best of our ability to get a better production, I think, doing it that way.
A: Scott Burns is almost like a sixth member of the band. What did he contribute to the album?
Donald: He brought us the confidence that, even if we don't know how to run a computer or sampler, you know, the machine we bought to just go beyond death metal, em, he convinced us that as long as we make up the ideas in our brains that him and his assistant is gonna get this out of our brains and into the board the way we want it. And I think that was important for the band because a lot of bands have an idea but can't really explain it to a producer that they're not friends with or not close to or that they can't really relate to. And it was really important for Obituary on this album to stick with what they were feeling comfortable with, because it is our most important album, our fourth and biggest album that we're gonna release, so, em, it was a decision of staying with Scott because we're definitely comfortable [with him] and wanted to feel comfortable with this album.
A: Was it recorded with the same line-up as your previous album, "The End Complete"?
Donald: Yup. Same band members (Donald Tardy drums, John Tardy vocals, Frank Watkins bass, Allen West lead guitar, Trever Peres rhythm guitar, ED.).
A: Why is the album this much delayed?
Donald: I think a combination of things. A very small portion of it was, I guess the recording and the preparation for the album took maybe 3, 4, 6 months more than we had actually anticipated. But even bigger than that, the band's been done with it for 4 months. It could have been released already. The whole key to it, I think, is timing. They're waiting for the perfect time to release it, not only for what other bands are releasing but also, when Obituary is gonna be here the album is there, so we're definitely on tour at the time of the hottest part of the album, which is gonna be the first three months of sales. And we really wanted the time to tour. It comes out in the United States in perfect timing when we're there, and in Europe. That's the delay now, the label knows when it is the best time to release the album.
A: What bands influence you most?
Donald: The band as a whole, I think, is not influenced by other music that we think...that we think is good enough to put in our music. We don't look at bands and say, "Man, this band's getting big, we need to kinda do something like this." We've been together for 10 years, and we have a very unique writing style from day one since we've been writing, and we've always stuck to that, which is listening to music which has actually nothing to do with our band and when we come down to write our own music. We listen to anything from rap to house music, techno, em, acid rock, country music. I listen to a wide variety of music, but one of the varieties I wouldn't say would be a heavy metal or a death metal band when I'm at home listening to my stereo, or in the bus listening to headphones. I stay away from it because I'm doing it all year long, I hear it every day of my life when I'm on the road. I can't say that a band that's real heavy is influencing me for the last album or is gonna influence me for writing songs for the new album. I think the thing that influences us has something to do with music but it's things like this, when we get to come to a festival and play with bands we've never played with before, play in front of some kids we've never played in front of before, and hope that these kids are going to enjoy Obituary. That's an influence for Obituary as a whole, to really keep their eyes and minds set on being influenced in the right way to write new music, I think.



A: What with Morbid Angel, Death and Obituary all sortof coming from Florida, is this state seething with death metal bands?

Donald: No, I believe people here and people in the United States that don't live in Florida get that concept that there's a million bands and a million people and a million fans and a million...em...whatever for death metal and the whole scene, but Florida is very laid back, the population is mainly, em, there are young kids that are getting into it and there are more kids than compared to 2 or 3 years ago that are getting into it, but it's just like any other part of the world. It got flooded in the last few years, with the scene, I think any place, including here, has blown up. There's a million bands, there's a million fans, and right now it's an important part, you know, to all these bands when they realise that they don't make it on one album. They write another album but it's hard to write 2 or 3 good albums. So, it's important right now for Obituary to realise that we have a good album, get out on the road, and wait for all these millions of bands to fade out and let the kids really concentrate on us.

It struck me as a terribly arrogant thing to say, but Donald's entire disposition makes it evident he doesn't mean it like that. There's no smug grin, no feeling of superiority here, just a matter-of-fact statement without the intent of weight. I continue with a question about the bass player on their debut album, Daniel Tucker. There was a story going around about the man disappearing altogether for months and retrieved much later, totally confused. What was true about that story?

Donald: Nothing, that's a bunch of hype for the band, we were just making a joke. Daniel just didn't fit the band and he wasn't very responsible. He wouldn't show up for a couple of practises, or he wouldn't, you know, contribute. It obviously wasn't going to work. The rumour just started like any other, but there's not much to be said about it, you know. He was a bass player that filled the spot until we found Frank.

A: OK then, who is your favourite drummer?

Donald: It's hard to say. I guess, I mean, for me being impressed by somebody it would have to be Vinnie Paul. He's a big influence on me individually. Actually not songwriting-wise, because I don't think Obituary and Pantera have any musical...em ...you can't say either has been influenced by the other musically, but for me being a musician and seeing how perfect of a drummer he is, how disciplined his feet are, and his legs, how determined he is...At this moment Skintrade starts playing. Donald closes a van window, thinks for a while where he was, then continues.

Donald: I would guess, I mean, there's a lot of drummers, I'm not the type of drummer to buy a thousand videos and watch all these drummers, like Steve Smith, and...em...just a million drummers. I don't do that. I'm into bands, I'm into the live scene, I'm into amateur people that are getting better and better every day - like myself, like Igor from Sepultura, like Vinnie. They don't consider us a professional. I mean, "I" don't consider myself a professional.

I consider myself a professional musician and a business man, but I don't consider myself to be the perfect type. So I'm influenced by anybody that impresses me. I think the whole key is being open to anything. I'd listen to anything - jazz, country, acid rock, as long as the drummer's impressive I respect that person in every way.

A: Last, would you like to reveal something with regard to Obituary's future projects?

Donald: This album will come out in the United States as an EP one month before the release. Three songs, one song of which is a bonus track. There's 13 songs for the album but there's only 12 on the album. So one of them is a bonus track for the EP. In Europe, after that album comes out, a 7" is gonna be released with that song, so that's something in the making. Also this year, hopefully within the end of '94 and recording through '95, by the end of '95 I would like to see Obituary with sufficient stuff that we're gonna put out live, maybe a live album or a live video. It's a wish, but reality is that Obituary "is" gonna release something live. We're not sure what it's gonne be, if it's gonna be an album release or whether it's gonna be a home video to see us live. There's definitely going to be something live released from Obituary. Probably "best live stuff of Obituary around the world" or something. If my live sound man has enough time with the board and he's got enough good shows we've got a lot to pick through. We've recorded some stuff, but this year we're gonna concentrate on some really good recordings, to really seriously do a live album, not an album that you're going to have to clean up, redo the solos, or re-sing it. It's gonna be completely live. If I drop a stick and it hits the drums you're gonna hear it, if my brother's voice cracks you'll hear it, if Big Al (Allen West, ED.) fucks up a little in the solo you'll hear it, because Obituary I think is a very good live band and that's what we want to put out.

That signifies the end of the interview. We walk back to the dressing room ("dressing bunch-of-blankets-held-up-with-ropes") because I had told Donald I had a few questions for John too, if he didn't mind.

Just outside the dressing room, I get the chance to ask their singer some questions. It's quite a bit closer to the stage so there's a bloody racket, basically. I find it extraordinary that his voice is totally normal. Barney's voice (the singer of Napalm Death) is totally knackered, but John's isn't.

A: Say, John, do you use vocal effects?

John: For the most part none, nothing. Any effects you hear on the record or live are just obvious, well, delays or whatever.

A:I had read that many parts of Obituary lyrics are not true lyrics as such, but more a case of using the voice as an instrument. How does he go about that? And is a song different each time he sings it?

John: No, it's always the same. It's sortof a language I kinda developed of my own, so if I run out of words that don't sound right I'd just make up one that sounds right.

A: Will the next album have a lyric sheet?

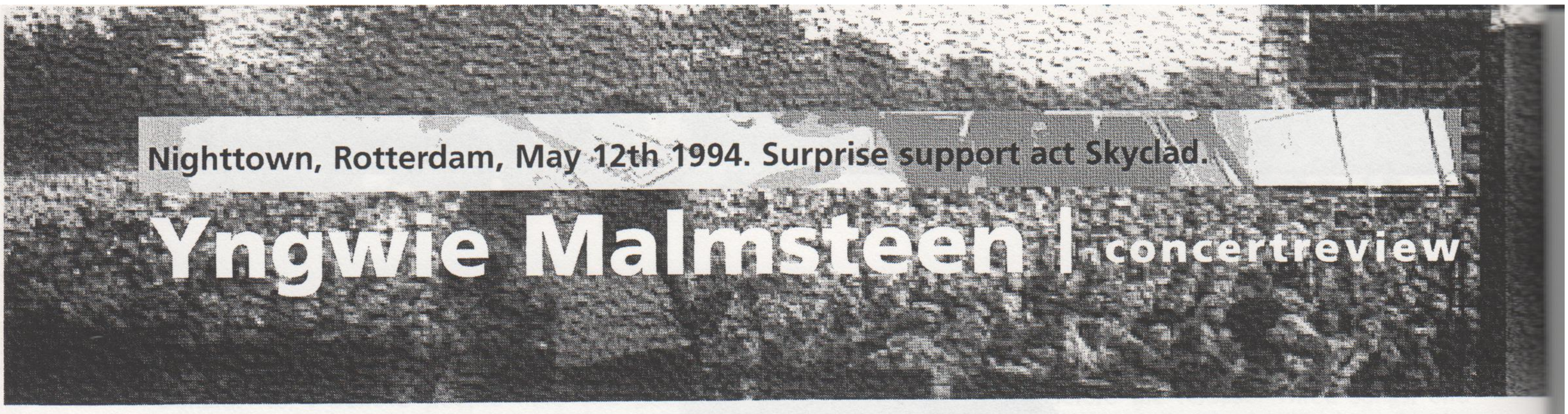
John: No. Trevor walks by now, which reminds me I had a question for one of the guitarists in the band. I had often tried to play along with Obituary on my guitar, only to find out their guitars are tuned lower.

A: How low?

Trevor: We're down-tuned to D (that's a full note down, ED.).

My next task - apart from actually checking out Gorefest, Napalm Death and Obituary playing - was to locate and interview none other than Gwar, probably one of the most illustrious bands in the world. I was quite nervous about that, but this can all be read in another article in this magazine.


FRESH BLOOD
STUDIOS
Sean C. Carr
DEMENTOR
DESIGNS
W. Royce Billingsley
Creative
IMAGERY



Nighttown, Rotterdam, May 12th 1994. Surprise support act Skyclad.

Yngwie Malmsteen | concertreview

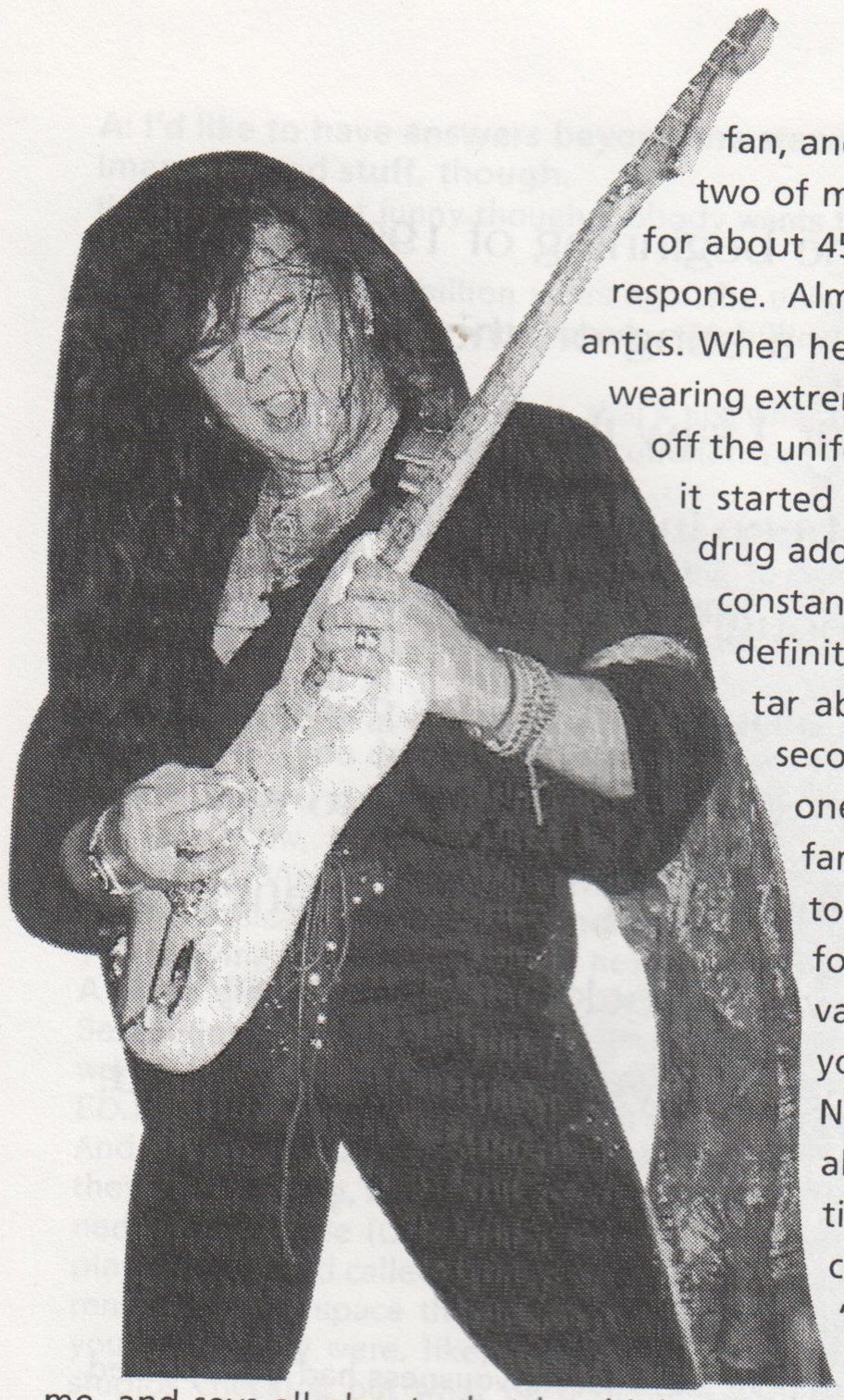
After having interviewed Mr. Malmsteen (see elsewhere) I went to Nighttown with Theo-Hans. My girlfriend went home to look at our guest Joey (the dog) and drop off my guitar and other stuff at home, to meet me again at 19:30 when she'd come back. There were already a few other people standing there, fans like us, waiting for Malmsteen to arrive in a fashion similar to me about a year ago when I wanted to meet Joe Satriani. I had a bite to eat and at a quarter to four we went to the side entrance. The other members of the band arrived on the dot, and Malmsteen and tour manager Dave Hulme arrived by cab about five minutes later. Both Theo-Hans and me were allowed in. A security dude tried to prevent us, but Malmsteen said, "it's OK, they're all right" so we entered from the backstage area.

I walked onto the back of the stage, Mike Terrana's impressive drumkit straight before me and about a dozen Fender Stratocasters to my left. I touched one of them and it was a little bit like magic. I think I was in a state of utter enthrallment as I crossed the stage and walked off it at the front. Theo-Hans and me got out CD liners and gold/silver pens for signatures in case any of the musicians had time to spare later on.

There was a small drum kit standing in front of the stage with a "SKYCLAD" box lying near. I thought no more of it for the time being. I was too busy being totally enawed. There's only so much you can truly concentrate on.

It was a cool soundcheck. They just played some songs while the sound was being adjusted, ranging from some Van Halen ("Ain't Talking 'Bout Love" and "Mean Streets"), Hendrix ("Spanish Castle Magic" and a bit of "Red House"), Deep Purple ("Burn") and Queen/Metallica ("Stone Cold Crazy") to some of his own stuff ("Pyramid of Cheops", "I'll See the Light Tonight", "Crash & Burn", "Hairtrigger", "Forever One" and some more). At the instant when he took out a Gibson Flying V to play "Pyramid of Cheops", one of my favourite tracks off "The Seventh Sign", I truly thought I was dreaming. Not in the metaphoric sense, but actually truly. I found myself blinking my eyes, pinching my arm, but I wasn't asleep. This was reality, incredible though it was. Yngwie even practised his guitar pick kicking'n'hurling so in turns we got them off the floor. I got four. I value these higher than the concert ones, because in concert he plays with them for something like 30 seconds whereas these were used for almost a whole song, like. The soundcheck took quite a while, and each of the musician became available for signing at one time or other. Especially the drummer and the bass player (Barry Sparks) were amicable fellows. Mats Olausson (keyboards) was friendly, too, but was more busy. The singer (Michael Vescera) was less apt to talk, but most importantly we got him to sign all necessary stuff. Around this time I found out that Skyclad was actually the support act. I didn't have any Skyclad CD liners with me but got all band members to sign on a piece of paper. I had a talk with their singer, Martin Walkyier, an incredibly small man, and made use of this golden second opportunity to ask him what the address of their co-manager, Tony Bray, might be. He was pleased to give it, which means you might expect an interview with this Venom drummer (and possibly old members Mantas and Cronos (!!) too) in a future issue of Avalanche some day. At something like 18:45 the Skyclad soundcheck was over. In the mean time we had also caught a heavily painted glimpse of Amber - Yngwie's new photomodel wife - but we hadn't sortof had the courage nor quickness to ask her to sign the "The Seventh Sign" CD liner too (she'd written the lyrics to "Prisoner of your Love", not at all a good song actually, but who cares). She could barely walk because of the height of her heels, and if she hadn't been wearing a large coat we might actually not have seen her at all as she moved her almost absurdly slim form between a few air molecules and disappeared. Theo-Hans stayed inside when, at 19:00, Nighttown opened its doors. I got something to eat outside and fetched Miranda from Rotterdam Central Station at 19:30. Because I had a photo pass and we were on the guest list we could get in for free. Incredibly I found two of my close "V.I.R.U.S." friends without tickets (hi Thomas and Bo!) standing in front of us in the queue so I could sell them our tickets and get in with the photo pass. We got into the crowd and somehow succeeded in meeting up with Theo-Hans again, right in front at the right, where Malmsteen would stand. I was basically one or two feet off the stage, a more than OK position for the experience I was going to have. Last time I had seen Malmsteen I had been something like 10 or 15 metres off the stage and my photocamera had been a throw-away one. Of the 36 pictures I had taken, a mere 4 had something discernible on it. This time I had a proper camera (with zoom) and I was close. This couldn't go wrong (and, as it would turn out, it didn't). Skyclad had the exceedingly thankless task of opening before a sold-out audience that had come for Malmsteen only. I think there was only one true Skyclad





fan, and one semi-fan (and that was me). They played a good set including two of my favourites, "Spinning Jenny" and "Widdershins Jig". They played for about 45 minutes after which they had, remarkably, received quite a good response. Almost ten minutes early, Malmsteen started with the usual guitar antics. When he came on I realised he still hadn't changed that much - he was still wearing extremely tight trousers and he had made up his eyes, though he had left off the uniform stuff. Why on earth does he do the make-up? After three songs it started to blotch and all pictures have him looking like a severely sleepy drug addict.I had never seen Malmsteen this active on stage before. He was constantly running from left to right and posing in all kinds of ways (yes, he definitely is a poser, but that's what my camera wants!), throwing his guitar about, playing with his teeth, and generally not standing still for a second except when an acoustic guitar on a stand forced him to stay at one spot. I made some terrific pictures, all the time trying to evade the fanatic jumping of some of the even more zealous fans who seemed to want to touch Yngwie at every possible instant. I had earplugs in for most of the concert which made everything brilliant. It's unbelievable how notes played in rapid sequence give you the idea what you're hearing is totally out of tune when heard without earplugs. Never again! I didn't get any additional guitar picks and didn't actually try to, either. I had four of them in my wallet already. Now it was time for the masses to get them (which they did most enthusiastically). Well, what did he play? I am quite sure he didn't play "Hairtrigger" even though he did it during soundcheck, and he played nothing off "Fire & Ice" (which is more than all right with me, and says all about what he thinks of that album himself, though he could have played "Perpetual" for all I care). He did play "Rising Force" (the only one off "Odyssey" not counting a "Krakatau" excerpt in the extended guitar solo spot), "See the Light Tonight" (the only song off "Marching Out"), "Bedroom Eyes" (the only one off "Eclipse"), "You Don't Remember, I'll Never Forget" (the only song off "Trilogy" not counting the bit of "Trilogy Suite Op:5" in the guitar solo spot) and for the rest his set concentrated on "The Seventh Sign" with the title track, "Never Die" (the first track), "Forever One" (introducing a terribly shy Amber on the stage to give him some white wine, to the whistling sound of male libidos wanting to make themselves heard), "Bad Blood", "Pyramid of Cheops" and "Crash and Burn". Of course he also did "Far Beyond the Sun" and the various pseudo- classical bits (Albinoni, etc.), whereas the encore had "Black Star" (with prolonged acoustic intro), a second Amber appearance and some covers - "Burn", "Stone Cold Crazy" and "Spanish Castle Magic" that I can recall. I really like him playing cover songs, very much actually, but if that's his excuse for not playing some of his own older stuff I'd rather have them skipped and instead have Alcatrazz' "Kree Nakorie", "Crying", "Soldier Without Faith" and the full "Trilogy" or "Krakatau".

The whole experience lasted about 2 hours and a quarter and was a thoroughly enjoyable one. I even discovered that what had started off with a cigarette in the guitar head Hendrix-style during "Deja Vu" on the "Odyssey" tour had now evolved into chainsmoking and a cigarette butt hurling act. I forgot the cigarette brand, but during the interview he had already remarked a whole package of them had a much tar and nicotin as one Marlboro.

We didn't bother buying a T-shirt (all designs concentrated too much on Yngwie's face for our taste) and crossed the street for some French Fries with mayo, curry and onions ("Grote friet speciaal"!). Some time later we got into a train literally filled with Feyenoord Football Club supporters (they had won some sort of cup earlier that evening). But even that didn't succeed in spoiling this great day.



G.W.A.R

I still remember the day. I think it was around the beginning of 1990 when a friend of mine had me listen to "Horrors of Yig", a song on the then current Gwar album "Scumdogs of the Universe". I liked it. I saw the cover with Gwar on it, and I liked it even more.I have never really been into Gwar the way I was into some other bands, but I have consistently bought their albums and went to some length to get their debut "Hell-O" (an OK album but not as good as the rest). I even bought their videos, which were all very entertaining to say the least. But I had never seen them live, something that was to change on Wâldrock, July 9th 1994. And while I was there with a backstage pass anyway I thought, "What the heck, let's try to interview these guys."So that's what I did.

Of course I first had to do a bit of finding out and talking. I had spotted their separate dressing room tent on the far side of the backstage area, but I had been told the actual members of Gwar weren't there yet. As it would later turn out, they had been around all the time - a confusion easily made, as one tends not to recognize people who are performing with masks and other 'bits' of outfit.I had a talk with their road manager, Matt Miles, asking of perhaps one of the guys - or several - would be willing to talk with me. For a moment he disappeared into the tent, after which he came outside again to lead me in.On the outside the tent had been a bit like those in "M*A*S*H". On the inside it could have been, too, hadn't it been for the guitar cases that were lying around, a large white fridge filled with Heineken cans and a fairly large chest fille with various Gwarapharnalia, most prominent of which was Slymenstra Hymen's spiked bra.On the far side two people were sitting, playing a board game unknown to me and involving six-cornered tiles on the board and a lot of small cardboard bits. To my left sat a stringy guy wearing an RKL T-shirt and army boots with red-stained socks in them, red-stained hands and short hair combed back. He turned out to be Gwar's 'manager', Sleazy P. Martini, generally represented on stage as a dude with tight purple or black polyester clothes, platform shoes, a Presleyesquely exaggerated hairdo and a ridiculously big dollar sign collarred to his neck. Two other guys walked in, interested in seeing what was going on, who turned out to be Sexecutioner (co-vocalist) and Jizmak da Gusha (drummer). They sat down on the opposite side of a Jackson guitar case on which I put down the walkman as I started the interview. I still felt uncomfortable. Previously I had been nervous, thinking perhaps these guys would be truly insane and would do unspeakable things to poor me. That nervousness had disappeared instantly when the relaxed atmosphere in the tent and the appearance of the guys told me they were probably a lot more sane than, to name but an example, Entombed. Now, however, I suddenly became a bit anxious whether I'd come across as a good interviewer. If you act like Gwar acts on stage without actually being like that in true life, you've got to be pretty intelligent and totally sane. That can make you feel just as ill at ease. I noticed Sexecutioner was wearing a bandage around his elbow. How come?

Sexecutioner: I get to be an old man, breaking things all the time. I couldn't help but notice that he, too, had hands stained red. Obviously the blood goo they use is pretty difficult to wash off. I asked him how days of the year he walked around with those red hands?

Sexecutioner: Usually the whole tour plus the month before and the month after, about six months out of the year.

A: I would like to know a bit about the true background of Gwar. I've read quite a few interviews with Gwar and all of them were filled with humanity being scum-ridden, the earth sucking, and them being millions of years old and all that kind of thing. I would like to know the true story behind the people in Gwar.

Sexecutioner: We wanna destroy the myth right now that Gwar is art students. A few of us went to art school. We're students of the arts still, but we don't like to use the A-word.

Jizmak: Hey, we're big rubber monster from out of space. That's all there is to it.

by Richard Karsmakers



A: I'd like to have answers beyond the standard image-related stuff, though.

Jizmak: That's not funny though, nobody wants to hear that boring old drivel.

Sleazy: Anyway, 400 billion years ago...the universe as you know it is totally different anyhow...400 billion light years ago...

Sexecutioner: (To Sleazy) Hey, that's not what he wants to hear. Sleazy: Next question. Sexecutioner: You guys just do the interview and I'll burp and fart.

A: What are your real names, for example?

Sleazy: Mine's Don Drakulich, (pointing to Sexecutioner) Chuck Varga and (to Jizmak) Brad Roberts.

A: And when were you born, in reality?

Sleazy: We're all 20 to 30 something, that's close enough. Jizmak: I was born in nineteen boo-boo-boo-boom!

A: What did you do before Gwar was...er...excreted?

Sleazy: We were actually just various people still making art, you know, but hanging out doing other odd jobs in Richmond, Virginia.Sexecutioner: Trying to find a career. Sleazy: Basically, yeah, in that moment after college where you're trying to define what your next step is gonna be.

A: How did the concept Gwar come about?

Sexecutioner: Essentially, Hunter Jackson and Chuck Varga were working in this large building called the Derry (Dairy?, ED.), and they were working on what was gonna be a movie. And they were making a set right there within their studio, they were making, like, whacky costumes, and it so happened Dave Brockie (Oderus Urungus, lead singer, ED.) was playing in a band called Death Piggy and they happened to rent a practice space there. They kinda cross-pollenated, you know, they were, like, going back and forth between studios checking out what each other was doing. Hunter used to go and see Death Piggy, Dave would check out with Hunter what he was doing in his building, and basically they said, "Hey, where are these constumes for the movie?" And he was shown, and eventually it took off from there.

A: Is Gwar a full-time job now?

Sleazy: Yeah.

A: Also when you're not touring?

Sleazy: Yeah. Jizmak: When we're not touring we're making videos and costumes...comic books. Chuck and Don and Dave write and draw the comic books, and Hunter and a few others. We do all the Gwar art - all the T-shirts and all the comics.

A: Who actually designs the constumes?

Jizmak: Everybody. A lot of the artists design their own costumes.

A: What are they made of?

Jiz: Rubber...latex...

A: Don, how much does your wig weigh?

Sleazy: I'd say about 3 to 4 pounds. (To Chuck) Pick it up, it's right behind you. Chuck, after making a great show of lifting the wig, hands it to me. I am allowed to put it on. Upon me creeps part of the character of Sleazy. I take it off again before I suddenly start talking with an American accent and having a weird pencheant for dollars.Sleazy: It's not as light as a feather. It's made out of latex with polyfoam casting.

A: The dollar sign, too?

Sleazy: No, that's fibreglass-something I think.

A: What kind of stuff is the blood stuff? Why doesn't it wash out easily

Sleazy: Maybe you're getting way too technical there. Jizmak: We can't, you know, give our secrets away, you know. Sleazy: We bleach, pal, you need something with a bleaching effect to get it out.

A: Are there multiple costumes for one band member

Sleazy: Yes, some members wear more than others. Sexecutioner: The costumes are always tuned up, made better, look better, look more horrendous, take the next step.

Sleazy: If you're talking about the musicians who are on stage the whole show, they actually have one costume, with a few extra parts.

A: How many Cuddlefish are there?

Sleazy: Three or four have been made. They got lost or destroyed.

Sexecutioner: A lot of them get chewed to a stubble actually. Like, the other night the eyeballs got bitten off by some girl in the front row.

A: Oderus is your front man. How much does his entire costume weigh?

Sleazy: (To one of the guys playing the board game, one with a skinjob hairdo and huge tattoos on arms and back) Dave, how much does your costume weigh?

Oderus: Eighty tons. Sleazy: He says 80 tons, but I guess it would be closer to 30, 35 pounds.

A: Do you do fitness exercises just to be able to move around on the stage wearing all that gear?

Sleazy: We're the hardest working band in showbusiness, no doubt about it.

A: Have their been changes in the line-up? Obviously, behind the masks you could have changed a zillion times and, to be honest, Oderus' voice sounds quite a bit different on "Hell-O" (the debut album, ED.) than it did on later albums.

Sleazy: It's still him. Only Dave Brockie, the lead singer, is an original band member. Most of the rest of the members were left over from "Scumdogs", the second album.

A: When did you come in?

Sleazy: I came in before "Hell-O". I joined full-time in 1986. The first gestations of Gwar started in '85.

A: Would you take your parents or grandparents to a Gwar concert?

Sleazy: My parents been to a Gwar concert. They worried about the subject matter but they appreciated the amount of effort.

A: Will you ever take off the masks, like Kiss?

Sleazy: Well, that would be doubtful, because there are more artists in the band than musicians, so I can't really picture Gwar like that.

A: Would you think the media and the members would lose interest?

Sleazy: I wouldn't presume that. But Gwar is largely made up of artists and when there's no *art* to be made there wouldn't be any point in having them around.

A: What was the budget for "Phallus in Wonderland"?

Sleazy: Roughly a hundred grand. It's very low. Most bands will make one small music video for 100 grand. Maybe it will look good but it'll be only 3 minutes long, whereas we bassically tried to do something that's like a movie, with sortof a narrative throughout the entire video as well. Something that the Grammy organisation noticed and that's why it was nominated for a Grammy as longform video. You didn't know that?



A: No. That's amazing, considered the fact that the Americans are so stuck up.
Sleazy: Well, they weren't too stuck up to apprecioate the effort.
A: Will there be another Gwar product soon?
Sleazy: Sure, I mean we got a new album out, "Toilet Earth", and there's a longform video coming that going out in mid September, it's called "Skulhedface". Then there's a "Jack the World" single video and there's going to be a "Saddam A Go-Go" single video. As to these on CD single, I'm not sure. At this moment the interview becomes really difficult because NOFX starts playing in the back. The walkman is located somewhere in the middle of the tent so that all sounds can be picked up, but now I have to relocate it closer to us. Thankfully, Don knows he has to speak up more now. On to a totally different question.
A: Is Clinton any better than Bush?
Sleazy: I don't know how the Europeans feel about Clinton. I've heard that they feel that he's shown a lot of, say, incompetence in terms of foreign affairs, but the man definitely has made *some* inroads into, say, more social programs. He is more interested in the social welfare of the American, you know, the lower class. And maybe you don't realise this, but after 3, 4 terms of republicanism straight, the lower class has suffered.
A: Have you ever run into problems, for example when a customs officer checks out your luggage and suddenly finds Oderus' enormous prop penis, the Cuddlefish of Cthulu, looking at him?
Sleazy: No. They really haven't fucked with our props at all.
A: Are you still banned in some countries?
Sleazy: We had some problems in England for a while. We couldn't get the best venues, but we still went in there and played. We had harassment, I'd say, but as far as banning... nothing. We were banned in North Carolina for a year. The Cuddlefish of Cthulu was confiscated and our lead singer was arrested. That inspired the plot for "Phallus in Wonderland".
A: What music is the band inspired by?
Sleazy: I can't really say it for the rest of the band, because I'm not a musician, but...em...I think it's a healthy crossbreed of old school punk and, you know, speed metal. A wide variety of music though.
A: What's your favourite book?
Sleazy: I never really thought about that. My favourite book is "Alien Viewpoint". I don't remember who it is by. It's a collection of essays from five UFO-ologists and basically they have some pretty hard-core conspiratorial viewpoints on what alien visitation is all about - its intents and purposes, and design. I wouldn't expect anybody to be interested in it unless they'd be interested in the subject already. I myself have some strong feelings about alien visitation.
A: What's the film that made most of an impression on you?
Don: Recently? (I nod) Well, I like this one "Army of Darkness" because...em...because it had a big epic look, you know, very ambitious but at the same time used very cheap effects. And it pulled off a merger between the two: Having a big, epic look, you know, with cheap effects.
A: What's your favourite Gwar song?
Sleazy: I think "King Queen", which is not one that is played very often.

A: I read in the media that, after you would have toured for "America Must Be Destroyed", you would quit. Whydidn't that happen?
Sleazy: We never said that. We were definitely misquoted. We probably meant "After the next tour we're going to *stop*...and do a video and an album." This is common, you know, you go through a tour cycle and then you record. As far as I know, nobody ever said this band was gonna quit or break up. That's never been a serious discussion.
A: Are there any taboos left for the next album to expo se?
Sleazy: I don't know if we exposed any taboos to begin with, really. I'd probably expect Gwar to be a little bit more sophisticated about what it choses to do. You'll see in "Skullhedface", there's some taboos in there too. That'll be out in September - if it comes out in Europe at all, which I hope it does.
A: Now for the question that everybody dreads the answer to: Are Gwar songs wholly or in part autobiographical? Because if they are...
Sleazy: Only in small, small occasional references, but, no, I wouldn't say so. We're basically half-decent people. You can see (looks around, spread his arms) they're not out of their mind on drugs, they're playing a board game, you know. We're not strangling cats, not burning people at the stake, not exposing genitalia. They've got their clothes on and they're playing a board game. They're just like good little children.
A: What do you think is the most underrated aspect of Gwar's music?
Sleazy: I would say the melody in the songwriting, of the vocals. Compared to, say, a lot of bands that go "dah dah dah dah", and the fuckin guitar goes "chuck chuck chuck chuck".
A: Would you agree that "America Must Be Destroyed" and "Scumdogs of the Universe" are more melodic than "Hell-O" and even your new album "This Toilet Earth"?
Sleazy: I might agree with that. I don't know. I think "America Must be Destroyed" was more melodic.
A: Was "This Toilet Earth" a conscious decision to go more back to your roots?
Sleazy: Hm...well, I guess that could be conscious. I don't think we'd actually say it; the music just went that way.
A: Well, now for some words to react to. MTV.
Sleazy: Rich (grins), powerful, and I wish they would play our videos more. Also, I'd say, pretty commercialised as well. But that'd maybe sound like sour grapes, because they don't play our videos as much as we'd want to. But Beavis and Butthead play our video and they love it. We're in their video game that's coming out for the Sega Genesis. We're at the end.
A: Guns'n'Roses.
Sleazy: The first album was pretty cool, it just seems like they lost it after their first album, they became so slow. They don't seem to be able to put together anything as good as their first album. Sophomore jinx kind of thing.
A: Michael Jackson.
Sleazy: I think he's very funny. I...I happen to think he probably has some problems with children. That's just my opinion, and I think it's very funny the way he sets them up to be a champion of their cause and he turns out to be, you know, a hypocrite. That's funny to me, because society does that to uevery so often. People are not who they seem to be you know



A: Green Jelly.
Sleazy: Friends of ours...em...fast learners, and really lucky that they had a hit record. It enriches you so that you can do more things.
A: Religion.
Sleazy: I think about it quite a bit, but I'm not into any religion. I don't know how anybody else in the band feels.
A: Money.
Sleazy: Money is freedom, that's the way I look at it. I don't look at money as materialism, I'm really not into buying things and having things around, but I do appreciate money because it allowes you to do more of the things that you wanna do. Create, build, and money definitely helps you to do that.
A: But with the money you earn you help to destroy things, people might say, such as decent moral values and religion.
Sleazy: I think deconstructivism has its place, but I hope that a message that we hopefully get across is what you can do with hard work, because that's what we do, if you consider the large amoung or production that goes into Gwar. And the amazing thing is that it's self-generated and not artificially supported by subsidy, not much.
A: The Real Morality Squad.
Sleazy: PMRC (Parental/Parent's/Parents' Music Resource Center, ED.), is that what you wanna know about? Well, the Real Morality Squad is a lot more sophisticated right now. Essentially they're working through distributorships in America and instead of trying to fight you legally they basically are putting pressure on individual retail chains and whatnot to boycot them so those retail chains will, rather than risk that confrontation, refuse to carry objectionable material. We had a situation where we had to change one of our albums because it was just not gonna get out in the stores. That was "Toilet Earth", and we had to do a version without "Baby Dick Fuck". It would otherwise not have been released throughout a lot of stores in the States, including most of the big ones.
A: Is it not against the very grain of Gwar to go for those kinds of concessions?
Sleazy: Yeah, it goes against the grain but it's not that big a deal to us. First of all because I don't think we set out to *offend* people so much as we set out to *entertain* them. What's entertaining to us is what's offensive to other people. There is entertainment in offending people anyway. People like to be offended. It's like a rude joke.
A: AIDS.
Sleazy: A very complicated, subtle disease that is probably being misdiagnosed and definitely a lot of money is being made off of. I think it's probably a natural progression of AIDS virus mutations. What you have is a planet crowded with 5 billion people and you have tons of different anibiotics and drugs for curing diseases, and the diseases got to mutate to survive. It's just a natural progression. Venereal diseases in particular are an excellent way to pass on a disease. So you get that many people, you get a lower morality, and you get the right situation where a disease like AIDS is logically likely to happen. And unfortunately it's so sophisticated that it's probably easy for a lot of doctors to misdiagnose. They already did it with AZT, which is really nothing other than something that brings upon the demise of the patients faster than the disease itself. If you just ate well you'd do better, probably.

A: Gwar fans.
Sleazy: If they're just fully into it, when they buy our products and come to the show, they're up front, they're enthusiastic, they have a good time, but they're not destructive to us, you know, and hopefully not too destructive to the other fans, I would say that's typical. I don't know what they do at home.
A: Are you all now very rich?
Sleazy: No, very far from it.
Sexecutioner: (Looking up from some nowing of his costume padding) We're below poverty level.
A: But why do you do it then?
Sleazy: Because we love it. A great phrase to end this interview, I should think. I ask Chuck if perhaps he'd care to find Slymenstra Hymen, female Gwar member, for me. He immediately goes to fetch her from the tour bus during which time I am alone in the Gwar tent. I don't know why, but it's a weird experience of some kind. I find myself gazing at Slymenstra's spiked bra next to the prop coffin, have to tear off my gaze. After a while she walks in, a totally normal girl with tangly medium-length hair and a zany giggle bordering on the nervous. She seems not very sure of herself, quite on the contrary to her stage presence [this total antagonism between reality and stage presence made me wonder about the true penis size of lead singer Dave "Oderus Urungus" Brockie]. Chuck sits down with a large notebook, doing some drawings on a concept he has for an upcoming tour with a few other bands called (I seem to recall off the top of my head) "Organised Chaos". And Gwar pales when he describes the two other bands that will be on that tour - one of them with something involving vicious machines hurling pig carcasses and some other machines incinerating them while in the air. Really weird.
I leave Chuck to his brainstorming and have a short talk with Ms. Hymen, faithfully captured by the walkman.
A: What's your age?
Slymenstra: I'm 26 million years old.
A: So you're 26?
Slymenstra: Yeah <giggles zanily>.
A: What's your real name?
Slymenstra: Danielle, but sometimes I spell it D-A-N-Y-E-L-L. It's French. My father is from France. You know, Americans always say they're from somewhere. We continue talking in short about some of the video game projects Gwar is involved in but she tells me, pointing to someone who's sitting outside the tent reading a book, that I had better talk to Scott Krahl about that. I wish her a good gig and say goodbye, going outside to interrupt Scott in his reading in the last five minutes prior to Napalm Death taking the stage. I have not recorded this bit so I just hope I'm not forgetting anything in this summary. Scott tells me about a Gwar level that will be designed for Dallas' ID Software's "Doom II", a cult PC game that no PC freak seems to be able to live without. He also tells me Gwar is actually online via the Internet (email address "gwar@delphi.com") and that he is planning to set up a list server with mailing list and all, once he has installed a more powerful and faster modem and that kind of thing. Right now it's just an email address where you can contact Gwar. He says there are about eight messages there every day, and he answers them all by himself when he's home. He says he'll be home again in August.

WaLdRock 94

Bergum, July 9th 1994.
Featuring Omission, Anathema, Skintrade, Gorefest, NOFX, Napalm Death, Sick Of It All, Obituary and Gwar.

This year was, for some reason or other, the first time I ever went to Waldrock; I seem to be a later bloomer where festivals are concerned (1993 was the first year I went to D.O.A., would you believe!). Waldrock 1994 for me consisted of two interviews (captured elsewhere in this issue of "Avalanche Magazine") and quite a few good bands, about which I'd like to remark some stuff down here.

First band on stage was Omission, a local band I believe. I am totally unfamiliar with their material but it sounded OK. I didn't grieve too much when they disappeared, however, and the stage was made ready for Anathema.

Anathema

Not too long after that, Anathema took to the stage. It was the first time I'd seen them in daylight, and I have to say it was quite different. Of course they started off with "Lovelorn Rhapsody", after which a variety of older songs were played (among them "Sleepless"). However, they also performed some stuff off forthcoming albums: "Welcome to Hell" from the Venom Tribute Album and a song off forthcoming EP "Pentacost 3", wrapping up their show with a fiery version of a musically simple but otherwise OK song I believe was called "666" (probably to be found on their January 1995 full-length release, "Rise Pantheon Dreams"). Anathema seem to have gone for all-out inspiration of their heroes of old, Venom. And, so far, I like it.

Gorefest

Gorefest, it seems, are quick learners. Around the release of their third album, "Erase", they appear to have decided to go for a certain image involving "GF" logo banners on the back of the stage and "GF" logo T-shirts. I am not too sure myself whether that's a good or a bad move, but in the end I did hear some people telling me Gorefest was going too much into this image thing.
Never mind image. Mind the music. Which is exactly what I did when they started. They played four
old songs and three new ones, the latter part of which I didn't recognize because I don't have "Erase" yet. The old songs I seem to recall were "Mental Misery", "Get A Life", "Reality When You Die" and, the last song of course, the more than excellent "Confessions of a Serial Killer" (this being the only song off their debut album, "Mindloss").
It wasn't like Dynamo Open Air '93, but it was a good gig nonetheless. The new songs sounded OK, though I will still have to listen to "Erase" some time before I can make a final judgement.

Napalm Death

Napalm Death came on stage during the final part of a conversation I had with the Gwar computer person, Scott Krahl (a.k.a. One Of The Slaves). Excusing myself, I dashed for the press pit where I would now have a chance to make some decent pictures of Napalm Death.
"Suffer the Children" was their first song - and one of my favourites that this time I actually got to hear (last time I was interviewing Entombed during the first bit of Napalm Death's performance). Although I think Napalm Death had below average sound and they're more of a small venue band to begin with, they played excellently. "More than Meets the Eye", "Twist the Knife (Slowly)" and "Hung" were played off their latest album "Fear Emptiness Despair", whereas some old classics passed the listeners by as well. Unfortunately the Napalm Death set had to be cut short. Because of them having forgotten European power sockets they had started much too late and now they had to pay. They didn't mind, though I suppose large part of the audience did. Even so, they played the Dead Kennedies cover "Nazi Skins Fuck Off" (I still don't know if it's called this actually) after which they went off stage.

Next on were Sick of it All. Again, I didn't like that band particularly. Time for me to try and get a bite to eat. The food, first of all, was horribly expensive. You had to pay 2,50 Dutch guilders (almost £1) to get some French Fries with mayo. You got about 8 French Fries for your money. In the end I opted for a better-looking and, unfortunately, similarly expensive "Hamburger Special". That would have to do.

Obituary

Next up was one of my two most favourite bands appearing at this year's Wâldrock, Obituary. They had not been on the road long and it was evident that they had a lot of fun on the stage. During the first two songs - one of them "Turned Inside Out", I recall - I was in the press pit. After that I went backstage again. There were two stage exits, of which one was guarded by somewhat of a zealot. On the other side, however, there wasn't a guard at all. I spent the entire rest of the Obituary concert standing on that left back corner of the stage, enjoying myself tremendously, flipping out. Sound was perfect, the band played their songs with awesome energy. After I guess about an hour they left the stage - which was not until they had played about three new songs (which sounded great) and a load of classics including "'Til Death", "Words of Evil" (the predictable encore), "Cause of Death", "Body Bag" (?), "Back to One" and "Killing Time" (and probably some more). Covered by the huge banner that hung behind Donald Tardy's drum kit, Gwar roadies (including some of them that would later appear on stage as Slaves) had already been building up their drum kit while Obituary were performing. Their drums are quite ordinary, really, but all parts that can be covered by rubber bones and stuff without them interfering with the drum sound were covered up. I really respect these guys. I think the claim to their being the hardest working band in showbusiness might very well hold true. And I wouldn't like to be one of the

By Richard Karsmakers



roadies, who obviously do the bulk of the work.

GWAR

The gathered security people all wore thin plastic coats and all sound monitors on the stage had been covered similarly. Obviously, Gwar was going to kick some bloody (and sperm-y) ass.

On stage came Sleazy P. Martini, the Gwar "manager". The show had begun. Two heavily dressed people entered the stage, offering Sleazy millions of dollars to sell out Gwar. He politely declined, Gwar kicking off with "Americanized" and the heavily dressed people turning out to conceal huge amounts of blood and gore beneat their coats. Swords and knives were used to disembowel them, Gwar claiming it would never sell out.

I had already left the press pit to prevent the many gallons of expected semen and bloodshed from damaging my camera or the other stuff present in the bag I carried around.What followed was probably the most entertaining heavy metal show I had ever seen and probably won't ever see again unless I go to see Gwar another time. I believe, for starters, the disemboweled corpses first got eaten by a huge worm-like pair of jaws located under the drumkit. Some moments later there were three further people coming on the stage of which the heads got chopped off - blood splattering copiously dozens of feet into the audience as the three linked arms and danced a morbid polka. Slymenstra did a pyro show and suddenly took from between her legs an enormously huge, blackened and bleeding tampon. Also, we were introduced to Skulhedface, a creature that seeks to warp Gwar fans into hating the band by means of a ray device called the Homoginizer to the sound of the first chords, distorted heavily, of "The Road Behind". Sleazy defeated it with a Krakzooka, smoke enveloping the stage.One of the climaxes was the appearance of Michael Jackson on stage to the sounds of "Billy Jean". Sexecutioner interviewed him, asking him the secret of his success."Well," the sampled voice of the real Michael said, "I love children."The audience doubled with laughter. Then Sexy continued... "But whatta good are all the little boys and girls in Holland unless it is templed with limitless child molestation..." leading the band into "Sexecutioner". Somewhere during this song Michael Jackson's...er...procreative organ was pulled out, not long after which he started coming all over the audience, shooting blue semen. At the end of the song the skin of his head got torn off, revealing that in fact Michael Jackson was a transvestite space alien.

"Isn't that amazing," Oderus concluded dryly. After that we got the first song I ever heard of Gwar, "Horrors of Jig", during which it is revealed what the huge black-plastic-covered contraption at the side of the stage exit was - a huge three-person costume of a mutated Skulhedface, one huge shape in the middle with a fanged jaw at crotch height, several mutated heads and breasts at chest level, the two side shapes being huge hands. Later in the song the hands got cut off, blood splattering even further and in even more huge quantities. Suddenly out of the fangs came Hitler's face spitting blood at the audience. Oderus took a sword and cut off Skulhedface's head, again with blood splattering almost up to the very ceiling. Slymenstra collected the head and opened it to reveal (and eat) its brains. Oderus got a hammer and began mindlessly hammering about.After the song, two normal girls suddenly find themselves on the stage. I am not sure whether these were ordinary girls or roadies, but anyway they got eaten by the monster under the drumkit, that suddenly turned out to be some huge kind of caterpillar that danced and prowled across virtually the entire stage, pretty impressive. After the girls have been fed to silent its frenzy, suddenly Sexecutioner got caught. Other band members started hacking at the beast, cutting off the head. The caterpillar remains (need I say they were bleeding profusedly?) retracted under the drumkit, Sexecutioner jumping around with the cut-off fangs around him.The last song prior to the encore was "Sick of You", at the end of which Oderus took his biggest of all swords, hosing some more red fluid all over the stage and the befuddled audience.

Midnight arrived when the band stopped playing. I had to get backstage where two Avalanche guys were waiting for me to beat the rush out. We entered the car to the sound of the first song in the encore in the background, "Black and Huge".

I discovered green stains on my bag, that could only have been Oderus' semen. And I had been way far off!

What with my having emphasized the show elements of Gwar so far, it remains to be told that the music actually stood like a house. Gwar played the songs fairly faithfully, and I think many people who had only heard of Gwar's image before were pleasantly surprised at the music they got to hear. A lot of sampled sounds were used throughout the concert in the background, adding a lot to the whole experience. I didn't recognize the songs they played off their latest album (I only listened to it a few times), but I assume they played the forthcoming single releases "Jack the World" and "Saddam A-Go- Go", as well as, probably, "The Incidious Soliloquy of Skullhedface". Other songs they performed, apart from the ones mentioned above already, were "Maggots", "Ham on the Bone" and, I believe, "The Salaminizer".

I was pretty tired, thirsty and hungry when the car left Burgum. There was barely enough fuel to get us to Marijn's home in Amersfoort crossing a country where all fuel stations were closed. The last few kilometres got fairly intense, the "fuel out" warning light blinking almost constantly. But we made it, and at about 3 AM I lay myself to sleep, praying for the lord my soul to keep.



Anathema

Together with My Dying Bride and Paradise lost, Anathema rules over England with their death/doom metal. Anathema's previous album, "Serenades", sold reasonably well. Their new full-length album will probably be released in the beginning of next year. Through Peaceville they have just released a mini album called "Pentecost III", recorded at Academy Studios. The last few months they've done some gigs through Europe with My Dying Bride and Swedish thrash metal act, At The Gates. I talked to Darren (lead singer) about his life, his music and his thoughts about the world.

Avalanche: In an interview with Aardschok magazine (Holland) a while ago, you said that Anathema didn't play Death metal anymore. Anathema was influenced by this wide style and took part in it for years. Overall you still play death metal. It looks like you're ashamed for this style of metal.

Darren: I'm not ashamed of anything we do. The only faith I have left is in metal these days, so it is to the contrary, we are very proud of metal. The magazines talk about Morbid Angel, Carcass, etc. We feel that the interviewer was talking about this kind of death metal. Besides,the reason I say we are not death metal is because I hate the death metal tag. Any form of categorisation creates boundaries and limits. Often I feel that this "labelling" of music is almost a part of the "conspiracy". We are heavy metal...true, extreme heavy metal!

Avalanche: Do you think the media is to blame for the so-called death of death metal?

Darren: Yes, by inventing the tag and always choosing to label bands, you then get shitty new bands who categorise and label their own music and always try to write a "certain" style of music instead of allowing their own free creativity to create original music.

Avalanche: It is very popular to combine metal with unusual instruments nowadays. How do you feel about this experimental music?

Darren: If a band is 100% honest in what they do then nothing should stop them. Personally we believe there's so much that has not yet been done using the five instruments we use, so that is what we do...create original music instead of creating unoriginal music and sticking an unusual instrument over it in a vain attempt to make the music sound original.

Avalanche: Are you satisfied with the albums you recorded so far?

Darren: Yes, we are satisfied with all of our stuff. Though this music is very bleak indeed and very much on the down side of the emotions.

Avalanche: Is there anything you hate about your life as a musician?

Darren: The only thing I want to do in life is what I am doing now, so I am very lucky. Obviously there are other places I would like to be, but destiny has placed me here. Being kept indoors by neverending tons of mail is bad but if the band shared it more then it wouldn't be so bad. It's a lot better than having to get up at 8 in the morning and work 'till 6 at night every day. I would never work like that though, I'd go to the hills to play music if I was not in the band.

Avalanche: Do you have expectations for the future?

Darren: Yes,but they are very bleak and pessimistic. War, disasters, famine. I think this is natural considering what has happened in the last two thousand years, especially the last two hundred years.

Avalanche: How do you feel about racism?

Darren: Just another way for the narrow minded, insecure people to discriminate. Discrimination and racism have been bred into people, I believe. Television does nothing to help.

Avalanche: Do you think we can stop the war in Yugoslavia?

Darren: Very, very difficult and deep subject. I believe the whole war is part of the conspiracy and that Britain, Germany, Russia, France and maybe some other countries are actually backing up Serbia and letting them decimate the Bosnian people.
Chinese are destroying Tibetans, Greeks killing Kurds, Iraq are also killing Kurds and the marsh Arabs who live in the Garden of Eden. This once beautiful area of land between the Tigris and Euphrates, south of Babylon, has been drained, damned and burned by Iraq to set up oil fields and Saddam Hussein already has contracts with the French oil company ELF and probably others in Europe and the US. He has killed thousands,in the most horrific
way too hard and too detailed for me to tell you. I believe the West is deliberately turning a blind eye to the wiping out of the world's only true societies still left.

Avalanche: Are these subjects you think and write about or couldn't you care less?

Darren: Oh yes...every horrible thing you could ever imagine has been carried out to the true people in the world. It is worse than anyone could ever think.

Avalanche: Is there something you like to say to your fans?

Darren: If you are an Anathema fan you should do your best always to think about what Anathema means...and never stop thinking...it's deep. One solution...revolution!

by Marijn Vermunt



Gorefest

Gorefest are a Dutch death metal band. Where a band the likes of Pestilence didn't survive the international critics with their latest album, Gorefest came with an outstanding new album that will probably mean a breaktrough on worldwide basis. Gorefest played last year's edition of the Dynamo Open Air festival, but this year the time had come to accept the Pinkpop management's offer to play at their festival. Clever as they are, however, they eventually played both festivals' camping warm-up gigs, in front of 20,000 people each time. I spoke with Jan-Chris de Koeijer over the phone a week after these festivals. Before I asked his personal opinion on the new album "Erase", Jan-Chris told me about his performance on both the Dynamo Open Air and the Pinkpop festivals.

Jan-Chris: The reason why we played on the Pinkpop and Dynamo campings instead of on the actual festival days was because at that point we hadn't yet released the new album. It was possible to play, but that would have meant playing our old songs because nobody knew the new ones. I hope we'll play on next year's edition of Dynamo,though. The headliner show on Pinkpop's Rockin' Kolonia) was great. We played in front of 20 to 30,000 people.

Avalanche: What did you think of Dynamo's line-up this year?

Jan-Chris: Not my kind of music. The problem is that the only way to keep a low admission fee is to contract bands which are on the road at that period of time. Big names mean a lot of money. As to the music, I think had there been more extreme bands on tour they would have been chosen to play Dynamo.

Avalanche: Don't you think it's true that there were so many (U.S.) hardcore bands due to them being very popular these days?

Jan-Chris: Yeah, absolute strange, I admit.

Avalanche: What was the organization of both festivals like?

Jan-Chris: Very chaotic. Dynamo had many traffic problems. I even heard there won't be an tenth edition of the festival next year(?!). You can't compare Pinkpop and Dynamo. For instance, the Pinkpop organization is payed whereas Dynamo only works with volunteers.

Avalanche: OK,let's talk about the new album, "Erase", now. Maybe you're sick and tired of telling people about the change in music, but I ask you anyway. Was it a direct choice?

Jan-Chris: First of all, I don't mind talking about our new album because I like it very much and no, it was not a direct choice. You make direct choices when you are a construction builder, not when you are a musician. I don't make an album when I can't support my music. I make music because I like it. The reason for this change is that there are two years between "False" and "Erase". We are older, wiser and we have grown up. Also we are better musicians than we were before. The songs are mainly written by our two guitar players, Frank and Boudewijn.
Especially Boudewijn wrote many songs. He is very much into music from the 70's - Led Zeppelin, Thin Lizzy, Van Halen. We used his music because we liked it very much. Gorefest with influences from the 70's. Our thoughts were simple: We want to make a fabulous album, not just a death metal album. We wanted to feel good about the music. When people are asking me how I feel about the new album, I tell them that we found the perfect mix between extreme, brutal music and melody.

Avalanche: I think Gorefest could be a world act with this album. Is that your intention?

Jan-Chris: Do you think so?

Avalanche: Yes,I really think that's possible.

Jan-Chris: Thanks! Of course I want to be a "big" band and earn much money, but only my way and not at the cost of everything. You don't start a band to get rich. Nobody does. I want to prove that others, especially the people who are saying that you can't live off your music, are wrong.

Avalanche: Wouldn't it be fun to be the first Dutch mega act?

Jan-Chris: Vandenberg was a big act.They were very popular in the US...In Japan too, but a world mega act, not really...and they didn't make it in the end. This is difficult. This is one of the reasons people call me arrogant. Yeah, we have a very good album and we are probably going to sign a good deal with the biggest agent in Europe, the one Metallica are also signed to. We are busy with a record company for the USA and I heard there was interest from a major! Sure, why not a mega act...When you say that, people tell you that you're arrogant. A typically Dutch mentality, don't you agree? I have a clear opinion about some things. I'm not afraid to speak this opinion out in public.Some people have difficulty with my ideas. As long as I'm not hurt by that, they can call me arrogant. People who do know me, know better.

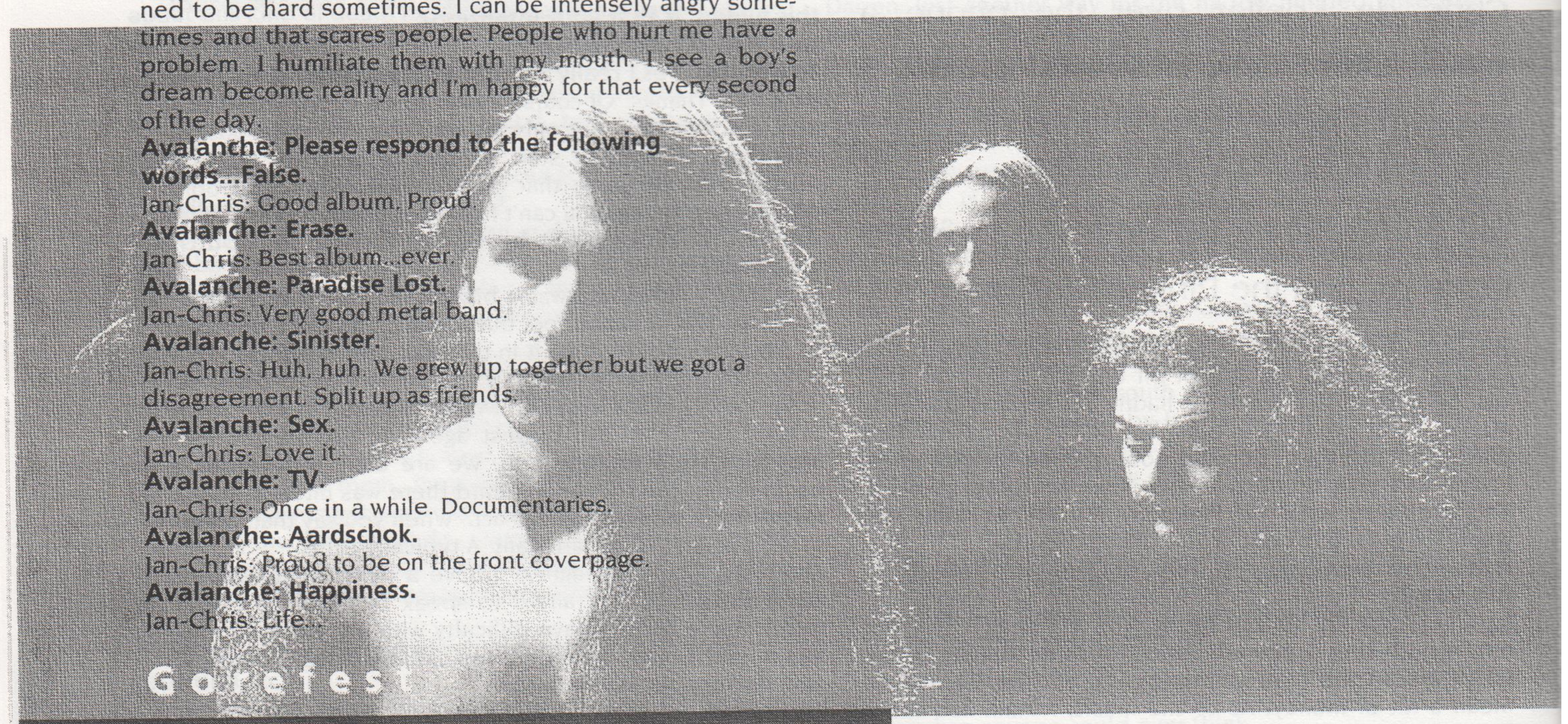
Avalanche: Is there something you don't like about your life as a musician?

Jan-Chris: Expectations. And there are people who think that they own you. People/fans expect so much from you. Every time you have to do something else to satisfy the fans. Suppose people didn't like the new album. Then you had to defend the album over and over again. I was afraid that people would like the album. Fortunately we lived up to their expectations.

by Marijn Vermunt



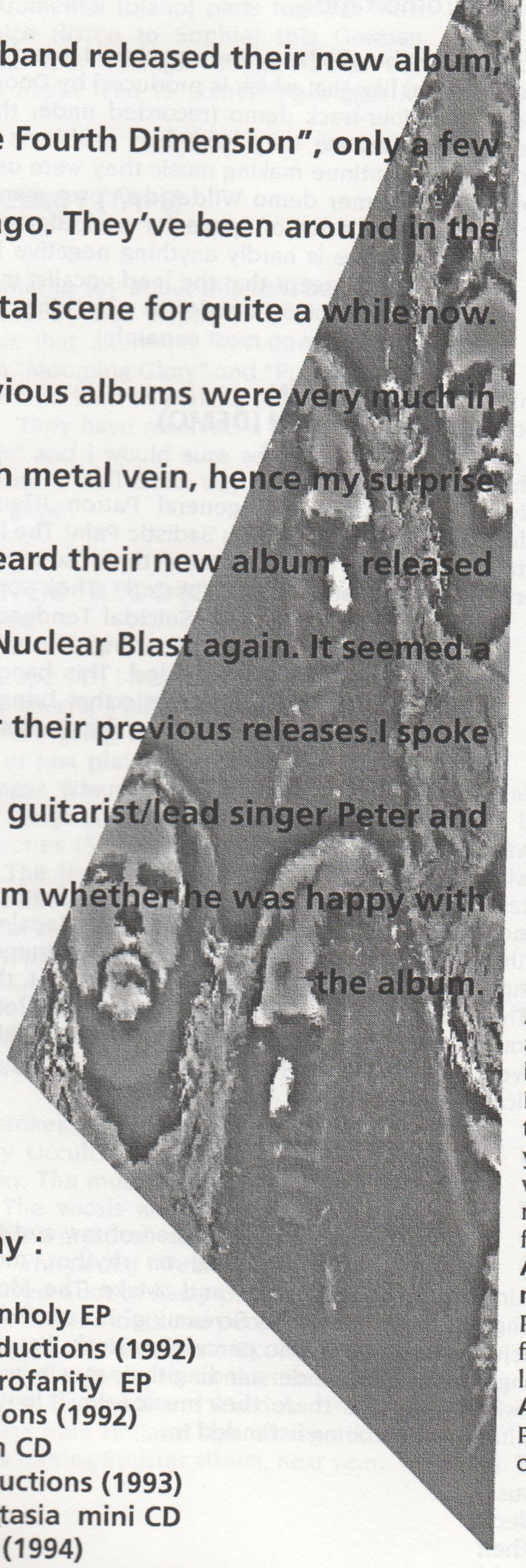
Avalanche: What will Gorefest do to promote "Erase"?
Jan-Chris: Probably a tour with Obituary. If not, we will do a headline tour through Europe. When we sign a deal with a US label we will also do some shows over there of course.
Avalanche: I heard about a tour through Europe with Amorphis?
Jan-Chris: Yes, because I like the band and their current album "Tales from the Thousand Lakes". Nuclear Blast will spend much money on this tour for promotion, etc.
Avalanche: Do you only live for the music you make or do you also have other indulgences, hobbies or wishes besides Gorefest?
Jan-Chris: I have one indulgence and that's my wife.
Unfortunately I haven't got any hobbies, though I'd like to have one. However, Gorefest is a job that takes 24 hours a day.
Avalanche: Are you intersted in politics or human behaviour?
Jan-Chris: I write lyrics about these subjects. These lyrics are my personal thoughts. "Piece of Paper" from the album deals with the problems in Yugoslavia. The USA no longer have the money to be this planet's police. Yugoslavia was forced to be a country although it never really was a country. Everybody could have foreseen there would have to be trouble some day. The country has a violent history ever since World War II. A solution? I don't know. Interference from the West would mean war and lots of people would-die.I really don't see a solution to this problem.
Avalanche: Many people talk about Jan-Chris de Koeijer. Tell me, who does Jan-Chris think he is?
Jan-Chris: An emotional, quiet guy. Used to be shy but learned to be hard sometimes. I can be intensely angry sometimes and that scares people. People who hurt me have a problem. I humiliate them with my mouth. I see a boy's dream become reality and I'm happy for that every second of the day.
Avalanche: Please respond to the following words...False.
Jan-Chris: Good album. Proud.
Avalanche: Erase.
Jan-Chris: Best album...ever.
Avalanche: Paradise Lost.
Jan-Chris: Very good metal band.
Avalanche: Sinister.
Jan-Chris: Huh, huh. We grew up together but we got a disagreement. Split up as friends.
Avalanche: Sex.
Jan-Chris: Love it.
Avalanche: TV.
Jan-Chris: Once in a while. Documentaries.
Avalanche: Aardschok.
Jan-Chris: Proud to be on the front coverpage.
Avalanche: Happiness.
Jan-Chris: Life...



Gorefest



Hypocrisy



This band released their new album, "The Fourth Dimension", only a few weeks ago. They've been around in the metal scene for quite a while now. Their previous albums were very much in the death metal vein, hence my surprise when I heard their new album - released through Nuclear Blast again. It seemed a relief after their previous releases.I spoke with guitarist/lead singer Peter and asked him whether he was happy with the album.

Peter: Well,in the beginning I listened to the album too much and I became sick of it after while. But now I'm proud of this album, much more than our previous albums. This album has a clear sound to it. The album is different from the others, I like it very much. One of the things that I want is to make every album different from the others. So we did.

Avalanche: Some things in your music have changed since the last album.

Peter: We made the album much more simple. Lots of bands are playing very technical and complicated music. It's hard for people to get into it when listening. Our thoughts were to make straight kick-ass songs. I believe the music is much more nicer to listen to.

Avalanche: So, it wasn't because of the money that you changed the music?

Peter: No, no. It would be nice to sell a lot of albums, but it doesn't matter to me if we don't sell very much, as long as people like our music. I don't care if 10 people say it's the best I've heard or 30,000 people buy the album and don't give a shit about it.

Avalanche: What were the first reactions to the album?

Peter: Surprised. I think that's OK. You should surprise people. Yes, everybody liked the new album.

Avalanche: You made some video clips for MTV isn't it?

Peter: One song from "Death is just Beginning" (video compilation) got censored right away. It was too bloody. We also made some clips for our previous albums but most of them were censored or sent back to us. We will make a video clip for one song from "The Fourth Dimension".

Avalanche: Are there plans for a tour?

Peter: Yeah, but we don't know for which band we can open and unfortunately we don't know when we will go on tour. Nuclear Blast are working on that right now. I hope at the end of this year. We don't want to headline a tour. It's better to be an opening act; the audience is fresh plus I like to see it as a match. I want to play better than the headliner, which often means a 100% dedication.

Avalanche: Is there a favourite band that you'd like to open up for?

Peter: Right now any band (laughs). It would be fun to open up for Deicide.

Avalanche: Tell me something about yourself. When and where were you born and when did you become interested in metal music?

Peter: I was born in 1970 in Sweden. I live in a very small town of 2,000 people in the middle of the woods. For three years I lived in the U.S.A. I love metal music ever since I was a kid. Mfirst album was by Venom. I like many kinds of music, especially Black Sabbath and Deep Purple, music from the 70's.

Avalanche: What's your favourite band at the moment?

Peter: I have collected many albums through the years. A few months ago I got a spell of collecting fever again. I collect old Kiss stuff now.

Avalanche: Plans...

Peter: Hopefully be around for a couple of years and keep on developing new music..

Discography :

Rise of the Unholy EP
Mephitic productions (1992)
Sacrificious Profanity EP
SOD productions (1992)
Ignis Creation CD
Osmose productions (1993)
Waves of Erotasia mini CD
Nuclear Blast (1994)
Sweet X-rated Nothings CD

by Marijn Vermunt

REVIEWS

GRAVE
SOULLESS (CD)
Century media

Soulless, a mixture of melodic, groovy music exposing the musical influences from various bands these days. That doesn't mean that Grave is becoming a cover band, but it shows that these three Swedish musicians know what their music is going to sound like, now and in the future. With 11 new songs they make you understand that Grave has become more mature. With songs like "Soulless" and "Turning Black", Grave takes you further and beyond. With the former albums in my head ("Into the Grave" and "You'll Never See") they prove to me that death metal is certainly not gone. Instead it has been taken over and formed into another kind of metal...GRAVE METAL.

THE 3RD AND MORTAL
SORROW (CD)
Concrete records

Have you ever heard of atmospheric metal? The stuff this band produces is absolutely great! Four songs (of which one instrumental) with an unequalled highlight in "Ring of Fire"! This Norwegian band has a female lead vocalist who sings in different languages, but masters them all perfectly! Pumping rhythms with classical influences give you the feeling you are listening to an opera. The 3rd and Mortal are ready to conquer the world with their atmospheric metal; again it seems that Scandanavia rules!!

SYNERGY
RATIONAL CONTROL (TAPE)
Promo tape

The Dutch group Synergy is a result of a long cooperation between the individual musicians, and it shows. I find it somewhat hard to believe that this four track demo was recorded in a mere two days. The music is complex without being confusing. You can find all kinds of influences, from jazzy solos to Arabian melodies. It's not heavy, nor extremely fast or inaudible. But, then again, always the same stuff can get boring after a while. All of the four songs are quite long, at least measured by today's standards. The shortest track, "Pleasure", takes up six minutes of your time; the finale, " No stranger", steals your mind and gives it back after eleven and a half minutes. From a musical standpoint this is something you have to have heard!

STORMLORD
BLACK KNIGHT (TAPE)
Promo tape

This demo is the second time Stormlord leaves something solid for you to worship or detest. There are five new songs plus an intro and an outro, and last but not least they included a cover of Venom; all in all a total of eight songs. These guys have managed to put clarity in their sound without losing the low end. The sound of the lead guitar somewhat reminds me of old Black Sabbath as well as Sepultura. These Italians say they put every style of music in their songs, and perhaps that's true because I can't decide what kind of metal it is. Sometimes it's doom, then again it's death. Sometimes it's grind, even. I could underChristiano Borchi has a good voice but sometimes it seems like his voice can't keep up with the rest of the band. The whole thing is well put together, although the bridge from the intro to the first song could use a little work. Nevertheless the "whole" stands out.

DOOMSDAY
SCUM OF SOCIETY (TAPE)
Promo tape

It has been a long time ago since I heard real thrash/speed metal like that which is produced by Doomsday. With their new four-track demo (recorded under their own supervision because they have had problems with their label) they continue making music they were used to do, like on their former demo Wildeside? propaganda. The music is fast with a lot of space for melodic instrumental (bass) parts!There is hardly anything negative I could say about this band except that the lead vocalist must do something about his voice in order to get things on the real road, which they are on most certainly!

SADISTIC PAIN
SADISTIC PAIN (DEMO)
S.P.Productions

Never knew that general Patton (George C.Scott) had something to do with Sadistic Pain! The latest demo of S.P. California U.S.A. contains three songs: "Warmachine", "I love to hate" and "Convicted". Their songs are brutal and sick at the same time (Suicidal Tendencies). The music is very good, sharp and sweeping you up. The tape is very well-produced and-provided. This band should really be listened to if you like music that brings you to different sides of life, sometimes even the down sides!

BLEED
WOMB (DEMO)
Concrete records

Bleed is a band that plays the death metal that started "the riot" some years ago, like Napalm and Benediction did. With a well-performed guitar, drums and bass trio that is supported by a teriffic death grunt, these guys certainly make you understand that while a lot of bands change their style into melodic/doom music, Bleed holds the flag of "real Death Metal" up high.

RAMROD
RAMROD (DEMO)
Concrete records

This band is an expression of raw and rythmic power! This whole tape is based on rhythm, mostly in the songs "Listen...As I Die" and "Make The Most Noise". Another song, "The Sky Is Screaming" is covered by slamming guitar riffs and teriffic percussion work. You might have a slight problem understanding their music immediately but once you "get" there, their music (play it loud!) is certainly worth while being listended to.

By Marijn Vermunt • Richard Karsmak



ABEL KILLED CAIN?
RECYCABEL (DEMO)
Concrete records

Power metal with groove is what Abel killed Kain? sounds like. Obviously influenced by Skid Row and Guns and Roses (Ice T?), they manage to give you some music that's easy to listen to. Good and well-performed instrumental (piano) parts together with a touching voice (listen to Sophie) this German band gives you four "grunge" songs. Check out Damian, which might lead to something bigger in the near future!

NAKED EVE
MOURNING GLORY (TAPE)
Concrete records

I hardly know what to say about this new band from North Wales. Influenced by Led Zeppelin and Black Sabbath, they play music that alternates between punk, classical and rough. With "Mourning Glory" and "Puppet Lake" they-show you there's no limit in making and discovering new styles of music. They have received a lot of succes in the "World of music" and I would sure as hell be one to say that this new band is well on its way in their first year...(to the ferris wheel guys?

MISANTHROPE
MIRACLES:TOTEM TABOO (CD)
Holy/Displeased

The new Misantrope CD! I must say that I did look forward to this one. As always, Phillipe Courtoise De L'Argiliere amazes me. What's going on in this man's mind? Is he a musical genius or just plain crazy? How do you compose this kind of songs? Where does he get his poetry from? One of the best songs on this CD is "L'Erotique Courtoise" (childhood memories 15 years later) which is sung completely in French. The last four songs from the album were recorded in 1992 already, with another line-up, and feature more death metal kind of songs. Past and present on one album...I really hope they have a future.

OCCULT
PREPARE TO MEET THY DOOM (CD)
Holy/Displeased

Yeah, Holland strikes back, hard, heavy and mean! This debut album by Occult will blast you right out of your Christian pullover. The music reminds me a bit of the old days (Kreator). The vocals are mixed to the background and give the music a mystical effect. My absolute favourite song is "The Whispering Tear". After the release, Foundation received a lot of nasty phone calls, and some shows were cancelled too because people were to frightened at the prospect of having an Occult show at their venue. And they did a good job on the "Sons of Northern Darkness" tour with Immortal and Marduk. Finally something really extreme from Holland.This album will keep me satisfied until the coming Sinister album, next year.

HYPOCRISY
THE FOURTH DIMENSION (CD)
Nuclear Blast

This is the fourth album from the Swedish death metal band Hypocrisy (they recorded 2 full-length and one mini-album before). Hypocrisy succeeded in making a different album. Their previous album, "Osculum Obscenum", contained much more speed and could be described as a real and pure death metal album. Due to this change in music, Hypocrisy shows us they can do more. This album could be a bit disappointing for Hypocrisy's die hard fans. Listen carefully and you will notice influences from all kinds of metal. Hear some doom and black metal elements, but mainly they stayed with their so-called Swedish death metal. For more details (for example Peter's love for Kiss!), read the interview in this issue and see them on tour in a few months trough Europe.

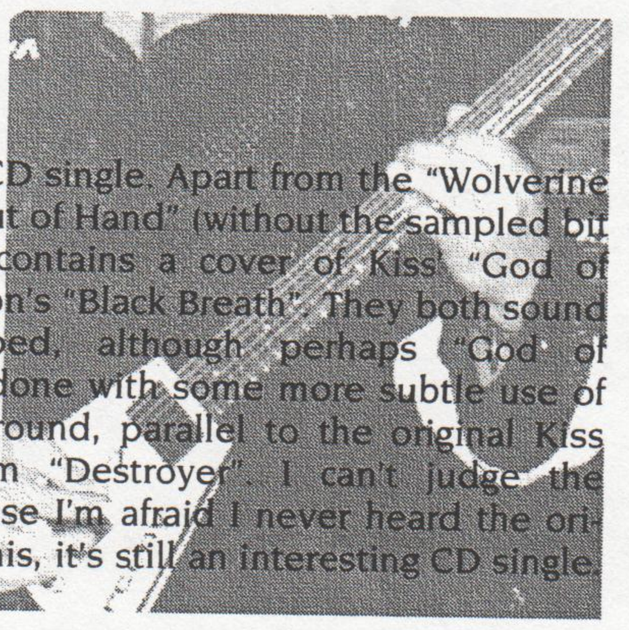
CRADDLE OF FILTH
THE PRINCIPLE OF EVIL MADE FLESH (CD)
Avantgarde Black

Well...adding a cello and keyboards to black metal is rather avant-garde to be honest. This CD is a big surprise to me, since I've never been a big black metal fan (that changed because two of my favourite bands are black metal acts).
A guest on this album is Darren from Anathema (yo, Marijn). See them on tour with Salem in October this year. Should you have had plans to buy the Occult album, buy this album, too. Damnation Distribution, Holland.

CORPORATE DEATH
SAMPLER (CD)
Relapse Records

This CD contains a collection of 29 tracks by 16 highly profitable bands. This album shows you a lot of great bands, all signed by Relapse Records. Among those present are Amorphis with "Exile of the Sons of Uisliu" (taken from "The Karelian Isthmus"), Macabre with "Embalmer" and "Serial Killer", and "Radio Hit", "Chump Change" and "Unbelievable" (of course, a great song!) by of Anal Cunt. These days it's very interesting to know that a lot of bands collect their fame because of similar productions; this this way they can prove themselves between other bands, just like bands along the lines of Convulse (their new album, "Reflections", is a must-have), Mortician, Disrupt, Exit-13 and Candiru. Now you know what's on it, you know what to buy!

ENTOMBED
OUT OF HAND
(EARACHE)



This is an interesting CD single. Apart from the "Wolverine Blues" album track "Out of Hand" (without the sampled bit at the beginning) it contains a cover of Kiss' "God of Thunder" and Repulsion's "Black Breath". They both sound unmistakably Entombed, although perhaps "God of Thunder" could have done with some more subtle use of samples in the background, parallel to the original Kiss version on the album "Destroyer". I can't judge the Repulsion cover because I'm afraid I never heard the original. Having said all this, it's still an interesting CD single.



MERCYFUL FATE
THE BELLWITCH
(MUSIC FOR NATIONS)

I like Mercyful Fate, no matter if actually "Mercyful" is not a proper English word but should be "Merciful". I have all their old stuff, their new stuff, and I have been known to repeatedly torture my voice trying to squeeze out King Diamond's preternaturally high singing when in a good mood. However, "The Bellwitch" (EP) really disappointed me. For starters it's basically a somewhat longer CD single but it's priced like a mid price CD - probably deemed possible because of the "limited edition" words printed on the cover. The EP contains two songs everybody already has ("The Bell Witch" and "Is That You, Melissa" from their latest full-length album) and three live tracks ("Egypt", "Come to the Sabbath" and "Black Funeral"). Musically the live tracks are OK, of course, but I've heard better sound quality and - a thing I was afraid of even before I bought - King Diamond's voice is no longer capable of handling the rigours of touring. On studio albums his voice is excellently high alternated with growlingly low, but live the high bits sound like pig slaughter and more oftent than not does he have to resort to singing them in a low voice.No, Mercyful Fate is OK to see live because then everybody's singing along anyway so you can't hear the way King screws up the vocal parts. But to just listen to a live recording is not worth the rather high price attached to "The Bell Witch". I am a big fan. If you are, too, I suggest you wait for their next album, due to be released in autumn 1994.



MY DYING BRIDE
SEXUALITY OF BEREAVEMENT (SINGLE)
(PEACEVILLE)

Some of you may remember my mentioning the Peaceville Collector's Club some time ago. Well, now is the best time to subscribe because the welcome gift will be the My Dying Bride "Sexuality of Bereavement" (a signed 7") as well as a free T-shirt. Depending on the time when you finally get to read this, another offer may be valid though. This is certainly the most interesting CC 7" so far, with the exclusive, non-album track of the same title that was recorded during the "Turn Loose the Swans" sessions. The B-side contains the "Crown of Sympathy" remix also found on the "I am the Bloody Earth" EP. "Sexuality..." is a very good song in the same vein as other recent My Dying Bride songs. Not better, not worse, just very good. This particular single totals to 16 minutes of music - quite long for a single (but, then again, you have to play it at 33 rpm as opposed to the regular 45 that are actually mentioned on the sleeve). Much worth your while!

ANGELS W/DIRTY FACES
SOUNDS OF THE WORLD TURNING
(BLUE FLAME)

Around early 1991 a band called Angels with Dirty Faces was formed in North West England, consisting of Jemery Dykes on bass, Simon Gibbs on vocals, Paul Roscrow on drums and Jason Woolley on guitar. After a self-financed mini-LP by the name of "A Little Taste" they have now released their debut full-length album, "Sounds of the World Turning", on Rock the Nation's Blue Flame Records label (from Luxemburg).Angels with Dirty Faces play a sort of grunge, quite melodic too, and certainly accessible to a wide audience I should think. Some songs have the kind of Lolapolooza appeal that you'd need to get a current-day non-house contemporary music hit, while many of the songs have a disctinctly heavy layer of guitar at the base of it all. When you listen to the album you don't get the idea you're listening to a vague Pearl Jam, Nirvana or Alice in Chains rehash (need I mention that blasted Stiltskin or whatever they're called?). It all sounds quite fresh and original, and my personal favourites are "Retro", "People" (though it's quite mellow). The only thing I dislike about the album - sometimes - is the vocalist. He can do some good shouting and singing but in some songs (such as the non-chorus parts of "Pots of Gold" and the beginning of "Retro") he's a bit too whiny, too experimental. Bit it's kept down to a minimum so that, overall, it's one hell of a good debut album with the drums coming out especially alive and vibrant. I am beginning to believe the bit at the end of their press release: "There is no way this band can fail!" Other than not being signed to a major label, that is, which I think is something this band really needs. If this band were signed to Geffen I reckon the sky would be the limit, and then some.

DARKTHRONE
TRANSILVANIAN HUNGER
(PEACEVILLE)

Well...what to say of this new Darkthrone album? I heard Darkthrone have already recorded four albums, and want to record another three (including a Fenriz solo album) before the year is out. When listening to "Transilvanian Hunger", suddenly you understand how this is possible. All tracks sound rather the same, especially the quality of the vocals and the lack of speed changes. Pertaining the latter I clocked most of the album 4 beats per second and they don't really deviate from that except on one song I believe. And if it's not fast enough to be the fastest band, why do it? And Norwegian lyrics are fun but half of their intended darkness (or even more) passes me by. I like the album's production least of all. It sounds as if you're listening to a transistor radio. Ancient Venom recordings were just as evil but at least their production was sortof OK. Is just making a recording appear sub-standard an artistic statement of sorts? I personally think Darkthrone will disappear when the Norwegian Death Metal Scene Controversy wears off. If people actually start to listen to the music and forget about the image that's behind it, they won't like what they hear.
Some of the statements originally set for inclusion on the sleeve have been left out due to the current Norwegian death metal scene controversy. Four tracks have lyrics by Count Grishnack, convicted murdered recently imprisoned for 21 years in Norway for killing arch rival Euronymous.
This album will not be available all too well in Germany and Britian because of said controversy, but I don't think anyone there will really miss anything. Without a doubt, Darkthrone is the least talented band in the Peaceville catalogue and, so far, their only band that I don't like.

DISONANCE
SLEEPLESS DEAD (DEMO)



Dissonance, a doom metal band from Lithuania, I guess has a good future ahead of it if only they'll get discovered. Their music is a lot like My Dying Bride or Anathema, but with less use of violins (if it all). Some passages have hints of Nightfall or Septic Flesh clinging to them, and production may not be good enough to use on a CD but gets the music across amply. If you like atmospheric metal, not too fast but really nice, you probably won't be disappointed by this. This demo, 26 minutes of music repeated on each of the tape sides, is available by sending US$ 10 to Ramunas Abromaitis, P.O. Box 2829, Central Post Office, 2000 Vilnius, Lithuania. It contains four songs plus a kind of bonus track, an older version of the last of the four songs, "Leaving the Body".

FEAR OF GOD
TOXIC VOODOO

Dawn Crosby's Fear of God is back to kill, and the faithful fans annex worshippers will be all the happier for it. "Within the Veil", Fear of God's debut album released in 1991, kicked some serious gothically doomy ass. Great atmospheric songs with Dawn's vocals dubbed thousandfold atop it - the thing we all know and love. For a long time it looked as if Dawn, after losing her record deal with Warner Brothers and the band splitting, would never be heard of again. Fortunately a relatively small record company by the name of Pavement Music Inc. signed her anyway.With a totally revised bunch of musicians she recorded "Toxic Voodoo", an album that is intermediate between "Within the Veil" and her earlier band Detente. Which means what you get is an album not as good as "Within the Veil" but still plenty aggressive with her inimitable "cigarettes-and-booze" vocals, lyrics involving betrayal and other possibly feminist subjects, and genuinely heavy songs. I would hasten to add that "Toxic Voodoo" is not perfect. The guitars sound like those on really old Destruction albums - a sound that is a bit dated - and the drums could have been more crispy clear. In other words the production could have been done better. Oh...no...I suddenly get a dream vision. There is a cloud. I am in a cloud chamber, there's a white door...I open it and see Scott Burns sitting at the knobs for Fear of God's third album. I have to close the door. Satan laughs, but I haven't got a clue why. Then I wake up, bathing in sweat. I find I have to change my underwear. Pavement Music Inc. 17W703A Butterfield Rd. Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181 USA

MISANTHROPE
MIRACLES: TOTEM TABOO
(Holy Records)

I have listened to this album about a handful of times, but no matter how open-minded I listen to it I don't really like it. With the risk of losing review status at Holy Records (I understand Misanthrope is their favourite and prime band, and it's French too) I have to say I don't like it at all actually.The music is quite inaccessible, which in itself is no problem. Compositions are complex and quite ingenious, certainly not void of a desire for experimentation and featuring treats such as classical music excerpts, subtle violin, and copper instruments. The album consists of three parts - five tracks that were recorded in June '92 without bass. These latter four songs are quite excellent, but the other songs have very experimental, almost whining vocals by main man guitarist/vocalist Philippe Courtois De L'Argiliere. Had the album been filled with tracks similar to these last four tracks it would have been quite excellent, but alas these four only make up less than 20 minutes of the total 55 minutes.I realise it's asking a band to act against its own developing and evolutionizing instinct, but I wish they would stick to their older style. I would consider myself quite open-minded but the vocals on the first five tracks primarily really don't suit me at all. Musically it's all OK though.
Thanks to Severine and Philippe for sending the CD. And it was nice meeting you at Waldrock!

SEPTIC FLESH
MYSTIC PLACES OF DAWN
(Holy Records)

Septic Flesh is a Greek band that has recently released their debut CD, "Mystic Places of Dawn". Their music is somewhat in the vein of Nightfall, but with a better production. Their label, Holy Records, calls it "dreamy war metal" I seem to recall, and this is most appropriate. Where Nightfall goes all-out no-holds- barred for the "war" bit, Septic Flesh gives more attention to the atmosphere, the "dreamy". In between viciously fast and aggressive segments, Septic Flesh creates some of the most beautiful (yes, the word "beautiful" is definitely in order here) music possible within the confinements of doom/war metal, or whatever you call it. Subtle use of keyboards, violin and female vocals takes to soaring heights their eeriely haunting compositions. This is music that doesn't just touch your neck and bowels, it also touches the mind and the heart. Masterpieces such as "Chasing the Chimera" and the sublime "The Underwater Garden" are interspersed with songs such as "Behind the Iron Mask" and "Return to Carthage" that cater for the lover of somewhat more straight-between-the-eyes metal. And then, once again, Septic Flesh glide beyond all previous limits into the long instrumental epos, "Mythos", one of the many climaxes on "Mystic Places of Dawn".I loved Nightfall, but Septic Flesh takes everything so much further. Spiros Antoniou's vocals are deep and doomy, on top of which melodies superb are laid. Words fail, really. This is the best in the genre, without a doubt. This is music to kill for. The only negative thing I can come up with is that, even at its 55 minutes of playing time, there's not enough of it. Thanks to Severine and Philippe for sending the CD. You have made my musical life a much more enjoyable one. Looking forward to the Orphaned Land album!

SHIP OF FOOLS
OUT THERE SOMEWHERE
(Peaceville)

One of Peaceville's Dreamtime label bands, Ship of Fools, has released their long-awaited second album. Well...it's not actually long awaited because it hasn't been more than about a year, but I was waiting for it nonetheless. Ship of Fools produce sortof semi-dreaming music, instrumental, with the use of speech samples. It's inspiring music to sit and do something intellectual or creative. It's hardly the music that will cause you to bang your brains out, but progressive...er... what progressive? It's difficult to classify,



and I'm not sure whether they would need to be classified properly anyway. I guess they wouldn't, for otherwise they would have signed to Holy Records probably <grin>. The new album "Out There Somewhere" has funky bits, some vaguely heavy bits, and seemingly a lot more guitar than their debut "Close Your Eyes, Forget the World". I think they describe their music as "dreamy, the stuff astronauts need". This is a proper description. I know for sure that if I am ever to book a Shuttle trip to the moon and back, I will insist on some Ship of Fools being on the tape in my walk-man. This is music that will redefine your definition of redefinition. Good stuff.

HÖRNQVIST PROJECT
A JOURNEY THROUGH TIME AND SPACE (Demo)

A very old demo, this one, dating back as far as 1991, but I received it only recently and I think it's flippin' excellent. As opposed to all other sortof death-metal oriented demos that are reviewed here, this is a guitar hero tape. The band consists of brothers (?) Jonas (guitar, bass and keyboard) and Magnus (drums and percussion), playing a gamut of many guitar styles (electric as well as some acoustic) in which guitarists can be distinguished the likes of Cyril Whistler, Greg Howe, Al DiMeola, Tony MacAlpine, Yngwie Malmsteen, Vinnie Moore and probably many more that I am not acquainted with sufficiently. Many of the songs are pretty happy in the way most Shrapnel guitarists are (particularly Greg Howe, Joey Tafolla), but there are jazzy bits and heavier bits as well ("Mixed Emotions" has all of them in one song, quite appropriately), and the unbelievably excellent "Unknown Journey" seems an almost direct tribute to several guitarists (mostly Malmsteen) and some more classical composers. "A Tear of Love (To You)" and "Memories of You" are ballads that probably hold profound meanings for the musicians but are less impressive than the other songs (which does not mean to say they're crap because I for one would probably never be able to play them). I don't like the cover much, but that isn't as important as the music contained on this most excellent guitar tape. The demo got sent to me by Jonas Hörnqvist himself, not as a review copy. I lack the order details, but I expect you can acquire it at Jonas' address: Hasselbackevägen 16, 44444 Stenungsund, Sweden. Try asking first, sending an IRC for reply, then send the money he needs if the demo is still available. I don't think you can possibly be disappointed if you're into guitar music! I think it's a disgrace that this band hasn't yet been discovered by labels the likes of Shrapnel or Relativity!

SPIRITUAL CEREMONY
VISION (Demo)

A massive 56 minutes is the total length of 7 songs on Spiritual Ceremony's "Vision" demo. This Italian band is actually quite good, using atmospheric compositions with keyboards and clever use of samples, but the major drawback is the production. Solo guitar bits sound too distorted, and very often the whole recording sounds as if recorded on one of those auto-record-level devices - when the drums are suddenly loud the whole background goes softer, and when the instruments get softer record level automatically cranks everything up. This is a real shame, as this could easily have been the best demo this time if only the production had been near-commercial. Still, on account of its incredible value for money and the actually good music, you may want to get this demo anyway. The address to send the required US$ 10 to is Simone Salvatori (is that a girl on those unbelievably deep growly vocals?!), P. Teodosio 15, I-00145 Roma, Italy.

PYOGENESIS SWEET X-RATED NOTHINGS (CD)
Nuclear Blast

This band is since "Waves Of Erotasia" one of my favorite bands.I must admit I was a bit nervous when I recieved their new album.What could I expect from this new album? After I heard songs like "It's On Me" and "Fade Away" it was obvious they had left the doom/de¨athmetal.Ok,it was not what I had expected but anyway this album will enter my perso¨nal top 10 list of this year.They made an album with much more influences from other music styles.Why did they change their music? That and more,you can read in the interview I did with Flo (vocals©leadguit≠ar) somewhere in this issue.This album is great and after all they made me very happy.Weird is that there are more than 90 songs on this album..?Open your mind for this new album.

TIAMAT WILDHONEY (CD)
Century Media records

"Wildhoney" is their fifth (including their live EP,"The Sleeping Beauty") album.And what an album this is!They definitly left the deathmetal behind them with this album.The music has many experimental parts we never heard on their previous albums.Tiamat,or should we say Johan Edlund,has tried to make an different album and I believe they succeeded.Songs like "Do you Dream of Me","The Ar" and "A Pocket Size Sun" will take you away to a fantastic journey into music.The keyboard parts came from producer Walda¨mar Sorycht≠a,now working with Dave Lombardo's new band Grip Inc. This one really hurts.Go see these guys on stage in the next view months.Of course we will do an interview with them in the next issue.

ANTICHRIST SUPERSTAR SAMPLER (CD)
Displeased records

This album contains 17 metalacts,which for me Hybernoid from the U.K. is the most interesting band.They released so far two singles;"Dust In The Wind" and "World Of Ruin".In a while they will record their debut CD. Further on this cd some Dutch bands like the trashmetal formations Mystic Charm and Donor and deathmetalband Gutwrench.Also on this cd some bands from the U.S.A;Damnation and Aftermath A.D.and from Portugal,Sacred Sin. From Sweden and Norway come respectively,Vindictive and Paraplegic. Hybernoid is the best I think,but there's lots more to hear on this album.



CRYSTAL AGE PROMOTAPE `94

A while ago Crystal Age sent me this tape.In their letter to me they wrote that their music wasn't standard scandanavian metal.But what is wrong with the traditional death metal from scandanavia?It doesn't matter this tape is very good.Sorry for you guys,but I must say that your music has influ¨ences from At the Gates (Sweden).Anyway,I liked this tape a lot.I hope there's a label who can offer these guys a deal.

DEMOLITION HAMMER TIME BOMB (CD)
Century Media records

Demolition Hammer's third album will enter the trash/core scene of today with bands like Pantera and newcommers Machine Head.There were some line-up changes the last view years.James Reilly left the band in 1993 and after that Vinny Daze also decided to leave the band.Anyway,one year later Demolition Hammer made one hell of an album,"Time Bomb".Only thing I can say is that they listened to Pantera's previous album too much.They made an agressive album which is a good combination between trashmetal and hardco¨re.Do you like bands mentioned above,than buy this album A.S.A.P. (M)

PLAYLIST

Jesse Vermunt

1. Amorphis | Tales From The Thousand Lakes
2. Tiamat | Wildhoney
3. Anathema | Serenades
4. Sadness | Ames De Marbre
5. Convulse | Reflections
6. Gorefest | Erase
7. Lubricant | Nookleptia
8. Etherial Winds | Saved
9. Asphyx | The Rack
10. Sepultura | Chaos AD

MARIJN VERMUNT

1. Pyogenesis | Sweet X-rated Nothings
2. Tiamat | Wildhoney
3. Amorhpis | Tales from The Thousand Lakes
4. Hypocrisy | The Fourth Dimension
5. Carpathian Full Moon | Serenades in Blood Minor
6. Anathema | Serenades
7. The Brandos | Killer Among Thieves
8. Cemetery Of Scream | Someone (demo)
9. My Dying Bride | I Am The Bloody Earth
10. Calvary | Facilities of Life (demo)

NEWS



British music publishers Peaceville have sent their revised schedule.And "revised" it is for certain, with a few releases having been delayed up to 6 months. August will see the release of Pentagram's delayed "Show 'Em How". In September there will be releases of the My Dying Bride EP Box Set (their current three CD singles in one box), Anathema's "Pentecost III" (an EP to warm you up for their second full-length album, track list "Kingdom", "Mine Is Yours To Drown In (Ours Is The New Tribe)", "We the Gods" and "Guitar Opera" as well as a rerecorded version of their July 1990 demo song "Memento Mori"), an At The Gates CC 7" (possibly with live tracks too) and Darkthrone's "Panzerfaust". Next there's a bit of a leap with the next release due on Sunday December 25th, this being a "Welcome to the Process" CC 7" by GGFH. Around that time 1995 will start, with releases in January of Anathema's "Rise Pantheon Dreams" (delayed from September '94), My Dying Bride EP's CD (all the CD single tracks on one CD) and Kong's "Cerumen in Verse" (also delayed - track list "Results", "Hoover", "Herk", "Prick", "Ditch", "Arab Loop", "Bump" and "Perculator"). February will witness releases of Autopsy's "Shitfun" (delayed from October '94), Vital Remains' "The Last Supper" (delayed from August '94!), Drug Free America's 2nd album (similarly delayed), GGFH's "Halloween" (delayed from October '94) and a mini CD of Tekton Motor Corporation remixes. March, finally, will see releases of Darkthrone ("Caravans to Empire Algol") and the "Peaceville 'V' Compilation". Not yet scheduled but due for release somewhere within the October 1994 to March 1995 period is My Dying Bride's third full-length album.

It should be noted that the Collector's Club singles (CC 7") are only available to Collector's Club members! Also, the "Unholy Black Metal" box by Darkthrone won't happen at all (or at least not for a while). For info on the Collector's Club, send a letter to Peaceville, P.O. Box 17, Dewsbury, West Yorkshire, WF12 8AA, England, or call England 0924 466814.

Peaceville have canned their Deaf sub-label. Whereas the future for Morta Skuld and Banished remains unclear, At The Gates has been moved to the Peaceville label.

There is an official German Black Sabbath fan club now. The address is: c/o Alexander Rack, Postlagernd, D-14171 Berlin, Germany, tel/fax (030) 824 67 99 (Alexander Rack).

PLAYLIST

Anathema - "Serenades" Deep Purple - "Made In Japan" Dream Theater - "Images and Words" Entombed - "Left Hand Path" Obituary - "Cause of Death" Pan-Thy-Monium - "Dawn of Dreams" Satriani, Joe - "Time Machine" Septic Flesh - "Mystic Places of Dawn" Slayer - "Decade of Aggression" Vai, Steve - "Passion and Warfare"

MERCYFUL FATE
THE BELLWITCH
[MUSIC FOR NATIONS]

I like Mercyful Fate, no matter if actually "Mercyful" is not a proper English word but should be "Merciful". I have all their old stuff, their new stuff, and I have been known to repeatedly torture my voice trying to squeeze out King Diamond's preternaturally high singing when in a good mood. However, "The Bellwitch" (EP) really disappointed me. For starters it's basically a somewhat longer CD single but it's priced like a mid price CD - probably deemed possible because of the "limited edition" words printed on the cover. The EP contains two songs everybody already has ("The Bell Witch" and "Is That You, Melissa" from their latest full-length album) and three live tracks ("Egypt", "Come to the Sabbath" and "Black Funeral"). Musically the live tracks are OK, of course, but I've heard better sound quality and - a thing I was afraid of even before I bought - King Diamond's voice is no longer capable of handling the rigours of touring. On studio albums his voice is excellently high alternated with growlingly low, but live the high bits sound like pig slaughter and more oftent than not does he have to resort to singing them in a low voice. No, Mercyful Fate is OK to see live because then everybody's singing along anyway so you can't hear the way King screws up the vocal parts. But to just listen to a live recording is not worth the rather high price attached to "The Bell Witch". I am a big fan. If you are, too, I suggest you wait for their next album, due to be released in autumn 1994.

ALIAS
METAL TO INFINITY
[ROCK THE NATIONS]

First of all, I should want to say that this is not the American band Alias that debuted with "Alias" on EMI America in 1990 (Curci - DeMarchi - Fisher - Fossen - DeRosier) but an American band Alias that debuted with "Alias" in 1987 (Mark Severn guitar and backing vocals; Phil Arnt drums & percussion; Carl Hayden vocals; Dirk van Tilborg bass and keyboards), unless their entire line-up has changed and there was a mix-up with debut release dates.What we have here is typical AOR that I suppose had its audience but totally fails to convince. The vocals are in some ways similar to Fates Warning but not just as good. Compositions vary from cliche 'progressive metal' to a few fairly powerful songs that are too few and far between. The consistently weak part is the drum production. The bass drums sound more like a slab of wet meat hitting something rather than anything else. Had this album been produced more capably it would no doubt have been a platform where the excellent guitar player would not constantly be left unappreciated because of the high drums irritation factor.

ALTAR
YOUTH AGAINST CHRIST
[DISPLEASED RECORDS]

If you want black f@*kin' metal with excellent production, a high flip factor, heaps of speed changes and the occasional "come on you Christian mother fuckers" thrown in, you need look no further than Altar's "Youth Against Christ".



The CD is filled with almost 50 minutes of uncompromising, aggressive mayhem that is as black as early Venom but apparently more sincere and logically evolved and cross-bred further into a putrifying pulsating pool of Satanic Bliss. Titles like "Jesus is Dead!", "Hypochristianity" and "Cauterize the Church Council" throw themselves mercilessly at your senses, but the good thing about it is that you'll always want to come back for more blasphemically Devilish beatings. Slam the CD in the player and see what fun it can be to spit on god.But why the goat's skull in the group photography? I thought the time of bands posing with various pseudo-Satanic paraphernalia was behind us?

BROKEN HOPE
THE BOWELS OF REPUGNANCE
[MUSIC FOR NATIONS]

If there's one thing that I wondered about when I heard Broken Hope's "The Bowels of Repugnance", it was how on earth these guys have secured a record deal with Music For Nations if similar deals for bands like Morta Skuld and Vital Remains seem insecure. Apart from the fact that you get only slightly more than half an hour of music, what you actually get is un-innovative, uninspired and generally not good at all. When I listened to it a quote of a familiar TV character sprang to mind: "Stop in the name of all that which does not suck!"The CD liner contains extensive lyrics, although it's totally impossible to verify what is actually sung. I love grunts and get off on death metal, but Broken Hope is almost absurd. Death metal isn't dead as far as I am concerned, but Broken Hope certainly seems a nail to the coffin.

ORPHANED LAND
SAHARA
[HOLY RECORDS]

Holy Records have recently signed up Israeli band Orphaned Land. Their debut CD is called "Sahara" and might very well be one of the most innovative products to come out of the metal scene. As far as I know, Orphaned Land are the first band top extensively use Arabian chord progressions and Eastern musical instruments such as Tarbuka and Hud amidst distorted guitars. The product of a war generation, topics of their songs range from Jewish religion to the Gulf War. Kobi Farhi's vocals can be compared to those of My Dying Bride's Aaron, meaning they vary from a grunt to plain singing that fits the songs eeriely. A female singer is present on many songs, though I have to say her voice is perhaps too sweet for them (quite on the contrary to the female vocals in, say, Excision and Paradise Lost). The song where here voice fits best is the song you should never have to listen to when you're having love problems; the beautifully exquisite "The Beloved's Cry". "Sahara" is, very much like Septic Flesh' debut, a technically excellent album that also offers incredible songwriting and a lot of innovation. Those of you who aren't yet confined to the narrow limits of today's standard genres might do well to broaden their horizons by giving this band a good listen. Someone at Holy Records is precisely "in sync" with me, I've discovered. Excellent.



Sacred Sin

Sometimes you've got a band that is very popular in its own country, trying to reach the rest of the world. One of these is Sacred Sin - motivated musicians playing rough death metal. I spoke with Jose Costa who revealed someinteresting facts about the band and their new album.

Avalanche: Jose, you started in 1991 with well-known musicians from bands like Massare, Silent Scream and Necrophilica. Wasn't it hard to combine these musicians and their styles into one band, Sacred Sin?
Jose: Well, I think that was the most interesting thing about this band, each had its own ideas and views about music and everything in general. We share the same goals, musically speaking, we're all shooting at the same target here. Even if we don't have the beliefs, we respect each other as individuals and musicians.

Avalanche: You became Portugal's best band ever. Is it hard to keep up that image even though you know you must give more than 200% at a live gig?
Jose: Thanks for that remark but you probably don't have the least minimum idea of the shit we have to face here in Portugal, to keep a vertical attitude towards our music and our scene in general. We try to be as straight as possible with everyone, unfortunatly there are too many jealous people, always trying to put shit into anything you do for no reason at all. The aggressive competition between bands is probably the reason that there are so many bands. Really good bands, but nevertheless Portugal sure as hell is going to bring a lot of bands in the future so beware!

Avalanche: You worked with Jorge Adonis. Were you satisfied with the work he did for you on the album "Darkside"?
Jose: Actually we were not totally satisfied with it but I think the main goal was achieved.The production sound is stable and it captures our musical feelings in a very good way so at least that worked out. The music on "Darkside" is what you call "true Death Metal", very fast and aggressive.

Avalanche: Do you share the opinion that Death Metal is dead?
Jose: I haven't really thought about that...But if you say that death metal is dead because it is not selling enough, or doesn't mean anything to many people anymore, I don't give a fuck! I don't go along with the fashions, I go for what I feel. But when you tell me Death Metal is dead 'cause there is a lack of originality these days, well we might talk about that. There are too many bands with the same music so it is very hard to be creative and original but as long as there are bands who present the real music they stand for, that will be enough for me to keep the flame burning and to continue.

Avalanche: Most of the songs are up-tempo, full with riffs, but "A Monestery in Darkness" doesn't fit that description. How come you chose to put that song on the album
Jose: Yes, "A Monestery in Darkness", and "Deliverance" also, are songs with a more doomy sound. We have that in (almost) every song if you listen carefully, the mix between fast and aggressive riffs and heavy deep chords is presented in a lot of our compositions.

Avalanche: Tell me about your new album, what can we expect?
Jose: We have about 90% of the songs ready now, and we are thinking about recording in August. The new album will be different from the other album, more diverse in its genre. There will be more heavy, slow songs, but also extremely fast songs. But most important is that we have centered more on our feelings towards the occult and mystical sights of existance, as opposed to "Darkside" which is more about the actual facts of live.

Avalanche: Did I hear some titles in the background?
Jose: Yeah, "Guilt Had No Past", that is probably going to be the title of our new album. More titles are "Carnage Forsaken" (which was also featured in a live version on the second edition of "Darkside"), "Link to Nothingness" and "One with God". This new album will contain about 12 to 15 songs but we still have a lot of experimental stuff that is not quite finished.

Avalanche: What about the "contract" with Musica Alternativa?
Jose: We have no contract with M.A., there is just an agreement, we're trying to get a label with more distribtion outside Portugal, that is one of our main goals for now.

Avalanche: What's it like to work with such a small label?
Jose: They are nice people but it is just that they don't have enough money to do more promotion for us and others. Nevertheless they are trying to do as much as they can even though it is a small label!

Avalanche: Can we expect Sacred Sin in Europe soon?
Jose: We hope so, we're really looking forward to playing for different audiences and get their reaction to our music. There are people taking care of it right now. I hope that something interesting comes up!!

Avalanche: With Napalm again?
Jose: Why not, they're really great people, it would be a killer, that's for sure.

Avalanche: What is the scene like in Portugal, is it really the way you told us earlier in the interview?
Jose: Yes, we have a lot of great bands in our scene but they are all trying to make it as hard as possible for each other. We have a good radio show that is trying very hard to put the underground on top of things. What we could use is some clubs etc. to play because that is one of the main problems here. The bands that do play a lot are the bands that are more pop/rock oriented. I think that we could also need a good magazine that could tell our audience (best fucking audience in the world!) what is going on.

Avalanche: What music inspired Sacred Sin most?
Jose: Black Sabbath!! No, not only them. Slayer, too, have had a major affect on our music. I listen to a lot of different kinds of styles though, almost everything, from metal to folk, underground to big acts...Mainly we are interested in music with special feelings that mean something to us.

Avalanche: On the thanks list of "Darkside" there is something interesting. Who the hell is Berto Boss (penafiel you fucking rule?????)
Jose: (Laughs) He is a guy from the north of Portugal, a small town called Penafiel. He is a promotor who has done a gig for us. We played for 1200 people, the biggest gig we have done so far as a headliner. The name of the guy is Alberto Barros also known as Berto Boss!

by Jesse Vermunt



Infamous Sinphony

This death/trashmetal band from the U.S.A have been together for 9 years. The original line up consisted of Chuckie,Paul,J Sin Piatt and Scott Nelson on bass and Greg "Banshee from Hell" Raymond on vocals.Infamous Sinphony made one album "Manipulation" and a 3 song EP which was released by Wild Rag records.The contract with Wild Rag ended and they signed with Chainsaw records where they recorded a cassette album "Hell is Round". Greg left the band and Paul took over the vocals.After the recording of this album J Sin left the band and Dusty Woods took over the bass. Infamous Sinphony just released their debut cd (see:issue No.1) "Beefkurtin" on Chainsaw records.This interview was done with Chuck,Paul,their newestmember bassist Eric Swanson and label owner Woody Barber.

Avalanche:"Beefkurtin" is the debut cd on Chainsaw records.It contains over 18 songs.Are all these songs new?

Chuck: It's our debut-cd on Chainsaw,we already did one album.That was the cassette record "Hell is Round" which contained 11 songs and an instrumental.The 20 song collection is made up of 7 brand new tunes mixed with 8 favorites off of "Hell is Round" and 5 all time favorites of the band.Basically what you get is over 70 minutes of brain bashing Infamous Sinphony for one great price.

A:What does the album title "Beefkurtin" mean?

Chuck:A basic part of a womans anatomy.
Eric:Imagine a wall off beefy tones and churnning riffs that create a kurtin of sheer energy.
Paul:To me it represents the carnage and suffering of mans inhumanity towards fellow man and how people can create a curtain to block out what they don't want to see.The spelling of "Kurtin" was intentional,doesn't have any real meaning,we just liked it.

A:The cd was just released.How where the first reactions on the album?

Chuck:The response has been the best from Europian countries like Germany,Sweden and of course the Netherlands.A lot of people remember us from our past works and are really getting into the new material. Paul:We have sent quite a few copies out to distributors and are merely awaiting a reply.If you're reading this mag and can help us,please contact us.

A:Woody,is there any chance that the cd can be bought in a recordstorein Europe?

Woody:We are working on it,but good connections are hard to come by!

A:Are you satisfied with what you did achieve till now?

Chuck:We will always be satisfied as long as we are progressing forward. The disc is starting to do well and we are in the process of working on new material with Eric.
Paul:We feel that our newest stuff will prove to be the heaviest and sickest music we can play.

A:Tell me something about the lyrics/subject of the songs....

Paul:Most of the material touches on things that are real in the world today.Some bands go for the gorey fantasy type stuff while we write about real sickness and gore.
"I CAN'T STOP" is about a habitual child molestor who serves some small amount of prison time only to be released into a small community where he abducts,molests and eventually kills a young girl.
"MILITARY GOD" is about how countries use their military force to overrun innocent people and their country for no good reason at all killing thousands and destroying entire races like they are gods.
"SUFFERING SPECIES" is about the homeless people all over the world that nobody wants to lend a hand to and they are forced to live and die on the streets like dogs.
"HOLY SORROW" is about people who use religion as a shield to hide behind so they can feel respected for their relationship with god and covence you that by sending them your money that you will be gueranteed a front row seat in heaven. "EMBO" is about the hardcore junkie that will put anything in their veinsincluding a nice little air bubble that will lead them to death.

A:What is your favorite band?

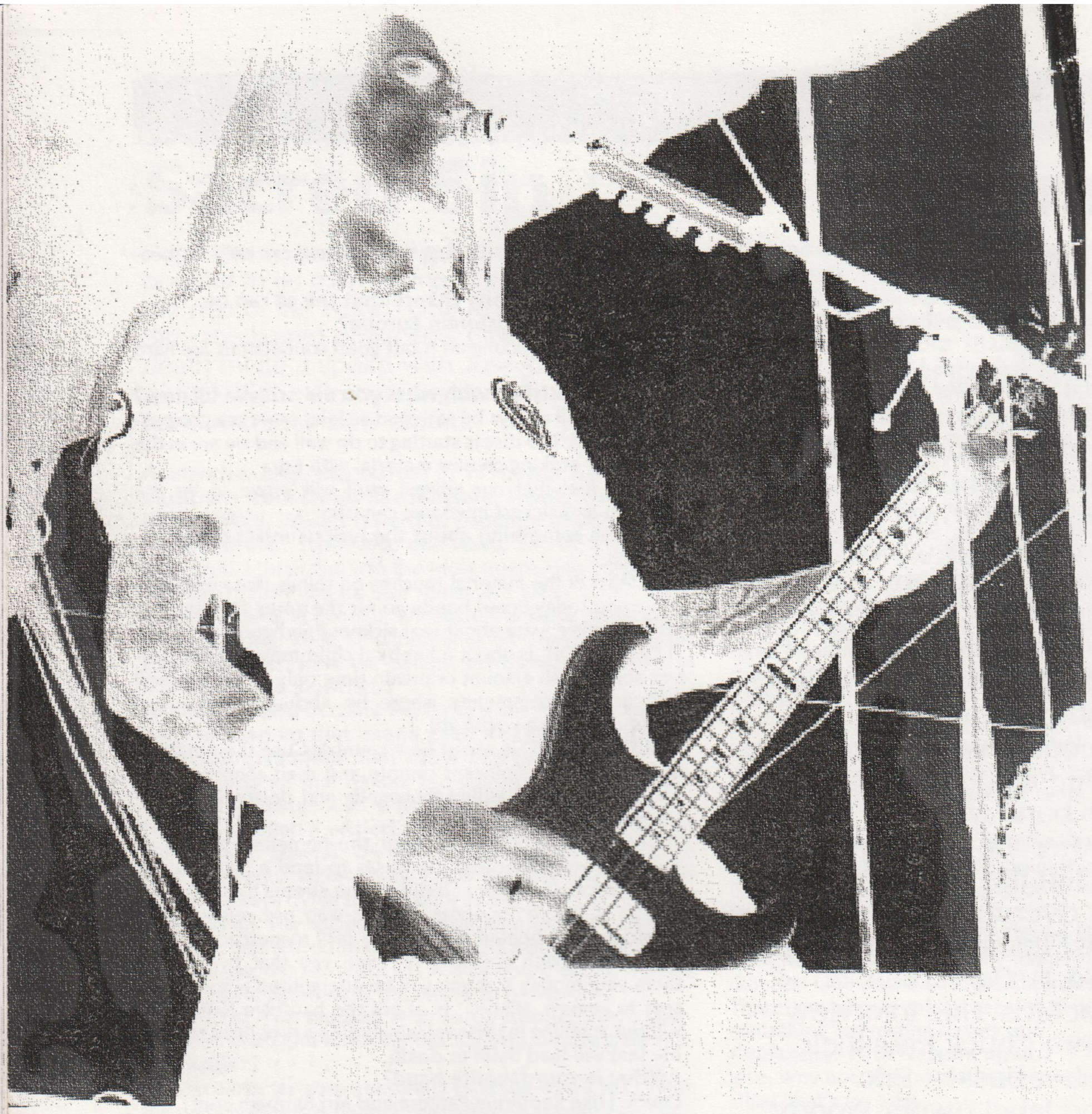
Chuck: I like Sepultura,Pantera and old Sabbath stuff
Eric: Iron Maiden,Metallica always anything heavy.
Paul:English Dogs,Exploited,D.R.I.,Slayer.

A:Plans for the future?

Our future plans are to make music that we enjoy playing and spreading our message for people to get involved in this life because you will only live it once.Be true to the underground.

More information? write to:Chainsaw records,13465 Community Rd. Box 104.

by Marijn Vermunt



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