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the Serotonin Sunset

(Featuring Paul Flve of Syntthetic)

NEW CD DUE FOR RELEASE JANUARY 2007



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In ways, this issue of TWF isn't entirely unlike its cover star. Emilie Autumn often gets carried away with writing material and needs to be told a definitive 'Stop' and 'Release' to actually get her records out. Otherwise every album would be a triple box set. We've kind of got carried away a little, as you can probably tell by the extra pages in this issue.

Whether this remains to be this size we'll have to see - but at the minute I think there really are a lot of bands worth talking to and writing about. That's not of course to discredit our fashion and lifestyle side of things (hey, I'm just the music editor - what do I know about fashion and life?) but a lot of things in the Goth and associated scenes are really exciting me at the moment. As always I've had my travelling shoes on as I've popped into Leeds, Whitby and London on my travels, for Woolstock, WDS Ball and The LoveCrave respectively. I've also just come back from Alkmaar, but there will be more on that in the next TWF.

For now, I think we've a good mix and variance of bands and content, many bands included are doing their first ever UK interview. Unfortunately this issue also sees the last ever interview with Libitina. I am sure Libitina are a band that will be sorely missed and I'd like to wish all of the members all the best for any and all future projects.

Anyway, reading my waffle is stopping you reading the magazine - so I'll shut up now.

Kev

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CONTENTS



Disclaimer: The Worst Fanzine strives to offer an impartial view of all aspects of the Gothic/Alternative Scene - so just because you buy us drinks doesn't mean we'll add points to your review, but hey, we'll happily take the drinks off you.

The Worst Fanzine strives to avoid politics of every nature, there may be a lot of questions in here, but this is not Question Time. TWF's policies are against the publication of pornographic nature, this sadly means we won't be interviewing Rock Bitch again.

The editor reserves the right to alter anything submitted to fit into the magazines guidelines.

Submitted reviews are not necessarily the opinions of the editor - hey this is about what is good and what's not, not what the editor likes. Also we cannot be held responsible for the accuracy of submitted articles. We cannot be responsible for reduced quality of images sent as .jpg and/or via email, although we do aim for the highest quality budget will allow - if you want to help improve our printing quality - feel free to send us money.

Advertised products are not necessarily endorsed by The Worst Fanzine, but most of them are excellent or at least worth checking out.



Unfortunately it is not possible for us to reprint all of the news we have been sent or researched. To do this would add pages upon pages to our news section which would just get silly. The following is just a brief overview of some of the things that have been happening.

Show me the way to Aviemore

Whilst it may not seem the most likely of locations to host a Goth Weekend, the first Aviemore Goth Weekend has been confirmed to take place on the 6th - 8th July. The weekend will include a Rock/Goth club night, a Goth Ceilidh, a Victorian Steam Train Ride, as well as plenty of pubs to explore! More information on this including suggestions for accommodation and where to eat and drink can be found at http://agw.techmad.co.uk/

15 years as All Living Fear double up

Dave Ball (Soft Cell), Steve Bronski (Bronski Beat), James Ray and Arthur Brown are among the artists set to guest on forthcoming All Living Fear album 'Fifteen Years After'. The album is scheduled to be a double album containing remixes alongside new material. The album will be released on September 1st and distributed by Resurrection Records.



Mortiis gets mixed up with Heroin

Mortiis is set to release a remix album titled 'Some Kind of Heroin', reworking material from 'The Grudge', on April 16, via Earache Records. The album contains remixes from a range of bands from Zombie Girl to The Kovenant and from Velvet Acid Christ to In The Nursery. "I'm really stoked we finally got to do a remix album," enthuses Mortiis, "I've always been fascinated with taking songs and twisting them into something different, the ability to grab the elements you like and put them into a totally different environment. The flexibility of that really appeals to me."

Mortiis undertakes a European tour with **Deathstars** in April in support of 'Some Kind of Heroin' Mortiis has also begun work on a new album for release late 2007.

Some of the working titles are: "Zeitgeist," "Great Deceiver," "The Ugly Truth," "Looking Glass," "Doppelganger," "Sins of Mine," "Scolding the Burnt," "Live Forever," and "Road to Ruin."

Freudstein continue our news theme

Keeping up with the trend, **Freudstein** are also set to release a double CD with remixes and remasters. The 'Side A' will include unreleased remixes by bands such as History of Guns, Autofire and In the Now

Side B features remastered versions of remixes Freudstein have done for other bands such as **Swarf**, **Chaos Engine** and **Arkham Asylum**.

There are also set to be a brand new track to provide a sneak preview to their next album and some special surprise bonus tracks. The CD should be released at time of press.

Eat at the Hellfire Club

Somebody had to do this one day - and they've done it in Manchester.

The Hellfire Club is the UKs only Horror themed restaurant.

It is set in a haunted building and has already won awards for food, service and entertainment - as well as getting praise from the local food critics in Manchester. Dressing up and making an effort is encouraged and they also have assorted themed nights, such as a Rocky Horror night. More information and a menu available from

http://www.hellfireclubs.com

Katscan and Earth Loop Recall roll the Line Out

Katscan and Earth Loop Recall have both signed to Line Out Records. They join the label already host to History of Guns, Trauma Pet and Deathboy and are both scheduled to release their next albums in 2007.

Earth Loop Recall have a working title of 'This Means Nothing To You' for their next album - and you can read more about Earth Loop Recall in this issue of TWF.

deadfilmstar say 'Hello' with new Cruel single

deadfilmstar have released new limited edition single 'Hello, Cruel World'. The single is available for £1.99 from www.deadfilmstar.co.uk and will be limited to 100 numbered copies.

The CD also comes with 3 remixes and the video for the song. 'Hello, Cruel World' will not, however, be included on new forthcoming album '*A.rtistic I.ntegrity*'.

"As you can imagine we're not in any rush," explains singer Gary Mobley, "it is set for a late 2007 release. You can expect it to be of the same sound quality as the single. We've been playing around with different sound sources although not wanting to move too much away from our own identity. We're also working on another cover version which should shock you. All will be revealed to TWF first!"



Star Industry Crusade through the Matrix

Belgian Goth-Rock band Star **Industry** have signed to **Alfa Matrix** and are set to release third album '*Last Crusades*' in April. The CD is also available as a special 'fan box set' with bonus CD of remixes and rarities and a t-shirt.

Floorshow 2007

TWF looks to continue it's partnership with **The Charnel House** to bring **Floorshow** events in 2007. In 2006 we brought many bands to Newcastle for their debuts in the region, hit a grand finale with US-Chart Toppers **The Cruxshadows**.

We had hoped to have more news for you relating to some of the shows - but at press time there is only one gig we can reveal to you.

The Phuture Sounds of UK EBM: Featuring Novus, Cybercide and Uberbyte. This will take place at The Telegraph in Newcastle Upon Tyne on the 20th May 2007 and priced at a bargain £5. This event will showcase some of the hottest new EBM bands from the UK, so it's a good chance to see some of the brightest band for a low price.

What's on your CD...?

1) Emilie Autumn - Dead is the New Alice (Manipulator Mix by Dope Stars Inc.)

Taken from the EP 'Liar/Dead is the New Alive'
Published by Tea Party Publishing (ASCAP) Licensed from Trisol Music
Group GmbH

www.emilieautumn.com

2) Uberbyte - No Hiding Place

Taken from demo EP 'Better Red than Dead' www.myspace.com/uberbyte

3) Cauda Pavonis - Carnival Noir

Taken from the 'Carnival Noir' EP www.caudapavonis.com

4) I am Immune - Heroic

Previously Unreleased www.iamimmune.co.uk

5) Pro-Jekt - Drowning in Someone Else's Soul

Taken from 'Defiance' www.pro-jekt.org

6) Cybercide - Exocet

Taken from 'Adrenalin' www.cybercide.org

7) Colt - Body Bag (Acoustic)

Previously Unreleased www.livingwitheatingdisorders.co.uk

8) Dyonisis - Distance

Taken from forthcoming debut album (title tbc) www.myspace.com/dynonisis

9) The Opposite Sex - Ceremony

Taken from the 'The Opposite Sex' EP www.oppositesexmusic.com

10) KarmaDeva - Broken

Taken from 'Dreamless Sleep' EP www.myspace.com/karmadeva

11) Rhombus - Love you Til Closing Time

Taken from 'Closing Time' EP www.rhombus.org.uk

12) Libitina - Duty Unbound

Taken from 'Parhelion' www.libitina.co.uk

13) Lesbian Bed Death - Goth Girls are Easy

Taken from 'I Use My Powers for Evil' www.lesbianbeddeath.net

14) The Faces of Sarah - What D'Ya Know

Taken from 'Lament' www.facesofsarah.com

15) Everything on Black - Stain

Taken from 'Stain' www.everythingonblack.com

16) Sundealers - Gun Crazy

Taken from 'Tears, Love, Religion' www.sundealers.de

17) History of Guns - Secret Garden (Live)

Taken from the limited edition 'Whitby October 2006 Promo' www.historyofguns.com



Sydney duo Angelspit unleashed full-lengthed debut offering

'Krankhaus' earlier this year and it's impact has landed them a deal with Dancing Ferret Discs (home of bands such as The Cruxshadows, The Last Dance and Ego Likeness). The album is now set to be re-released in January 2007 and should be easier to get hold of a copy than at present.

We caught up with ZooG, the male half of Angelspit to ask him more on the band and their release - including finding more about how the deal with DFD came about... "THE FERRET (the affectionate nick-name of our beloved record label) walked into a record shop in Philadelphia and bought our CD." He explains, "They liked it and emailed us."

"The offer was pretty awesome and unexpected, because we sent our demo to a heap of other record labels and the only reply we got was a polite mass-produced reject letter from Digital Hardcore."

"Up until then, Tommy T at DSBP was helping us out with distribution in the USA - TOMMY T ROCKS!"

As deals come about this is one that is simple and to the point! TWF also enjoyed 'Krankhaus' (flip to the reviews section to see what we thought) and by exploring this deeper we can get to the root of what made this release appealing to us and DFD - along with stirring a bit of a buzz with a lot of fans.

The first thing I noticed with the release was the visuals and artwork. Imagery including a dinner party with human organs on the buffet and a guy strapped to a chair awaiting surgery. ZooG explained some of the ideas behind the designs.



"There are many ideas behind Krankhaus," he begins, "One of the main themes is the idea of the 'Beautifully Grotesque' - something so grotesque it is beautiful, something so beautiful it is grotesque. We were toying around with the idea of trying to find the beauty in horrific themes."

"The other driving idea behind Krankhaus is the notion of extreme entertainment and vanity, if people had the means to do whatever they pleased, how far would they go?" "Krankhaus is a mixture of hyper-capitalism, cannibalism, recreational vivisection and drug use, all wrapped together in a secret society for horrifically rich and spoilt children who find torture a pleasurable past-time."

"The 18 months leading up to the release were very trying times for us. There were many unfortunate events and hardships that fanned the fire."

Lyrically there's this strong flowing feel throughout the album about cosmetic surgery (and extreme cosmetic surgery in places) and vanity - what inspired this concept? "French performance artist Orlan was a big influence as she uses cosmetic surgery as a tool to sculpt the body in order to make an extremely visceral statement about society."

"Destroyx [the female half of Angelspit] did a lot of research about the history of the corset, a beautiful garment with a grotesque past. She found out that during the Victorian times some women had to wear corsets that had an attachment which was a rubber cup. This rubber cup was inserted into the wearer's uterus to stop it from haemorrhaging. It's this kind of perverse extreme in fashion that we're interested in, and comment on."

"Vanity is just another pleasure drug...enough of it will kill you."

I also spotted quite a few religious references - has religion influenced your lyrics and music at all?

"With all honesty, 'religion' hasn't inspired us at all. People inspire us"
"I can not do it without the help of God'; 'I can not do it without the help of the
Corporation' Spot the difference. Try this one: 'I must have faith to survive', 'I must



have money to survive"

"What I'm trying to say here is that people will ultimately believe in something, whether it's religion or not.... We just have to identify what the gods are for this age." I believe the earth is invaluably precious and all people are beautiful. I believe the only person who can stop you from doing something is yourself. I believe you fail when you stop trying. I believe that "winning" and "succeeding" have every different meanings- to win is to have power over someone else, to succeed is to achieve something for yourself. I believe "selfishness" and "greediness" are profoundly different. I believe life is short."

I've mentioned a few times in reviews of Angelspit that I've felt there was a nod in there towards the Digital Hardcore movement. I suspected there may be influence from bands like EC8OR or Atari Teenage Riot

"We don't actually listen to much ATR," ZooG points out, "We're big fans of Cobra Killer [a side project of EC8OR and Shizou] though. We only started listening to ATR after we established our sound with our first EP, 'Nurse Grenade'."

"Skinny Puppy ROCK - They are GOD. Sonic Youth are also brilliant! We're inspired by a lot of rock and indie as well as cyberpunk. We try to make music that reflects the passionate, turbulent and complex world we live in...our music is not simple and robotic, nor is our reality."

One of the plans Angelspit have documented for 2007 is that they are moving to Germany. I enquired what had inspired this decision.





"Sydney is a LONG WAY from everything...Berlin seems to be in the middle of it all - so it makes so more sense to go over immerse ourselves in it!"

"We've always wanted to spend time in Europe and luckily an opportunity presented itself so we jumped on it."

"We're going to miss Australia - this country is beautiful and we have all of our friends here."

"It's important that we challenge ourselves with new people, places and ideas - these

will inspire us and push us. It's all about growing...right?'

"...fuck I sound like a hippy...."

Australia isn't always a place commonly associated with it's Goth scene. OK, Nick Cave is Australian but I'm guessing that the average TWF reader may not be familiar with many more. ZooG explains more about the Australian scene

"It's small and strong. If a club pulls 300 people it's officially HUGE. The people are very flamboyant - especially with the Cyber-Goth genre. I've heard people say that the Australian Cyber-Goths are as insane as they come. The fetish scene is also small but strong. A real characteristic of the alternative scene here is the mixing of subcultures - you'll get Goths, ravers, punks and fetish people in the same club because of the small population." "Our biggest gripe with the scene here is that there are only a few DJs who will support us by playing our music in clubs. Crash Frequency's latest Compilation is getting played all over the world except in Australia. We had to send an email out to all the DJs who got a free copy of the CD and BEG them to play it. About 10% of the DJs replied and said they were playing us." Crash Frequency is an Australian based collective that Angelspit are involved with. The 'official' statement on this is "Crash Frequency is a collective of Industrial/Gothic bands from Australia who share a common goal of helping promote their music worldwide."

ZooG explains more on this collective, "Crash Frequency is BRILLIANT. It's all things dark! There's Goth Rock bands like IKON, EBM bands like Angel Theory, electro like Tankt, Industrial Rock like The Mercy Cage, Noise like The Process Void and future pop like The Tenth Stage...and that's only half the bands!"

"We all pitch in with contacts and helping each other get gigs and publicity. From our perspective, the best thing Crash Frequency offers is the group of older and extremely experienced bands who we can adopt as mentors...we pick their brains for advice and get support from them often!"

If this is not enough, Angelspit are also behind the online store Surgeon-X which sells various clothing, jewellery and assorted accessories. This has helped fund the bands releases and ZooG explains more about this.

"Krankhaus was completely self funded. We made the doe through Surgeon-X. We made ties, collars and fake hair to pay for the photoshoot, mastering and pressing. We worked like muthafuckers to make and sell that stuff...but we were also writing, recording touring AND doing a double degree and full time job WHILE we were doing all of this."

I had been going to ask where they found the time to do all this, but ZooG got their first, "...it's amazing what you can do if you don't own a TV."

"We love to create! Whether it's music or images of fashion of extreme hair...we live to create!"

One thing that is noticeable about Angelspit was that even when they were more unknown there were still a large amount of fan made music videos on sites like YouTube. I asked how they felt about this, to which ZooG empathized, "We encourage it!"

"It is the greatest honour to have people put images to our music. We've just launched a forum (www.krankhaus.net/forum) we are encouraging people to create and share inspirations. Negativity and web-bitchery are not welcome! We'll be uploading samples and images - people are welcome to do what they want with them....just be respectfully creative!"

Based on the strength of 'Krankhaus', the signing to DFD and the relocation to Germany - what are your goals for 2007?

"Play as much as we can, play everywhere (UK, USA), REMIX AND DESTROY as many acts as we can! Work on the new album. Meet heaps of people."

Angelspit are presently on tour in the US with The Cruxshadows. 'Krankhaus' is released in the UK through Dancing Ferret Discs on January 29th and comes as a limited edition double album containing remixes from bands such as Combichrist, Ego Likeness and Stromkern.

Words: Kevin Morris

Photos: Helen White, Paul Ward



history of guns

When I get on the train in the morning it's empty, this is a good time for thinking, reading, staring out the window etc... At each subsequent stop more and more people get on. Sometimes they know other people on the train and feel compelled to talk to them nonstop, about any kind of trivial aspect of their life and everyone in the carriage has to hear it. As Chuck Palahniuk once put it "someone's always spraying the air with their mood". Sometimes this makes it hard to read, and the walkman is the only way to shut out their noise.

Sometimes you just have to listen.

Today at some station or other someone called Nicola Neads (I've guessed how to spell her surname, but it's the sound of her surname that will become important later on) and her two female companions joined the train. (One of whom i think it's safe to assume was Nicola Neads sister.) When Nicola Neads got on the train she was complaining about how the person who'd parked the bike in the bike rack next to hers at the station had done so really inconsiderately and it really made her angry and she clawed at some imaginary bike grease on her fingers. One her companions offered her another tissue and lamented how she used to carry wet wipes in her bag but doesn't anymore... she does apparently keep some in her desk at work though because "you know how it is when you eat something like an apple and your fingers are a bit sticky and you can't be bothered to go all the way to the bathroom".

In the paper I'm reading to try and blot out the intrusion of pointless noise there's one of these media fashionable Top 10 lists. It's the top ten worst places to live on the planet... if you're a child. Number one is, apparently, Darfur in Sudan. Each entry in the chart is accompanied by a small bite size reason explaining what happens to children in each place: rape, malnutrition, genital mutilation and being forced to fight brutal wars against their will all feature heavily.

Nicola was saying how it made her really angry that she originally had a bank account in her name, then she switched it to a joint account with her man, and they automatically put his name before hers on everything, when it was originally *her* account!

Apparently despite it's booming economy 1.5 million children will die in India of malnutrition making it number 5 on the list.

Another thing that makes Nicola Neads angry is her name. Apparently at school it was all, "Nicola Neads an ice cream" and "Nicola Neads a wee" etc etc. I felt for her I really did. Fortunately having been in the company of Nicola Neads for twenty five minute without ever being properly introduced, I had to leave the train. I found I knew a surprising amount about her. I could maybe use her as a character in something. I tried to think of a story in which to place her but fortunately failed miserably. It would've probably been a huge seller and she'd have only ended up being "very angry" and suing me for every penny I haven't got.

And then I was on the tube, an advert on the opposite wall read, "You don't have to be homophobic to work here, but it helps." It was advertising EQUALITY... (placed by the charity Stonewall). The woman next to me was reading a book called '101 Actions Of A Wise Woman', on page 79 it said in big letters, "Wise women avoid being terminators or destroyers of the warrior spirit in their man." By turning my head fully from left to right four different people's newspapers informed me that (Syd Barrett ex-Pink Floyd) had died. I liked him. I don't believe half the stories they say about him.

More people fill the carriage, obviously you can't look them in the eye so you look down. There's some really ugly toes on display. They disgust me; you see I'm just a shallow as the rest of them, but you know it really doesn't take much attention to sort them out. On page 84 it reads, "A wise woman builds relationships that are based on values, not valuables."

And look we're only at Kings Cross... more people squeeze on, the temperature soars. So many sad faces crushed together, starting to smell bad, surrounded by bad news at the front end of another working day. It's no wonder there's a suicidal vibe in the air.

Issue Three - POKER FACE (July 2006) OUT NOW!
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Chavs in Black

More and more often these days you hear the same thing, "What has dressing up got to do with Goth?", "What has Victoriana got to do with Goth?", and the most ubiquitous false dichotomy in Goth "It's the music that's important not the image". If you have ever uttered that last one you may need a sit down about now as I deliver this bit of devastating news, it is perfectly possible for some people to find both the image and the music interesting. In IT terms this is called "multitasking" and any one with an IQ over about 75 is theoretically capable of it.

Barely weeks after October Whitby 2006 the 'Net was alive with the same old round of people complaining about the fact that others dress up or take care of their appearance. The BBC Culture Show, which shot a short section at WGW was attacked for being more interested in make up and "transvestites" than music. Dean Hathaway, himself featured in the show went on to say:-

"For those who complained about the way people dress at WGW...and the way it looked on The Culture Show, the fact is, if Goths did not dress the way they do the BBC would not even have been interested, they would not have been there."

"The fact that they made the feature may encourage the enquiring mind to listen to some dark/goth music!...Isn't that a good thing?" (Ibid)

He's right. I first came to the scene through the music, but I quickly realised I loved the image as well, there is no reason why having an interest in one excludes an interest in the other.

In his potted history of Goth which forms the introduction to "The Goth Anthology" (reviewed elsewhere in this issue) Alex Ogg reminds us that "Pretty soon 'Goths' became the collective noun for fans of...bands, with a dress code that emphasised black, but also featured flourishes of Victorian lace and silver and pewter jewellery. In common with its punk forerunner, there was a prestige associated with DIY creations, exhibitionism and an innate celebration of sexual androgyny and decadence.""(Alex Ogg, The Goth Anthology 2006) There certainly was, and still is. Hands up everyone who mistook the keyboard player of Uninvited Guest (who played the recent WGW) for a woman?

On the subject of Uninvited Guest, no one can deny they put a lot of work into their image, they clearly do. Dean's outfits can be breathtakingly elaborate, and Lucas Swan has mastered the androgynous look to which Mr. Ogg was referring. Dean probably put it best when he told me;-

"Music is an art form....so is fashion, its perfectly understandable that creative musicians would have a creative interest in their appearance. Everyone wears a uniform of sorts, Status Quo (the most non-image band in history) had a denim uniform. The Goths who complained (about others at Whitby dressing elaborately) still wear black jeans and leather jackets...they are still in uniform. The only way to break free and express yourself more is too create your own 'look', even then if Goth it falls under a dark aesthetic. No one has the right to judge...everyone's parameters are different. As far as music goes, Uninvited Guest's music is as colourful and vibrant as our image, intentionally so. The way we look advertises-to those who have not heard us- that our music may be interesting. They may then take the time to listen." (Dean Hathaway, Uninvited Guest, 2006)

Or take me, I am that rarest of things, a professional Goth DJ (by which I do not mean to imply other DJs are unprofessional, I mean DJing Goth music is my primary means of support). True I am not always captain immaculate, and at October Whitby this year I swung between jeans and a T-shirt or a basic black suit. Right now I'm in jeans so old they are charcoal grey and a T-shirt. However, on other occasions I've done the whole back combed hair (When I still had hair) hour long make up thing. I've worn a Napoleonic Prussian cavalryman's uniform, a c. 1810 British rifles officers uniform, capes, Victoriana, Georgian inspired outfits, whatever takes my fancy. Why? Well frankly, why not? Some days I want to, some days I don't. Some days a 15 year old band t-shirt and faded jeans will do me, some times it won't.

You learn a great deal from a DJ booth. I've seen people who are dressed in incredibly elaborate outfits, or make up ask me for seminal traditional Goth tracks or brand new tracks that I just know are going to be club classics in the future. I've also seen people who just hours before where holding forth about how "image has nothing to do with Goth, it's about the music" hand me a request list consisting of nothing but commercial Kerrang TV playlists.

So what does image have to do with Goth?

To deny the role of image in the Goth scene is to deny some of its roots.

Although the early Goth scene was a gig-going scene, with extremely strong ties to the punk movement, the passing of the New Romantic movement resulted in moves by some of the clubs towards playing Goth and punk music. The club scene which evolved as a result was image conscious, and music conscious. Whilst some remnants of the 'Poser' element of the New Romantics remained, and still remain to this day,

what emerged was a new image for the clubs. It should be remembered that due to links with the punk scene, early Goth gigs were rather frenetic, and thus sensible giggoers adopted a 'uniform' out of necessity - clothes which were easy to move in, sturdy shoes, things you didn't mind getting damaged.

However, as the scene (and the gigs) grew larger, the line between the two types of event grew blurred; many people would wear their clubbing clothes to gigs, and vice

It should also be remembered that in the 80s, Goth bands charted. They appeared on Top of the Pops; they were covered by mainstream music press. They were picked up by record labels. This meant that they were image-managed; in exactly the same way that other 80s bands were image managed. Glossy pictures of Pete Murphy in eyeliner graced the covers of such magazines as 'Smash Hits'. As a result, mainstream fashion picked up on this new movement, and lace, fishnet and PVC appeared in high street shops. Weekends could be spent trying on fetish-styled clothing in Chelsea Girl (now Top Shop) and its like. Of course, this meant rebellion. One cannot be part of a sub-culture when one's mother's catalogue is selling clothing you would actually wear as a teenager! There was a move towards a DIY culture, back to the practice of raiding charity shops and attics for clothing. Many Goths took to wearing what was most reviled in the 80s - second hand clothing. Dresses from the Victorian era to the 50s were preferred, and after Rozz Williams was pictured a la Miss Haversham in a decaying wedding gown, a positive mania for dead brides emerged.

Then came Phaze, probably one of the first dedicated gothic clothing companies, they produced clothing so that you too could have a shirt like the one Dave Vanian wore in the 'Eloise' video, or a duster coat which bore a striking resemblance to garments worn by Fields of the Nephilim. It had been long-established that one could buy clothing like Siouxsie Sioux's from shops like Vivienne Westwood's 'Sex' boutique. It could be argued that the anti-fashion of the Goth scene became a fashion in its own right.

So before you blast dress-up Goths, ask yourself this. Would you go to WGW with a bad haircut, no make-up and wearing blue jeans? Do you have items of clothing you specifically buy to wear there? Then you are no different. The only difference lies in the extreme to which some people take it. We saw horror stories of people actually proudly boasting that they had shouted abuse at other goths during WGW for the horrid crime of dressing too flamboyantly.

Just think about that for a second.

Don't we get enough abuse from outsiders without supposed members of the scene behaving as nothing more than Chavs in black? If the site of some one dressed differently to you truly offends you so much, perhaps you would be more at home in a bus shelter dressed in a track suit and Burberry cap and begging for cigarettes with people whose attitude you share..

DJ Ghost





Over the past few years alone I've seen many bands call it a day for one reason or another. Bands splitting up is part of the industry and life cycle of the music but there are some that come to an end well before their time.

One such band that came to an abrupt end was Earth Loop Recall, a band who unleashed an impressive debut album, raised the roof at WGW in 2004 and created a mixed following from Indie, Goth and Rock crowds.

They got hit by the 'curse of TWF' (I predicted better things for them, then 5 minutes later they split up - see Libitina and Monophobia for other examples) but they now plan to come back some shows in April 2007 - and they've signed to Line Out Records. We simply had to ask vocalist **Ben McLees** how this came about.

OK... so what persuaded you lot to get together to do a special one-off show?

To be honest, I think it was something I've been putting off ever since ELR split. I've tried twice to form a new post-ELR band, incorporating old ELR songs alongside new ones, but it always felt like a half-arsed effort. Deep down my heart has never left ELR. So it didn't actually take much in the way of persuasion to do it properly. Lee Chaos [Chaos Engine, Wasp Factory head honcho] asked me whether I'd consider doing an ELR one-off for a night he's planning in the spring, and it was all the encouragement I needed to pull my thumb out of my arse.

What will the set be like for this show? Are you planning to do this as if it would be any normal show, or do you plan to play various unreleased tracks/demos/covers that have done the rounds?

It all depends on what the format for the night is and how long we get onstage. Ideally, I'd love to play for 90 minutes and do a set of everything we ever did. But that'd just get really self-indulgent and after half an hour, we'd probably end up with about 5 people watching us. I've asked several people what songs they'd like to hear at the gig and several song names kept cropping up, so the decision's pretty much been made for us. I think it's safe to say that the set will include the more popular tracks from 'Compulsion' plus a couple of others - though I don't really want to give too much away. What I will say is though, is that you'll never see ELR play 'Futureless' again. It served some kind of misguided purpose for us at the time we wrote it, but I just can't listen to it anymore. I think it's absolute dogshit.

What are the chances of some of the unreleased demos/songs ever being finished and recorded/release in any format?

There's every chance. Already we've done a new version of a song called 'Glass', which we used to play live all the time before 'Compulsion' came out. That'll probably get an official release this year on one of the Line Out Records compilations. It's nice to revisit and recondition some of the old tracks, there's some good stuff floating around the archives which weren't done justice at the time.

I understand Mark will not be appearing for this show, although does give the go-ahead for it - do you know the reasons why Mark had declined performing in this show?

At first I couldn't comprehend doing ELR without Mark being involved. To me, what Mark brought to the table - both in terms of musical contribution and stage presence - was a huge part of what made ELR. As a result, I wouldn't have felt comfortable going out as ELR without him. I asked him if he wanted to do the one-off show, but he wasn't interested. Mark and Gareth are doing great things as Mordachi now; Mark's the lead singer in that band now and I I think it's fair enough that he just wants to focus on that. But it's all good - I've been to see Mordachi live a couple of times now and we've had a few beers together. Mark has basically told me to go for it with ELR, his exact words being "it's your thing". It wasn't until he said that, that I was comfortable with the whole ELR mkII idea. If Mark had any objection to it, this wouldn't be happening.

Is there any further news as of when/where this gig will be?

Indeed. Friday 30th March at The Two Pigs in Cheltenham. It's a bit of a post-Wasp Factory party, with The Chaos Engine, Tarantella Serpentine, Skinflowers and Xykogen all on the bill. And... we're also playing Madame Jojos in London on April 19th... couldn't *not* play a London gig!

It has to be asked - if the gig is a success, do you feel this could result in any form of longer term reunion for Earth Loop Recall?

Well, yes! ELR signed to **Line Out Records** at the start of the year, which was a nice coup for us given we'd only got the band together in October. The plan is to play the two gigs, work on the new album [which we started in the New Year] and if anyone wants to offer us a few gigs along the way, I'm sure we'd be more than happy to come out and play. (The album should be released August/September)

We've got Tim Clark [Faetal/I Am Immune] on guitar and my old mate Dan Vickers on drums, and in a lot of respects the band is better than it was before. It'd be silly to not make a decent go of things given that we've gone to the effort to get *this* far.

I always felt ELR fell apart just when things were about to get interesting, so in that respect there's certainly some unfinished business. Some of the new stuff we're working on sounds really exciting, and while I know EVERY band says this, it's definetly shaping up to be the best ELR output yet. If we get anything ready in time by the time the gigs come along, we might even preview a track or two...

Words: Kevin Morris



Having began her solo work as Hagalaz' Runedance in 1996, a series of albums and singles saw her move on to retake the name Nebelhexë in 2003.

Nebelhexë has just released her second album, 'Essensual', an enchanting and spiritual record with almost commercial production.

Andrea also has strong connections with assorted Pagan and Witch Circles. Kevin Morris anxiously caught up with her for an interview, to find out more.



Your discography started as Hagalaz' Runedance - what are the differences between Hagalaz' Runedance and Nebelhexë and what influenced you to make these changes?

Hagalaz' Runedance was very dedicated to the northern Pagan spirituality. I explored ancient Nordic folk music, used authentic folk instruments like the Norwegian bag pipe, the strykelyre and langeleik. I explored the northern myths and wisdom and after three albums I feel I have fully explored this sphere plus the all-round dedication to the Germanic myths became restricting... It was time to move on, both musically, lyrically and spiritually. Since '03 I release my music under the name of Nebelhexë again and I will continue to do so.... I called myself Nebelhexë again, also because people knew at once who I was and it stirred up a new curiosity. The reason why I first came up with that name for Aghast was because I always liked the image of the Nebelhexë, the dancing fog, the mysterious fairy being that no one can see clearly. Also a particular owl is called Nebelhexë. But I also like the name because there is something humouristic about it. It is also a name from a children's story of 'The little witch'. And with it I like to show that I am a person with a lot of self-irony. My music can be described as alternative, gothic, ambient, folk, very primal, pagan...I think I have an individual way of making music and a very individual voice, thus it is hard to place.

New album 'Essensual' has 'pop-like production' - were you aiming for a more commercial/widespread following with this accessible approach? Has this helped pick up more fans than previous releases because of this?

I wasn't aiming for a particular style really, I have stopped doing that. I just create what comes to me. Each song or album represents something of my feelings and thoughts and influences of that time. This time I felt very light and 'pop like' I guess. When the producer and I saw the direction it was going, he thought it would be cool and fresh to give it a very modern pop/rock style production. But yes, I thought that this would be more accessible to a wider audience and it would be great if a wider audience would find my music, words and writings. I always love to inspire. Yes the album certainly has gotten a wider audience... I also have gotten some shit from some metal magazines... but hell... I really don't expect them to like my new album... when it comes down to it; I create music for myself...

How would you describe the influences that went into 'Essensual' album?

More than ever I feel the songs came from deep within and manifested themselves, subconsciously, spontaneously, magically...very personal, forming a pattern. What I like about the new songs is that being produced in a pop like fashion, they're a great contrast to the rather gloomy, bittersweet or ironic lyrics (Would I ever write cheerful lyrics?). Much peculiar thought lies behind the words. And much is about hidden feelings, various thoughts within the psyche, the bad experiences that shape us, thoughts about our real being, thus the title "Essensual". When I created the songs I had a quite strange and frustrating period. I was living in Oslo where I was working at the Veterinary College and I found myself kind of in love with a gay dude. Amongst other kind of frustrating things... But I do have an alternative, gothic music background of course, and the cover songs I have done of the Cure and Lene Lovich show that I pay tribute to this scene.

You've recently released a video for 'Underworld' - what made you choose that track to make a video for?

When I made the pre-work of this song I knew already that I had a vision for this song. Originally it was for an exhibition that I thought of contributing with. So Underworld was definitely a video I had in mind since the beginning.

And what is the concept to the video?

It's about stains and scars... those on the inside. The outside is the facade and no one knows what is hiding inside of a person... in my video concept, I am the facade and the observer walking in ugly cold and big old factory rooms... I pass by the chained and beaten up men... who represent the stains and scars and chains that hold us in our everyday life. The song is also about image of vampires, kind of about my inner nature, my inner wolf that I have to hide away a lot of times, when I am out doing everyday tasks. Sometimes I am forced to be amongst social events and just smile and talk stupid... when really I just want to scream out 'fucking hell I want to get out of here...'

On the album is a cover of 'The Figurehead' by The Cure - what influenced your decision to cover that particular Cure track?

It's from the album Pornography, truly one of the best Cure albums ever. I have memories from living in London, living in a squat, a large empty factory building, which we also used as a gothic night club on Saturdays. So to listen to the most dark and depressing sounds of Pornography was perfect. I have great memories from many Cure songs, one of my favourites are 'Charlotte Sometimes', 'the Top', 'Bird Mad Girl', 'Cold', 'Empty world'... I first thought of making a cover of Empty World, but then it became the 'Figurehead'...





After Hammerheart went bankrupt, you chose to sign for Candlelight Records what persuaded you to sign for Candlelight?

Candlelight is a strong label, I have known them for many years, in fact I was hanging out with Lee, the guy who started Candlelight, in the very beginning of the label. And it feels kind of nice to be back in England again.

It is well documented that you have connections with various magic/pagan/witch circles - what is your own personal view on paganism?

Paganism is about understanding the mysteries of nature; it's about understanding our own nature. It's about freeing your mind and being the person you really want to be. I have been a pagan and magician/witch consciously for many years now. In a way I always have been, since I was a little girl. I was very emotional, had intense dreams and visions, was very connected to nature and animals, was very much into ancient cultures, and I loved gloomy images, vampires, ghost stories etc. So I haven't changed In my early twenties then I really got into the mythology and traditions of my Germanic ancestors and I made it my aim to open people's eyes about the fact that a lot of traditions they still practice today are truly pagan rituals, not Christian. I wrote the "Ancient Fires of Midgard" about it. It is really important to tell people what Christianity really is, what crimes the Church has done and how they restrict people's minds with their dogmas.

You have an upcoming book and design project - could you tell us more about

Yes, I plan to publish weird stories/thoughts/poems together with graphics. Also I thought of having a Nebelhexë collection and work together with a designer. It was actually a journalist who suggested this idea to me... I liked the idea and started to

You've got your own perfume, also named 'Essensual' can you tell me more about where the idea to create your own fragrance came from and describe the ideas that went into the fragrance?

I had sold small Nebelhexë perfume bottles at my concerts before. I thought the name Essensual sounded kind of like a perfume name, and thus I thought I could create a special perfume and call it Essensual. It started as a joke idea really, but then I thought this was a good idea, and not many artists have done that. As with all my art creations, I like to be inventive...

Words: Kevin Morris

Photos from www.nebelhexe.com - used with permission





Send all entries to: Competitions, TWF Magazine, 170 Collingwood Court, Sulgrave, Washington, Tyne and Wear, NE37 3EE, United Kingdom.

Alternatively – email kev@twfmagazine.com with your entry

Closing date for all competitions is 30/06/07

WIN! History of Guns CDs!

To celebrate signing to Line Out Records, History of Guns have sent us a handful of the limited edition 'Whitby October 2006 Promo' CD. The CD contains 10 tracks, 5 guitar driven and 5 electronic driven and include 'Secret Garden' from this issues free CD.

We have 5 in total to give away to 5 lucky winners that can answer the following question.

This was a special promo for Whitby in October 2006. Which other month is there a Whitby Goth Weekend?

- December a)
- b) January
- **April**

WIN! TWF Goodies!

We've realised that the one thing missing in our life is a slogan, as TWF doesn't have one. So, what we want you to do is think up a slogan for TWF. The winning slogan will win a 4-issue subscription to TWF (or a 4issue extension for existing subscribers) AND a t-shirt bearing the new TWF slogan.

We also will have t-shirts for notable runners-up.

Please make sure you specify your t-shirt size when entering!

Competition Rules.

All entries must be received by advertised closing date. Entries received after this date will not be entered.

Winners will be selected at random and notified by post following the draw. A full list of winners will be available on request by sending a SAE to the competition address, requesting this. Any person directly associated with TWF Magazine, or the bands/record labels concerned, may not enter these competitions. The judges decision is final.



Baltimore three-piece EGO LIKENESS have produced one of the stunning albums of 2006 with 'Order of the Reptile'.

It's woven structures of guitars and electronics drags you in and demands you listen. But they're not a band I see many people talking about. They've toured extensively in the states and in Europe - many of which in support to The Cruxshadows. But you don't see much demand for them in the UK. Kevin Morris thought this was a crying shame so caught up with key song writing duo Donna Lynch and Steven Archer to find out more on 'The Order of the Reptile' and find out what made them move away from trip-hop to where they are now.

You originally started musically, as "...darkly experimental trip-hop..." how do you think you got from there, to your current sound - and what influenced you to move in this direction?

Donna: I know every band says this, but we are constantly influenced by so many styles and genres of music, that it seems only natural to change and evolve with time. **Steven:** I think we ran with the darkly experimental trip-hop thing about as far as we could go. Our first demo sprang out of the idea of mixing Massive Attack and Skinny Puppy. We played that material live for about a year, and then decided that it was cool, but kind of boring to play live, and it was time to turn the tempo up.

So, 'The Order of the Reptile' - what is the significance of reptiles to this release?

Donna: Reptiles represent wisdom here, above anything else. There is an entire back story to the album, centring on a (fictional) cult of evolution and adaptation. At some point, we will release that short story.

And by 'at some point' I mean when I finish writing it all down.

Steven: Reptiles are also survivors, adapting and shifting as the planet changes. You have to respect that.

The opening track is 'Weave' - I'm particularly interested by many of the lyrics within this track - I am guessing the lyrics are a metaphor on life, am I right?

Donna: Yes, that would be about right. More specifically, the song is about accepting responsibility for one's own situation and handling it accordingly. I believe that we all

create our own demons and villains and prisons, as much as we are responsible for creating our own happiness.

Personal responsibility is a recurring theme on this particular album and is represented strongly in this particular song.

'Save Your Serpent' seems to carry a message of not forgetting where you came from - but making sure you leave a trace of where you're going - firstly, is this a

reference to some of the music on 'Order...' throwing in influences from your earlier material?

Donna: Well, not so much a direct reference, but definitely true. This song ties in with the back story, too. I guess I also wanted to express our displeasure with humanity's sense of entitlement. Too many people go through life bitter and unhappy because they feel they're owed something.

Everyone wants something for nothing, everyone wants what's fair, but really there is no such thing. There is nothing governing 'fair' on a universal level. And I really believe that we are owed nothing in this life. If you want something,





figure out how to get it. Otherwise, stop complaining. Again, with the personal responsibility...

How important is it to remember where you've been?

Donna: That would depend on what I was drinking and who I was with. **Steven:** Who were you with?! And what were you doing? Is there something you need to tell me?!

What pushed your decision to cover The Sisters of Mercy's 'Afterhours'? Donna: It's just such a damn fine song.

Steven: I remember the first time I heard it I was in a car driving through the middle of nowhere. I wanted to recapture that feeling of personal isolation amidst the biomass of city life. It, along with a good chunk of Sisters material, is on my list of songs I wish I had written.

This year you also contributed a track to the CD 'Where's Neil Gaiman when you need him?' - What influenced the track you chose and how would you describe the influence of Neil Gaiman on your work?

Donna: The novel 'Stardust' was the inspiration for our song on the CD, although it wasn't the first song we wrote. We initially chose 'Good Omens', as Lunascape were doing a song for 'Stardust'. We wrote a song called 'Funny Olde World' in a sort of big band style, which was very fun, especially writing it as a bit of a love song for the demon Crowley. But at the end of the day, it really wasn't very representational of what we do, and recognizing we couldn't write a serious song about 'Good Omens', we went with my other favourite book and wrote 'You Better Leave the Stars Alone'.



It was different enough from Lunascape's take on the story, so that worked out ok. We will be releasing 'Funny Olde World' on a CD in the near future, though.

We are huge fans, of course, but the thing I am always amazed by is when people can develop and cultivate such vast mythologies, as Neil Gaiman has. It isn't just about one story or one project, it's entire worlds being created. That's what attracts me to artists, and it is what we try to do, as well. Steven and I have a collective place where all the stuff we create lives, as well as some places of our own. We spend a great deal of time in those places, which would explain the sometimes blank expressions on our faces when we're in public. Steven: The thing about Neil's work that amazes me is his ability to write about the most

fantastic events in such a way that you feel the reality of it. Just because a thing did not happen does not mean it's not true.

You're just about to embark on a tour with The Cruxshadows and Ayria I know you've played with CXS a few times, what is it like playing with them?

Steven: At some point we will write a book about our experiences on the road, and it will be called "Everything We Know about Touring, We Learned from the Cruxshadows". It would also have to include an introduction by Voltaire on how to get started in this business.

Donna: It will be the sequel to our book "How to Name-Drop Your Friends and Influence People".

Steven: But seriously, they are some of our best friends, and we have nothing but complete respect for what they do. We have played 60+ shows with them and every night we watched their show in awe.

I've noticed between the 3 of you, you have a range of side projects, plus painting, writing novels, knitting and of course remixing for other bands - where do you find time for life between all of this?

Donna: Well, we don't find time for much else, in general, though we have decided to do a few non-work things this year, like take a vacation. But really, these things are our life. It's how we wanted it to be. Plus, I get bored very easily, and when I get bored I get depressed, and that is something I work very hard to circumvent. **Steven:** There is a constant flood of ideas and influences, and after a great deal of work, we have created a life where we can explore them in any form we want.

What are your plans for 2007?

Donna: We are going to try to tour as much as we can, and work on releasing some new and revisited material. I'll also be writing and promoting the novel for its 2008 release

Steven: We will also begin production of our next full length CD which we are hoping to release in 2008 around the same time Donna's book "Isabel Burning" comes out.

http://www.egolikeness.com http://www.dancing-ferret.com http://ego-likeness.livejournal.com http://rawdogscreaming.com

Words: Kevin Morris
Photos: Lauren E.Simonutti

End Of The Line?

While I have dubbed this interview as being the 'last ever' for LIBITINA, I really hope I'm wrong. Not for any general half-arsed "Oh,

I'm sorry to see you go" but because I really will be sorry to see the end of Libitina, as I'm sure many other Goths will.

If we get straight to the point - 'Parhelion' is an immense album. It was undoubtedly

the best album reviewed in TWF last year - the finest hour of a band who'd already been quite a key player in the UK Goth Scene.

Unfortunately, last year in an email announcing they were to play their 100th gig, they also announced it would probably be their last. This has since been confirmed that Libitina are no more. But at least with 'Parhelion' they're going out at a peak, rather than fading away.

Kevin Morris caught up with Jamie, bassist and one of the three original founding members, to find out both more about 'Parhelion' and more about the split.

A 'Parhelion' is a bright spot that sometimes appears on either side of the Sun - what prompted you to name an album after this?

We decided on the name for the album whilst having a post-studio drink. Phill and I had several potential titles between them and it turned out that we each had 'Parhelion' as a suggestion! Given that 'Parhelion' isn't exactly a commonplace word and our choices had been completely independent of each other, we felt we had to use it as the title!

The album's about signs and portents, interpretation, contradiction, and ambiguity, and inner conflict and civil strife. The Parhelion painting ('Vädersolstavlan' by Elbfas) that inspired my choice (if not Phill's!) of the album title represents the 6 luminous rings of light that appeared over Stockholm in 1535. These mock suns were interpreted as a revelation of the imminent collapse of worldly power and as a call for people to mend their ways. Fittingly, the themes of the album surround reading such signs and making life-changing choices to avoid the destruction of both the self and society.

Have any new influences gone into 'Parhelion' that hadn't gone into other releases?

Well, there's some Scott Walker in there and some OMD too. Otherwise, it's business as usual with our mix of gothic guitars and synths. However, it's angrier and more aggressive than our previous CDs.

What sort of lyrical influences have gone into some of the songs?

The lyrics are mostly about relationships falling apart, choices being made, and the consequences of those choices (probably best exemplified by 'Duty Unbound' and 'Duty Bound'- different sides of the same coin). They're about the struggle of the self, either internally (making sense of the world) or externally (in maintaining alliances and protecting what it is important to us). 'Alea Iacta Est' is an attempt to capture the feeling of impending doom that we can sometimes sense when a relationship is about to fall apart and there's nothing we can do to avoid it happening. 'Panopticon' is a rage against the surveillance state and the chains we find ourselves in as a result of accepting the 'gifts' of capitalism.

TWF described 'Parhelion' as "[Libitina's] finest hour" - was similar feedback received elsewhere?

Yes, we've received some excellent reviews... although not as eminently quotable as yours! The UK press has been very, very appreciative and we've received a lot of good press from abroad too. The general feeling is that it is our tour de force. We're very pleased with the CD and it's good to see that reviewers feel the same way!

What do you think helped make this album so strong?

We took more chances with the production- our last album, 'The Shadowline', was designed to be played live, but this time we wanted the recording to be more studio orientated. Having 4 albums of material to play with does free you to explore new possibilities! Also, some of the songs had been around for a few years by the time we came to record them and Phill had had plenty of time to put his production skills to work on them. The album has a very warm and intimate sound to it, partly a result of using only analogue and virtual analogue synths on the recording. It certainly has an early 80s feel to it! Also, we knew that this would be our last studio recording as Libitina and that probably contributed to the strength of the sound.

In September this year you played your 100th live gig - how do you feel having played so many gigs?

A little deaf! It certainly feels odd to think we've got that many under our belts! Over these 100 have there been any favourites (or least favourites!) and what made these so special, or so terrible?

We've certainly had some amazing experiences and some truly dire ones too! Our headline at a festival in Finland last summer was one of the best gigs we've done. Coming on at midnight with it still being light outside was incredible and the audience were absolutely fantastic! Another favourite would be our gig in Brussels 3 years ago- it was in an anarchist squat and the audience didn't really know who we



were before we started... they more than made up for that by not letting us off the stage until we'd played every song we had with us, about 75 minutes worth! There have been some awful ones too, usually involving sound engineers who didn't know their arse from their elbow. Actually, the worse of the lot was a gig in Italy where we turned up to discover that the venue was in the middle of nowhere, the PA consisted of 2 karaoke speakers and there were no monitors, and that the audience were more interested in scoring drugs in the toilet than enjoying the club before and after we played. Still, you have to do the gig even if you know it's going to sound terrible!

This gig was also Phill's last with the band - what were the reasons behind his decision to part ways with Libitina?

He felt that it was time for a change of musical direction and that 4 years was long enough for his involvement in Libitina. We knew that it was coming for a while, so

we were able to savour the recording of 'Parhelion' and the live dates to promote it. There was also uncertainty about whether Jamie and Darren would continue as Libitina, has this uncertainty been decided on yet - either way what made you consider calling it a day?

Darren has decided that his time in Libitina has come to an end. That means Libitina is down to just one of the 3 founder members and, at least for the moment, it doesn't feel right for me to continue with that name. Pete, our old singer, threatens to come back every so often and perhaps that may happen some day. I'm continuing to write material, but it will probably be released under a different moniker. I've also joined Spares, the brilliant new band featuring Simon from Goth legends Children On Stun... joining forces will be a bit of a 90s Goth revival! I've loved Spares' Goth punk sound from the moment I first heard it, so working together is really fantastic. We should be doing some recording over the next few months and will be playing some gigs over the spring and summer- including one at the April Whitby Gothic Weekend.

You've picked up quite a few years on the clock - which is quite an achievement, what do you feel has helped you keep going over this time?

Thanks, 12 years is quite a long lifespan for a band! We owe our longevity to a love of the Goth scene, the challenge of creating our own music, meeting new people (and catching up with old friends!), thick skins, mule-like stubbornness, and playing places where alcohol is served.

Over this time you've probably seen many trends, styles and bands come and go - are there any trends, styles or bands you're happy are gone - or any you wished had stayed around a bit longer?

There certainly have been some comings and goings! The bands we miss the most are Children on Stun and The Dream Disciples- the live scene hasn't seemed the same since they went. We've got on well with most bands on the UK scene and good luck to anyone who's willing to get up on stage and do something!

What has been the highlight of your career?

We've had some wonderful experiences. Gigs in Italy, Germany, Belgium, and Finland are definite highlights, as are our Whitby performances and an appearance at the Sacrosanct Festival in The Astoria 2. Being filmed performing 'Gothic People' for BBC2 was pretty amazing. We've even made it into a classical history text by an Oxford don (Tim Rood's 'The Sea! The Sea!'). Not many bands have that on their

And for the penultimate question - is this the last interview we'll see/read with Libitina?

It's more than likely that it will be. Thanks for doing the honours! **Anything else to add?**

Finally, we'd like to thank everyone who has supported us over the years and say a quick hello to all the friends we've made through Libitina. Our website www.libitina.co.uk will continue and we've set up a MySpace page at www.myspace.com/libitinagothicpeople ... so come and have a look around!

Words: **Kevin Morris** Photo: **Steve Godfrey**







While the initial 'Goth-Metal' explosion may have calmed down, if anything this has only improved the quality of 'Goth-Metal' bands coming through the ranks. If we take The LoveCrave for example,

they emerged after the whole craze had came and passed, yet have still created a dynamic album which is capturing the imagination of music fans across Europe. The band are seemingly creative, in addition to the album the booklet also comes with a short story written by charismatic front woman Francesca Chiara, herself already an experienced musician having had a successful solo career and album in the 1990s

Francesca also has 'Rain', her animated persona who follows her around, like a mascot or alter-ego.

Kevin Morris caught up with vocalist Francesca Chiara to find out more about debut album 'The Angel and the Rain' and the explosion that is The LoveCrave.

Well, your album seems to have exploded with interest across Europe - can you explain the time and emotion that went into the record and do you feel this has paid off with the many positive reviews you've received?

The LoveCrave is an explosion... it's what I always say because it's what we feel since we've started to work on this project. When you are hurt, locked and angry you arrive at a point when there is no space anymore for patience, you just start to run, as fast as you can so nobody is gonna stop you. We are gonna touch the highest point this band can get to...and I'm not talking about success or anything, just freedom of making music.

Am I right in understanding 'The Angel and the Rain' was based loosely around a story written by you?

You are right; the record is like a movie. It's a world that we try to tell through music, visuals and writing. The story was written back in 2003 and when we made the first song ("Can you hear me?") I thought about that story right away, it was perfect with the music

Do you feel some fans may be able to see themselves as a character similar to Leo?

20

Oh I don't know about that , when I write a story is like being there for me, standing on the character's shoulder just to see what he will do next. I just watch and the story grows itself. Leo is a 22 year old boy like many others but his life goes through a big change and probably the change is one of the main concepts. You gotta have balls to change if your life is screwed or took a wrong turn.

How would you describe the concept of the album and what influenced some of the musical and lyrical ideas?

What was important for me was to give an environment to the music. The city, the darkness, the rain, love, death, the rage and the pain and of course the music, it's all





And what made you decide to cover 'The Chauffeur'?

The Durans have been the first love for all of us. I was 10 years old when I first bought one of their records. They came before the metal, before our passion for music, before everything. This is why we decided that we had to remake one of their

Are there any songs you are considering making music videos for and do you have any rough ideas/plots for these videos?

We have tons of ideas for videos but we have to sell our houses to pay for one of

We are trying to find somebody who is interested in making a really professional video for not too much money but it's not as easy as it seems. We are not going to make a bad one; we'd rather wait and see what happens.

Going back a bit. This is got to be the most boring question ever - and you've probably answered it about 100 times this week alone - but - how did the band get together?

No problem the question is easy... we are all friends! Tank (guitar) and I have been writing music together for 10 years, Iakk (drums) is Tank's best friend and Simon (bass) is a friend of mine from high school. We don't know if we are gonna play together forever but I'm sure we'll stay friends!

Where did the idea come from for the creation of 'Rain'? - will she stay with you and the band forever (perhaps like Eddie the Ed and Iron Maiden)?



Exactly! Iron Maiden are one of our favourite bands and I think that they make the best CD covers ever! We wanted to do something like that, keep Rain for every graphic item, put her in the videos, on the stage, on the merchandise... it will take time to do all that we have in mind but we are very determined to finish what we

As mentioned in the review - one thing I said I'd pick on in an interview was that you don't consider yourself to be a singer... why not?

Because you know I don't really care about notes when I sing. I just try to say something out of my heart. I'm not "controlled" at all, I just put a voice to an emotion I have in mind. There are of course the melodies that I follow, but that's not my main worry. If I sing a word, for example "eternity", the sound of my voice has to give that feeling, of something that doesn't end. This is singing for me, it's a way of communicating and it's closer to "saying something straight" than to "singing".

You've just recently toured with The Birthday Massacre - what was it like touring with them?

It was great! We had a blast last summer! The guys of TBM are all really nice, we really hope we can go back on tour with them and take some more silly pictures in the dark-wave clubs!

I'm guessing you'll be touring extensively for the new album - do you have any particularly areas/festivals/etc planned? Or been invited to any big events? Nothing is set yet but our agency is working hard right now to book us in some big festivals because that is the way we can play in front of many people all at once and push the album up. Hopefully we will be around a lot next year.

What's the Italian scene like at the moment?

The scene in Italy is really growing but it's a very hard life for Italian bands. It's hard to get the support of the magazines or of the media. The excuse is "we want to treat the Italian bands like all the others" so we can't even count on a little bit of more support from our home country (something that every other country does with its bands). This is why many bands are trying to bring their music abroad and the other countries in Europe and in the States seem to appreciate our music long way more than Italians! This is crazy!

Do you find you've been commonly linked/compared to the same bands? If so, what do you feel about this?

Oh I think it's normal, I think that those who like this album will realize that it has its own precise sound, we've worked on research a lot trying to take elements from all our influences but mixing them in a very personal way. Of course those that don't like it will easily compare us to the bands but it's just because I think they listened to it once and fast, which is normal if you don't like a style of music.

Has a lot of the good publicity in some of the press been a blessing or does this add pressure on the band?

You know we've had more than 50 reviews in two weeks and we weren't really used to it, it is scary for us! We read all kinds of things about our music that we didn't even know. I mean for us it's like a dream come true that all these people who listen to CDs all day get to review our album.

What are your goals for 2007?

We have the mission to bring the album as far as we can, playing, promoting, no matter how. We are really proud of the work so now we are going to help it growing.

Anything else to add?

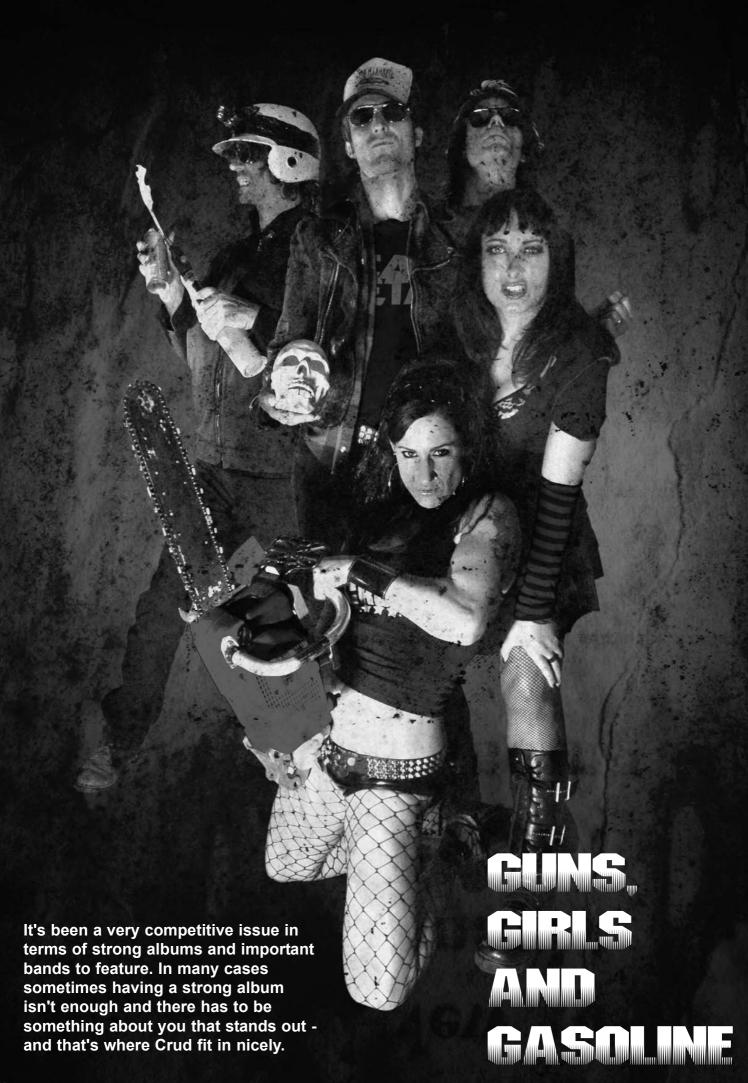
Pregiolla! (It means "cool" in Italian slang)

Since conducting this interview The LoveCrave have been confirmed to play Wave Gotik Treffen in May 2007

www.thelovecrave.com



Words: Kevin Morris Photos taken from www.thelovecrave.com - used with permission



They're a five-piece from Detroit, whose debut album 'Devil at

the Wheel' is packed with addictive tracks and a cocktail of influences enough to produce an end product that's almost like nothing you've ever experienced before. If it was fight it would be The Cramps finding dangerous weapons to beat up Rob Zombie with, with a little help from Rammstein to crank the heat right up. Although their self-released debut was assaulted on the US in 2005, it has taken until recently for them to find support in the UK. Martin Oldgoths Thirteen13 company distributed their CDs amongst the UK DJs and press in late 2006 and tracks like 'Reality' have become instant club hits up and down the country.

You've probably danced to this track already many, many times but not know very much about the band - which is exactly why Kevin Morris spoke to the band to find out a bit more about them.

The band are fronted by the twin vocal attack of Vin Dombronski and Danielle Arsenault - Vin having been described by one of the most mesmerising frontmen in rock music whilst Danielle herself being a burlesque beauty.

They are joined by David Black on guitars, Dana Forrester on bass and Jimmy Paluzzi on drums.

In this interview we spoke with Vin, Danielle and Dana.

"Crud is a band that highlights the dangerous and sexual elements of rock music." Warns Vin, upon being asked to explain more about Crud, "Our influences and inspiration include the Butthole Surfers, X, Detroit techno music, shooting, vodka and American culture..."

It's plain to see quite early that I was right in my suspicions of mixed influences. Ghost, whom reviewed the album, picked up on influence from The Cramps and he felt it would be inevitable that comparisons would be made between Crud and The Cramps. Not just on a musical note, but also from promotional pictures, energetic

live shows and the album cover.

"We were going for more of an Ike and Tina Turner kind of thing but the Cramps are close." Begins Vin, "It's a flattering comparison as Lux can be a very dangerous man. I would hate to get poked in the eye with one of those size 13 pumps".

As I mentioned above, 'Reality' has been somewhat of a club hit around the UK - popping up on playlists here there and everywhere. However it is rare to see other tracks from their album played.

"Reality is definitely the song that cannot be denied in terms of club play," explains Dana, "But our new label Full Effect Records is doing club remixes of 'Girls That Swear', 'Meat Detonation', and 'La Dee Da' that will be smokin' hot!"

Danielle also points out, "Quite a few strip clubs have been playing the hell outta 'Girls That Swear!"

Although 'Reality' has perhaps been the track to break them into the UK, the band have their own favourites above this track, "'La De Da' is a personal favourite," states Vin, "It gives the finger to the rich getting richer types. The track includes the sound of a crack pipe getting hit. People do more time in the states for selling illegal drugs than white collar crooks that steal millions from folks. Disgusting!"

The band also have a cover of Gary Glitters 'Do you Wanna Touch' doing the rounds, unfortunately this track was suggested as a cover by guitarist David Black, who was unavailable for comment but Dana agrees with his suggestion, "With Dani and Vin dueting - it's a great choice!"

The cover itself is a dirty rock n roll cover of a dirty rock n roll song - so it's probably all quite fitting for the world of Crud!

One thing that particularly surprised me about Crud was that their music is included in a number of hit TV programmes. Shows like ER, MTV Cribs and CSI. The reason I'm so surprised about this is because Crud are effectively an unsigned band! "We know people who know people and we got very lucky," laughs Dana, "Radio in the States is so hard to break into - that with Crud we're infesting people aurally

through television soundtracks. It's surprisingly much easier than getting play on commercial radio."

Danielle is also quite excited about this, "I love to hear Crud during my favourite shows on MTV - so cool!"

Despite 'Devil at the Wheel' being a couple of years life in it, they are still happy to ride the wave of interest this has caused rather than settling down to record a new album. "'Devil at the Wheel' still has a ton of life in it," explains Dana, "We're just at the tip of the iceberg when it comes to promoting this CD."

"Our new label Full Effect Records is re-releasing 'Devil...' internationally," continues Danielle, "We'll also have a new track or two on it..."
"Vin is currently writing a new Crud track called 'Murder is Fun!"

Dana picks back up, "For 2007 Full Effect is going to amplify everything we've been doing on our own internationally."

The word 'internationally' and term 'breaking the UK' seem to be a heavy theme in this interview and TWF can exclusively reveal the band is set to embark on a UK tour later this year. Unfortunately dates are yet to be finalised at time of press, but a tour is coming...

"Yes a UK tour is coming in October," confirms Dana, "Thanks to Martin Oldgoth and Thirteen13." "As long as they let us in the country we will be amazed to be there," jokes Vin, "I have had horrible trouble with passports in the past and very tricky experiences leaving the country. Recently I was at a border crossing with my gas mask and 2 clips of 9mm ammo that I forgot to take out of my bag. I started talking about art with the border guard and he let me go!"

So what can the UK expect to see from Crud as a live band?

"Sex, drugs and rock and roll personified!" states

"A rock and roll gang bang from Detroit!" adds Danielle, "Come see Crud when we hit the UK -it's like nothing you've seen or heard before!" "Hell yeah to that!" agrees Dana.

You know, I don't doubt this for one moment... there is a storm coming - and that storm is called Crud, miss them at your peril!

Words: Kevin Morris





We seem to have an increased amount of Australian bands in this issue than normal. I seem to go around countries and areas

like this. For example, Issue 4 seemed a bit heavy on Finnish bands while in Issue 5 it was Leeds bands. But like our Finnish bands and Yorkshire bands, our Australian bands are both quite different. While Angelspit produce mangled electronics that are abrasive and in your face, **The Crystalline Effect** are often more chilled out and 'club' orientated.

Musically they come across as a cross between Trauma Pet and Portishead, often enchanting and soothing electronic arrangements underpinned by psychedelic triphop.

Their 2005 debut, 'Glass', received outstanding reviews from press around the world and this was followed up with the 'Blurred Edges' EP in 2006.

In this time the band also were tour support for VNV Nation in Australia and are presently working on second full length album, 'Hypothermia', scheduled for a June 2007 release.

The band is a duo consisting of Elenor Rayner and Pete Crane. Kevin Morris caught up with the bands male half, Pete Crane, to find out more about the band.

Firstly, how would you summarise TCE to someone who had no prior knowledge of you?

We're a duo from Australia, I write the music and Elenor Rayner writes the lyrics and does the vocals. Stylistically, the music is rooted in electronica, drawing influences from EBM as well as trip hop. We mix down-tempo, atmospheric and glitchy music with dancefloor-oriented tracks, with female vocals.

What exactly is a Crystalline Effect? What made you chose this for your band name?

It basically came out of the usual process of choosing band names. At the time we went through a phase where we wrote e-mails to each other pitching lists of names and picking out the best ones. Elenor got the name "The Crystalline Effect" from a preset on a vocal processing unit she owns. We both liked it so we chose it.

Your debut album, 'Glass', was released in 2005. In this you combined influences of trip-hop and EBM. What caused you to wish to infuse these sounds?

At the time that we started, EBM was my biggest source of musical inspiration. It wasn't all I listened to, but it was the kind of music I wanted to make. However, when it came time to write some music, what came out was closer to trip hop in some ways than anything else, but with EBM elements in the synth lines. Elenor's vocals worked really well over this style though, so I went with it instead of forcing out music that would fit into a specific style.

You received excellent reviews across the board for this album; did anyone have anything negative to say about it?

You know... not really! I don't really remember seeing anything particularly negative regarding our first album. I just hope people end up liking our new album as much!

In 2006 you released the EP 'Blurred Edges' - how would you describe the difference and progression between this and previous album 'Glass'?

The "Blurred Edges" EP contains 3 new tracks that will be included on our second album, as well as a couple of remixes I did and a couple of remixes from other artists. At the point that we put it together, the label for our first album "Glass" went under and I'd sold out of all the copies of Glass they'd sent us. So we were kind of in an odd place, working on a new album but with no promotion being done on our behalf. I didn't want people to forget about us so in order to keep our name out there and avoid "data death" in the sea of information we put out this interstitial release. The direction of the music is indicative of our new album, and the remixes gave some older tracks a new interpretation into the dancefloor-direction.





You are currently working on a new album, again, how would you describe the progression to this next album?

This new album, with a working title of 'Hypothermia', has been 2 years in the making, so given the time frame the styles within the album are quite varied, at least to my ears.

Progression-wise, the music of our new album is still the kind of music we want to make. We're still running with what comes out of us. Though to me it's a more developed style; I forced myself to rely less on "trip hop" beats and to experiment with other styles and production methods along the way.

The album is now completed and will be released by Advoxya Records in June 2007

Can you describe some of the songs on the new album and explain lyrical influences?

The tracks on the album are quite varied, as mentioned. To give an idea of what to expect, there are slow, atmospheric songs with sparse, glitchy beats (such as Radio Waves), there are dancefloor-oriented tracks (Nothing Warms This Room) and there are also tracks with more aggressive, harsh music (Only You Can See You). The instrumentation is mostly electronic, with some sparse guitars.

You recently toured with VNV Nation - how did this support slot come about and what was the experience like?

It was a great experience to share a stage with that band.

I guess we were in the right place at the right time to get offered the slot. We didn't actually spend any time with the band; they were on a tight schedule so we didn't even get time to share a beer. They kind of did the rock star thing, we took the whole

experience in our stride, but it was some great exposure and a lot of fun to play on a big stage with full production like that!

On record you are a two-piece - how do you turn this into a full live performance and what are you like as a live band?

When we play live in clubs we play primarily EBM/club music, a very "body"-oriented show. We play our clubbier tracks and remixes, and basically go for the highest energy music we can.

Though there have been occasions where we've played in small theatres or cafes and we've played our slow, intimate "trip hop" songs.

Our live show and line-up varies. The only constant is Elenor and I, with Elenor on vocals and me on synth and laptop and sometimes guitar as well.

We usually include an extra live keyboard player, sometimes a live bass player, and sometimes a live VJ mixing visuals from the stage.

Are there presently any plans for a European tour in the foreseeable future?

Yes, definitely. We are hoping to do this in late 2007, but as for dates we don't have anything firm enough to print yet. I'm trying to get in touch with promoters and any other contacts that can help build our profile in Europe, and if anyone is reading this who would like to be involved in some capacity with a tour or possible gigs in Europe please get in touch with us!

Australia doesn't have a particularly big EBM scene - have you ever considered relocating to Europe?

Actually yes, I am planning on moving to Europe.

Not having personally been to Europe yet, I can't really compare our EBM scene to yours, but it's not too bad here. In recent years we have had some successful tours of European EBM bands, like the mentioned VNV tour, as well as Apoptygma Berzerk, Covenant, Architect/Haujobb, Converter and some others. We're getting more European bands touring every year, so that's a good sign. Locally we've got some great bands (mostly in the Crash Frequency collective) and the club scene is quite healthy

As for moving to EU, I am definitely at the stage where I want to do this. Again, no dates confirmed enough to go to print yet, but in the relatively near future I will be moving to London and using that as a base to live, probably followed by some time in other EU countries like DE and NL. Elenor is always up for travelling and performing anywhere, so tours will always be possible. So keep an eye out and again, any promo contacts reading this please get in touch!

Can you tell us more about some of the other projects yourself and Elenor are involved in, or have been involved in?

At the moment I have 2 active projects, The Crystalline Effect and Plague Sequence. The latter is my solo project, which is musically primarily psytrance but shows some EBM influences. I've played at psytrance events and outdoor "doofs" with this project and it's great to play to such enthusiastic crowds. This project has been developing for many years and gone through a lot of different styles to try and find its own, but I've finally tapped onto an original style that I'm happy with, so I'm working on a debut album.

Check it out at www.plaguesequence.com.

I've also been involved in several projects in the past apart from this, but that's mostly trivial and not too relevant!

Elenor is in some great bands, the main one being her solo project "Sobriquet" (sobriquet.org). She also plays keys for Snog, and toured the world with them last year.

You are part of The Crash Frequency Collective. I did ask Angelspit the same question, but how would you personally describe this collective?

The CFC is a collective of Australia's hardest working bands in the field of darkwave electronica. The members front as a collective to help pool resources for mutual gain, like dealing with distribution for the members' individual releases, and common promotion. There's also a regular CFC compilation, which has achieved quite a bit of renown thus far. Best of luck to the Collective, but I recently left due to various reasons, though I would still like to work with the members on a musical level.

Anything else to add?

Since we're in the same issue I'll say "Hi!" to Angelspit *waves* - hope the US tour didn't kill you and that Deutschland is treating you two well!

Also, keep an eye out for our upcoming EP and album in April and June 2007. This EP (titled "Do Not Open") will contain 100% exclusive material, including tracks written just for the EP, and a bunch of new remixes. At this point we have incredible remixes already finished by acts such as Negative Format, Blank, Stark and Implant, and have confirmed remixes in progress by Urceus Exit and cB, among others. These will be released by Advoxya Records, so keep up to date by checking us out at **thecrystallineeffect.com!**

Words: **Kevin Morris** Pictures: **pOizon**





It's not the first time it's been mentioned this issue, but there has been a lot of very strong bands and CDs this time around. I think from a UK perspective the strongest album we've received recently came from Deathboy with new offering 'End of an Error'

It is a hybrid mix of sounds, styles and influences. A touch of electronic breaks and beats, some punk guitars, a strong whisk of emotion in the lyrics.

Deathboy are key players in the current 'Futurepunk' movement. It's a movement that, like the band, doesn't take itself too seriously and is always quick on the tongue-in-cheek comments. The word 'Futurepunk' itself being a nod towards the 'Futurepop' movement. Except all 'Futurepunk' bands don't sound the same. Sorry, think talking too Deathboy vocalist/lyricist/guitarist/head honcho Scott Lamb has rubbed off on me (Kevin Morris) a bit...

New album 'End of an Error' seems to have received top reviews across the board (for example TWF gave it 9/10) - how do you feel about the response you've been getting from this?

It's really good to see the reviews come back positive. This one took a lot more time that we'd initially intended and while we're pretty pleased with how it worked out, there was a worry that people wouldn't care any more. Gratifyingly, it looks like people didn't give up on us and are really enjoying the album, which is a big kick for all of us!

Do you feel this increases the pressure for your next release in order to maintain the standards you've now set yourselves?

Yes, but not in a bad way. I think if anything, the pressure is mostly about being able to write decent songs. We've moved forwards a tonne in production quality. Just to

piss me off, we've even been called over-produced now - I know we don't have the same rawness as the last album, but 9 times out of 10 I think that's for the best. If we're still enjoying doing it, the rest has a way of wriggling itself into place. How's that for a cop-out?

Your sound incorporates a lot of influences. Some drum n bass and trip-hop on one side - and some punk guitars on the other - what made you decided to gel these influences and why do you think this works so well?

We like to take something from all of the genres we adore. It's not often much of a conscious thing (like, "let's write a punk track with some break-beats and a metal chorus!") so much as being quite happy to try out ideas. They don't always work, either! I'm personally a big fan of a few particular concept albums where two musical styles were jammed together. Judgement Day's soundtrack and the Spawn album (great record, shockingly bad film) both took the approach of putting unlikely combinations of

bands together. That's not how we see what we do, but growing up with those kinds of records in your collection and a happily diverse music taste in the band means, well, it means that I can just about get away with dropping some jazz piano into the middle of 'Lullaby' without getting beaten up.

A lot of your lyrics are quite deep, emotional and personal - do you ever find fans come up to you to say they relate to your lyrics?

Yeah, it does happen quite a bit. Sometimes it's odd if the words have struck a chord with someone, but not actually how you meant them, and you can get in a bit of a row about what the song means (always odd, I tend to think I know what a song I wrote means, but it's happened).

And sometimes the intensity with which someone cares about a given song is scary, particularly if they've been through rough times and identify with it closely. The best feeling in the world for me is if someone says that a song says what they had in their head, but couldn't articulate. My favourite songs are like that, and it's a cool thing for someone else to say you've done that for them.

On these - are there any songs that are particularly close to your heart? Which are these and what are they about?

Probably sounds very clichéd, but most of the songs are, actually. Most of the lyrics are about things that have had an impact (usually a fairly negative one) on my life, or those of people near to me. I didn't write the lyrics for 'Black Morning' (as with 'Money and Confidence' and 'Angel on my Shoulder', they were written by The Phil, my childhood friend and regular lyricist/silent band-member) it's probably the best song we have, and the lyrics are particularly poignant, the stuff of relationships, self-change, dark days. Almost Gothic! 'Lullaby' and 'Playing Grownup' are also quite personal to me in particular, lots of themes and demons from my childhood and early adulthood I needed to get out.



You've recently signed to Line Out Records - how did this deal come about and how are they treating you?

We approached them, as it goes. I believe the conversation went along the lines of "HELLO! WILL YOU PUT OUT OUR ALBUM, PLEASE?" they said "YES!" and all was good. It really was pretty much like that, as Bob from Line Out liked our stuff and he seemed a good guy. No nasty surprises, good support when we decide we want to do daft promos and so-forth, we're very happy.

Line Out have also signed a number of our contemporaries (History of Guns, Katscan, Earth Loop Recall) since we joined, so it's almost like a class reunion, we're definitely in the kind of company that we like to keep.

You have been known to give a lot of songs, particularly demos, away free to anyone that wants them - in fact you've got your entire back catalogue available for free download from www.deathboy.co.uk now -do you feel this has added to your popularity or helped you in anyway?

I believe it has. You could (and some people do) argue that you could see all the downloads as lost sales in some way. I don't really believe that. First and foremost, we love making music. We love someone to hear what we do. The more people we can get to hear us, that's potential future fans, people who will support us when a commercial release comes along, or we gig in their neighbourhood or whatever. But even if none of that was true, I like people hearing our stuff, we'll continue with the free tracks just as long as we're making noise.

You're one of the strong players in the present 'Futurepunk' movement. How would you describe 'Futurepunk' and where do you feel you fit into this?

WE ARE THE ONE TRUE KINGS OF FUTUREPUNK AND GRAMMAR BE DAMNED!

Also, we made the word up. heh. It IS a movement, of sorts, there are a bunch of bands wielding the term about with flagrant disregard for safety. It's basically a bunch of artists that do actually have a similar sound or feel, but no other appropriate banner to gather under. But it's also something none of us take too seriously (like, bothering to define it with any particular care or attention). We all like the energetic, industrial-orientated, sometimes-experimental, often just mental side of music, we're not much for posturing (unless it's with heavy sarcasm), and we like crosspollination... remixing, gigging, collaborating with each other, making sub-sub-subgenres of ourselves, then taking the piss out of each other afterwards. Basically, it's all loud music and grins and shouting. And alcohol. And more shouting.

As well as gigging in the 'real' world - you've also been playing gigs in computer game 'Second Life' - so tell me, what was that like, did you go down well and was the promoter good to you?

It beats spending half a day on the motorway, but not quite as much fission as a real gig. It was fun, as a matter of fact. Much more so than I expected. Very much like playing a live radio slot (as opposed to an actual gig) with me and Jase talking between album tracks, mentioning stuff that was going on in the (virtual) club at the time and taking the piss out of each other. The crowd seemed very enthusiastic and the club owners liked what we did, gave us a few quid for our effort and asked us back. Given the number of people you wind up having the chance to expose your music to, it beats half the Goth gigs we do! It's all very geek (but then, so are we, frankly) but it's actually quite a laugh and great promotion for us, so there ought to be more in the tubes, hopefully with some proper "Live! from my lounge!" gigs in

In terms of 'real' gigs in the last couple of years you've played various events such as WGW, Black Celebration and Futurepunk - what was it like playing these events and do you have any favourite experiences from this?

Whitby's always superb (I say "always", ok, we've played twice, but both times were excellent). Great sound, great crew, lotsa people and enthusiasm, lots of fun all round. BC is your stock London gig, less enthusiasm, difficult to get tickets into hands, the locals made to feel like we're lucky to play while the Euro-bands shipped in are treated like Gods. Less fun, but nice to play to a "home crowd", regardless. Futurepunk was ACE! We (as in the bands involved) promoted and organised it, it was a little bit ramshackle, but it all worked out to a cracking gig, great response and no tears! As far as I know, the consensus is that there's only not been another one yet as we would like the next event to be just as much fun. There'll definitely be more of that this year.

With the recent release of your album what are your current plans for 2007?

We're going to try to line up some good gigs for the summer, and get some new material written - hopefully the next album won't take quite as long as this one did! I've been collaborating and remixing quite a lot since EoaE, trying out new ideas, so there ought to be a few new releases with my name scribbled somewhere in the margin. We're also going to continue to do our best to push EoaE with promotions and suchlike, as we're pretty fucking proud of it.

Anything else to add?

Just a big thank you to everyone who stuck out the long wait for EoaE... and supported us so well when it was released! Tell your friends! Buy the CD! DeathBoy for Pope!

'End of an Error' is out now on Line Out Records. The band also has a generous selection of mp3s available for free download from www.deathboy.co.uk

Words: Kevin Morris



These shoes were made for posing

There are a lot of companies that create custom clothing and accessories. However, there do not seem to be that many that specialise in footwear

Miss Bunny Shoes seems to have found a gap in the market with her hand crafted custom shoes. She creates a range of unique designs as well as filling custom requests.





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THE WORLD ACCORDING TO



OK, we're not the first publication to put EMILIE AUTUMN on our cover - and I dare say we won't be the last. Emilie Autumn has

had a cult following for a number of years and with her latest triple whammy of CDs looks set to hit a wider appeal. As a classical trained violinist it's almost no surprise the violin features heavily in her work. Although this isn't Vanessa Mae the second. Emilie also combines influences from assorted electronic and industrial bands to create her own unique style and sound she calls 'Victoraindustrial'.

Of these three releases, the first was double CD 'Opheliac', a musical exploration into Emilie's world. The second was supposed to be a double A-side in the form of 'Liar' and 'Dead is the New Alive' - however she got a bit carried away with tracks and at 11 it became a near album in itself.

Her next release is another double CD of violin work entitled 'Laced/Unlaced' unfortunately we caught up with Emilie before this was confirmed for release. With these releases she already seems to be heading onto stronger things and is scheduled to play at this years Wave Gotik Treffen.

With all this in mind, Kevin Morris simply had to catch up with her to find out more.

Your last release was the double length EP 'Liar'/'Dead is the New Alive' - before I dive in and talk about music - there are 11 tracks on this release, that's an awful lot for a single - what made you decide to put so many tracks on?

I will keep adding tracks to any given record of mine until I've reached the deadline and someone comes to take it away. There would have been even more tracks had I had more time. I've simply got so much material screaming to be put on something; it's just a matter of when.

What do you think of some of the remixes done by other musicians for this release?

I think each one is absolutely brilliant in its own way, and I'm flattered yet humbled by their mad skills. And in the case of Spiritual Front, their bravery for their cover of 'Thank God I'm Pretty'.

So 'Liar' - I'm reading through the lyrics - and I was wondering if you could share what these are about - part of me thinks it's about broken promises, but can you explain more?

The only thing I will ever explain about 'Liar' is that the only lyric I wrote myself was the actual word "liar." The rest of the song is a literal quote from someone I once knew. It's what happens when you scream in someone's face and they snap and start repeating your words back to you...coming from my own lips, it's pure unadulterated

Is dead really the new alive? In what way do you feel this? Is this a nod towards the interest in your music from some Goth circles or is there a deeper meaning to this?

Dead is the new alive to people who are either gothic or suicidal. If gothic, in a flippant way as they are fascinated by the darker side of all things. If suicidal (as most manic depressives are at one time or another), in a rather more serious way, because it is always a pending reality. "When the obsession with death becomes a way of life..." is an example of the dual applications of one lyric, whether to one who chooses death fascination as a lifestyle, or to one who is born with death fascination because they are ever on the verge and so have no choice but to become dangerously well acquainted with it. To live remotely healthfully in either state, a good dose of morbid humour is required I think. In either case, the song is a bit of a laugh at all of

I'd also like to talk a bit about the album, 'Opheliac' - I understand this was a reference to Ophelia from Shakespears' 'Hamlet'. Ophelia went mad following the man she loved killing her father and subsequently committed suicide. What inspired you to name your album after her? In what way does this tie in with the album on the whole?

"Opheliac" is word I childishly made up to explain the condition of a person having the characteristics of "Ophelia" and the "Ophelia" archetype. While the original Ophelia did indeed go "mad", it was not primarily caused by her boyfriend knocking off her dad, but rather by not only Hamlet but also all the men in her life manipulating and pushing her to the point of no alternative. I didn't exactly name the album after her as much as I named it after myself. As the truest "Opheliac" I know, this album is my story from beginning to end. Listen thoroughly and you'll know more about me than my closest friends, this being because I generally write songs about things I would never tell a living soul.

Are there any other Shakespearian characters that have inspired you in any

I've poured through every thing Shakey's ever written many times over, but I would not claim to be inspired by the characters, I more appreciate them, and even identify with some of them, because of their archetypal illustrations of the entire depth of human natures. To me, S's works are an ideal guidebook to the complete spectrum of human beings, and therefore the perfect manual for a future alien race who wishes to know what we were capable of. I am however an extremely selfish writer, and as much as I identify with Viola from 'Twelfth Night', I don't find myself writing about her because she is not me, and I use all my pretty words and flowery characters as metaphors for the self I am too guarded to show. Ophelia is me, and that is why she pops up in the songs and no one else.

What makes Ophelia so special?

Probably the same things that made her special to a host of Pre-Raphaelite painters, insane asylum superintendents, and poets for the last four hundred and five years. She is the ultimate archetype for the depressed female, for glamorized feminine suicide, or as I've said many times before, the poster girl for girls on Zoloft. Girls pulled out of the Seine two hundred years ago were called "Ophelia's". Female inmates of Victorian insane asylums were dressed in dirty shifts with flowers in their hair and locked in cages so that the public could buy tickets to "Come see the Ophelia's", a morbid tour through those famous museums of the insane (or rather not insane as a lady could easily be locked up for wishing to leave her husband, being moody or for really any reason a man felt inclined to admit her).

In the title track, 'Opheliac' you sing "I hope that in the end you will see It's the Opheliac in me" - I've found this a strong lyric. In what ways do you feel that 31

you are 'Opheliac' (or am I starting to repeat myself a little bit?)

Not at all, you're no more repetitive than the album we're talking about is as each song is about exactly the same thing. "Opheliac" is both a medical term and a sarcastic one. As I've said before, I am the ultimate "Opheliac". I've lived her scenario in frighteningly accurate detail, the only real difference being that I came back from the dead and I'm coming to get you.

In the same track there's also the lyric "Intelligent girls are more depressed because they know what the world is really like" - I'm again assuming that this is a personal reference. Have you found your intelligence to be a help or a

Not only a personal reference, but a statistical one, in that is has been statistically shown that the majority of seriously clinically depressed young girls are of far above average intelligence. I don't personally lay claim to any amount of genius, but I do concur that ignorance is bliss.

You describe your music is being 'Victoriandustrial' - this is a quite fitting term for your music - but what influenced you to combine various elements of Victorian music along side modern-day electronic arrangements?

I simply combine what I like, because I don't want to spend great chunks of my life doing one thing and not the other. It's simply a convenient way to do everything at once, just like sweet and sour Chinese dishes.

On that (and going back to the album) there were two tracks on the second disc that particularly stood out for me. The second of which was 'Marry Me' - this seemed to play on a lot of Victorian influences - firstly, what has made you so interested in the Victorian Era?

I am terribly interested in the Victorian era for several reasons, not the least of which being that it was the era that gave birth to the modern notion of psychiatry, something I am only too familiar with. It was also characterized by the Industrial Revolution, the advent of capitalism, class disintegration, public health care (for better or worse), and many many many of the social, medicinal, psychological, sexual, and behavioural traditions we carry with us today, again, for better or more frequently for worse. The Victorian era is close enough to us to see both the differences and the similarities quite clearly. A record combining ideas and imagery from the Renaissance would be entertaining but not nearly so

Secondly, are there any ideas within 'Marry Me' that you feel can be transferred into a modern age?

"Marry Me" is primarily a period piece, in that the ideas it contains are more confined to a past time than my other material. It is about coping with an arranged and rather revolting marriage and the knowledge of one's place, and, as in the cases of Henry the VIII's ladies, the foreknowledge of their eventually being gotten rid of. While I know of several people who have married for reasons other than love, I don't really compare this with anything in the modern day, at least as far as western culture is concerned. It's just a lark.

The other track that particularly stood out on that disc was 'Thank God I'm Pretty' - do you often feel your good looks are a curse (or is that the wrong word) or is this only something you feel from time to time (or have I completely misunderstood the song)?

No, you haven't misunderstood, though I don't proclaim to have "good looks" any more than I lay claim to the aforementioned intelligence. I find myself rather odd and not particularly "pretty", but that hasn't stopped me being treated in the outside world as a "pretty" person where being attractive has it's only special dangers. As usual, and you're probably sick of this by now, the song is entirely sarcastic, and could just as easily be called, "Thank God I'm Female", as it is essentially an insincere 'thank you' for all of the meaningless perks of being a not-particularly-unattractive girl, perks which I personally view as society's consolation prizes for not being born a man, as if we'd want to be. There are no social "perks" to being a girl, despite what some of my more foolish male friends believe. There are only bribes and handouts.

On the Victorian influence, if time travel was possible - would you opt to live in Victorian times?

Come now, be serious. For any woman on earth, being alive during the Victorian era would be a living hell. For a girl like me with ambitions, a rebellious streak and a penchant for jumping off bridges, I'd be in an asylum living a horror movie with a leech down my throat. For a gentleman however, life in the Victorian era would be

You are a classically trained violinist. What persuaded you to produce music for a more Goth/Rock crowd?

I never intended to make music directed at any particular crowd at all, and no one is more surprised than me at the success of 'Opheliac' and my other works. I had quite

given up at being understood by the public by the time 'Opheliac' went into production, and made the album myself in an attic with my friend INKY engineering, and myself writing, producing, and playing every single note you hear. I always say 'Opheliac' is not an album, it's a treatise, and it's one I wrote as a promise to myself, not to anyone else. I didn't know that the gothic crowd would become attached to it any more than any other, I only know that I made something which represented me in my most honest form at that particular time, and that my fellow pale-faces like it is a lovely and much appreciated bonus. My being a classical violinist is nothing more than another tool for me to use in making the music I want to make, the same as my being a harpsichordist or knowing how to work ProTools by myself.

What was it like touring with and playing with Courtney Love? Has the experience helped you as a musician and did you gain any good experience or receive any good advice?

Come on, it's Courtney Love we're talking about. What do you think?

You also played with Billy Corgan - did this prove any form of experience? When I was asked to work with both Love and Corgan as well as the several other artists I've worked with over the years, I was asked to contribute my unique musical skills, not to do anything different from what I was already doing, so the goal or opportunity wasn't really to learn anything, but rather to share what I knew.

What encouraged you to perform the daily video updates that were available for free over the Christmas 2006 period?

I simply wanted to give a Christmas gift to my sweet and loyal fans, and the most expensive gift to me when this much is going on in my life is the gift of time. Time to chat with them, time to make little movies of my life and share them...it's time I

don't even give to my dearest friends anymore, so it meant a great deal to me to be with the fans every day for a month. You have quite a loyal, passionate and dedicated fanbase - how do you feel about this?

I'm flattered, confused, and often in disbelief that they care. Not because I think they shouldn't, but because with all the artists in the world to devote one's self to, I'm always a bit surprised when someone gets attached to a girl who keeps rats and reads Shakespeare. Britney I am not.

You recently dominated the sales charts for UK online music retailers Music Non Stop - how does this make von feel? Again, shocked. I know there

other parts of Europe, Germany in particular where my label, Trisol, is based, but I had no

had been a good deal of buzz in

idea that England, my favourite of all places I've ever been, even knew about me at all above a cult-status level, until we were topping the sales charts above other artists I had admired for years.

And with that in mind, have you considered coming across here for a tour? Yes indeed! We've got some dates in the UK this summer, and I would personally like to arrange a more extensive UK tour shortly thereafter as I dearly love it there and would like to show my Bloody Crumpets where their asylums would stand had they lived a mere hundred years earlier.

You've gathered a lot of video footage lately - do you plan on releasing a DVD, if so what will this entail, if not what do you plan to do with the footage?

I do plan to release a DVD as soon as we've got enough really shocking footage, and if we don't release a DVD, then I will obviously donate the footage to Paris Hilton who will release it online as a sex tape to boost her career. It's the least I can do.

I'm aware you played a large show in Chicago recently - can you tell us more about that show/party and what was it like playing?

It was brilliant, the first time playing a lot of the material from 'Opheliac', gluing my monitors into my ears with eyelash glue and electrical tape, and serving vegan carrot cake to a hundred people afterwards out of my hand. If that last bit were on video right now I'd be a lot more famous than I'd ever care to be.

You seem to have a love of Crumpets, English Breakfast Tea and 'Upstairs Downstairs' -where do you think your love of these come from?

Simply from experiencing them and finding them worth loving. I challenge any soul to not crumble before the adorable authority that is Hudson the butler while munching jam soaked crumpets and sipping a dark and sobering cream tea with champagne on the side...show me one person that is NOT heaven to, and I'll eat...another crumpet.

OK - I think I've talked enough for the moment... is there anything else you'd like to add?

EA: I'll out-talk you any day of the week. And I'd only like to add that I very much look forward to meeting my fellow UK Lolita's.

Words: Kevin Morris

Photos: www.angst-im-wald.com



ACTION DIRECTE/Adfinem

The Head of Steam, Newcastle Upon Tyne 17/09/06



If you were lucky enough to see a copy of TWF7 before it sold out (although there may be a couple available if you hunt the web) you'll have been aware of my curses when it comes to trying to see Carlisle Synth-Pop trio **Adfinem** live. I didn't trip over any black cats or walk off any ladders and finally got to see the band again. They do have this noticeable depth to them this time around, without being disrespectful I'd previously found them a bit plain and one dimensional. They're still a bit down tempo for my liking, but I think it's more about the atmospheres of the music then being able to bop yourself out. I think new vocalist Simon McDonald had a lot more character to himself as a vocalist and front man above previous front man 'PD' although at times he is restricted to

trying to sing some of the older material in PDs style rather than adding his own touch to some of the songs.

At the minute, I have no doubt that these songs will work well on record, but I feel an extra edge is really needed for them to make an impact as a live band......(6)

Action Directe are musically quite a contrast. Playing what could potentially be their last tour (and most certainly will be the last tour with the current line-up) the band pull no punches as they pound through their set.

The set opens with 'Strike First, Strike Hard', it is slow yet pounding. Joel snarls the lyrics while the crowd that has gathered around start a sweepstake as just how long Spider will play wearing a balaclava in this heat! These first few minutes are actually the slowest moments of the set as they crank up the heat an onslaught the crowd with their a-list material. This isn't a set to catch your breathe or nip to the bar!

Older songs 'Zealots' and 'Dissidenti' both receive an airing, but I was more



surprised that more tracks from new album 'Intervention' weren't aired. 'England' and '60 Million Guns' were both re-recorded for 'Intervention', but other than those and 'Strike First...' only one other "new" song was played, that being 'US/UK'. Tracks like 'There is No Going Back' would also have fit in nicely, but they opt for a set mostly containing more established tracks. Perhaps this could do with Corin from Zeitgeist Zero being drafted in at short notice to fill in for guitarist John who was missing due to other commitments. He'd had less than a weeks notice and this time to try and learn all of the songs!

THE CRUXSHADOWS/Adfinem

Newcastle University 28/11/06

 The Cruxshadows haven't had the easiest of days all told. Having traveled on the ferry from Norway that day, in rough weather and the ferry having to return to Norway resulting in the band arriving late and seasick.



They take to the stage 30 minutes later than advertised but manage to concentrate their energies on putting in the best performance possible.

They don't do a bad job all told.

Knowing the afternoon they'd had, I'd fully expected they would just try to roll through the motions and wheel and produce a 'job done' set. Enough to make the punters go home happy having seen the band while not upsetting the bands uneasy stomachs any further.

So, the set is compromised slightly. Rogue does not live up to his reputation of climbing up the walls, swinging from the lighting rigs and general climbing around the venue, the most extreme he gets is standing on a chair in the middle of the crowd. However, what they cut out in general tomfoolery they make up for in the focus they put into the set.

Now, a lot of people criticize the Cruxshadows, saying they're a bit 'style over content' when it comes to their live shows, that it's more about "What will Rogue do next?" than the actual music. However, without that they really demonstrate what they are capable of musically. For chunks of the set this ails to blow me away. They do start convincing enough, they open with chart-topping single 'Sophia. A track which I personally find rather bland and average (at best) however tonight it turns up the heat on what is perhaps one of the more intimate shows they have played in the UK in recent years. 'Sophia' comes across is if it had been a live favorite for years and grabs the crowd straight into an early frenzy.

From there it gets a bit weird. A lot of the set seems to hinge towards tracks from the forthcoming album, so a lot of people are unfamiliar with the material. This does not stop their enjoyment though, as they boogie along as if it was a track that they 'quite liked anyway' but from here I start to find a few of the tracks a bit bland and I have that sense of de ja vous where I just feel I have heard it all before.

Perhaps this was down to the quantity of new material being quite a lot to take in ,and the fact I'm not the most hardcore of CXS fans so there's a lot of material they have released that I haven't heard. But for periods I'm unimpressed by the music, although every now and then a track pops up which raises some hope.

I was quite confused about various omissions from the set also. No 'Dragonfly', no 'Cassandra' and the only track spun from their last full length album, 'Ethernaut' was 'Winterborn'.

Within the opening few bars of 'Winterborn' the roof is raised and while the attendance here in Newcastle may be a little smaller than what they're used to, the crowd manages to make enough noise to rival some of the bigger gigs on this tour. The set draws to a finale with Rogue inviting half of the crowd onstage to bounce along to 'Marilyn, My Bitterness'.

By this point I'm starting to feel a lot more taken in by the band. Despite chunks of the set leaving me uninspired, the band do have enough to at least keep you interested for long enough before they fire out some of the big guns. On the whole though, this was a rare chance to see one of the biggest Goth bands on the planet in intimate surroundings. This helped brew up a really good atmosphere

DEVIANT:UK/ Deathboy/ Trauma Pet/ Novus The Mixing Tin, Leeds 09/02/07



Today's gig is scheduled to be the last 'Friday Flock' gig night in Leeds. Friday Flock itself is moving to the Subculture venue, but at present there are no plans for live bands.

Novus kick proceedings off tonight. It's the new band of Sarahjane of Faithful Dawn, although I'm sure they'll quickly tire of a 'Sarahjanes new band' tag.

Tonight she is joined by a few stray members of Cybercide to create a live band - so a live keyboardist and guitarist join the affray, "They will be mine, oh yes" It's straightforward bouncy electronics, it's fun and gets you warmed up nicely. The band seem to enjoy themselves also, Eddie in particular doesn't at all look out of place, looking more like an established band member than a helping-hand.

It's a good way to warm up and I'm sure

Speaking of bands that grow in experience, it's **Trauma Pet** up next. They seem to have gained a drummer since I saw them last, they also seem to have gained a lot more confidence - and it shows.

They also seem to have added a fair few new tracks to their live set. It's always hard to assess a song you've heard only once in a live set, but 'Love the Abuse' particularly stood out - a lot of these additional guitars in songs is really helping move Trauma Pets sound to a new level.

On that, older songs such as 'Controlled Hysteria' and 'Sick' also have an extra twisted dimension on them with the extra live guitars and drums. Not that there was anything wrong with debut album 'You Cannot Feel This', but this extra angle is the difference between them being a great band and an awesome band.





I was really looking forward to seeing **Deathboy** for the first time, although Trauma Pet looked like being a difficult act to follow, Deathboy are quite different musically.

They don't start at their best though. They open with 'Cheap Shot' which is undoubtedly one of their stronger tracks and should have lifted the roof from the word 'go' but it fails to take off. I am not sure if this would be a track better played once momentum is built, or whether the lack of a backing vocalist limited the shoutalong backing vocalist. Regardless of this, it failed to have the impact I expected from it.

Still, as their set goes on, they do pick up momentum so the set does end a lot more triumphantly than it begins.

New songs 'Antimatter' and 'Hastostop'

from the free 'Now that's what I call Futurepunk' CD sit nicely amongst choice cuts from second album 'End of an Error'.

Like the record it's a frenzied mash-up of drum n bass, break beats, punk guitars and personal lyrics.

While you can dig deep in the angst of 'Slip' ("Why does all my shit fall down again?") you can also bounce shout and swear like a maniac to 'Smile You Fuckers'. So, while it took them a while to get going, they were strong enough once they did. It gives you a good dancing work-out but could have been phenomenal if they'd started stronger and then took off.

I'm really starting to go off **Deviant:UK**. I saw them last year and there's nothing that really stands out or improves from their performance last year to this year. In the studio, Deviant:UK is Jay Smith, live he is joined by two backing musicians whose job it is to press buttons. There might be more to what they're doing behind their cloaked stands, but with no room for a full sized keyboard it looks simply just like pressing buttons to make noises. Too me it's just not live enough. Now, I'm not suggesting they are miming, not at all. I'm pretty certain that they're not, but it just doesn't really feel like your seeing a live band. Now, Jay has the stage presence, the



DEVILISH PRESLEYTrillians, Newcastle-Upon-Tyne 12/02/07

It's a rare treat to see a band like **Devilish Presley** in Trillians - but perhaps their
show here goes to reinforce a point raised
in other reviews in this issue about thinking
outside of the Goth 'box'.

Like many bands, Devilish Presley have a sound and style that can appeal across more than one genre, or sub-genre. What they particularly do right is they're not

afraid to play riskier gigs and venues in order to build their profile.

Regardless of whether you love DP, or hate them, you have to credit their courage and work ethic which has built them to where they are today.

Today being a wet Monday night in Newcastle - where they're faced with the 'Trillians Factor' (I've particularly mentioned this in the old series of TWF - but in summary many bands find that no matter what they do they cannot get people to dance to their music - and the applause is sometimes limited. The bands leave the stage thinking they sucked only to be bombarded on the merchandise stall by people telling them how great they were.) It seems to take them a little while to get warmed up; their energetic deathrock n roll fusion doesn't quite have you burning until



around half way through their set. In that period we've already passed 'Halloween Queen', which despite not delivering the trailblazer I'd expect, it does showcase that maybe the best is yet to come from DP. That's them cursed then, the last 2 bands I said that about split up shortly after...

It's the run-in at the end of the set which really gets the blood flowing. 'Cover Version' really shows off their twin vocal attack at full throttle, whilst with 'Saturday Night Satellite' it's party night any night of the week.

In this run in the band starts to see a better response from the crowd which has them bouncing around on stage a whole lot more. Jonny in particular finds anything to climb over or under to play guitar with some uber-rock style.

LESBIAN BED DEATH/ Razorwire.

The Head of Steam. Newcastle-Upon-Tyne 8/10/06



I'll keep the review of Razorwire short and to the point. Their set bursts out within a 30 minute explosion which rips your head off and pours napalm down your spine. By the end of the set I felt I'd had my ear drums burst with pneumatic drills and that somebody had smashed a sledgehammer into the back of my neck. Awesome. But anyway, a couple of change of personnel and a re-jiggle later and Lesbian **Bed Death** take to the stage. I think they've stewed up a bit interest for themselves. In addition to TWF Magazine other magazines including Bizarre have struck an interest in them - while they've also had the right sort of negative publicity (according to NME they have the worst band name, ever. While Rock Sound said they took feminism back 25 years. I understand Andy emailed the writer of that

review to thank him...)

So, they have the right sort of positive interest, they have the right sort of negative publicity. But maybe at times they fall under the old chestnut of "Too Metal for Goths, Too Goth for Metallers"

They do lean heavily on the harder side of the spectrum and it does take the Goth-Metal slant to a whole new direction.

It's a fast paced set which also only clocks up 30 minutes. Following the anthemic

opening of 'I use my Powers for Evil' the set soon dives in to some of their harder hitting moments. The likes of 'She Wants It', 'Pretty But Mental' and 'Goth Girls are Easy' among those dished out.

The turnout tonight isn't what it should be so there was worry this could turn the gig stale, but the bands don't let their heads drop and instead focus on rocking the socks of everyone that did come along.

Although LBD are a relatively new band, some of the members have had lengthily experience of gigging and touring and that experience really shows in their professionalism and stage presence.

So, it does hit you a bit harder than your average Goth gig, but then NFD probably hit you harder than an average Goth gig and they're doing alright for themselves... It was a scorching performance from a band that are really turning up the heat on their exposure to the scene. I'd like to say lets hope for a bright afterglow......(8)

PSYDOLL/ Ikol

The Telegraph, Newcastle Upon Tyne 15/10/06



Got to admit it's the first time I've been in the function room in The Telegraph. I think when it was built they didn't intend to use the function room for bands as there is no stage and the most suitable place to make a makeshift stage is in front of a fireplace. Thankfully the fireplace is not lit... Local band Ikol take the stage first. As always I'll keep this brief as they're not really a Goth band, but as local bands go they do show a lot of potential. They start brightly enough, showcasing they do have a knack of writing a tune, plus their cover of 'Monster' doesn't half raise a smile. I think towards the end they lose a little confidence, perhaps they feel they're not going down too well and then dip into a few covers. Fully competent and maybe a few more gigs to mixed crowds like this will help boost their confidence.

But yes, it really is a mixed crowd tonight. There is quite a few drop-ins to the gig who'd come upstairs to see **Psydoll** because it looked like something interesting was going on, alongside the predicted mix of Goths and Metallers.

It is, like many of the bands promoted by Floorshow, their debut performance in Newcastle. It's a daunting place to play at times I feel, but they said afterwards they really enjoyed it.

Now, I should really point out that I do not really follow J-Rock, although it is a genre I've always had at least a passing interest. Probably no further to the extent that if a J-Rock band played locally I would make sure I attended. So here I am. I can with all honesty say this band is like no band I've ever seen before, this is truly something different to witness and listen to. The Tokyo based 3-piece consist of a menacing looking guitarist, donned in an industrial style mask and surrounded by a horde of guitar pedals to churn out a big mix of sounds from his guitar. To the other side of the stage we have the most active drummer I've ever seen. Using an electronic drum pad alongside a real tom and symbol he leaps around the stage creating the crashes and pounds each time he strikes the pad. For two tracks he even stops away from the pad to play a Theremin! Yes, a Theremin! In the centre is front lady Nekoi, donned in PVC and armed with a keyboard and enchanting Eastern vocals she completes the trio.

Musically this is chaotic yet controlled, unpredictable yet structured. This is enough to make sure you don't know what is coming around the next corner with each track bringing new surprises while not falling completely off the rails into obscurity. Their style is creative and artistic, while their image is vivid and stunning and that turns nicely into becoming a real treat. They've been across for quite a few UK tours and this performance tonight makes it clear why there's the appeal for them to keep coming back. This is a band you really must see when they're here, as you may never have seen a band like this before, and may never see a band like this again. .(8)

SPIDERBABY

Legends, Newcastle Upon Tyne, 19/01/07

Free gigs are always great. They're a good opportunity to see a band you might not like without having to begrudgingly part with your hard earned gig on the off-chance your mind is blown. If the band turns out not to taste you can walk out without feeling you've wasted your money. If the band rocks your socks off then it's a bargain, especially as anyone in early enough to see **Spiderbaby**, for free, also gets free entry into the rock night afterwards.

From a band perspective this should also be great as more people should come and see you because it's free and because they're attendance at your gig gets them entry to a club they were intending on



going to anyway.

Sadly, what looks awesome on paper can sometimes be a bit of an anti-climax especially when so few pop their head in to at least check out the band. Bands always say "Oh, we aim to put on a good show whether we're playing to 5, 50 or 5,000" but you know really that having a high attendance will always benefit the band, it's the old rock n roll cliché of "The band feeds off the crowds energy". So while the effort is most certainly there, you can see clearly tonight that the extra edge is missing. This is a shame. Many of the tracks aired tonight have the potential to have a large crowd bouncing, as they come across onstage like an energetic duel between Glam and Goth.

Their songs are catchy, many are guaranteed to have you singing by the second chorus, with tracks like 'Damaged Goods' being a sure sign of potential, while 'Love Buzz' really backs up that claim.

THE LOVECRAVE/ Razorblade Kisses Camden Underworld 20/01/07



It took a while for a support to be confirmed, but I personally was excited to hear Razorblade Kisses we're given support duties. Mainly because I've never seen them before - and they've generated enough interest to make me want to see them. This is a good start on their part. Tonight I saw the unravelment of a beautiful jigsaw puzzle. The pieces were spread out across the stage and picked up piece by piece to create an enthralling image, the voices and imagery really take control of you whilst the music is competent enough to keep you gripping onto the focus point. For the risk of sounding predictable, I do have to say there are pieces missing from the puzzle. Some of these are more obvious than others, the band really need to dig within themselves to find them, because at the minute you see

an overall enjoyable performance, but while you're happily oogling the pretty girlies there's nothing here that really takes the required dominance to blow you away. Equally, this does tie in nicely with a clear weakness the band have, their too submissive within their stage presence, they're too grateful to the crowd for turning up. As a spectator you may feel you'd like to see them again, but it's more like an addiction you can dip in and out of as you please rather than one that has you hooked and wanting you to come back for more. RBK are generally nice, the music is safe and their presence is enjoyable but they really need that killer instinct to win me over. Right now there's a tick in my box next to their name on my "bands I must see" list but nothing that makes me particularly come back for more - and perhaps this is the area where they're lacking the most. They're worth seeing to say you've seen them, but that's presently it. Still, at least they are on the bands you should see list. (5)

By similar contrast The LoveCrave are clearly thrilled to be in the UK; however their difference is that they use this to their advantage and woo the crowd to the degree that everyone in the room goes home feeling special and in love. They're a very difficult band to review in ways. They were in such form tonight you may never see them this good ever again. The intimacy of the venue, their thrill to be there and the response from the crowd fed to the energy of the band. Vocalist Francesca frequently smiles to the crowds and in one of those smiles I swear you could read "I love this, you love this, but we'll never be this close again" because, and let's get this honest from the get go, The LoveCrave are the next big thing. They are the band gracing the cover of Kerrang in three years time that every



teenage boy will be having wet dreams about. What was witnessed tonight was the birth of a phenomenon. Debut album 'The Angel and the Rain' has enough depth that they could re-arrange the playing order and play the album in it's whole (well, bar 'Dark City') and it sound like many established bands churning out a 'Greatest Hits' set. This is what they did... of course; they didn't just play tracks from the album. A

rare treat was a re-arranged version of 'Strengthe' from Francesca's 1999 solo album. Slowed down, beefed up and translated into English. This was a surprise, albeit one many fans may not have grasped the relevance of.... Yet. Expect to see copies of 'Il Parco Dei Sogni' on eBay for silly amounts of money.

WEDNESDAY 13/ Sign/ Betty Curse Carling Academy, Newcastle-Upon-Tyne 20/09/06

I'm quite sure this gig was supposed to be in the little room upstairs, however ticket sales/interest seems to have pushed the gig into the downstairs. Sure, the venue is looking quite bare but I wonder if the last TWF having opening act **Betty Curse** on the cover had any influence?

They're looking a lot more comfortable onstage this time around, but then there is more of an audience to play to and it's not two days before the biggest event on their calendar.

Unfortunately, there was no photo pass waiting on the door for me, so I couldn't take pictures of any of the bands tonight, I could try to be crafty and sneak a photo but without being close it's difficult to get decent photos anyway and not worth the risk of having my camera confiscated

Finally, **Wednesday 13.** Like the world needs another Alice Cooper tribute band. I wonder how much he must owe in royalties. Wednesday 13 is also in The Murderdolls and Frankenstein Drag Queens from Planet 13. Whilst I'm pleased he doesn't sell himself off the 'hits' of these bands there are one or two songs that have been done with both of the other bands, such as '197666', 'I like to say Fuck' and 'Rambo'

Now, in my time of gigging I've already seen one rock n roll cliché too many. Perhaps it always amuses me how easily the crowd falls for them time after time. We've had the whole "We were in Norwich last night - and it was a rocking place, but somebody told us Newcastle was the most rocking place to play" rubbish (unless the band misheard what they were told) which is clearly transparent due to the bloody acres of empty space in the venue. Plus, if it was that rocking a place, surely they would have done more than a one song encore?

The other big cliché was the "I went to see the doctor and he said to me, 'Wednesday, cancel the tour, stay at home, and rest' and I said 'Fuck You Doctor' I'm playing for the fans"

It was evident his throat wasn't on the form it should be but screaming down a microphone for 100-odd days on the trot is never going to do your voice any favours. Still, credit where credit is due - some bands have cancelled shows for less. The sound was also not what it should be for W13, suggesting the sound problems followed through the night this did put a dampener on the show, but I don't think the kids were complaining.

WOOLSTOCK 08/12/06-09/12/06

Friday @ The Mixing Tin, Leeds GHOST OF LEMORA/ Zombina and the Skeletones/ The Way of All Flesh/ Lesbian Bed Death

If you turn to our CD reviews you will see the slating we have given **Zombina and the Skeletones** on their new offering 'Horror High School'. OK, that was Ghost writing the review, but I pretty much shared his views on the release. With that in mind, I don't have high hopes for ZatS tonight. Perhaps, because I suspected I would not enjoy them it made them seem somewhat enjoyable when they proved to be better than I expected. OK, it's Prom Night, and Carrie has just burned down the Prom. Don't you just hate when that happens? This really upset the band on stage, being killed and what not, so not to let a little death get in the way of them finishing their set they carried on regardless.

And that just about sums up ZatS for you. It's still nothing special in my eyes and gets a bit grating and repetitive at times but you would not mind seeing the band if you thought a better one was coming on afterwards...................................(6)





So, that's what I expected of Ghosts of Lemora, I expected them to be the better band coming on afterwards. They start off well enough. Tracks like 'Happy End of the World' burst with energy but then after that I begin to lose interest after I find there's very few variances between songs, both musically and lyrically. They're pretty much all about getting pissed. This probably works quite well at about 12.30am when everyone in the venue is pissed, so their time on stage is quite fitting... Whereby my low expectations for Zombina left me pleasantly surprised, my high expectation for Ghosts of Lemora leaves me somewhat disappointed. They seem to gain a lot of high praise for a band with limited ideas, or maybe I'm missing something. (6)

Saturday @ Joseph's Well INKUBUS SUKKUBUS/ NFD/ Zeitgeist Zero/ **Rhombus**

The second day of Woolstock takes place in the much larger Joseph's Well venue in Leeds. This is a somewhat prestigious venue in many ways, and also where Andrew Eldritch likes to have a 'night off to watch Near Meth Experience'. They don't seem to play anywhere else this Near Meth Experience band.

Speaking of The Sisters of Mercy, Rhombus are the opening band tonight. Not that there are many direct connections with Rhombus and The Sisters (although Rhombus' guitarist has played guitar for James Ray) but it's a sound that reminds me of an older TSOM sound, except with a twist of humor here and there. For example, their new EP is called 'Love you 'til Closing Time', the title of track of which is a stand out point tonight. As I expected it was a performance that you could enjoy and it would get you in the mood for the other bands nicely, but they didn't really threaten to blow the other bands off the stage. However, maybe this is what they want to do, they may enjoy opening shows like this and they are an enjoyable band to see. (6)

Zeitgeist Zero plunge into risky territory by playing 4 new songs in a short set. It's a risk that seems to pull off though, as the strength of these new tracks showcase their best is yet to come. So while tracks like 'Beasts Under My Bed' and 'Bride of Frankenstein' show what they're already capable of, it's tracks like 'Dance of the Fallen' that really show the depth they're capable of. The tracks are packed with an electrifying tingle that you just can't help but dance to. For anyone that's already got their debut album this is mouth-watering preview for the next album. (8)

NFD have just been awarded 'Best Darkwave Album' from shelf magazine Rock Sound. This is a tremendous achievement considering some of the bands they were up against. including Rammstein. Tonight they're how to show us just how good the material is. NFD unleash a fierce musical onslaught, they sound more like a 'Fields of the Nephilim for the 21st Century' than Fields of the Nephilim actually do... It's easy to see the Nephilim connections within their music, although it comes packed with a much harder crunch. There are guitars upon guitars upon guitars; it is a menacing overkill of guitars that leaves you completely blown away. Tracks like 'Turbine' and 'So Let it Begin' really take your breath away but inevitably it is the encore of 'Moonchild' in which the place completely erupts. Now this is a difficult band to follow.....(9)

Yes, and Inkubus Sukkubus have the pleasure of trying to follow NFD. However, it's not all fruitless on their part, they have a strong following, hence being top of the bill, so many people are here to see Inkubus Sukkubus with no interest whatsoever in NFD.

They managed to grab my attention well enough at the start of their set. It's lively and energetic and they just really show they're enjoying themselves on stage which reacts well with the audience. But, there are a few things I'm not too struck on. Firstly, Tony McCormack often wanders into Cheese-Rock territory by playing his guitar with his teeth and other show-off techniques. I haven't decided if this is just for fun or silliness or whether he thinks he really is Zak Wylde (Black Label Society and the

Ozzy Osborne band) but either way it's a bit naff and cheesy, especially done so often. I am not going to slip into the common criticism of Inkubus Sukkubus and say all of their songs are the same, because they're not. They're just awfully similar at times. It's not that they don't have good songs and ideas, but I think too many decent songs get left on albums and don't get the live airplay needed to really vary the set. I am also not entirely surely of the purpose of the barong player, as you can't actually hear it over the music, although this is a good opportunity to make a lucky fan feel special I suppose.

As the set goes on I do feel myself getting increasingly bored and I eventually take to watch them from the back of the venue. It takes until the encore to get me interested again when the blast out 'Son of Pan' and 'Wytches' in quick succession. But still... I won't argue, they are good at what they do, but for a neutral spectator it gets a bit 'done to death' midway through the set and I think a lot more variance could make it

ZEITGEIST ZERO

The Venue Newcastle Upon Tyne. 11/11/06

Originally **Zeitgeist Zero** had been scheduled as the support band to Interlock. However, van trouble caused Interlock to break down with no means of rescue in a small village near Rochdale. With the short notice available for a full cancellation, Zeitgeist Zero played nevertheless.



However, as word got out that Interlock would not be appearing the numbers drastically reduce, turning this gig into more of a dress-rehearsal.

It's naturally frustrating conditions for the band to try and play in, so they push out a set designed to impress those that did still come along to support the night and to show anyone else just what they're missing.

Zeitgeist Zero are one of the faster growing bands on the scene at the moment, which concerns me in the sense I'm worried they will pack up and bugger off to Germany where they could probably fill a venue with ease.

They blast out a 45 minute set containing a mix of songs from their debut, self-titled, album and a few newer numbers. It's eerie electro-rock that you just can't help but dance along to. It's often faced-paced and packed with bone-tingling melodies. The band also add with some imagery in the form of an ongoing picture show in the background showing everything from burlesque dancers, Betty Boop and Teresa shopping in ASDA. They gel well onstage which gives for a very strong stage presence and under the right conditions Zeitgeist Zero will be a band capable of an immense live set.

All reviews and photos by Kevin Morris.

To see these picture and more in colour, visit the gallery at www.twfmagazine.com

some something is to listen to



"Something To Listen To - one of the greatest new labels in England"

(Past and Present)

"The label founded in 2003 by Legendary Colt Producer John Fryer a small but truly caring label, it encourages its artists to stay true to themselves and too develop further their very own identity."

(Fabienne Tartarin. La Magic Box)



to listen to Everything On Black

"Stain"

"Might as well slap a big fat sticker on the front of this CD that reads "commercial gold".

(Rocksound)

This is quality pop-rock with no loose ends and no bad songs.

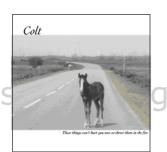
These guys should be huge.

(Past and Present)

Terrific pop songs that are memorable numbers that darkly pleases.

(Editor's Pick) - Smother.net

http://myspace.com/everythingonblack



Colt

"These Things Can't Hurt You Now So Throw Them In The Fire"

"This is a beautiful car crash of an album."

(Rocksound)

"Weird, unsettling & wonderfully unique for it".

(Zero)

"Like waving & drowning at the same time – a breathtakingly delicate, beautiful, personal, special album."

(Organ)

http://www.myspace.com/coltmusicuk



Sundealers SOF

"Tears Love Religion"

"Thank fuck for bands that don't want to be Nine Inch Nails. This German five-piece are defined by a razor-sharp sound that accentuates every nuance of every song. Sundealers deserve to be fuckin' huge".

(Rocksound)

listen to

"Sundealers claim to play 'the hottest rock exported from Germany since Rammstein', and I totally agree. I also like this band more than Rammstein".

(Planet Trash)

http://www.myspace.com/sundealers



Licky

"Press Fire To Continue"

"Duo Lips and Sacky have escaped from the New York underground scene armed with their ironic joyful fusion of The Ramones Punk Rock and Fischerspooner Electronic / PunkSoundclash that dares to say what we don't".

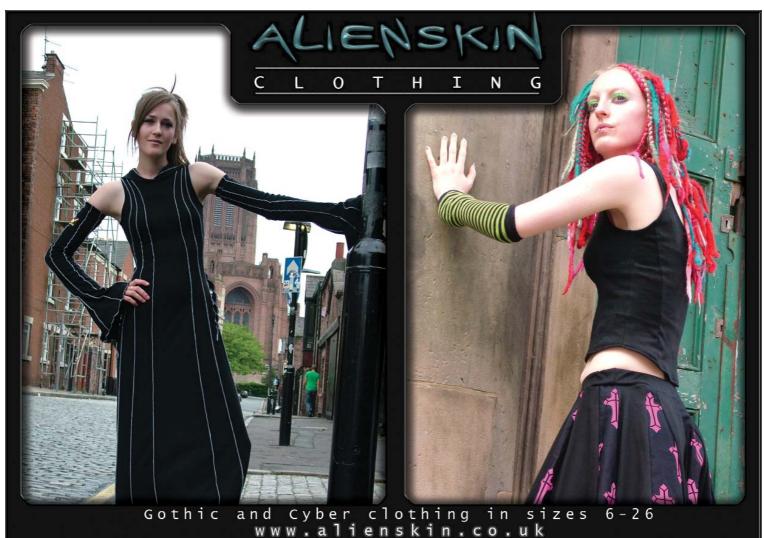
"Presenting the foul-mouthed, hyperactive children of Fischerspooner".

(Rocksound)

(subba-cultcha)

http://www.myspace.com/ilovelicky

All albums available for download and purchase at most reputable sites and stores. www.somethingtolistento.com





(Pondering) The Wonders of the Universe

Anybody that knows me in person will know I can often wander into controversial territory with my opinions. For the best part

'Ponders...' has been mostly harmless with me having a bit rant about things like Summer Holidays, Designer Labels and Christmas Songs. I think this issues ponders may be a tad bit controversial - and as a result of which I would like to apologise in advance to anyone who may be offended, particularly if it's because you're one of the 'exceptions to the rule'.

For the best part I'd probably suggest that if you are a Suicide Girl, are dating a Suicide Girl or want to be a Suicide Girl - you turn the page... nah, on second thoughts - read on.

This is also not just related to Suicide Girls, there are other similar sites - however SG is the most popular and most recognised.

I must admit, when Suicide Girls was first launched I thought it would be a nice change. Girls within the alternative scene may have been ridiculed by their peers for their appearance, or told they weren't pretty by some peroxide-haired, orange-skinned chav - and being featured on Suicide Girls is an opportunity to raise a middle-finger at all those that had previously condescended the individual. Kudos to that. However, these days I think Suicide Girls has turned into something it had always set

I'll avoid getting out my brush and tarring everyone with the same coat of paint, I have spoken to various people who have modelled for Suicide Girls (or sites like it) that are decent, down to Earth people.

Unfortunately, I've also come across people that have modelled or SG and are not. I have seen girls gloat about being on SG to other girls that maybe wouldn't make it onto the site - and of course I've come across plenty of guys ready to gloat how their girlfriend is a SG.

Some guys also seem to treat it like a male fashion accessory or must have - as if you can't be rawk or gawth or whatever

you're trying to be without a SG on your arm or at least, it raises your rawk or gawth points if you do. Isn't that the re-objectification of women? Have we gone back 150 years? Sorry, think that's the feminist in me, what can I say - I'm a feminist trapped in a mans body, ha! Still, this is one of those human logics I can't understand - I've been on the wrong end of blokes getting overprotective of their girlfriends when they think I'm chatting them up. But yet they're happy enough that (potentially) hundreds of men (and probably some women) can pleasure themselves in private to scantily clad or half-naked pictures of their significant others. Anyway. I touched above that not all

girls that apply make it onto SG. Now surely if this was supposed to be any type of 'alternative' site they'd cater to alternatives in all shapes and sizes. Having had a look for research purposes, bigger girls (i.e. not a stick insect) seem to only be included for tokenism reasons.

This to me has it's own problems. Girls are all too well aware of this and I've spoken to many who've said they'd like to submit a set but would like to lose some weight first so that they look better in the pictures and have a better chance of being accepted. Which can be fair enough really, especially as this can be an incentive for girls that are medically overweight.

The problem is, some of the girls who've said this to me have been quite slim to start with - and in both cases I'd be worried that if the girls lose weight and still get rejected that this could lead to some form of eating disorder or other health problems.

Of course, I'm also concerned that there may be cases where blokes pressurise their partners into doing stuff for SG, again tying in nicely with my above point or reobjectification and "Suicide Girls - The must have male fashion accessory".

Some of my points above makes me wonder if this whole SG thing now has too many properties from mainstream 'life' to be considered to be alternative any more.

It's never been any secret the concern that many teenagers develop eating disorders trying to style themselves around the skinny celebrities in celeb/gossip shelf magazines, up to and including this years 'Size Zero' phenomenon. So has this now become the same with SG, that girls now feel they have to look a certain way to be on SG - or accepted by their alternative boyfriend?

Have SGs become the ideal that young or teenage alternative girls want to look like at any cost (to health or otherwise)?

And are girls cutting back on eating, up to the extent of risking developing a disorder for reasons of vanity above health?

I fear in too many cases the answer to these questions is 'Yes' - which means that SG has become what it set out against. A place where people who are not 'accepted by the peers' have no place and only those that conform by ideals are acceptable.

Conforming to accepted ideals... that's not very alternative...





Emilie Autumn - Opheliac

(Trisol)



The problem with records like this is that they run the risk of me writing epic sized reviews about them. The other problem is, that if I don't write an epic sized review, there runs the risk that you'll not get the full picture of the record.

'Opheliac' is a two disc epic created by slightly eccentric violinist Emilie

Autumn. Emilie takes her skills on the violin and combines a Victorian image and influence with an industrial image and influence to create a record you're unlikely to have heard anything like before.

The album opens with title track

'Opheliac' and this begins the rollercoaster ride of the album. Following an intro with an almost traditional piece of Victorian music, it bumps into a casual build up of violins and electronic arrangements, before sliding straight off the rails for the chorus.

From the more controlled verses, the chorus bounces like a screeching tempertantrum "You know the games I play and the words I say when I want my own way". The track also contains an assortment of trippy beats and breaks to accompany the violin driven patterns.

By the end of the track the music has slid all over the place and leaves you giddy, but like an exciting rollercoaster you really want another ride, but you know you've only got so much time to visit as many rides as possible.

This first track on paper looks terrible, but the mix of ideas reads so badly that it shouldn't work - that it does, in awe-inspiring style.

And this is just the first track of a double album. Eep!

'Swallow', is a little calmer, more driven on the beat and heads a bit more into darkwave territory. It also opens with the amusing but honest lyric "I'll tell the truth: all of my songs are pretty much the fucking same"

But in truth, that's a bit of a harsh self-criticism.

It's a lot mellower than the opener, but still packs the dynamics. Maybe I've just got a soft spot for classical violins.

'Liar' has a dirty electronic beat and is the darkest moment of the album so far, with some screeching violin effects to accompany the atmosphere on this ditty.

'The Art of Suicide' is more courteous, it is the lonely soul pondering in the corner of the masquerade ball.

I Want My Innocence Back' packs a dancier beat; it's also one of the more structured tracks and probably one of the easier to dance to. With that in mind, it makes it a bit safer than most of the album.

'Misery Loves Company' however is simply epic. The violins are very dominant in the mix on the track. The verses build up nicely before the chorus swoops in and the vocals rock nicely on the bed of violins.

Emilie also quite likes codas in songs - and 'Misery...' has perhaps the best coda on the album, it jolts along underneath the vocals, "You're so easy to read/ but the book is boring me..." she begins at the first part of the coda, "Prey for me if you want to/ prey for me if you care" she asks in the second part, before she rears the unpredictability at the end of this section when she snaps "Prey for me you fucker/ if you fucking dare!"

'God Help Me' has a booming piano line to help carry this lower-paced track. This is also a track that really shows of Emilie's vocals. I haven't spoken about these much, but Emilie has a very good vocal range. She can be either an angel or a devil with her vocals as she sees fit, she can pull off a temper tantrum, drag you in and bite your head off. There is a lot of emotion goes into the music on the whole and she uses her vocal techniques very effective as an additional instrument on the record.

'Shalott' spins and weaves like a large spinning wheel. It's a lot faster than it seems and perhaps the biggest surprise is that Emilie can make it through the whole song barely stopping for breath. It's not a key stand out track, but it's a good track nevertheless

'Gothic Lolita' is a key stand out track, once it gets past the stuttering intro. The beats become more present in the verses than they have been on the past few tracks.

The track nods along quite nicely and while it never threatens to overpower you, the chorus soars as it descends. Be cautious around the lace and frills though, there are sharp knives between the layers, just ready to give a little nip if you get too close. Or gauge your eyes right out.

Dead is the New Alive' is another of the more structured songs; it's got a somewhat classic industrial spine that the rest of the track takes a piggy back on. It's a straightforward enough track and I'm not really surprised it was picked for a single. 'I Know Where You Sleep' is a bitter blow and taunt against an ex-partner, with many points that smack you right beneath the belt ("...funny how the only one in your bed is you").

While '... New Alive' was more sane and straightforward, 'I Know...' makes up for it by never threatening to even go on the rails.

'Let the Record Show' is an anthemic gem. It bounces along bitter-sweetly through the verses and has one of those choruses's you can't help but bop and sing along to. It's a very thrilling and paced ending to the first disc.

The second disc is quite different. The first disc showed off more of Emilie's all round song-writing and composing skills and the ability to mash up all of her influences into a tasty blend.

It's one of those cocktails that looks so wrong but when you take a sip it blows your mind.

The second disc shows off more of her Victorian influences and for the sake of trying to keep this review at a civil length there are three spoken word poems on here and a rendition of Bach's 'Largo' played on the violin included that I won't mention at any other point. This leaves only four tracks to speak about.

The first track to talk about is 'Dominant' - an instrumental very heavy on some beautiful violin skills that are performed nicely over an accompany beat to create a beautiful and moving piece of music with an extra edge to help drive this. '306' is the one track on the album I've failed to settle into. Well, there has to be one. 'Thank God I'm Pretty' is simply genius. It's a very simple backing track as the most focus in this track is the sarcastic lyrics, it's very "Yeah, I'm pretty so my life is so great - I get perved on by dirty old men, just what every girl wants", it's those 5 minutes where you curse your looks (if you're good looking) and see all the negativity that being good looking can bring that it's not all a life of luxury. 'Marry Me' is similarly genius, sang as an almost ballad for a girl in Victorian life, the music could easily be from a Victorian musician while the lyrics who tell the story of a girl to be married in Victorian times. I've got to admit, this is not my specialist subject, so I did a few searches on the Internet and found that for most of the Victorian-era women had very little rights, anything they bought or owned was the property of the husband and remained so in the case of divorce, so if a man found someone younger/better/etc there were limited consequences for his actions. All in all 'Opheliac' is sheer genius. It is daring enough to be different and delivers an end product that is unlikely to be anything you've ever heard before. On paper so many elements of this record suggest they shouldn't work, but Emilie pulls these off magnificently. You need to hear this to believe it. With this all said and done, there Kevin Morris



Action Directe - Intervention

(Oktober)



I was quite critical of Action Directe's last full length album. However, if you remember I have been a lot more positive and excited by subsequent singles, EPs and live performances. What has really shone from Action Directe over this time is the force in which they've gripped onto a true sense of identity. This in turn has notably helped them forge the beginnings of the Yob-Goth and Industrial-Punk movements while their attitude has given them the extra push they've always needed. As time has moved on they've really moved acres by simply stepping into

the territories of doing what they want to do.

'Strike First, Strike Hard' provides a near-perfect intro to the album. It is slow, but packs a punch and demands your attention. It stomps like an iron boot and makes you sit up and pay attention.

Now that you're listening, 'There is no Going Back' proves to be a real gem. It has a certain 'raise-your-fist-and-yell' element as the beat thumps and the track runs rampant.

It didn't take much guess work for me to identify the influences behind 'Room 101', you just have to look at the title, it's a nod towards Orwell's' '1984'. Lyrically this is one of the bands more simpler moments but it packs a necessary abrasive nastiness perfectly fitting to the subject matter.

Perhaps if you look to the song from an angle it could be about modern day Britain, but then that's me on one of my '1984' trips, so I'll move on quickly.

If you don't know what I'm talking about, go read the book.

'For Your Protection' is another anthem in the soundtrack to the ugly story that is the nihilistic 21st Century Britain.

You almost feel pressed against the wall during a riot on the streets. The imagery is captured really well.

For some reason 'Sufferation' brings to mind 'Ghost Town' by The Specials. Maybe the songs, or the influences into them, aren't that far apart...

In fact, looking at the lyrics, "People stabbed to the disco beat..." that looks awfully close to "Too much fighting on the dancefloor"

'England' has been rerecorded with an extended intro. As strong a track I've previously considered this to be, it actually sits in the shade compared to some of the other tracks on the album!

'US/UK' is quite a simple and effective number. It's a much needed rant about the current relationships between the UK and the US. It's a general formulaic punk rant, but one guaranteed to muster up support.

Whilst the jury is still out for an extended lunch coming to a verdict on 'Social Democrat' one can not deny the strength or power of '60 Million Guns' You hear the first thuds on the piano, Churchill makes his speech and the song flares into life. It doesn't matter how many times you hear the track you can't help feel the build up of the track, you just wait for it all to kick off, "So what's it gonna take?" It is this type of track that really shows the calibre of Action Directe. Musically this completely flies overhead, the double paced beats really crash around you like rapid gunfire. Action Directe, like Orwell, paint a bleak vision of the future, only their future is a lot closer than his was. Perhaps the darkest of the lyrics comes within the last verse of this song, "A day may come/ When the Stars and Stripes will fly above London/ When the battle is lost in the war is said and done"

Angelspit - Krankhaus

(Crash Frequency)



It's an interesting review here in the sense I'm both behind the times and ahead of the game. This review really should have been in the last issue, but it's still getting printed before the album's official release in Europe and the US (Jan 2007)

The album was released in Australia on 06/06/06 but does avoid getting into any over-the-top cliché.

Thankfully every song here isn't about the rise of the Antichrist or the Number of the Beast. Or is it?

There is a loose concept throughout the album around vanity and extreme

cosmetic surgery. At one point I thought they'd been watching the new series of Doctor Who a little closely and were writing all about their love of Cybermen, but that wouldn't be possible due to time constraints, unless they were the fastest songwriters ever... or had access to a TARDIS themselves.

In saying that, given the equipment they use to create their sounds, I wouldn't be surprised if striking the wrong power chord could send them back in time...

I've said before Angelspit sit somewhere between the new-found industrial-punk scene and the Digital Hardcore scene. I did at times sometimes find that the whole Digital Hardcore scene got a little noise-for-noise sake at times, so this is nice to be able to have some of the attitude and ideals yet still remain somewhat accessible. The album opens with 'A La Mode, A La Mort' which drags you in, ties you up, then skips around you pointing and taunting. "Vanity is all right, it's really alright..." taunts female vocalist (and co-songwriter) Destroyx, "...this Universe missed the point completely..."

Again, I really like the use of twin vocalists, as Zoog also contributes greatly on a vocal scale.

This is one of those tracks that really warm you up. I had great anticipation for this album, but I appreciate many readers/listeners will not have previously heard the band, so I'll backtrack.

Like many Australian electronic bands, they're interesting. They're not afraid of identity or rely on the cushions of sounding like every other goddamned band just so people will like them.

They take their electronics and splice it up with punk guitars and attitude, but are probably unaware of the rising UK 'industrial-punk' movement so are thus avoiding the risk of being indirectly influenced by any of the bands over here.

Of course, having identity, soul and purpose would be fruitless if they weren't competent in what they're doing. Previous offering 'Nurse Grenade' grabbed by interest and now full-debut offering 'Krankhaus' is the challenge to keep me and the listeners interested - or for the new fans, get them interested.

So, 'A La Mode, A La Mort' warms the blood nicely. 'Vena Cava' turns up the gas and sets it on to boil!

The intro beat packs a drum n bass influence which takes you in before the track stomps in and drills into your skull in a military fashion.

Now, where 'A La Mode...' had you strapped to the chair, 'Vena Cava' has you meet the Doctor (who is insane) and 'Elixer' is beginning of the surgery.

"We'll make you better than God did before!"

Are you scared yet?

'100%' takes the foot off the gas a little, but shows they are more than a one trick pony. It's got a far more dancefloor-friendly groove to it and the main focal point in this track is the vocals and verses.

Still, you probably needed this - any more tracks like the first three and your heart might explode!

Now, I'm not too struck on 'Juicy', but perhaps it just sits in the shadows of its predecessors a bit much.

'Make You Sin' picks the form back up nicely, although it does flow along from there. The tracks pack the required punch to keep the album interesting, but only a few select moments escalate.

'Create Desire' is one such escalation, a high paced bounce-a-long complete with Ramoanes-esque 'gabba-gabba-hey-hey"s

The album also ends on a peak in the form of the anthemic 'Wreak Havoc', a song which is going to have me asking them some questions on religion when I interview them

This track is almost anthemic and lyrically reminded me of 'the devils' speech in Doctor Who (although can't be plagiarised by either party, due to the fact this album was released at pretty much the same time that episode was!) it is a real gem and gives a nod towards various Digital Hardcore influences ("We have it right now/ right now/ riot now") and concludes the album on a strong high point.

Blue October -One Day Silver, One Day Gold

(Cryonica)



I don't think Blue October could have got off on a worse foot with me. The very intro word and voice reminds me drastically of 'The Illogical Song', as massacred by Scooter, a version that brings visions of terror to my mind. It's as if I was at the fall of Rome or something... you had to be there to understand. However, 'It's Not Enough' seems competent enough beyond that, regular downbeat synthpop. It does not exactly blaze but it's a track that's a lot better than it could have been!

'I Never Thought I'd See You Cry' is

a real gem though. Classic smooth synthpop, that brings to mind some of Erasures lighter moments. Or is that a bad thing?

'Free' mixes things up a bit with a simple acoustic guitar intro into a more anthemic chorus

I'm not sure on some of the vocals at this point though, at points the vocals are lacking just that extra edge of passion that would help really make this song. However, in saying that, it's probably better 'as is' than overdoing it a bit. 'Nervous Energy' is shiny. Well polished electronic arrangements, with 80's-cheese style robot voices for the word 'electric'. It's pleasant enough. It has a bum in sofa style groove, you wiggle into it nicely and then you get quite comfy.

'Pushing' is a bit dull in comparison. It's an instrumental that badly wants to kick in and become a song. It leaves you wishing it would.

'Somewhere' does go... err... somewhere. After opening with elevator music it turns nicely into chill-out-room-at-1.30am-when-you've-clearly-had-too-much-to-drink-as-you're-lighting-your-cigarette-from-the-wrong-end-but-you-want-to-stay-until-the-end-of-the-night.

I am really starting to think about Erasure too much. I just can't help it...I'm expecting an ABBA cover any minute.

Fittingly 'Nowhere' goes... err... nowhere, a rather longwinded instrumental that clocks up over 8 minutes.

After that interest kind of wanes. It's done what it needed to do within around the first 10 tracks, ideas got a bit exhausted after that and the three remixes at the end were not particularly needed.

Crud - Devil at the Wheel

(Self Release)



1). 'Reality' The first track on the disk opens with quite a bang, sort of reminiscent of the Cramps if some one had pissed them off to the point of frenzy. The mail vocals snarl what should be a repetitive refrain, but somehow they don't quite seem as simplistic and repetitive as they would appear in print.

The overall effect is a remarkably catchy track that I can see the more energetic types slam dancing to with Gusto.

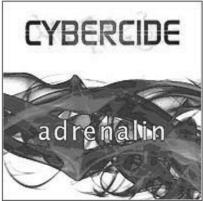
2). 'All used up' continues in a fairly similar vein but if anything the guitars seem even more angry than before,

sort of as if they had gotten out of bed on the wrong side to see a huge income tax bill on the mat only to discover that when they go to make breakfast the breads gone off and they are out of coffee.

- **3). 'Meet detonation'** continues with an energetic blend of guitars and percussion with both mail and female vocals kicking in at different points and sounding very nasty and sleazy but in a good way. Sort of what punk bands would have sounded like if any of the members knew how to play their instruments.
- **4). 'Assume the position.'** Musically very similar to the previous 3 tracks the angry mail vocal screaming "Get down, assume the position" reminds you of that nightmarish video clip of the abusive US police officer bullying a terrified lone female motorist that resulted in his instant dismissal. The whole thing is quite nightmarish in an entertaining sort of way.
- **5).** 'Girls that swear' is a sleazy sounding ditty that has the mail vocalist letting us into his supposed dirty little secret about how girls who swear turn him on. The worrying thing is that he put such a good case for it hat by the end of the track you feel yourself developing a similar fetish.
- **6).** 'La **De Da'.** Another angry and punk-learned-to-play sort of thunderous anthem in which the singer snarls out his disgust with the posh folks. The rolling drum work is incredibly catchy and the meter is just perfect for humming under your breath on the bus and getting funny looks from the other commuters.
- 7). 'Glue' is classic American hard rock with a bit of a southern redneck influence in there. Now given that I don't usually like that sort of thing, this isn't half bad, although it is my least favourite track on the disk so far.
- **8). 'Londe Del amore.'** This track is a massively catchy and entertaining rock-a-billy work that has you tapping your foot and bobbing your head before you know it. Although it is a considerable departure from other tracks on the album in some respects, there is still plenty about it that clearly marks it out as "Crud".
- 9). 'Devil at the wheel' is the title track and is another track that puts you in mind of the Cramps only more so. It is really rather good.
- 10). 'The Man' is another slight change in pace, slowing the whole thing down it is something of a rock lament with a slightly faster chorus. The underlying current which explores the dark side of human nature which has been present throughout all the tracks on the disk is once again brought to the fore. Once again I find I love this track

Cybercide - Adrenalin

(Self Release)



I seem to be getting a lot of electronic stuff to review this issue. Not sure why this is, as I don't really like electronic stuff that much at all. In fact, very few electronic bands interest me at all and it takes someone more special than Icon of Assemblage Nation v3 to impress me. Well, Cybercide seem to have something a bit more impressive going on, as I can't seem to put this album down. Not bad for a genre I don't like. So, what are they doing right then? Well, they seem to have a lot more life and passion going on in their songs which really charges the tracks

and gives them a bit energy and emotion.

John's vocals have clear passion and emotion while the music fizzles nicely above the driving beat. 'Searchlight' and 'Exocet' start the album at a nice pace which gets you into a dancing frenzy.

'Further' is a very good reflective song, its brighter and focuses around the lyrics a lot more, which is another strong point for the band. They've got some good structured lyrics, "I'll leave it all behind somehow/ if this is where my story ends then let it end right now"

'Isolate' takes the pace right down and creates a very atmospheric track with female vocals which help add to the mood. I think some of the bleeping on this track is a bit sharp, as this overpowers the main track a bit.

'Redshift' cranks the tempo up marginally, but 'Underfire' really hits the target nicely. It seems a bit common for bands to put anti-War anthems on records these days, some work better than others, and 'Underfire' works. It gallops along nicely picking up pace nicely before asking "Where is God in this?" and then running off again. 'Recoil' is a bit tame in relation to all that's come before it, which kind of relegates this as somewhat of an album filler. It's competent enough but doesn't threaten to overthrow the other tracks.

The album ends with 'Faceless' which while is also lyrically strong still sits in the shadows with 'Recoil' compared to the rest of the album.

Deathboy - End of an Error

(Line Out)



I am going to try and write this review without insulting any other bands. Let's see if I can do it. 'End of an Error' is one of those albums which packs just acres of cross-genre appeal, although it seems to be marketed more towards a Goth scene, there's no reason why fans of Metal bands like Nine Inch Nails shouldn't be lapping up every second of this if they'd only get their heads out of Kerrang!

Not that I'm saying Deathboy are a NiN clone. No, there's a lot more to them than that...

'End of an Error' is their second album

and compresses a cocktail of influences into a dark, yet commercial, electro-punk album.

Throughout the album I hear traces of trip-hop, drum n bass and other assorted breaks and beats to leave you broken and beaten. The album is mostly laid back and low-tempo in approach, often quite ambient; this really helps drag you in to listen to the music and its dark nihilistic lyrics.

The synth effects help create a real atmosphere and depth to the music, however you'd be forgiven for overlooking these in favour of the emotion in Scotts vocals. 'Slip' is a track that really shows these off, chasms are opened when these combine at the line "How can everything fall down again?" and I think it was at this point that I realised just how much Deathboy are capable of.

Going back to cross-genre appeal, the emotional content of tracks like this, combined with the huge track structure, almost throws a gauntlet down to some of the more popular 'emo' bands at the minute. That not only can Deathboy match them in the emotional content stake (on some tracks) they also have the songwriting talent that shows they're just more than a meaningless whine. Not that I'm saying Deathboy are an emo band. No, there's a lot more to them than that...

The guitars are beefed up a bit more in the mix for 'Smile You Fuckers' while the beats are frenzied at points on 'Lullaby' (which also has a riff very reminiscent of Fatboy Slims 'Praise You'...)

'Cheap Shot' is perhaps the first track on the album in which you can get your dancing shoes on for, packed with punk shout-a-longs and a guitar that clatters along

with the beat. Marvellous.

'Something' is a real gem also, it twists and weaves around you and constantly threatens to fall completely off the rails - until the break and bold declaration of "Of course it's fucking hard! We're alive aren't we?"

From there the album winds down with 'Angel on my Shoulder' and the bitter breakup of 'Caustic'

Deviant UK - Barbed Wire Star

(Repco Records)



Deviant UK have been doing the live rounds in the UK scene for quite some time and have managed to build up a lot of interest in doing this circuit. It's possibly somewhat of an achievement for a band with no album to appear above two bands with an album and proven sales record at this years Beyond the Veil, but they seemed to have justified this well based on their work ethics

'Barbed Wire Star' is the long-awaited and somewhat delayed debut album, so does it live up to the promise

they've built people up to expect?

It opens with the ever impressive 'Raptured Saints', a song that has been doing the rounds for a while, but seems to have been polished off a bit for the record. Jay's vocals have definitely been re-recorded and demonstrate he can actually sing beneath all of the vocal effects. The track has a pleasant thumping dance groove that you can nicely slide into.

The track, like most of the album, does seem to be quiet heavy in the treble stakes. To the extent of following a loud concert the other night I tried to listen to this album and couldn't hear most of the album due to my hearing being temporarily impaired. Still, if you're on a bus full of elderly people they're unlikely to complain about the noise if you've got your personal music player up too loud, as the treble may be slightly out of their hearing range.

But, it's a positive start to the album, even if the track does become awfully longwinded after a while. Do we really need 3 false endings?

This actually becomes one of my common criticisms of the album as a whole. Too many of these tracks are too long, they're long for lengths sake and not because they need to be. Many could be cut down by a minute or so.

After the impressive intro, some of the tracks leave you feeling somewhat uninspired. The tempo comes down a bit, and then the motions are span through. The tracks all have at least one false ending (it was annoying the first time!) and the vocal effects are overdone in places to the point they sometimes becoming piercing, and not in a good way.

'Target Acquired' picks up both the pace and interest. They seem to be mostly interesting when they're writing songs for the dancefloor. The verses seem to remind me awfully of Project Pitchforks 'Timekiller' but it works a bit better once it gets up and going.

'Wide Asleep' starts off well, but by this point you're starting to feel the synth effects are a bit done to death by now. Plus the music hopping up and down in pitch seemed a good idea earlier but by now I'm look for the pony's second trick.

'Access Denied' does get the interest back up again. It's one of the tracks with most depth musically, completely engineered to the dance floor, a nice verse to groove into with a chorus that sends your arms skywards. The vocals work a lot better on this track (think they've been practicing) and this is focused musically rather than sliding around like New Rocks on a skating rink, as in some of the earlier tracks.

After that we return to the disinteresting territory and there's nothing really worth writing about again.

Rereading this review it seems a lot more negative than when I first heard the CD. I will not lie, when I first got 'Barbed Wire Star' I really liked it, however I've heard this a good few times and a lot of the songs become tiresome after a while with only a few keeping my interest enough to want to hear them again. Again, I conclude this to the overuse of treble which after a while becomes rather grating. I also think a few more ideas need to be experimented with to help vary tracks and increase interest and appeal.

Ego Likeness - The Order of the Reptile

(Dancing Ferret)



'The Order of the Reptile' is the third full length album from Baltimore trio Ego Likeness.

I think I'm always a bit too judgmental of American bands; I've always been one of the music patriots in the patriotic sense that your country is better than all the other countries because you live there. Yeah, so shoot me. At least I admit it.

So, Ego Likeness can feel quite hard done by, based on their Geographical location, with this review. The album opens with 'Weave'. For

the first 90 seconds this builds up nicely. You can hear there are some pretty competent electronic arrangements chuntering along and a nice chunk of guitar to give some melody. It's interesting enough and you're just waiting to see where it's going to take you, when the vocals begin.

Donna Lynch has somewhat of a hypnotic whisper to her vocals and it's at this part that you really begin to at least take notice, while the track continues to build up interest. After 90 seconds, the guitars are beefed up in the mix and the whole track completely claws itself around you and it's from here that you can really appreciate everything within the track. It's also nice to have some vocals that demand you hear every single word as if it's a definitive whisper in your ear. "I designed this institution..." brags Donna, "...the lunatics are honored guests" and just to put the final twist into this eccentricity, "...and it was invitation only/ the murders are here at my request" are you scared yet? If so, you shouldn't't be. This is more likely to impress than distress.

So, as you can tell, I did not like 'Weave' too much.

'Burn Witch Burn' bops along nicely. The sweep of darkwave electronics make a nice pile underneath the carpet of guitars that the track is bouncing on.

The darkwave electronics vs. guitar battle goes on at other points of the album, but they do accompany each other nicely, regardless of which one is winning the present battle. This creates some really interesting arrangements and you can tell a lot of thought has gone into every bar to make it work right.

'Aviary', for example, takes a lot of the electronics and only uses guitars to help create extra drama and atmosphere in this lower tempo track.

'Save Your Serpent...' is perhaps a key standout track. It slowly builds up and you can feel the pressure building on a track that's just ready to explode, and explode it does straight onto the dance floor (in your club, house, mind, etc) and every now and then, usually when you think your safe, it lashes it's tail and demands your attention. There's a good message throughout the track also, reminding people to remember where they came from and to leave a mark wherever you go. Philosophy in music, always great. Well, if it's something I agree with...

As you can tell, I still hate this album.

'Severine' also keeps up the interest, but in all the times I've listened to it, I can never quite make up my mind. I acknowledge it's a good track, but I feel it lacks a little of the character and identity some of the previous tracks have and slips towards a territory I feel I've heard a few times before. But, it does the job at hand - it keeps the interest up and follows on from a strong track very well.

The next few tracks take the pace and interest down a bit, although enjoyable tracks like 'Foolish Man who has no home' are tracks you can dip in and out of as you please.

'Seventy-Nine' is the band realizing you're not paying full attention to them, so they crack the pace up again and demand you listen. The guitars and electronics both slide together really well on this, bouncing off each other quite nicely.

'Raise Your Red Flag' is a much lower paced number, but still keeps the interest, I'm not sure if this is due to the piano, the drum, the screech on the guitar, the "Never Surrender" message hammered into you, or Donna's voice, or if these all come together themselves to create a complimentary cocktail.

Kevin Morris

Evanescence - The Open Door

(Columbia)



My instincts tell me that this title is probably a reference to Ben Moody's exit from the band; informing him there is an open door should he ever want to come back. What leads me to those conclusions is the fact that nearly every other song I've had the displeasure of hearing has been about that in some way, shape or form. I was aware that since the album would be written without the chief songwriter for the first album (which I did quite like) this could go one of two ways. It could either let Amy shine in her own light as a songwriter, or be an album of tracks moaning about how he left her for Avril.

Which lets be honest, is worth getting upset over. But still, too much of the latter I'm afraid and the result is an album that is drippy, dreary and for the best part devoid of any real substance.

Where is this open door? It looks like they'll be using it when this album flops. But hey, you never can tell the way music works... The Rasmus last album was far stronger than 'Dead Letters' but flopped so, who knows.

Everything on Black - Stain

(Something to Listen to)



It's Indie Jim, but not as we know it. Thank fuck for that. I must admit, from reading the press pack I was expecting another one of those overrated dire chart pop bands that have a guitar so call themselves 'Indie' (or as the current buzz word is, 'Post-Punk' this is neither the time or the place for one of my rants on the term 'Post-Punk') but EOB have so much more to them than that. Which is a shame really, they could have been huge if they'd walked the sell-out path. But then, they would have simply found their way onto my list of faceless bands to slag off.

Musically they remind me a lot of

Muse and Placebo. But again, there's so much more to EOB in their own right. If we start at the beginning, 'Trust' is an anthemic opener. This is them taking the bull by the horns and diving straight in with one of the biggest anthems you're likely to hear that you're not fed up of hearing.

It's got a certain feeling to it that suggests it would be best listened to at somewhere like Glastonbury Festival, you'd need the movement of a few thousand people bouncing, in the mud, while it's raining.

I haven't attempted to recreate that atmosphere to test, just take my judgement on it. 'Going Down' doesn't have as much bounce to it, it's a general straight forward guitar track. Enjoyable enough as an album filler, but never going to be a favourite. 'Impossible You' does have somewhat more edge on it. The verses are still quite flat and straightforward, but the rise for the sing-a-long chorus is the not-so-secret weapon in this track. "I fell in love with someone I couldn't have/ and now things are getting too complicated"

With 'Following My Dreams' I notice a pattern emerging, that EOB seem to have made a sandwich. Every other track so far has been more of a filler than any real bite.

With that in mind, 'Girl' should give you something you can chew on. It's a bit of a 'cigarette lighter' moment, as it has that mellow sway to it. But other than that it gets a bit slushy, we've already established from earlier tracks he has unrequited love for some girl, but singing this song outside her window at 2am is more likely to get you arrested for stalking...

'Liars' however provides the much needed bite and cranks the bounce-factor up to overdrive. 'Liars' zips along in a hurry, like it's left the house late and packs the determination to make sure it still catches the bus.

'Isabelle' is naturally tired after all that running around, so is a lot mellower in comparison. It does tidily lock together melodies to create a comfy layer for the rest of the track to lie on.

'Stain' chops along nicely; we do seem to have slipped into a quiet corner of the album. But he's still clearly very upset his girlfriend left him "I'm feeling kind of sad/ I'm feeling insecure/ since you left the stain in my heart"

'Seven Faces' confirms we are comfortably in the quiet corner, an acoustic track that often dips into Placebo territory.

'How Was I supposed to Know' kicks the door down to wake you up just when 'Seven

Faces' was about to send you to sleep. How rude. It's packed enough with melodies and some creative guitar work, but you feel that the highlights of the album have long since passed.

'Runaway' bulks out the guitar and heads straight down a dark alley, "She was living inside my mind/ but she ran away" is this his girlfriend that left him, or the girl he had unrequited love for? In seriousness this is the darkest part of the album, it also has a real substance to it you can fit your teeth around nicely.

'No More Idols' proves that EOB are more than a one-anthem-pony. Yep, it ends as we begin with an anthem, this one a bit more epic and more ideal for finishing off a live show, or the album. You can just see the masses swaying one last time and screaming along "So where do I go now?" it's a real gem and probably earns them back a lot of the points some of the last few tracks lost them.

I've just actually picked this album back up to review, as I haven't listened to it in a good few weeks, and I'd forgotten how annoyingly catchy some of these earlier songs were. I'll probably be singing some of these lyrics for the rest of the day, which is not good as I have other reviews to write!

Inertia - Decade of Machines

(Cryonica)



'Decades of Machines' is the definitive collection of the best Inertia tracks spanning 1994-2004, generously spread over two CDs.

When I first saw this was a 2 CD package, I'd expected the second CD to be full of rarities and unreleased tracks however this is not the case; all the tracks on either CD have previously been available from previous albums or EPs.

As a result of this, this may be a shot

As a result of this, this may be a shot in the foot in ways as there is no material here that lifelong fans will not have and other fans may already have a lot of the content.

However, this would make the release an excellent starting point for new fans or fans who may only have one or two of the bands releases.

Inertias lengthily career has not come about by luck and '...Machines' really shows off their competencies and abilities.

They have a good knack of banging out hard-edged electro tunes, many of which put Inertia ahead of their time, even some of the older songs on here still sound pretty fresh and would sit nicely in a club alongside some of the many bands Inertia have clearly influenced.

The tracks were pioneered with well structured layers of electronics and samples tightly woven to create a tight sound. However, the hard thumping may leave many listeners with a throbbing headache long before you make it to the end of the two discs, while Inertia clearly show their ability and influence as a hard-edged electronic band they don't really do anything that would appeal to fans outside of this remit which is somewhat of a weakness.

So if you like your electronics with a bit of a bite and crunch then this may well be worth dipping your hands in your pocket for......(7)

Kevin Morris

Fields of the Nephilim - Genesis and Revelation

(Jungle)



This 3 disk (2 CDs and a DVD) boxed set from a bunch of Guys famous for making dressing like you had stepped out of the 19th century American west* brings rare versions and live performances by this classic Goth band to a new generation and to old fans alike.

The first thing one notices when slipping Disk One "Studio Rarities" into the CD player is that it is actually Disk 2 "Live at Roskilde Festival 2000" proving that although Carl and the boys look great and sound better, they can't count to 2.

This left me in a wee bit of a Quandary as to how to set out the review since confusion could easily result.

So I shall be forgoing my usual track by track format in favour of the more common overview approach.

The studio rarities don't actually include much in the way of new tracks that fans will not have heard, rather they include demo versions and rare mixes that you may or may not be familiar with. The beauty of the remixes lies not in the remixing itself but in the high production quality that was lacking in the original releases. The "Power Surge" mix of "Power" is an exception in that it certainly brings this old Neph classic up to date, adding some very contemporary elements to the sound without loosing any of the original appeal.

Even the demo versions sound much better than one would expect. These are not tinny sounding "we banged them out in some ones carriage and recorded it on a cheap tape deck" demos, nor are they "This was done in a hurry" demos either. They are professional and surprisingly polished sounding demos that are a joy to hear and not just for completions either.

Similarly the live performances on the other disk are very good as well and from the crowd responses that made it onto the disk, the atmosphere must have been really something to have experienced.

Disk 3, the DVD contains a series of videos shot in various locations from Croydons underground club and Brightons Zap club in the mid 80s to the Mera Luna festival back in 2000. The quality of the videos varies from Average to Good and so do the performances. However it has to be said that the "Bonus feature" is possibly the most boring interview ever filmed. I made the mistake of watching it initially from Bed and kept falling asleep. I watched it again the next day pumped up on coffee and still found myself yawning.

H.E.R.R. - Vondels Lucifer - First Movement

(Cold Spring)



I think it would be very fair for me to say that this release is most certainly an acquired taste. This is a musical recreation of 'Lucifer' written by Dutch playwright Joost van Den Vondel in 1654. H.E.R.R. sound track the English translation of this to an atmospheric neo-classical accompaniment. That is what this is. While it's most certainly not 'War of the Worlds' it is most certainly enjoyable enough if you can keep your interest level up. The arrangements are interesting

enough and accompany the piece very well, creating appropriate moods as

Invading Chapel - Snow after Fire.

(Self Release

Track 1 - "Rusty years" opens with a morbid sounding homage to 80s Goth with some distinctly "Cure" inspired guitar work. The vocals seam a little forced but not enough to seriously harm what is a really rather enjoyable track.

Track 2 - "To Be passing..." continues to display "Cure" influences and to exploit an 80s Goth sound. The song is not quite as gripping as "Rusty years" and in places descends a little into clichés.

Track 3 - "Nerve-racking" opens with some fields of the Nephilim inspired guitar work. Although the sound is overall quite good it is slightly less appealing than "To be passing", leaving one with the unfortunate feeling that overall the albums quality is deteriorating as it progresses. With a 12 track album that bodes ill for the latter tracks.

Track 4 - "The dolls" begins to allay any such fears one may have. The track has an "80s Goth meats the blues" feel to it that is rather appealing.

Track 5 - "Fadeream" sees a return of the FoTN influence although primarily in the introduction which lends the track a promise it never quite lives up to, leaving one feeling a little disappointed.

Track 6 - "Clarify" continues the melancholy feel, although it does in places descend into moments of near hysteria. Overall the track is slightly reminiscent of early "Faces of Sarah" meets "The fields of the Nephilim".

Track 7 - "Room 17" is a dark and haunting song dealing with a rather weighty

situation. None the less it has a surprisingly catchy chorus that I can see myself dancing to in a dark and Smokey night club. The classic period Goth sound is strongly in evidence in this track as well.

Track 8 - "Don't believe" is a slow and, to my mind, rather boring sounding track. The message is bleak and almost apocalyptic but sadly the meter is so slow as to sound more languid than maudlin.

Track 9 - "Frozen Age" picks the pace back up and we hear Morticias vocals for the first time. This does leave us asking "Why don't we hear more of her vocals?" because, although you can hardly call Loics vocals bad, Morticias are far superior.

Track 10 - "Society of Ice" is another slow and languid track that, although it contains some interesting influences still leaves one with the impression that the band just aren't stretching their talent enough here.

Track 11 - Psychosis (Nerve racking) is sadly quite an average track that is reminiscent of "And also the trees".

Laibach - Volk

(Mute



Laibach probably don't need much of an introduction. They've even gone into mainstream territories recently as they're one of the bands 'endorsed' by Nemi in the comic strip in UK Free Newspaper 'The Metro'. I suppose they're still better known for their covers of tracks like 'Jesus Christ Superstar' and the ironic cover of Queens 'One Vision' (they make an anti-war song, musically sound like a war song) but their own stuff often goes a bit ignored beneath these covers.

A lot of people seem to be getting a bit excited about 'Volk'. On first glance, I would join them.

My first look at the album tells me that each track is named after a country. No prizes for guessing the countries represented in 'America', 'Anglia', 'Francia' or even 'Slovania'.

So Laibach are taking us on a journey around the world. At each stop they seem to brutally savage the nation "So you still believe you rule the world?" they ask in 'Anglia' while snarling "...how could you be so blind?" to 'America'

It's something destined to make them few friends, so it will be 'good luck' when booking dates for a tour! Joking aside, this is a clear and definitive smack in the face to various counties and their poor decisions and world relations.

However, my main criticism of the album is a big criticism. Each and every track incorporates the National Anthem of the nation the song refers to There are guest vocalists galore to come and sing the National Anthem in the native language and whereby I won't deny that this is a good idea for one or two tracks, for every track on a 14 track album this becomes predictable and tedious.

After a few listens I've concluded that this is a love/hate album. You will either love the idea, or hate it. For me, I think this spoils an otherwise good album. I also think the idea limits what the band can do lyrically and musically within the album - a problem bands often run into when attempting concept albums.

It would be a difficult challenge to pull off and I don't really think Laibach have pulled it off very well.

There are some strong tracks here, the scathing 'Anglia' being a key strong point, while 'Rossiya' and 'Yisra'el' are both deep and dark with a bass so low that it makes you feel no worried for no real reason.

The LoveCrave - The Angel and the Rain

(Repo Records)



I believe this album is actually a loose concept album. Creative vocalist Francesca Chiara wrote a fiction story entitled 'The Angel and the Rain' which links all of the songs here together. This is explained in the booklet that accompanies the CD. Unfortunately, at the time of writing the CD is not released and I am reviewing from an advance copy, so I do not have the booklet.

However, as nice as fancy artwork and accompanying booklets are, ultimately I'm judging and reviewing the band on their music, which I do have.

If you wanted me to give you a genre,

I'd be afraid in case I scared you off if I said 'Goth-Metal'. I'm sure a lot of readers are sick to the back teeth of 'Goth-Metal' on the grounds that so many of the bands sound exactly the bloody same.

The LoveCrave are thankfully different. So, you won't pick this up and think "They want to be Lacuna Coil/ Nightwish/ Evanescence/ etc" and if you dislike all of those bands, then well, TLC are different.

However, I did have my apprehensions the first time I put the CD on. The opening track is entitled 'Vampires (The Light that we Are)' and so I was a little worried this could turn into some naff kiddie-Goth effort.

OK, I was wrong. What it actually turns into (following an intro of rain, electronics then piano) is a refreshing, stomping, rocking little number.

While the intro builds your interest, even if it is in "Will this fall on its face?" way, the song raises a certain "Hell yeah, this is actually quite good".

It is an almost text book intro track. It builds interest in the album nicely, but doesn't overpower or overshadow the rest of the tracks.

Second track 'Nobody' backs up my statement. It takes the heat up a bit and gives a nice dark rock to it. I also like the near-'Firestarter' "Hey, hey, hey" in the background.

By this point you can start to take more notice to the band and everything they do. There is a good Metal guitar structure and also darkness and depth to the music. By this point you can also start to take appreciation from Francesca's vocal input. Now, this is something that will be talked about more an interview, but Francesca doesn't actually consider herself a 'singer'. For the sake of this review I will say there is more talent in the voice than various successful people, male and female, that do consider themselves to be singers. But well, we are all our own chief judge, jury and executioner.

It depends on what you want from 'singing'. This is not operatic vocals. But at the same time, this is not spoken word. Francesca does have a scream-to-a-whisper vocal range (although she doesn't scream that much) but while it's not Charlotte Church (thankfully!) it is extremely fitting for the record.

She captures the mood of the song within her voice and passion for the songs and her dark style accompanies nicely.

Anyway, moving on.

I do find the intro to 'Little Suicide' a little cheesy. Particularly the "Thank you God, thank you for the darkness", but the rest of the song compensates enough. Going back to the vocals, I think at parts the vocal line is sped up slightly in places (apologies if I'm wrong!), but rather than sounding like a naff dance record this again works quite well and effectively. Particularly as it's not over-used. It's a good anthemic song and quickly proves itself to be one of the albums key strong points. Sure, the intro does come across cheesy, but at least it's definitive.

'Can you hear me?' is a rival to its predecessor on the 'album strong point' note. The piano intro leaves you not knowing how the song will go, but it turns into a highly atmospheric song with a good beat.

The chorus is a real strong point, perhaps the highest reached so far. Lyrically this also hits a deep chord which I am sure will make it an anthem in it's own right, "I know you can tell/ you don't know how it feels/ you don't know how it's breaking me/ can you hear me?"

'Fading Rose' is a low-key moment but can double nicely as a slow-dance ballad. "It's our last day together/ it's our last day/ dance with me"

This sits nicely between being an epic rock ballad and an epic Goth ballad. Do you now see why I think this band is going to be big?

'My Soul' takes on a more rockier front and takes the pace and beat back up. I do actually feel this is perhaps the weak spot of the album, despite the fact I am sure this is a clear live favourite. Music is weird at times.

I don't normally talk about every track on an album (that's DJ Ghosts job) but I feel myself visiting every track in this, as they all have something worth talking about. If we take the next track, 'Runaway', for example it's again a little slow to get going but by the time you hit the first chorus you know this is going to take off nicely. It has a huge chorus so while the verses seem a little subdued the choruses seem

gigantic and although I am feeling the best moments of the album are in the past this is still an enjoyable track.

Title track 'The Angel and the Rain' does seem to shake the "intro dust" off them quite quickly, which is good. Again, the sped up vocal effects seem to make an appearance, while the track itself seems to be an everlasting epic despite only clocking up 4 minutes. Perhaps that's a good thing as there is something about it that just draws you in and makes you listen.

Anyway, like I said above I did feel the best points of the album were in the past but 'The Chauffeur' popped up to pleasantly surprise me.

This nods back to be an unexpected rival for 'album strong point' as it gels together neatly. The strumming intro builds interest quite quickly and the track is also a strong point on the vocal front. It has the knack to take you in for the ride particularly as you don't know where it's going, as the beat hits in during the first verse you nod along, only for a dip during the first chorus. But perhaps it's during the second chorus when everything really soars up that it really leaves your mouth watering, particularly during the epic outro to the track.

This would be a great way to end the album, but 'Dark City' gives one last breath of life. An acoustic track, which is accompanied by whispering vocals and rainfall, gives a sullen, yet beautiful exit to the album.

So, on the whole. Despite my initial apprehensions, by the end of the album I was actually left quite impressed. I am sure it's all possible at some point in the future you will be sick of hearing the name of the band, although you may not have heard them. Perhaps on hearing the band you'll hear what all of the fuss is about. Not that there is fuss at the minute, but I am predicting there will be. There will be a lot of buzz about this band as this is a very impressive debut that suggests bigger things from the band.

Although I always try to avoid lazy-journalist "This sounds like band x" situations, this album reminds me of the first Lacuna Coil album, 'In a Reverie'. Don't get me wrong, the two don't sound similar but I still feel 'In a Reverie' was LC's best moment although one of their most criminally underrated. They have gone on to a lot better things since, just like I said they would when I first heard '...Reverie'. 'The Angel and the Rain' has had that similar impact on me and while some tracks are a little slow to warm up in places on the whole this is an album that has me nodding, "One day everyone will be going on about this band." So yes, there is a lot more to come from The LoveCrave, I can sense it. If you want to be one of the first to Kevin Morris

Ministry - Rio Grande Blood (13th Planet)



Kevin Morris

Rio Grande Blood' is confirmed as being the penultimate release from Ministry. Thank fuck for that. They're a band that have me constantly scratching my head on their links with the Goth Scene (Yes, I know they're 'Industrial' but if someone put a few samples to a Slayer record, would that be welcomed with as open arms?) and while undoubtedly the band have released some key and influential releases, they've been dogging on scraps for the past ten or so years. But still, I'm always ready to listen

with open ears and an open mind, and I'll admit I do enjoy opening track, 'Rio Grande Blood'.

It's a scathing piss-take of George Bush, with various Bushisms re-quoted to have Dubya declaring, "I am a weapon of mass destruction, I am an evil dictator". In amongst the battering and blasting sounds, this is quite funny. It would have been even funnier if this idea had not been done to death on the previous Ministry album, but still.

After that, there's really nothing worth mentioning. The rest of the album continues with a line of stolen Metal riffs, more slagging off George Bush and selling the album on the back of guest musicians.

There are no ideas really present. Everything on hear I feel I have heard before (and better) and the repetitive lyrical subject gets very boring very quickly. I would probably suspect they're making the next album the last as they're completely devoid of ideas and Ministry has been pushed just about as far as it can go. As it happens, the theme of the next album is scheduled to be "a politically minded blast at the administration of President George W. Bush.", which probably just about confirms my suspicions. I refuse to criticize the output of some of Ministrys early work, but 'Rio Grande Blood' is not at all original, not at all Goth friendly and not at all good. (2)

Nebelhexe - Essensual

(Candlelight)



Nebelhexe is the work of Norwegian artist Andrea Haugen. She's most certainly kept herself quietly busy over the years, although this is the second album under the guise Nebelhex?, Andrea has also used the guise Hagalaz' Runedance for an assortment of singles and albums and has also guest appeared on work by Cradle of Filth and Satrycon. In saying that, she has appeared to gather a cult following of fans and while I can't honestly forecast world domination for Nebelhexe, there's no reason why she can't pick up a few

more fans.

This next line will probably either have you skipping past the review (although I'd hope you'd at least read on), or have your ears prick up in interest. The literal translation for Nebelhex? is 'Fog Witch', a reference to Germanic Folklore and Andrea makes no secret of her connections to various magic/pagan/witch circles. For those of you still reading; you can feel a lot of these influences throughout the music. Although this is more about self-expression than being Norway's answer to Inkubus Sukkubus.

Opening track 'Underworld' is extremely mellow. It has a defining, nodding, drum beat which is about all that saves it from dipping into "Winter Forest by Night" style relaxation CDs. It is a track that is almost like a wind-down or relaxation track. There are a cocktail of instruments to help add to the atmosphere but the main focus in the track is on the drum and on Andrea's voice.

Vocally Andrea has a deep, yet enchanting, voice. Yeah, it's not Goth-Metal-female-by-numbers (thankfully!) but it does draw you in nicely.

My natural concern at this point is that all of the album will be like this and that before the end of the CD I'll either be so relaxed that I fall asleep, or die of boredom. Opening an album with such a chilling track gave me that impression.

However, perhaps it was just there to lead you into a false sense of security, that you thought that the album would be mostly harmless. OK, 'Invisible Entity' doesn't exactly rip your head off and spit down your throat, but it does have a lot more life in it

The beat moves up the pace slightly while the guitar line adds an extra dimension to the track. Listening closely, the backing track is a very basic keyboard arrangement, so again the main driving points are the drum and the voice.

The guitars come into a bit more on 'Their Dead Poetry', a track that spirals and ascends around you. We've now gone from relaxation to a rockier sound and style within 3 tracks.

'Sun God' strips things down again. It's centred around a loop of bleeps with other instrument usage used sporadically. It doesn't quite work as well as some of the earlier tracks and disrupts the flow of the tracks too much.

'Erzulie's Charm' brings in an interesting mix of sounds and atmospheres, but we're back walking in that Winter Forest (although it is now daytime...) I'm now starting to find I'm losing interest in this release, not helped that as I felt it was going somewhere it's completely fallen off the pace - and not in a good way.

Thankfully 'Purple Nightshades' seems to be the one to get the album back on track, maybe I'm just a sucker for the guitars. It's a relatively mellow track, but has plucked the interest levels right back up and this track flows along nicely.

'Living Trash' slows things right down but works really well. It's mesmeric and enchanting.

A cover of The Cure's 'The Figurehead' picks up the tempo a bit, but personally I've much preferred her own work.

'The Wish' is one of the rockier moments and also one of the stronger moments. There are some good synth effects that help add an extra dimension to the music. 'Dreams of Little Girls' is almost dreamlike, the synth effects swirl nicely, while violins give an edge that I'm not entirely certain is needed.

On the whole, 'Essensual' is a bit hit and miss. Some of the more relaxing songs work very well and some of the rockier songs work well, but some of the more experimental tracks just doing quite work so well. It should be stated that Andrea's voice remains strong throughout and this itself is a very strong instrument and a lot of the passion, determination and energy of the tracks are all channelled through her voice.

The Opposite Sex - The Opposite Sex

(Opposite Sex Music)



The Opposite Sex are one of those bands that drag out all the older Goth influences from the grave and show them off for all to see. It's Goth in the original post-punk sense when you could see the punk influence and the term 'Goth' had not been invented yet. Fittingly, it's clear they listen to a lot of Joy Division.

'Dollhouse' opens like a lively rendition of The Sisters of Mercy's 'Body Electric' but then rampages off into a more eccentric direction, the bass driving out some familiar sounding 80s lines.

'Ceremony' opens with some fancy guitar work and then strolls along

nicely. The chorus is refreshing but does not really fit in with the verse. 'The Sound' picks up the pace ones more, with exhilarating bass lines carrying the

track along nicely.

'All Consuming' creeps up on you slowly, this gradually builds up memento like footsteps chasing you in the woods by night. As it nears you, you feel the whispering echoes and howling cries twitching behind you, before you're finally caught at the end of the track. Breathtaking.

Romance - When things are better.

(Self Release)



Track 1 - 'Paris is Burning' opens up the CD and puts one firmly in mind of The Rutts both lyrically and musically. It is a little more mellow and refined than the Rutts 'Babylon's burning' which seems to have had something of an influence on the band, but it sounds great as a result. Track 2 - 'The Light' continues in a very similar vein to 'Paris is Burning'. Whilst some people may find the sound a little dated I think it's more accurate to say that the track pays homage to earlier bands like The Rutts or The Pogues whilst adding a level of maturity and production that

were lacking. Although I didn't quite like this track as much as I liked 'Paris is Burning,' there really wasn't that much in it, and both are great tracks that will probably never get the radio play they deserve.

Track 3 - 'Automatique' again the band provide us with some first class music very much in the same vein as before, although I suspect I can detect a feint Bauhaus and early Siouxsie and the banshees influence creeping in here as well. The chorus is quite stirring and very danceable.

Track 4 - 'Guiltless', although a little slower than the earlier tracks on the disk contains a few elements that put me in mind of the Clash, an impression that is strongest in the opening bars. The track may not be quite as good as the previous 3 but it is still a good, sterling track in its own right.

Track 5 - Your magazine face opens with a raw but up beat sound. The drumming, which has sounded quite raw all along seams more so here. The metre is quite simple as well. Taken as individual elements everything about this track is just a little bit too basic, but put the whole thing together and some how it all hangs together in an incredibly strong whole, a testament to the bands talent and ability.

Track 6 - 'Thin lipped Wisdom'. The bass and drum sound on this track heighten the impression of a strong Rutts influence. The speed has been picked up a little from that of the previous two tracks and as we reach the chorus the band have used a bit of classic punk technique by using the drum beat and the metre of the vocal performance to produce short, barked sentences with the drum sounding like it provides the punctuation. All in all this is yet another good track on what is shaping up into a very impressive album indeed. With only two tracks left to run there is no way the band can screw it up now.

Track 7 - 'Prima Nocturne' is Latin for the supposed medieval practice in which a lord was entitled to have the first night with a new bride. As I understand it there is some considerable doubt that the practice was ever really enacted or even actually existed. Anyway, that is utterly irrelevant because that's not really what the song is about anyway. Once again the track sounds like the sort of skilled punk that one might expect from the likes of the Clash, the Rutts or Elvis Costello. If you like that sort of thing, which I do, you are going to love this track (indeed this whole album) as much as I do.

Track 8 - 'Don't go Disco'. All too soon the album reaches its conclusion in a track that sounds like it was released in the punk/Goth crossover years that spawned such

greats as Andi Sexgang and the Sex Gang Children. I was half expecting this track to be sub-par for no other reason that I thought surely the band must have at least one track on the album that lets it down, but they don't. The track is another good one. Overall Romance have produced a very strong album with "when things are better". It recalls an earlier musical Epoch and has the listener nostalgic for the many bands that have clearly been an influence on Romance and reminds old fogies like me of the sort of thing that attracted us to alternative music in the first place. (8) Available from http://www.romancemusik.com

DJ Ghost

Seduced By Suicide - Gothic Dream

(Self Release)



Seduced by Suicide is the solo project from Brazils answer to Pete Steele, Earth.

No, I'm not at all referring to Earths manhood... more so the reminiscence of the vocals between his and Mr. Steeles

'Gothic Dream' is a 5-track journey from love lost to love wanted.

Musically this is somewhere between the poppyness of HIM combined with the power of Moonspell and the morbid twist of Type O Negative.

There is a clearly a lot of talent on display here, Earth handles all of the instruments (presumably not all at the

same time) to shape his songs and visions right how he wants them. This allows for a really deep exploration into the music and helps compliment the sound and produce the vision exactly as Earth requires this to be shaped.

Kevin Morris

Sinbeats - Sinbeats

(Self Release)



Sinbeats are a German Rock band. However, there is more 'Goth' in them than many bands that call themselves 'Goth'. This self titled debut brings to mind what The Damned might sound like if they were Goth.

The bass throughout the album really hits you where you feel it. While Harry Wolff croons vocals, his German accent doesn't overpower the songs but helps add to the atmosphere. 'Down the Line' is pleasantly catchy, while 'Farewell' follows up quickly to rock your socks off.

'All Your Sundays' does get a bit tiresome after a while, "Every Sunday

is a Sunday/ Every Monday is a Monday/Every Wednesday is a Wednesday" you get the idea. It's down tempo and booms as that ever-explosive bass detonates. But some of the lyrical repetition lets this down.

'Annabel Lee' is one of those Arena Rock cigarette-lighter moments. It sways nicely for the verses, while the chorus snares you and hits you with sharp, sniping vocals. 'I want my Analogue Life Now' opens with a riff I think Iron Maiden wrote earlier, but then the vocals, heavily reminiscent of Dave Varian, take the track back under control.

It is quite a long album, clocking up 13 tracks, but it does manage to remain pretty consistent throughout. I'm not going to talk about every song as you'll get the idea easily enough. It's German Arena Rock that's somehow become very Goth. A good example on this (and possibly the albums strong point) is 'Bury My Heart', packed with "Hey, Hey" shout-a-longs, with traditional stadia guitar melodies around a swaying structure.

I'll skip past a few tracks, there's nothing really I feel I need to pick on either negatively or positively, the ideas follow the same pattern and while songs are enjoyable and varied there's nothing much that makes me want to stop and talk about it

Space Monkeez - Speedracer

(Universal)

This should be quick enough to review. Mainly because the 4 tracks on this single are all different mixes to the title track. Space Monkeez have created a very nifty driving track, just ripe for all you speed freaks out there. Probably not very good for Goths though, most of us drive hearses...

This is a very catchy electro-rock anthem. It's rocky enough to appeal to some rock fans and the electronic spine and key tingles should keep it tasty for anyone who likes their electronics with a side serving of guitars.

Spiderbaby - Teenage Odyssey/ Love Buzz

(Self Release)

We seem to be getting a lot of singles this time around. The total play time of this double A-side still clocks in at under 5 minutes which should give you a bit of an idea about the music produced before I even begin.

Kevin Morris

Sundealers - Tears Love Religion

(Something to Listen to)



Alphabetically this is the third John Fryer produced album I've reviewed this issue (Deathboy and Everything on Black being the other two), but honestly this isn't turning into a "Here's one John produced earlier" Sundealers are a bit more rawk compared to the other two.
'Steam' and 'Gun Crazy' both go off like a pressure cooker that's been left to boil too long. Music to beat your friends up to. Off you go.
After this they turn the hob down a

bit. The next tracks give you a better chance to appreciate Sundealers for their songwriting ability. They combine rock guitars with samples and weave this together into the sound that leans on a more commercial angle.

I don't really want to say 'industrial', because to me this is not industrial. It's a rock band with a sampler. I think on a good day "What is Industrial?" has the potential to cause more arguments than good old "What is Goth?"

As rock bands with samplers go, Sundealers packs a punch to get you to listen; they have the songs to keep you listening and have enough rawk to have you bouncing off the walls and punching your friends on the rebound.

Toll - Christ Knows

(Cold Spring)



It's this type of release where I really should just put my hands up and say that I don't have a clue where to begin when attempting to review. Mainly as its genre, a more classic industrial is not one I have ever really grasped. It's a re-issue of a 1986 album, with added bonus tracks

It's the more experimental industrial where bands were using the sounds and (limited) technology available to create epic soundscapes.

At times to me this sounds like I'm just standing on the production line of a factory with large metal things clattering into each other and various

drill and hammer noises. I have never really understood the appeal of music that sounds like this, and this makes albums like this hard to review. I don't know if it's any good, I don't know if people who think the best part of working in a factory is the noise will appreciate this and all I really know is that I wish it would end so I don't have to listen to it ever again.

Uninvited Guest - Your are Your Kingdom

(Self Release)

Some of you may recall my review of Uninvited Guest's 'Faith in Oblivion' was not entirely a favourable one. I would like to take this opportunity to point out that rumours of an ongoing feud between the band and myself as a result are entirely unfounded, and those of you present at the Newcastle gig hopping to see the speculated upon "UG vs. Ghost tag team bare knuckle boxing match" will notice it never quite emerged. (Now they will say it is because we are all mature adults who agreed to differ and respect each others differences. I, on the other hand, maintain it's because I had them outnumbered, as there are only 4 of them and there's one of me, and we all know 1 Geordie is about equal to 5 southerners).

Any way on with round two my review of the single.

Technically the single includes 2 tracks and a video, but since I can't seem to get the video to play I'll have to skip reviewing that.

Track 1 "You Are Your Kingdom" opens rather promisingly with a powerful guitar sound following on the heels of an almost tribal beat, as Dean's voice kicks in along with the rest of the instrumentation the various elements of the song mesh together to form a potent Goth rock whole that is rather impressive. If I have a criticism at all it would be that the recorded version lacks a little of the power and energy the band bring to the track when performing it live. It is still very good though, and is well worth the modest cover price on the disk.

Now, as some one pointed out the last time I was discussing Uninvited Guest down the pub, I previously criticized the band for a heavy handed attack on religion. The same person asked me why I liked this one so much since "(this track) can be read as challenging religious views in that it invites us to be our own kingdom and not to tie our sense of self identity to any religion." Well to put it simply, firstly the song's message is positive, focusing on self-realization, and secondly, I seem to recall commenting that some of the earlier work lacked a maturity. That is certainly not an accusation that can level at "You Are Your Kingdom" which challenges the listener to take a critical introspective look at themselves. What is more, I think the song is more accurately read as asking us not to tie our sense of self identity to any externally imposed set of normative values, religious, political or social, without critically evaluating them first, now that is a message I can very much get behind. Track two is the bands homage to WGW (which was written before they were booked to play there, despite the rumours to the contrary), and is quite a clever look at the experience and what draws so many people to the town twice a year. Musically it is a very jaunty sounding track, and lyrically it is quite uplifting as well. We also see a return to one of the bands recurring themes, that of social exclusion. Unlike other tracks which explored the theme, like 'Angel Boy' and 'Devil's Toybox', this one dwells not so much on the experience of the exclusion many Goths feel in society, but instead explores the way it is almost unknown during the WGW experience and how Whitby thus becomes an all to brief respite from it. It makes a lot of good points, and is very entertaining to boot.

All in all the 2 track single is an excellent showcase of a band that have a great deal to offer and I imagine will go from strength to strength, the band have developed considerably very quickly and the maturity and development both lyrically and musically shows through strongly.

The Violets - Hush Away/ In This Way

(Angulai

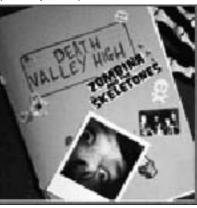


This double A-side from The Violets has proved to be a real gem of a find. I have been getting press-packs like this for a few months from bands looking to sell themselves into this supposed 'Goth Revival' and when the opening paragraph suggested that influences include Adam and the Ants, Bauhaus and Siouxsie Sioux I was rather surprised upon listening that I could actually hear these influences! Vocalist Alixus clearly takes a Siouxsie influence in her vocals, giving the same bite and spit that Siouxsie did on the early Banshee records.

Musically the two tracks both pack the influence of some of the earlier punkier Goth bands, such as those mentioned above, while there's a nice commercial twist which guarantees you to hum along after a few listens.

Zombina and the Skeletones - Death Valley high

(Electoplastic)



Okay I've heard Zombina and the Skeletones many times before and have always had a "Take 'em or leave 'em" attitude to the band. They would probably get more play at Charnel House for my part, but they just don't seem to go down too well. I sort of hoped there fore that this latest release from them might develop them a bit and push them from a band I can take or leave to one I quite liked. 'Death Valley High' is billed as being the script of a slasher flick style cheesy horror B movie, and the band have obviously put a lot of time and effort in to the concept. Certainly it is

quite easy to follow the script through the tracks laid down on the album. However, overall I can't say I liked the album much. Rather than pushing the band up the ladder in my estimation I felt I liked this considerably less than their previous work. True to the basic concept of the album the band produce music that sounds like it belongs in the aforesaid B movie, in fact you can easily picture them as the band you would expect in the later acts playing the high school prom that the protagonist Janie is stalking. Sadly that's pretty much the problem; the band sounds a lot like a US high school band. Their undoubted skill and musical talent is somewhat overshadowed because you just can't shift the feeling that they are the aforementioned B class high school band. When you listen past the styling and the vocal style which mimics the intended genre perfectly it is clear they are way more skilled and talented than the average high school band, but they do such a good job of evoking the image they are after it is hard to get past it.

On the up side, if you enjoyed such camp horror musicals as "Little Shop of Horrors" for the music, you may well rather like this album. I didn't, and I found that I really didn't care much for "Death Valley High" in the slightest.

Various Artists - The Goth Anthology (Metro Music)



The Goth anthology is a 3 disk boxed set available from high street stores (I bought mine from ASDA), this very fact will undoubtedly work against it as the cynical flock to condemn it before they bother to check it out the way they invariably do whenever a compilation goes on sale in the high street. People tend to be instantly suspicious of alternative music compilations one can buy in supermarkets as if the music industry was incapable of realizing that first generation Goths are now hurtling towards middle age with alarming

rapidity and are almost certainly running their own houses and doing their grocery shopping in just such places. Where better to catch us? Even I am in my local supermarket at least 3 times more often than I am in a record shop these days. Certainly reading the forward to the anthology which is written by Alex Ogg it quickly becomes clear that the people behind this product know their stuff. The forward is a 3 page fold out which is remarkably informative, and even I managed to find something in it I hadn't known before hand.

Certainly there are some obvious choices on the 3 disks. Disk one opens, for instance with the terribly predictable 'Tower of Strength' by the Mission, however the second track, for all it is by the fields of the Nephilim isn't the expected 'Preacher man' rather it is the 2002 release 'From the Fire'. By the end of the first disk we have been presented with old favourites like Christian Death and the March violets, alongside much less predictable choices such as Bone Orchard and the Dance Society as well as Creaming Jesus.

Disk two again mixes predictable tracks such as 'I walk the line' by Alien Sex Fiend with some less common choices such as Front 242s 'Head Hunter' and the Screaming Dead's 'Nightcreatures'.

Disk three similarly opens with a terribly predictable choice in "Eloise" by the Damned and I can image that track 2 (Pretty in Pink by the psychedelic Furs) may have some people scratching their heads (probably until they recall that The Sisters of Mercy always listed The Psychedelic Furs as a major influence on them). The Neph track selected for disk three, "Power" is hardly a shock, but given that it is on a disk with Usherhouse and The wake it is quickly apparent what the compiler was thinking. Give the disk an eclectic mix of old favourites, new tracks and some relative obscurities to help draw people into what is a vibrant and powerful genre. Disks two and three both end with tracks by Cradle of Filth which I know is going to have many traditionalists swearing and tugging at their hair. I will be honest, I was one of them. However, if a couple of tracks by CoF on a 3 disk boxed set are the price we have to pay to have the Kerrang! generation who have been told they are Goths by the music press buy the boxed set and expose themselves (yes I know, I wished he'd phrased that differently as well. Last issue he's telling us all how much he likes Cof, this issue its all talk of people exposing themselves. Ed) to some real Goth music I think it's worth it. Many of them may find they like Specimen, Children on Stun and the March violets once they hear them.

All in all this is a boxed set may be available in ASDA but it's far from being a highly commercial or watered down product. Between the 40+ tracks on the compilation we are treated to old favourites, newer material and some hard to find on CD tracks. Personally I love the compilation and I think the makers have managed to get an incredibly tricky balance almost spot on. Certainly I would recommend it to anyone just coming into the scene.

Weighing in at 43 tracks for under £15 (I think I paid £11.95 for mine) this compilation is a bargain, and it should be there first recommendation you give anyone newly discovering the scene as it showcases some excellent tracks from every

DJ Ghost





Faces of Sarah - Lament

(Malicious Damage)



I was very dubious when I received instructions from his highness the editor in chief to review this CD since it was relayed via my wife, a sure fire sign he knows I'm not going to be happy and is looking for some one to cover him as he retreats. The fact he also added "He isn't going to threaten me with a cheese grater again is he? Only they do seem to have been listening to an awful lot of Iron Maiden before they wrote these tracks".

This did not bode well. Luckily for him I seem to have broken the cheese grater.

Certainly by track two I am detecting

an awful lot of metal influences in the tracks. Bon Jovi, Maiden, Icon of coil, Nightwish have all seemed to have a bit of an effect on the band since their last release, and although the vocal styles retain much of their near hysterical energy they had on 24, some how much of the originality I liked about the band seems to be missing. The music is very polished, but the vocals, whilst still very accomplished, came across as a little too shouty and hysterical for my taste.

That is not to say I can't find tracks I love on the album Track 4 "If I could I would but I can't" really engages me and I love it. I will certainly be giving it an outing at CH. Here I can hear influences as varied as Bauhaus, Children on stun and Rosetta

There is also an impressive array of musical styles on the album, from the rockier efforts like "Another breakdown" to the balladic "Lament", which demonstrates the band has quite some range in it.

Overall I would not call Lament the bands best work, although they have clearly honed their performance and playing skills (which were never exactly sloppy) the album just didn't engage me.

Now that said, I think anyone who was already a fan of the band is still going to enjoy this album, perhaps not as much as some of their earlier work, but conversely some people may actually prefer it. What is more, I have no doubt that the new work will actually appeal to a section of people that would not previously have given TFOS a second glance. If you like bands like Nightwish, Epica, Lacuna coil and such like, you are probably going to like this album (in fact if that's your favorite sort of

Now, I do and don't agree. I think that The Faces of Sarah walk along that line somewhere between 'love em' and 'hate em'.

If they were a curry, they would be a Vindaloo. Some people love the full on flavour, but for some it's just far too spicy for what they like.

They've always been a particularly emotional band and for a good few months I found I couldn't really listen to this as some of the lyrics were a bit close to the knuckle on something happening in my life. However, while they have that 'something to relate to' thing going on, I felt it was a little too close for my comfort. TFOS have sometimes been accused of being a little over the top in their vocal styles, but I think they're just very passionate about the music they do and lyrics they perform. However, undoubtedly it does seem they've inserted a fierce slab of Metal into their sound and I fear this may put off many potential fans. Some of the riffs are a little 'Here's one Iron Maiden wrote earlier' and while I feel this adds to the dynamics of the music I fear some may feel that TFOS have gone 'too metal' for their

The album most certainly starts with guns firing on all cylinders with the double assault of 'All that you used to be' and 'Another Breakdown'.

It is the trademark Faces of Sarah of sound, but with the dynamics turned up to 'mind blow'. This is an album that will literally blow you away.

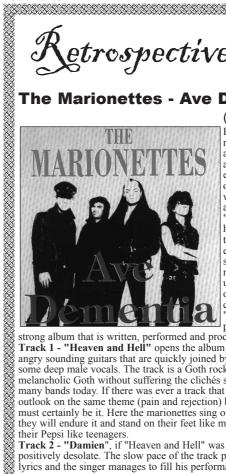
Perhaps I'm sitting on the fence a bit. This is a difficult album to review, because quite frankly it's brilliant. The Faces of Sarah are really building on the potential they'd shown in previous album '24' and the album is both exhilarating and overpowering. However, I think this extra slab of Metal may move them a little way away from the Goth scene (although I'm sure more would love them if they had a swirly female vocalist) and many Goths may not like this expansion on the bands

There is no denying this is an immense and powerful album, even some of the lighter moments whistle through the roof they have just blown off. However, be wary this may not be for you - if you want something similarly powerful but more Gothic than you couldn't go wrong with the previous album, '24', but this is most certainly one for Kevin Morris

etrospective Review

The Marionettes - Ave Dementia

(Maze Music - 1990)



For this issues Retrospective review I thought I would cover an album that should, by rites, appear in the collection of every Goth DJ and the majority of trad goths as a whole, but which probably doesn't. That album is "Ave Dementia" by "The marionettes". The band had a significant output both as the Marionettes and in their earlier incarnation of "The screaming marionettes" and for many a year it was not uncommon to find at least one of their tracks on most Goth compilations.

"Ave Dementia" is arguably the pinnacle of their career, a very

strong album that is written, performed and produced to a very high standard. Track 1 - "Heaven and Hell" opens the album and kicks off with some very angry sounding guitars that are quickly joined by a percussion section and by some deep male vocals. The track is a Goth rock lament that epitomizes melancholic Goth without suffering the clichés so common in the work of many bands today. If there was ever a track that demonstrated the different outlook on the same theme (pain and rejection) between Goth and Emo, this must certainly be it. Here the marionettes sing of pain and lost love and how they will endure it and stand on their feet like men rather than sniveling into their Pepsi like teenagers

Track 2 - "Damien", if "Heaven and Hell" was a bleak lament then Damian is positively desolate. The slow pace of the track perfectly meshes with the bleak lyrics and the singer manages to fill his performance with sadness without ever becoming trite. The track is intensely evocative of the emotions one feels when having lost a love but is devoid of self pity and angst, in part because the lyrics cleverly refer to the sufferer in the 3rd person, thus allowing us to recall the emotions through a sense of empathy rather than self pity.

Track 3 - "Ave Dementia" is the eponymous album track and brings us into a nightmare world of insanity and madness with a rocking Goth anthem that fills dance floors in Goth clubs up and down the country to this day. The sound is so quintessentially Goth that it is hard to imagine the scene not having produced such a superlative example of its own musical intent. If the track has a single flaw it must lie in the sudden ending that always makes it seem like the DJ cut it off a few seconds early.

Track 4 - "She said" keeps up the pace and opens thunderously with

Track 4 - "She said" keeps up the pace and opens thunderously with percussion and string sections blending perfectly. There is a faint angry tone to the vocals adding a depth of emotion and feeling to what is yet another magnificent example of what the Goth genre can produce when in the hands of masters like the Marionettes.

Track 5 - "Like Cristobel" slows the pace down a little bit, but once again all

Track 5 - "Like Cristobel" slows the pace down a little bit, but once again al the elements of the song hang together to produce a masterful track that is easily better than a great deal of what has come since. It remains a powerful Goth Rock anthem and continues the theme of personal desolation and agony that the Marionettes have mastered so well. This time the singer uses the cunning device of combining singing in the 3rd person (when referring to the eponymous Cristobel) and seeming to include the listener as the object of the song.

Track 6 - "Love is" Another very powerful Goth Rock anthem unifying all the elements into a cohesive whole the song is a cynical view of love as nothing but an illusion and seems to emerge from the pain of a rejected lover who, in truth, may never have experienced the real thing. Again the song could so easily have descended into stereotype and angst in the hands of less skilled musicians but does not do so in the hands of the marionettes.

Track 7 - "Play Dead" is a soft, balladic lament that changes the pace quite markedly, but which perfectly suits the dark lyrical content. Although the track is by far my least favorite on the disk, it is still, none the less, rather good and makes quite uncomfortable and challenging listening to the extent that it is not unknown for the track to set the hairs on the back of ones neck standing on end the way a good horror film does.

Track 8 - "Obsession" picks the pace back up and brings the subtext that has

Track 8 - "Obsession" picks the pace back up and brings the subtext that has run through the album to the fore with a powerful Goth Rock exploration of obsession as opposed to love. Sitting at the end of the disk the song draws the whole thing to a close, and confirms to the listener that they have been listening to a musical exploration of Obsession mistaken for Love and the desolation and emotional distress that this can bring.

DVDs

Abigail's Mercy - To Hell With Angels / Cloud Dancer

This package is a double CD box set. One CD being DVD and the other being audio 'To Hell With Angels' is a one-track DVD for the video of the same name, from dark-rockers Abigail's Mercy. They're a bit harder than your conventional Goth, but all that seems to have done for them is increase their potential fanbase. One extra on this is a live cover of 'Ace of Spades', which sees stray bikers rocking alongside girls in corsets. And I don't suspect either are there for perverse reasons. The extras also includes a rather detailed video diary of the making of the video.

The video itself is a mixture of some live footage and people teleporting through forests to get to the gig. It's quite a lengthily affair, clocking up nearly 6 minutes, while the accompanying track is a catchy affair. Some of the vocals remind me a bit of 'Away with the Faeries' by Inkubus Sukkubus, so imagine how I smiled to the lyric "God damn you Sukkubus, to Hell with Angels". But it does put the 'rock' into 'Gothic Rock'.

The 'Cloud Dancer' side of things is actually the 'Salvation' album. To be honest, I really should reviews this as a CD with extra DVD rather than the other way around however me being an idiot didn't actually realise the second disc was an audio CD until I put it in my DVD player and wondered why I wasn't getting pictures on my screen. The fact the disc had a 'Setlist' on it implied to me it was a live DVD. But nope. It's an audio studio album.

Unfortunately, with time restraints and whatnot I don't have the time to listen to this album the multiple times I like to in order to come up with clever words and meaningful descriptions. So, if I said it was Goth-Metal with New Model Army providing the Goth and Motorhead providing the Metal. A twin male and female vocal used effectively, although Lindsay does drop a bit into the background a bit too often. There's a potential that they could really unleash if they brought her into more tracks - the duel vocals could form a really effective partnership.

The key cut of this CD has to be 'To Hell With Angels' but 'The Sky Begins to Cry' and 'Cloud Dancer' also show they are far more than a one-song pony. I do worry this might be a little too rawk for many Goths. I did mention the Goth side of things being New Model Army - who weren't really that much of a Goth band - so I'll let you work it out from there. But there is a strong Goth influence throughout.

Beauty in Darkness Vol 7

(Nuclear Blast)



These 'Beauty in Darkness' DVD's are always a great way to discover bands that are already creating a buzz on the continent, before they take off in the UK. The main problem is, while there are always plenty of gems on these (The Sisters of Mercy, London After Midnight and Type O Negative have all made appearances previously) these releases often seem to have a lot of Metal, or 'Goth according to Kerrang' on them.

Prime example is opener of disc 1, Deathstars. Still, it was about time that someone formed a band that plagiarised The Kovenant. Not as exciting as some would have you believe.

Dimmu Borgir continues the Metal assault, with Crematory quick to keep your finger

on 'skip track'.

You're almost glad to hear Lacuna Coils 'Heavens a Lie', probably not the best song on that album, but arguably the best Lacuna Coil have ever been visually. The effects somewhere between The Matrix and Final Fantasy. Shame the lip-sync is off. From the Goth-Metal we switch to the other end of the spectrum when And One come to give you some bog-standard EBM. 'Krieger' isn't the strongest of their material, while the black and white video combines with this to create an overall experience that is bland and uninspiring.

We then dip back into Metal territory with Amorphis, by which point I'm sick of slagging everyone off - and I really fancy getting some Christmas Cards this year, so I'll skip past most this and see if I can find something interesting and relevant. Or simply something worth slagging off.

I eventually find something worth talking about on track 11, which is 'Erdbeermund' by In Extremo. Which has some German nutters on a boat, sound tracked to a very bouncy guitar laden track.

Thankfully I don't need to get my finger on the skip button again, as Tiamat follow this up with 'Cain'. Not their most visual tracks they've ever done, very dank and dark, a bit like the accompanying track I suppose.

We'll skip past Raunchy, who don't exactly fill up to their name, where we find Wolfsheim. See, it's not all Euro-Metal.

'Kein Zuruck' is a strange video, but then again aren't all Wolfsheim videos strange? This seems to involve security gaurds chasing a girl in white around the laundry room in a hospital. Only for them to catch her, then escort her out of the building where she has some random fight with someone on a bike. If anyone can make sense of this, please write in.

Moonspell are here blasting their Gothic-Metal in a forest.

Sentenced are also here to keep up the humour factor with their very happy song 'No One There'. Don't think anyone dies in this video, but as always it's somewhat dark and morbid - this time seeing an Elderly Gentleman looking after his ill wife. Stone the Crow are the first real discovery on this DVD, a very rocking cover of Depeche Mode's 'People Are People'. It's like an upbeat Type O Negative. I'll mention Fireball Ministry just to take the piss, another Ozzy Osbourne wannabe. Please stop.

Subway to Sally are a bit more rocking then I imagined, but pleasant enough. Lots of good fire effects.

That's about all of real interest on Disc 1.

Disc 2 starts with the disturbing video for 'I don't wanna be me' by Type O Negative, unless hairy fat men dancing around in a Britney Spears-esque Schoolgirl outfit is your thing.

Thankfully 'Mother Earth' by Within Temptation is less distressing, pleasantly spiritual.

The 69 Eyes are also ready to remind the UK what they're missing out on. Project Pitchfork are also here to add to the bizarre mix with 'A view from a Throne', a bit tamer for them.

Paradise Lost seem ready to impress with 'Erased', they seem to have hit a peak with their electro-rock and appropriate visuals back this up.

The Missions video for 'Evangeline' doesn't half bring to mind some of the early The Sisters of Mercy videos... and music.

While Anne Clarke's 'Sleeper in Metropolis' is visually quite active, musically it's quite bog-standard as spoken word electronica goes.

My Dying Bride on the other hand are striking both visually and musically with 'For You', despite the morbid twist of a girl watching her boyfriend die of a drug overdose. These bloody Yorkshire Goths are so happy aren't they?

Almost as happy as Swedish pop band The Covenant. Crikey, their best days are well and truly behind them... 'Bullet' demonstrates how dull they've become. It's a bit of a late show, but Black Milk are also an interesting discovery. They're a bit on the dark-indie side, but having followed on from Muse and Delaware it's a lot pleasanter listening. However, the last track on the album is by a band called Deine Lakaien, who come across like one of those dodgy Eurovision bands...

It's an odd mix all told. There are a lot of really good tracks amongst the two discs, but then a lot of really naff ones. There's also not as much scope for new discoveries than on previous compilations. The slightly more Metal bias may also be a bit much for people, but there are gems if you're willing to look.

Kevin Morris

Venus Fly Trap - Celluloid



fans collection Kevin Morris

Celluloid' contains videos spanning VFT's career from 1998-2004. While musically they're art-punk with a somewhat darkwave twist, their videos are also the same. They're a band I could never really get into and a flick through the accompanying booklet suggests that it's not just me in the UK that struggles to get into this Northampton band - however they've had an album in the French National charts as well as marginal success in Eastern Europe. The DVD does demonstrate how they've progressed over the years, opening on a more noisy-arty-punk front and gradually increasing the darkwave until they become a darker

experimental-pop band.

It doesn't make me want to dig into their back catalogue to find out what I'm missing - but would be a welcome addition to any existing

Magazines

Alt Fashion Magazine - Issue 3

£3 from www.myspace.com/altfashion

Although I have seen previous issues of Alt Fashion, I have never had one in my hands long enough to formulate a fair review. I think my biggest criticism with Alt Fashion is that it has not improved between issues. OK, no one expects a magazine to be brilliant from issue 1 and it always takes a couple of issues to find your feet, rectify your mistakes and iron out the creases, but Alt Fashion just haven't been doing this.

The layout of many articles is confusing; many descriptions don't match up to the obvious picture.

Many articles also have large portions of white spaces which could be used for more or bigger pictures

The images in the galleries are too small and not very clear. These would benefit from being in colour, or if this costs too much they at least need to be bigger as in many you can't really see what is in the picture, the worst of this being the Carnival of Souls gallery in which the black background really affects a lot of the pictures. The articles on fashion companies have actually been written directly by the companies, whether this is a good thing or a bad thing I will leave up to you but personally I feel this would not help me establish the quality of the products provided by the companies.

What also really lets the magazine down is the lack of colour. I'd expect at least some colour in a fashion magazine.

However, do not get me wrong. Alt Fashion really does have the best intentions; it's printed on recycled paper, boasts being non-profit making and if nothing else the cover is fantastic. The articles and content are all very well meaning but the lack of any negatives leaves the results very one-sided. There must be at least one fashion company with poor customer service, is over priced for the quality or creates products using child or third world labour... surely...?

Kevin Morris

Black Velvet - Issue 51

£2 from 366 Birchfield Road, Webheath, Redditch. Worcs, B97 4NG



I'm not sure if I'm an issue missing somewhere - but Black Velvet has undergone a serious makeover since the last issue I read. It's a lot lighter, but still heavy on content while the magazine impressively is in full colour.

This new look adds an extra shine to a magazine with an already glowing reputation. Again, the bands might not be to everyone's cup of tea - depends on what you think of bands like Bullets and Octane, AFI and Paramore. Flicking through the reviews I was happy to spot reviews of The LoveCrave, The Faces of Sarah and Deathboy. It was very interested to see reviews of these bands by someone from outside of the Goth scene - which gives a broader opinion on some of the

bands doing well in the Goth scene. It's always been a good magazine, but the extra colour is just mouth-watering and hasn't half moved BV onto the next level. Kevin Morris

Devolution Magazine - Issues 10 + 11

£2.50 - available from: **Devolution Magazine**, **137a Brasenrose Road**, **Didcot**, **Oxon**, **OX11 7BP www.devolutionmagazine.co.uk**



There's something about Devolution I have never really decided is a good thing or a bad thing. They feature quite a broad mixture of bands and so you often don't know what to expect from issue to issue, while variety can be good, this would maybe put me off buying a subscription. Also, from a Goth perspective things of direct interest can sometimes be somewhat limited.

Don't get me wrong, bar a few niggly bits here

Don't get me wrong, bar a few niggly bits here and there (I really did not like the cover on Issue 10, for example) Devolution are really good at what they do and are undoubtedly one of the big players in the Premier League of Magazines, but sometimes there's maybe not enough of a Goth influence that would make me personally want to dive in.

Issue 11 is probably the stronger of the two issues

(and I'm not just saying that as I do a brief interview in there alongside other superheroes like Unscene Mark and Ev from Unsigned Magazine) which includes a comprehensive overview of Iron Maidens albums a passing chat with Cradle of Filth, but the real crowd pleaser for me is the feature on Angelspit.

I still stand by what I said about issue 9, Devolution seems to be edging slowly away from the Goth side of things but, if I know anything about Nickie, this could dive headfirst into Goth over the next couple of issues...

*Kevin Morris**

Insomnia Magazine - September/October 06 + November/December 06

£2.50 each from www.insomniamagazine.net



Insomnia Magazine is developing nicely over these two issues. You can see them moving along and developing into what they want to be. This gives the magazine more character and I feel Insomnia is really showing the potential of becoming something special.

Some of my criticisms I would have about the September issue (including interviews lacking depth and reviews lacking information) seem to be addressed nicely in the November issue which clearly shows they're adapting, improving and learning.

They've also significantly reduced the amount of 5/5 reviews they're slinging out - this is bad news for bands after a rave review, but good news for the reader base who now have less 'must have' albums that they need to spend their money on.

They seem to have a very good mix of bands featured and reviewed also. September boasts Cauda Pavonis and Pro-Jekt alongside the likes of My Ruin and Vice Squad. November boasts Deviant UK and Spiderbaby alongside the likes of Theatres Des Vampires and Mushroomhead. They're not a strict Goth magazine, but never said they were and seem to mostly be making good choices in dark rock and dark metal bands to include to keep this within a theme of 'Keeping you company in the dark of night'.

What I also really want to point out as a positive is that although they put a pretty girl on the cover, they do keep her dressed AND interview her. Kudos to that. There's also a good general mix to include fiction, columns and DVD/film reviews. Some fans may not like the mixtures included, but at £2.50 it's probably not breaking the bank.

Kevin Morris

Orkus Magazine - Issue 3

5.20

Although the cover price for UK reads £5.20 I understand you'd be quite unlucky if you ended up paying that much for it, or if you did that price may include postage. Orkus is probably one of the prime Goth Magazines in the world, and it shows. We're literally talking 132 pages. These pages also include a total of 40 interviews for bands of different shapes and sizes. I should possibly warn that this include some 'Goth according to Europe' type bands, so they happily list the likes of Cradle of Filth and Negative in with 'Goth' and I'm a bit suspect that some of these other bands I'm reading about that I have never heard of might be rather on the Metal side. You're now all calling me a hypocrite, but if you heard some of these bands compared to some of the Goth-Metal bands I have featured, you'd sharp see the difference.

But like I say, 40 interviews gives a lot of scope to read about bands you already like (Emilie Autumn, Cinema Strange, Clan of Xymox, Fields of the Nephilim, Patricia Morrison, and too many more...) as well as opens opportunities to discover bands you might not have heard of before.

But still, there a few points I'd like to see more of. For example, despite them being 132 pages there are more CD reviews in this issue of TWF than in their magazine. I'm not sure if they only milk out the crème de la crème, but I would have expected more. There is also only one live review. This is arguable the biggest Goth Magazine in Europe, and there's only one live review. While the magazine is beautifully laid out and you can see its prestige just by flicking through the pages, I wasn't too happy about some of the space-wasting techniques. For example, I really wanted to read the Combichrist interview, but despite the interview being covered over 2 pages, only half of one of the pages was text. The other page and a half was taken up by a picture. They also only actually asked him 7 questions; I would have preferred a bit more of an interview and this is not the only interview to be heavily padded in such a way.

Still, the Emilie Autumn interview read for heavy reading, possibly because they'd lifted some of the questions straight out of an A-Level English Literature exam. While I think, content for content, Orkus is extremely good value for money, as I say, you will discover new bands and get to read about ones you like, I think I'm just greedy and wanted a lot more from them, especially given their reputation. *Kevin Morris*

Spider's Web - Issues 2, 3 + 4

(£1.50, £2 and £1.20 respectively) from www.myspace.com/spiderswebzine



Spider's Web puts the fan back into fanzine. These issues are created by Spider and the contents are exactly what she wants to write about. She has somewhat of a passion for Finnish Goth-Metal bands with features and interviews on To/Do/For, HIM, Charon and The 69 Eyes among others. But a lot of the strength from this zine also comes from the fan interaction, for example there's an live review of Moonspell in Portugal written by a fan and the 'Life as a Goth' features talk to regular Goths from all across Europe who talk about what they like and what the scene is like in their part of the world

It's not the only 'zine of it's kind of the world, but

it's certainly one of the more Gothic. *Kevin Morris*

Unscene - Issue 4

£3.50 from **31 Dunedin Avenue**, Hartburn, Stockton-On-Tees, TS18 5JH



The latest issue of Unscene has been chewing on something because it's grown again. We're now up to 52 pages! They've also managed 14 band interviews. This is a very good quantity of bands for a magazine like this, although a lot of these bands seem to lean more towards electronics. They also seem to have enlisted an army of contributors - do many hands make work light, or do too many cooks spoil the broth? Or am I just jealous because we haven't had many contribution offers lately...?

Seriously, this is looking fantastic; it's their best issue yet. OK it was a little late, but lets not worry about that - Unscene has focus direction knows where it wants to go and has a damn good idea on how it's going to get there. There are some stops on this ride that might not appeal to us but for the best part this is going to be a good journey.

Kevin Morris

Unsigned Magazine - Issue 2

£2 (+86p postage) 6 Boxwood Place, Staffs, ST5 7BH, UK http://www.unsignedmag.co.uk



Issue 2 of Unsigned continues pretty much where Issue 1 left off. It's pretty much more of the same, free CD, unsigned bands reviewed and interview and an assortment of advice for bands and appropriate rants and columns.

This trove does contain a large mix of bands and styles and while many may not be to your taste, the likes of MAB, Lesbian Bed Death and Ivy's Itch are all included for good measure. They've also added a couple of bigger bands, such as The Zutons, into the mixture and whilst I'm concerned this may flavour the blend too much, they seem to have a good balance between larger and unsigned bands at the moment. Something I hope they can keep up as it should increase sales to help increase publicity to the unsigned bands.

Kevin Morris

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