

THE

IRON



Monthly Magazine for Metalheads

ISSUE NO. 60

MARCH 1989

FREE!!!

MATINEE MEMOS . . .

DECIMATION/BRAINICIDE/DEUS VULT
Phantasy Nite Club

February 24

POISON/TESLA Coliseum February 25
PAUL STANLEY/WARRANT Agora March 2
SACRIFICE/TERROR Agora March 4
REALM/ACROPHETPeabody's-Down-Under
OMEN/NITECRAWLER Agora March 9

March 8



ATTAXE/CHEMIKILL/TRIGGERZONE

Phantasy Nite Club

March 11

SPOYLD Agora March 11

CHASTAIN Phantasy Nite Club March 12

CINDERELLA/WINGER/BULLET BOYS

Coliseum

March 18

INDESTRUCTIBLE NOISE COMMAND

Agora

March 18

DARK ANGEL/DEATH Phantasy Nite Club April 6

ANTHRAX/HELLOWEEN/EXODUS Music Hall April 30

Concert planning, by definition, has a tentative nature. In addition, there is often just plain erroneous information in circulation. Please check with promoters/-venues/whatever for absolute confirmation of these listings.

Metal-morphosis

Officially unconfirmed reports indicate that DESTRUCTOR, thrash-metal pioneers in Cleveland, have called it quits. One thing is confirmed: bassist Brook Damage has joined BREAKER (yes, you did read that right; no, this isn't a practical joke)....Other personnel shifts around town include the departure of bassist/vocalist George Chapman from SPOYLD. This void has been dealt with by the return of vocalist Sammy T. Brdar, and the switch from guitar to bass by Jim Maler (resulting in a one-guitar line-up).

SPOYLD



Better news yet is the band's announcement that they will be finally abandoning forever their "copy"-band status, beginning with a blow-out all-original show, their first with Brdar, at the Agora Ballroom (see concert listings)....Perhaps the biggest surprise of all in line-up changes is the departure of vocalist Jeff Hatrix from PURGATORY. Hatrix has formed his own band, to be simply called Hatrix, which now includes former-Purgatory and Centurion guitarist Dave Felton, and drummer Sam Romano (brother of Purgatory guitarist Tony).... Make sure you pick up a copy of "Northcoast Steel", a "self-released" album of selections from local bands, one each from BATTERY, NIGHTCRAWLER, CENTURION, PRETTY VACANT, ROADIES NIGHTMARE, ABSOLUTE ZERO, FRAGILE, SAVAGE and ROUGH HONOR....Drummer Bert Atkins has once again left SNAKE ROCK and has, once again, been replaced by bassist Jeff Wray's brother Dave Wray....CHASTAIN vocalist LEATHER LEONE has just finished recording a solo LP entitled "Shock Waves", with a little help from her Chastain'-mates. Meanwhile, CHASTAIN will be doing a show at the Phantasy Nite Club (see concert listings), making up for the show in January that was cancelled at the last moment due to a grave illness in the family of one of the members....Seattle-area band HEIR APPARENT, a pioneer in progressive-metal, has re-surfaced with some line-up changes and will have an album released this spring entitled "One Small Voice". Meanwhile, fellow progressive-marvels CRIMSON GLORY, from Florida, will have their long-awaited second LP, "Transcendence", released here in April (it's already released overseas).

(continued on p. 2)

Metal-morphosis

(continued from p. 1)

...Bassist Lon Ciarlo and drummer Michael Sabatini have left New Jersey progressive-power-metal group ATTACKER. ...Brazilian death-metal act SEPULTURA will release their second LP, "Beneath The Remains", in April....WHIPLASH and KREATOR will both be releasing LPs in March, entitled "Insult To Injury" and "Extreme Aggressions", respectively....Former Exodus vocalist Paul Baloff has joined HEATHEN....Rhythm guitarist Gaz Jennings and bassist Ian Gangwar have left ACID REIGN....AGNOSTIC FRONT will be releasing a live album, "Live At CBGB", in March....ZNOWHITE's forthcoming LP will be called "Land Of The Greed, Home Of The Depraved"....Phoenix band ICON has re-surfaced and is now recording an album for a planned May release....FASTER PUSSYCAT's next LP will be entitled "Wake Me When It's Over"....Guitarist Kai Hansen has left HELLOWEEN, on the eve of their forthcoming U.S. tour with EXODUS and ANTHRAX, which includes a local stop (see concert listings). They should have a definite replacement by the time you read this....TESTAMENT will release their next LP, "Practice What You Preach", in June....The former bassist and vocalist of the disbanded Vinnie Vincent Invasion have completed a band line-up (yet unnamed) and are presently recording an LP for a March or April release....You can tune in some hard-rock and heavy metal bands on, of all places, "The Morton Downey Jr. Show", on March 1st and 2nd. The first show will be "Behind The Scenes With Rock Stars, Their Fans, And Life On The Road", while the second show will be "Politics In Rock'N'Roll". Featured bands/individuals include CYCLE SLUTS FROM HELL [an up-&-coming N.Y.C. band], RAY GILLAN of BADLANDS, BANSHEE (a great new act from Kansas City), CIRCUS OF POWER (who will actually perform), the infamous DEE SNIDER who is now fronting DESPERADO, ACE FREHLEY, TED NUGENT, ANTHRAX, and LORRAINE LEWIS of FEMME FATALE.



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OVER KILL

We talked with Over Kill vocalist Bobby "Blitz" Ellsworth. As always, he was accommodating, affable, respectful, and a delightful mixture of seriousness and humor. It is always a pleasure to speak with this frontman of one of "underground"-metal's most popular groups.

conducted by Marni Halasa and C. B.



DOES COLLEGE AIRPLAY CONTRIBUTE HIGHLY TO YOUR SUCCESS?

BE: College radio does help, but it's the kids that really make it happen. It's usually by word of mouth one kid tells another, and so on. College seems to be a proving ground for bands, and if you can succeed on college radio, it can really help in getting the word out.

IS MEGAFORCE DOING YOU JUSTICE?

BE: Well, Megaforce is sort of a family situation. Johnny is very involved with the band, but not so much as to take away from your creative control. I think it was one of Johnny's goals to become successful, make some money, and at the same time have fun and be involved with the bands. The things with Atlantic is really good, too, because we have Atlantic's pull so we have the money to go wherever we want to go and do, but we also have the personalized atmosphere of a smaller label like Megaforce. They haven't lost their identity by being a smaller label.

A GOOD PORTION OF YOUR SONGS ARE HIGH-ENERGY, INTENSE. FAST. SOME MIGHT THINK THAT A DESCRIPTION OF WHAT'S CALLED 'THRASH'. DO YOU THINK OVER KILL IS 'THRASH'?

BE: First thing I want to say is that I don't like to be categorized. The stuff that's fast on stage is really toned down for the records. We play fast on stage because it's live-intensity. You take that and put it next to the record, and you'd say the live show is faster. But I don't consider us to be a thrash band. I would say we are a metal band, that's established, but I prefer to say we're a power metal band. We're heavy.

IT'S INTERESTING NOW BECAUSE THERE ARE SO MANY DIFFERENT TYPES AND TERMS FOR METAL. WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT ALL THE CONFLICT THAT OCCURS BETWEEN POSEUR METAL, SPEED METAL, AND COMMERCIAL METAL?

BE: It's ridiculous. It basically comes down to 'in union we stand, divided we fall, divided we're weak, and together we're strong.' My ideology behind the whole thing is that you don't have to be a thrasher to come to our shows. You can be a thrasher, or a poseur, or a regular office worker, or a punk, or a young American NAZI...it doesn't particularly bother me. Just get something out of the show.

BECAUSE THE MIDDLE-FINGER "FUCK-YOU" SYMBOL IS SO OFFENSIVE, WHY DID YOU TAKE THE RISK OF OFFENDING THE GENERAL POPULATION BY PUTTING IT ON YOUR EP COVER? AND WHY IS IT SO IMPORTANT FOR YOU TO TAKE THIS RISK?

BE: It's direct and to the point. It's blatant, why flower it up? It always kills me that the same guy whose calling this offensive is shouting 'fuck you' to the guy who cuts him off on the highway and thinks nothing of it. It's not directed at anyone in particular; it's straightforward and it's kind of like iodine--you apply it where it's needed. To say 'fuck you' is not to hide anything, and to flower it up would be wrong.

(continued on p. 3)

OVER KILL

(continued from p. 2)

DO YOU THINK THIS COVER WILL HINDER SUCCESS WITH THE ALBUM?

BE: There is a censored version of the album that comes in a black bag...but I don't think the cover hindered sales at all. It was meant to be a novelty; it wasn't meant to rule the world with record sales. It was done because everyone wanted some live Over Kill. Everyone bootlegs shows and the cassettes they use are of the worst quality, so since they want something live, we'll give them something live. Plus, the song "Fuck You" has always been a part of our live show; it's always big with audience-participation. We recorded it during the "Talking Over" session. It's achieved what we wanted it to. It's not like we're trying to break new ground with it. We're just giving the people what they want.

HOW DO YOU WRITE A SONG?

BE: It has to be a state of mind for me. I really have to be feeling what we're writing about, the topic that I want to attack. Usually it's a state-of-mind but that state is, lots of times, on an angry and pissed-off note.

IT WOULDN'T BE RIGHT TO CATEGORIZE YOUR LYRICAL APPROACH AS 'SOCIALY-CONSCIOUS', BUT THEY DO DISPLAY A LOT OF T-WHAT PEOPLE CALL 'AWARENESS'.

BE: We are aware, but not so much in a political sense. We're not politically active. We understand and take note of what's happening around us, but we wouldn't write about the plight of the American Indians or the Middle East because we're not involved in it. We don't know about it well enough. The things we do are things that we're involved with directly, or things that we've seen second-hand. Here's an example: There's a band that wrote a song about the space shuttle disaster. Basically the song said the space shuttle went up and blew up, and that's bad, so we shouldn't waste our money on space. This is the most ignorant thing to say. Get a little more in-depth about an issue. Songs like "Drunken Wisdom" and "Brainfade" deal directly with the road, the people you deal with everyday. I think we're qualified to speak on this subject because we've all been 'confused' children, dealing with assholes all our lives. We know about it.

SOME OF THE NEW LP'S SONG-TITLES MAY SEEM "STRANGE" TO SOMEBODY. "DRUNKEN WISDOM" -- WHAT'S THAT ABOUT?

BE: The song is directed toward criticism. There is somebody who can always do it better than you. Great minds drink alike. You can sit there and a guy will come up to you after the show and say, 'You kicked some ass, but let me tell you how I would have done it.' The alcohol makes someone a little braver. You should criticize from some basis, but not just for the sake of criticism.

ALTHOUGH YOU CONSIDER YOURSELF SOMEWHAT ISOLATED, ARE YOU INFLUENCED BY ANYTHING EXTERNAL, OTHER THAN BANDS?

BE: Everybody's influenced by everything, and we're only isolated when it comes to writing. I listen to everything on commercial-radio to hardcore, so I'm very diverse. I even listen to a classical station at home with my girlfriend. I'm sure that there are things that hit me in the back of my mind. I was looking at some lyrics on the last album and I found they were very similar to the Beatles' "While My Guitar Gently Weeps". They're not identical but they're fairly close. I don't set out to do that.

THE 'CREDITS' ON THE NEW ALBUM'S COVER ARE LAYED-OUT LIKE THEY'D BE ON A MOVIE-POSTER. WHY IS THAT?

BE: It's set up like a movie with parental discretion advised, starring D.D. Verni and the rest of us, and

the credits we put like on a movie poster. We see these movie posters all over New York and we've always thought it would make for a good LP cover. It's similar to the AC/DC "Let There Be Rock" concept. It's something that would be a little more interesting.

WHAT DO YOU DO IN YOUR SPARE TIME?

BE: I'm getting into Stephen King. Just started reading "It". Also, I have a little boy, now. So, I read a lot, or take my kid out to the beach. I've taken a lot more responsibility in the lyrics that I've written as a papa. I'm not just role-playing a daddy I'm living it. At first I didn't like it, but it hit me that there are more important things than getting drunk and getting laid on the road. Having a kid is good for me, but eventually I think I'll probably have a brew.

WHAT KIND OF MUSIC DO YOU THINK YOU PLAY? CAN YOU SEE YOURSELF AS DOING ANYTHING NEW?

BE: I think the idea of Overkill was always to be within ourselves, than what is 'happening' around us. I don't mean we take this so far we end up ignoring everything out there; we just do not strive for what's happening. We always play with this much intensity, and although you didn't get a sense of it tonight, the other half of our set is quite melodic. The kids seem to take more to this stuff because this is the frenzy stuff, so we whip 'em into a frenzy real fast. Being such a short set, we don't have that much of a chance. I don't want to put a seven-minute song in there where I sing and Bobby plays very harmonic-type leads throughout because it'd sort of chill the mood. But, Over Kill, I think, is innovative, not in the sense that we strive to be so, but in that we never compromise what we want to do.

WHAT SHOULD WE EXPECT FROM YOUR NEW ALBUM?

BE: What we're going to do with the new album is not have a game-plan. If we start planning it, it comes out sounding planned. Since we recently lost a member of the band and since we write collectively, we were at only 75%-strength. It turned into a panic-situation that eventually worked out for us. For the next album, it's not going to be an overall concept or a definite direction, but a progression, which is what we've achieved from every album. A progression in terms of sound and songwriting-ability.

THE NOTION OF AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION SEEMS IMPORTANT TO YOU--YOU LIKE TO STIR UP A CROWD'S REACTIONS WITH YOUR MUSIC. AS WELL AS TALKING TO THE AUDIENCE BETWEEN SONGS.

BE: Tonight, at this show, I kind of had to because of all this mayhem going on with the kids jumping all over the place, but I personally don't care what the kids do at a show. I have lost a tooth because it got too wild, but stage-diving doesn't really bother me so long as the kids have a little respect for the band. Kids get so carried away and so caught up in the moment, and this is the way they want to express it...it becomes their pilgrimage, their homage. I'm not here on a selfish basis. I'm here because they want me and I'm not going to give them a rule that tells them what they can and cannot do. Just as long as they respect me and my bridgework!

WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO RECORD THE LIVE EP IN CLEVELAND?

BE: We do well here, and second of all, the availability. It just happened that they brought us in a bus with a four-track studio and they asked us if we wanted to use it. 'Hey' we said, 'we love Cleveland, Cleveland loves us, let's use it.' We're from New York and naturally we'd like to help the people in our area, but Cleveland's always been a second home to us, and we've always had a real good response here.

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HADES

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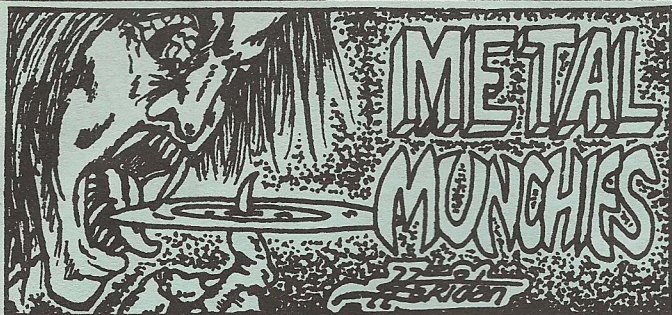
TORRID

This is the long-awaited second LP from New Jersey band Hades, following the much-acclaimed (but largely undiscovered-by-the-masses) "Resisting Success". That debut was a shockingly astounding work; this one bears no less a distinction -- if perhaps not more. What we have here essentially is something very heavy, with a prominent-but-not-dominant progressive current throughout, altogether exhibiting lots of class and what musicians call 'taste'. A couple of our more respected musician-type 'associates' considered this LP among the most tasteful, cleanest speed-metal [note: it isn't always fast] they've ever heard, bearing off-hand resemblances to bands such as Fates Warning, Slayer, Queensryche and Anthrax. The drumming in this band deserves special note, being incredibly skillful, versatile and, in this musical context, pulverizing -- truly at the top of all HM drumming [Dave Lombardo fans, please take heed!]. There are three brief, outrageous instrumentals here while the bulk of the songs are in the 3-5 minute range



HADES

(though they seem much longer), with a 9-minute (!!) opus 'piece de resistance' [entitled "Aftermath Of Betrayal (the tragedy of Hamlet)"] capping off the album. All in all, we can't possibly recommend this album enough [not to overlook the debut, either]. Yet another monumental display of modern-metal's glorious present!



SCANNER

HYPERTRACE

NOISE INT.

by Jim Motyka
edited by C. B.



Scanner is another German band, a la Helloween, that should certainly contribute a lot of impetus in further launching German Metal into the international under- and above-ground limelight where it's long deserved to be. "Hypertrace" is a concept-piece, lyrical-ly, a sci-fi yarn involving the rescuing-from-self-destruction of Mankind by a joined-force of alien beings and a banished Earthling. Very Helloween-ish musically, the "Euro-metal" features of harmonizing guitar-work, intricate rhythms, and "all-over-the-frets" bass-playing is found throughout "Hypertrace". A new-age Star Trek-ian adventure of sound and speed! Standouts include "R.M.V", "Warp 7", "Terrion", and "Locked Out" with its very strange bass-line. Recommended highly.

HOBBS' ANGEL OF DEATH
HOBBS' ANGEL OF DEATH

STEAMHAMMER

This is an Australian band that was signed by one of Germany's most notorious underground-metal record companies. This is very appropriate considering the band's musical approach is very in keeping with the extremes of the German underground-metal movement today. Actually, a German 'inflection' is only one part of this band's sound -- the rest seems inspired by some of Britain's overlooked and under-rated bands of this genre that emerged earlier in this decade (e.g., Angelwitch, Witchfinder General, et al). The lyrical content is full-throttle Satan-is-lord-and-Evil-I-do-for-him -- and the instrumental end is appropriately ominous at all times. The arrangements aren't really fast, although there is some wildly skillful drumming barrelling along throughout; just count on a perpetual mood of EVIL. The bio refers to a "stylish forceful assault" -- we hear an emphasis on the "stylish" and that is actually only the tip of the iceberg. Truly unique in its genre, even if the band name is far from original, this band and LP deserve attention from all parties even remotely interested.

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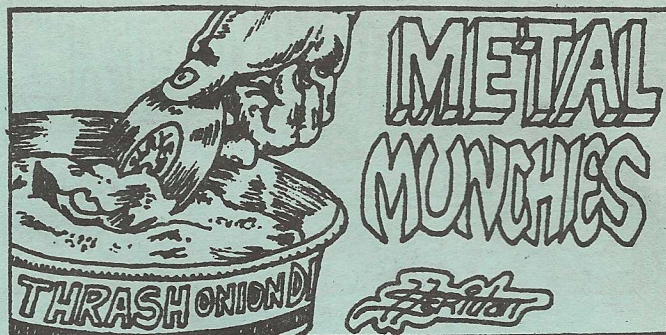
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LIEGE LORD

MASTER CONTROL

METAL BLADE

by Bill Peters



Paul Nelson
guitar

Matt Vinci
bass

Joe Comeau
vocals

Tony Truglio
guitar

Frank Cortese
drums

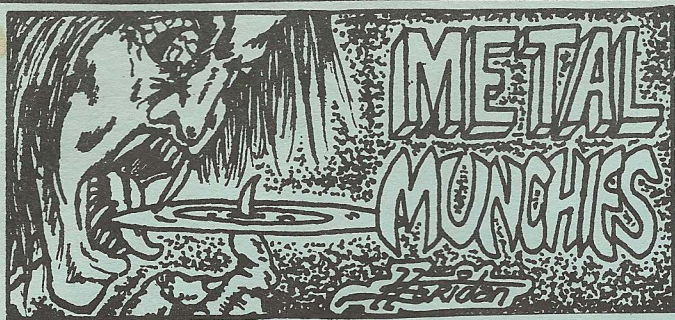


Liege Lord hails from Connecticut and this, their third album, "Master Control", is without question one of the best and most underrated power metal albums ever to be released. This is a true classic, a bright star in these clouded days of metal mediocrity. The band's previous albums were good and showed potential, but they needed a change in the vocal department. They found that change in Joseph Comeau just prior to the recording of this album. There isn't a weak song on this album; among the outstanding are "Eye Of The Storm", "Feel The Blade", "Fallout", "Fear Itself", the unrelenting title-track, and a rendition of Rainbow's "Kill The King" that is revved up to break-neck speed but in a tasteful way that doesn't desecrate the original arrangement. A truly devastating work...one of 1988's best.

EDITOR: CRAIG A. ROSEY

FOUNDER: CHARLES KERR

THE IRON PLANET is published monthly as a public service to headbangers across the land. Editorial contributions, advertisement orders/inquiries, and correspondence should be sent to: THE IRON PLANET, 11835 Lake, #4, Lakewood, O. 44107



HERETIC

BREAKING POINT

METAL BLADE

by Jim Motyka
edited by C. B.

This album is the definition of 'intensity' from beginning to end!! Although from California, Heretic has a 'Euro-metal' sound. Included in their sound are intelligent lyrics reflection a concern with various significant social issues, plus sporadic use of 12-string guitar (executed by either of the band's two guitarists). Added to this are searing, trouncing, heavy a la Judas Priest guitar lines, allowing for some unusual and unexpected sequences, full of feeling. The guitarwork ranges from having an "eastern" feel to being very powerful and heavy, reminiscent of bands such as Warrior, Metal Church, and Malice. Also, Heretic's vocalist is above-average -- a cross of Armored Saint, Barren Cross, and Bloodgood. He expresses appropriate feeling, so well the listener feels it, too! An emotional work, as best displayed in "The Enemy Within", "The Circle", "And Kingdom's Fall" and an overwhelming, breathtaking instrumental "Pale Shelter" which shows the 'magic' possible with two 12-string guitars playing in synch, and with emotion. As for the rhythm section, the bass and drum work is exceptional, and compliments the guitars and vocals. In fact, the overall band-effort in Heretic's music shows that the band is truly becoming the music they play, not just playing it. [Note: By the way, the mix of this recording is definitely 'A+' material.] All in all, a very promising work, from a band with a very promising future in Metaldom!

ARMORED SAINT

SAINTS WILL CONQUER

METAL BLADE



The fact that this live recording was done right here in good ol' Cleveland (initially, as a Z-Rock 'simulcast' from the Agora) is alone sufficient grounds for you pick up a copy. This band has always far outdone their studio accomplishments in a live setting, and, thus, this at least takes you several steps closer to the REAL Armored Saint. Unfortunately, though, this is only an EP of just five songs ("Raising Fear", "Nervous Man", "Book Of Blood", "Can U Deliver", and "Mad House") from that Agora show. If you have a CD-player, by all means get the CD as it contains two additional songs ("Chemical Euphoria" and "Long Before I Die"). Also included here is a song recorded during the band's earliest studio sessions, reportedly unaltered from its original form, a relatively "quiet" Saint number entitled "No Reason To Live".

DANZIG

DANZIG

DEF AMERICAN

If the Doors were somehow resurrected (with Jim Morrison being brought back to life), and if they were a couple notches heavier, this might just be what they'd sound like. At the very least, vocalist Glenn Danzig makes one of best arguments yet for reincarnation theories with his incredible resemblance to Morrison, vocal-wise. All the passion, and all the mystique, that Morrison became known and loved for, are here within Danzig as well. The music travels in many directions, often hard-driving but meandering and eerie, too. The lyrics aren't very direct in their messages, but a sense of foreboding is always there. Many will think this altogether falls in the Cult/Zodiac Mindwarp.../Circus Of Power category, with its occasional AC/DC-like chord patterns, although it's a lot less metal and a lot more melodic than any of those three outfits. [Food for thought: Rick Rubin, the producer of the Cult's last album, is producer of this one, too, and it can perhaps be argued that this LP is the fruition of his desire to do a band with this style on his own label, which this is....] In any event, a very worthy achievement that, as the bio points out, has a very 'timeless' character. Everyone should like this.

SLAYER

SOUTH OF HEAVEN

DEF JAM



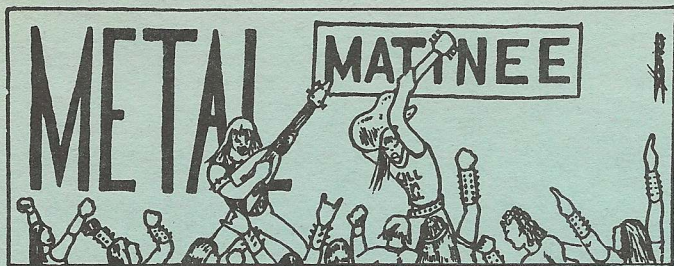
We know a review at this time won't make much difference; you all have heard this album and we're sure you all dig it lots. We'd just like to "clear the air" on a few things (for us, not for Slayer). Yes, there is a noticeable proportion of slow (or should we say, 'not-so-fast?') stuff here. Slow can be just as HEAVY as fast (bands like Black Sabbath during the '70s and Candlemass today have taken 'slow' metal to awesome proportions which have generated nothing short of total worship). And, this isn't something new for Slayer -- maybe you need a fresh listen to their "Hell Awaits" album -- these two LPs are very 'parallel'. Besides, the previous LP, "Reign In Blood", was the ultimate in speed-metal -- no one will ever outdo it -- even Slayer. Why would they want to, anyway?? Slayer isn't concerned with 'trends', including those that they themselves have [inadvertently] set. Their lyrics continue to be explorations of the ugly things that most of society would rather look the other way about. There is so much more we'd like to point out, but limits do control us. Slayer remains Heavy-to-the-Absolute. "South Of Heaven" is yet another monument to Slayer's hurculean greatness. Period.

RIGOR MORTIS

RIGOR MORTIS

CAPITOL

We believe this band is from somewhere in Texas. This is their first album and, if you're into this particular variation of Metal, this is an impressive work. Musically, we hear everything from Carnivore to early-Slayer, to a handful of German bands like Kreator...and then some. It's all primarily very fast, with that relentless sinister-sounding 'vibrato' type of guitar-playing throughout. The vocals are talked more than sung, in a deep, ominous tone very appropriate for this LP's lyrical themes, all of which revolve around evil, blood-thirsty killers who get their jollies from torturing, maiming and killing in the most horrific ways. Not for the squeamish. Great for the bangers who thrive on extremes.



HURRICANE/STRYPER MUSIC HALL DECEMBER 4, 1988

by Jim Motyka

Hurricane stormed the stage, as their name implies, with a clean, confident, '80s metal sound. This was a 100% improvement over a previous viewing of this band. Heavy "stereophonic" drumming, dynamic bass, amazing guitarwork and broad-ranged vocals really make a difference with a band like Hurricane. Highlights included "Insane", "I'm Onto You" and their cover of the old Alice Cooper classic "I'm Eighteen".

One of the very few metal bands that are concerned about their audience is Stryper. Needless to say, the Cleveland audience loved it. Stryper is energetic, powerful, talented and honest. Michael Sweet's vocals and guitar-playing are amazing -- and constantly improving! Robert Sweet kept the drums burnin' up, while bassist Tim Gaines (the band's "quiet one") provided a continuous intensity. Lead-guitarist Oz Fox was a true 'focal point' -- full of hyper-activity! Highlights included "Soldiers Under Command", "Lonely", "Writing On The Wall" and "The Way", plus an unusual amount of 'preaching' of 'the Message'. Overall, from the trademark harmonic guitar-breaks to the collective "heavenly" vocals, this was a very special show by a very special band.

IRON CROSS/PURGATORY/CHEMIKILL PHANTASY NITE CLUB DECEMBER 7, 1988

by Marni Halasa

Too much about Chicago's Iron Cross gave them a generic feel. Slower songs with interesting riffs offered some redemption, but overall the grating vocals and all-too-common fast-chords resulted in something too formulaic to have much merit.

Purgatory, on the other hand, displayed a whole different concept for the thing that we call 'thrash'. Evil-sounding dual-guitars and sizzlingly intense vocals charged-up the hungry crowd 'with a vengeance'. Purgatory has perfected a style that, although simple, features forceful riffs which break an unworldly speedometer. Definitely not there for a 'pretty' sound, they rock hard and mean it.

Strutting their stuff in a basically down-to-earth manner, Chemikill spin off crashing, occasionally melodic, riffs and rhythms into a tidal-wave of Metal that can bring you to a state of near-Nirvana. Simple 'block' chords yield their way into harmonic patterns that compliment gutsy bass-lines and screaming, yet technically proficient, vocals. Very promising. Kicks far more than just ass! Chemikill is a fist-hammering heaven!! Check these guys out.

TERROR/FAMINE/TRELLIBORG/WRATH/DEATH PHANTASY NITE CLUB DECEMBER 16, 1988

Despite a somewhat "flat" sound and occasionally generic arrangements, Terror definitely showed a lot of potential. They displayed an impressive understanding of the strength of tempo and chord changes.

Famine (formerly Pestilence) was definitely a love-'em-or-hate-'em type of band. They were ultra-heavy -- very reminiscent of a lot of what's coming out of Germany these days. Actually, their arrangements were INTRICATE. They could be a "musicians band" if they weren't so defiantly, mercilessly heavy!

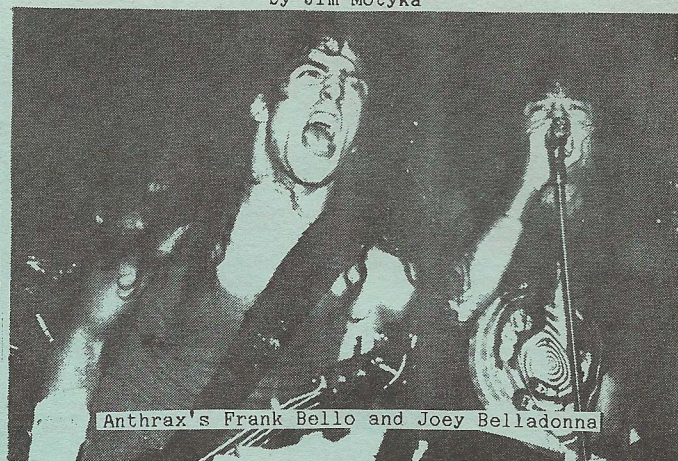
We took no notes whatsoever during Trelliborg's set. We can't even remember one thing about them. (Should that be the review...?) [Some fans consider this band to be one of Cleveland's best.]

ANTHRAX/OZZY OSBOURNE

COLISEUM

DECEMBER 12, 1988

by Jim Motyka



Anthrax's Frank Bello and Joey Belladonna

Anthrax is a band that's geared for pure, full-speed-ahead, moshin' fun! These guys take their music seriously, but have a good time while they're doing so. Anthrax takes thrash beyond the far-too-typical grunt/-scream variety. The overall musicianship was unified and tight -- and the vocals were great. "Indians", "N.F.L.", and "Madhouse" were pure intensity, while "I'm The Man" was a free-for-all of fun and pandemonium.

Photo: NORM WONDERLY



Ozzy Osbourne's ZAKK WYLDE

Ozzy's set was enjoyed by all, including the usual range of old (a la Black Sabbath) to new. Choice numbers were, as always, Randy Rhodes-era greats "Miracle Man", "I Don't Know" and the always-ominous "Mr. Crowley". Ozzy's latest "guitar-wonder" Zakk Wylde was talented, technical, very energetic, but somewhat predictable. Not ready for guitar "hero" status, just yet. [Editor's Note: Actually, if you happen to think that Ted Nugent is a guitar 'great', then so is Zakk Wylde. Not only does Wylde play like the ol' Nuge, he moves just like him, too (and, as a matter of fact, is well on the way to looking like him, as well). This is strange for Ozzy; either he's taken leave of his senses, or he's finally found them for the first time if this means he's finally given up trying to re-stage departed triumphs (Randy Rhodes) via surrogates.]

Wrath were quite a surprise. They continuously embellished a San Francisco-type of approach [they're from Chicago] with a shockingly technical one. Pivotal riffs were exquisite!

We got tired during Death's set, couldn't manage any notes, but we nevertheless recall that some of their trademark fast/slow songs were very good...and others weren't. Was it just an "off" night for them? [Their albums are great....]