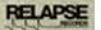




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## WARCHEST - AFTERSHOCK

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Something happened in South America in the 90's. Thrash metal never really went away. While in recent years it has resurfaced in the US and Europe, it was always present in the Southern hemisphere in countries like Brazil, Argentina, and Chile. Warchest is a Chilean thrash band who offer up a well-produced heaping slab of old-school thrash mixed with a slight amount of mid-tempo traditional heavy metal similar to old Judas Priest or Black Album-era Metallica. Done without any sense of irony or tongue-in-cheek whatsoever, *Aftershock* sounds like it should have come out in 1989.

However, this is 2012, and while it's great to see bands keeping the flame of thrash alive, like any other musical genre, if there's no evolution, there is stagnation. I can't say this is executed poorly at all- everything is tight as fuck. The drums sound incredible, the guitar riffing is heavy and there are tons of melodic hooks that you might hear Lamb of God pull off. The vocals are kind of... well, you know when Trey Parker does that song "Now You're a MAN" at the beginning of *Orgazmo*? Yeah, he kinda sounds like that, mixed with a little Hetfield and Phil Rind. It's not bad, just a little dated sounding. The lyrics are hilariously bad in spots, especially in the band's eponymous song. With a verse like "Tonight is the night/the gig's already sold out/Take out your leather jacket/'Cause we'll be rockin' tonight"... Oof. That's painful. But the lyrics aren't really what lose me on this.

It's that I've heard a LOT of these riffs before. I'm not saying they are intentionally purloined but while they are played well, they're extremely derivative. I can't count how many times I was singing a Metallica line or a Nevermore chorus or something that sounded like a band I've heard before. It's fine to wear your influences on your leather jacket but there needs to be some separation, otherwise it's going to be forgettable.

That being said, *Aftershock* is Warchest's first album. With maturity may come a more original sound and some evolution beyond the sound of the Golden Era of thrash. I hope so, because I love what South American bands do with this genre and how seriously they take it. So, for now, interested to see what this band does. I patiently abide.

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