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Ancestral Legacy - Trapped Within the Words (Self Release) Review by Nathan Ward



Ancestral Legacy have been rather quiet these past few years but the Norwegian 5 piece is back with a self financed, 5 track EP. For those who haven't heard of these guys before, like me, they play dark gothic rock, with a mix of growling male vocals and clean female vocals. The male vocals have a sort of Dimmu Borgir feel, similar to that of Shagrath, whereas the female vocals are similar to Floor Jansen's (After Forever) non-operatic singing voice or the late Sabine Duenser (Elis). The songs themselves are heavy with a mix of both Anita's and Eddie's vocals, a bit of synth and there is also a bit of lead guitar work.

The EP opens with 'Forsaken' which is an older song, followed by 'Wordless History'.

One of the songs is a ballad type song called 'Atrapada En Pesadillas', which I think is Spanish for 'Trapped/Caught in Nightmares', but don't quote me on that. It does have some heavy guitar parts and it is all sung by Anita. 'Disclosed' is a more upbeat song, musically, but is still heavy. The final track starts with an acoustic instrumental and fades out after 3 minutes or so. There is silence for a minute or so the song fades in again, but this time it's a piano instrumental with Anita singing over the top of it.

Ancestral Legacy's plan with 'Trapped Within the Words' was to increase interest in the band. It has worked on me; it has a good selection of songs on it, my favourites being 'Wordless History' and 'Atrapada En Pesadillas'. I really enjoyed the EP and I will be looking forward to the new album due to be released later this year.

www.ancestrallegacy.com

Austral - Tocado A Vento (Face The Abyss Records) By: Dave Schalek



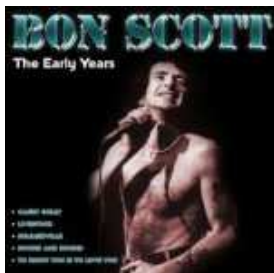
Brazil's Austral appear on their debut full-length, entitled "Tocado A Vento", on Face The Abyss Records. Essentially a pseudo version of symphonic black metal with some NWOBHM riffing and influences, Austral is utterly generic and virtually unlistenable under the best of circumstances.

Consisting of generic riffs, some rough vocals with a few keyboards thrown in for good measure, late 80s production values, and a mid-paced tempo, Austral's form of symphonic black metal is really just... well, boring. The musicianship on "Tocado A Vento" is competent at best, but the songwriting is horrible and there's absolutely nothing interesting

going on in each of the album's ten songs. Add to that a production that completely robs the album of any weight, and you end up with just a generic record that has no redeeming qualities whatsoever. Awful.

www.facetheabyss.com | www.austral.com

Bon Scott - The Early Years (IMV Blueline) Review by Metal Mark



About a month before he joined AC/DC, Bon Scott recorded 3 songs, which were "Carey Gully", "Round and Round" and "To Know You Is To Love You". Those songs were never released back then, but now producer Ted Yanni has devoted almost two years to bringing Bon back to life via three previously unheard songs. There are also tracks on this release which are of Bon Scott with the band Fraternity. Talk about humble beginnings indeed, this collection may capture Bon's voice on recordings of varying quality. Yet anyone who appreciated Bon knew that he wasn't great because of an overwhelmingly powerful voice. His range and power were merely decent, but it was his style and swagger that made him

so likeable and helped to establish AC/DC during his all too short time with the band. Most of the tracks here have me believing that either Bon needed a certain kind of music to excel at or that he had not yet really developed the style we would know him for. The first few tracks have me envisioning Bon Scott singing at some picnic, town gathering or something like that as the material is very sedate and quite honestly not very intriguing. Although track two "Round and Round" has a few moments where you can hear Bon using his voice and showing a few pale signs of what he would be just a few years later. Most of the other songs have me thinking of Spinal Tap doing "(Listen to the) Flower people". Okay, perhaps it's not that bad yet it's very similar in my mind as it's this slightly familiar voice singing to very standard and dated 1960's pop music. The last song "Sooky Sooky" is spirited enough to give Bon a chance to charge ahead a little and show a bit of his potential. I have no idea how much if any say that he had in writing of this material so I don't know if that's a factor or not. Really this is just a collection of songs that even the most devoted Bon Scott fan would be hard pushed to really want to own. The sound quality is hit and miss and the material itself is spotty with only a few real sparks of any interest. Fortunately Bon moved beyond this and made his mark with AC/DC and helped to define that band as well as establish himself as one of the better hard rock front men of his time.

Copremesis - Muay Thai Ladyboys (Paragon Records) By: Dave Schalek



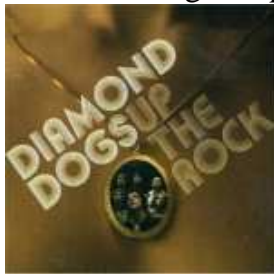
New York's Paragon Records is usually quite good at uncovering hidden American domestic gems as well as excellent Continental black metal and releasing it upon the unsuspecting American public; therefore, I always look forwards to releases from the label. Somewhat strangely, the debut full-length from Copremesis shows up in my mailbox as a promo from Paragon. I describe this as strange because Copremesis, a scraping of the bottom of the barrel pornogrind assault, strays pretty far from Paragon's usual staples.

"Muay Thai Ladyboys" is my first exposure to this New York-based quartet (numerous other luminaries from Malignancy and so on guest) and the band's fetishistic subject matter

of choice is not all that difficult to figure out. At any rate, you can't understand what they're gurgling about anyway, let alone read the song titles, so the music pretty much speaks for itself here. This is bottom scraping, pig burped death metal with meat filled, choppy riffs, blinding bursts of speed, and plenty of tempo changes thrown in to spice things up. There are more than a few bands out there playing this sort of TXDM style, porno laced subject matter and all, and not much differentiates Copremesis from the pack. Certainly, the music is reasonably well-played and catchy, but it isn't anything that you haven't heard before if you're familiar with Insidious Decrepancy, Pustulated, and so forth. What is notably lacking, however, is a huge, deep seated, bottom heavy, powerful production to really knock your head off. Unfortunately, the vocals are way too prominent in the mix and ultimately rob the riffing of some much needed crunch and heft. Somewhat, this leaves the album sounding a bit thin.

Ultimately, though, Copremesis are a competent entry in the TXDM- styled pantheon and "Muay Thai Ladyboys" is just that, competent. <http://copremesis.cjb.net> | www.paragonrecords.net

Diamond Dogs - Up The Rock (Locomotive Records) By: Joe Florez



When I received this disc in the package and looked at it, I thought to myself 2 things. 1. Why is this fucking record from 1973 on my desk and 2. Why is it on Locomotive? All I have to say is that once I popped this in I was in pure heaven. Yes, the band name comes from a David Bowie record, but the music is absolutely brilliant. The best way to describe it is The Faces featuring Rod Stewart meets classic era Rolling Stones and you are partly there. This is very much classic rock music from the early 70's. "Generation Upstart" kicks off the show with some ragtime style piano playing and then everyone plugs in. This track is catchy as sin. Great sing along hooks and a beat that will have your fingers snapping and

your feet tapping. It's simple, yet comes with a good, fun vibe equivalent to The Ark who by the way are also from Sweden just like these guys. "We May Not Have Tomorrow..." doesn't contain any of those old time piano sounds, but rather turns up the juice on the six stringers and lead vocalist Sulo and the boys just let loose. More rockin' riffs and even a sax makes an appearance. Just dandy. What I love about this record is

that there is a warmth to each track. Too bad this wasn't available on vinyl to get the whole experience (Remember those?). While I am a complete metal head to the max, a record like this does me some good and what a fine disc this will make to my collection. As usual, these guys have a plethora of releases that I will now hunt down. There are two things that make this record extra special. Famed metal producer Tomas Skogsberg (Entombed and all that was heavy) produced this thing and Bobba Fett who once played with The Hellacopters was in this group some time ago as well. Bottom line here is that this disc is just like a fine wine. It's smooth, warm and enjoyable to the max. The new generation of kids may not get it, but if you are in your 30's and older you will have a grin from ear to ear as you hear it. What also makes this music such a fun journey to be on is the fact that the tracks are all short and it's over in just forty minutes give or take just like in the old days. Well, looks like I will be spinning this thing a long time to come. A must have and a top ten for the year for sure.

www.locomotivemusic.com | www.myspace.com/diamonddogssweden

Disarm - By Any Means Necessary (**Imprint Records**) Review by Steve Green



What gets classed as Punk these days makes the genre a very confusing place to define. Here we have something at the glammier end of the spectrum. It's still an in-your-face, high octane assault, but the aggression is tempered by a catchy, (classic era) Hanoi Rocks/Rock N Roll style, which definitely doesn't fit in with the snarl of real English Punk Rock. No, this one takes me back to the time when Back To Mystery City was on constant rotation on my old record player and this crazy music from Scandinavia was starting to have a big effect on me. And as the album progresses, you realise what a big influence must have been on whoever wrote most of the songs on this album. I hear a lot of Mike Monroe in singer

Jamie's voice as well. Basically, this is almost as good as anything I've heard out of Scandinavia, bar a few classic albums in the 80s.

So what's the downside? Not a lot really. Not for the first time recently, I'm questioning a band name in relation to the music they play, and in my opinion, Disarm doesn't fit what's coming out my headphones. Maybe the title of track 4, Bark, Bite, Scream would be a more appropriate band name. Something with a bit of bite to it, as that's what Disarm excel at. Fast, attitude filled anthems with a bit of a kick. www.disarm.info

Distorted - Voices From Within (**Candlelight Records**) Review by Marco Gaminara



I'm sure that the old adage is never judge a book by its cover, and the same definitely goes for CDs. Dunno why, but their logo and the cover had me assuming this that was going to be hectic death metal approaching grind, but after the first minute of "One Last Breath" and Miri starting to sing, I realised that this couldn't be further from the truth. Her vocals are soft and soothing and a complete counterpoint to Raffael's deathlike growls and barks, his guitar work is also solid and chunky allowing Ben to play flowing leads over them. Guy's bass work is subtle and aids session drummer Shaked Furman to keep the fast paced rhythms on "What Remains" going. The title track "Voices From Within" bounces around with manic

paced drumming, slow female vocals, long drawn out growls and flailing leads and choppy rhythm riffs.

Now "Fading" is far more what I was expecting from them, with hyper drumming and fast death vocals, granted the female vocals do come in to give it a slower tone, while everything else keeps up-tempo. "A Soft Whisper" on the other hand is as the title describes, soft, melancholy, and dark with well plucked acoustic guitars. Incorporating death and both male and female clean vocals on "Reveal My Path" does make it rather busy, but then the constantly changing riffs do exactly the same thing, all rather well mind you. "Escaping The Mind-Grind" is a milder mid-paced affair that trudges along epically, with "Obscure" following suit with well interlaced vocal arrangements. Pretty instrumental "Theom" plays almost as an intro to "Consistent Duality" which meanders around its arrangement in a way that you never know what's coming next.

Approaching operatic vocals on "Letting Go" makes it feel almost Nightwishy, as does the length of the song. Bonus track "As You Lay" goes back to basics with Miri singing on her own 'til lightly picked guitars offer accompaniment and the lead a voice of its own. It's a rather haunting track and well suited as an ending to a fine album which takes many twists and turns along its way.

www.distortedband.com | www.candlelightrecords.co.uk

