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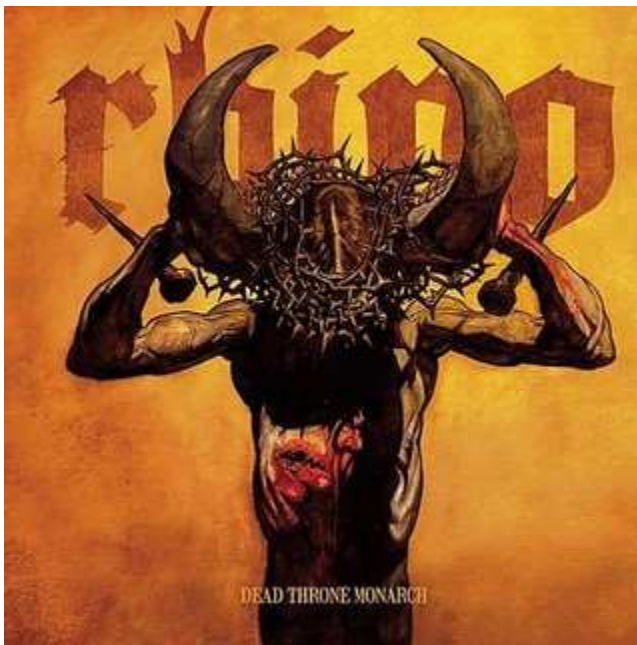
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[CD Review: Rhino - Dead Throne Monarch](#)

Rhino - *Dead Throne Monarch*

2008 Arctic Music Group

Ray Van Horn, Jr.



It's only fitting some of the most beastly and lumbering animals stomping around the planet have found their way as monikers for sludge and doom metal acts. Of course Mastodon sticks out above them all, but then you also have Woolly Mammoth, Bison, B.C. and now Spain's Rhino.

Led by guitarist/vocalist Javier Galvez, formerly of Burial, From the Cross and Left Hand Riders, Rhino has been long working and touring since 2004 to lead themselves to their first worldwide release after a demo, *Name the Horn Blower* and the largely Euro-contained *Breed the Chosen One*.

Now exposed to a doom and stoner audience well likely to receive them, Rhino makes a cacophonous announcement of their global arrival with *Dead Throne Monarch*, an album filled with more chunks than expired milk. As loud as you want it, *Dead Throne Monarch* literally rumbles at every turn, starting off agreeably with the High On Fire-reminiscent title song and "Reins of the Warlord" before setting its course on prolonged and sometimes repetitive drone chords part of the way.

Undoubtedly *Dead Throne Monarch* is going to rank as one of the loudest and dooziest outputs of the year and for those witnessing these cats live, there will no doubt be such a tremendous outpouring of sonic bustle half the crowd will be shaking and headbanging spasmodically while others are going to be wont to drop to their knees in deference of music so freaking *heavy*.

Despite having a large propensity towards drawn-out crush sequences, one of the major curveballs Rhino throws at their listeners is the anti-script "Bahamut" and "Promise of Storm," which cast nervy dice by mixing up nineties grunge ala Alice in Chains (particularly on Galvez's integrated Layne Staley-like cleans which catch you off guard after his dominant bellowing much of the way) with Sabbath and High On Fire forcefulness.

The longer the song on *Dead Throne Monarch*, the longer Rhino punishes them in a twisted game of endurance, such as the 9:17 "Earth Reclaims the Usurper" and the 15:20 "Funebre." At least on the 8:17 closer "Horned Crown," Rhino picks up the pace and moshes *Dead Throne Monarch* to a hefty finale filled with unpredictable tempo adjustments coinciding with a beastly array of double hammer beat patterns and windswept chord gusts. "Horned Crown" is as fine a wrap-up tune as any in this subgenre.

While Galvez's sternum-raked hard vocals tend to grate on the ears once in awhile and Rhino dilly-dallies their dirge ostinato ad infinitum in spots, there's still something appealing about *Dead Throne Monarch*, something that, like Lair of the Minotaur and High On Fire, kicks the dirt into the air and savors the brackish miasma clouding your immediate vision. Better yet, the effort whirling up such a cloud has been done by the hands instead of lazily with the feet to the point a cut like Rhino's "Wolf Among Black Sheep" which is pared to a paltry (by Rhino's standards anyway) 3:57 becomes all the blaring crunk you can handle.

Rating: *1/2**

Posted by Ray Van Horn, Jr. at [7:30 AM](#) 

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