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## Interview

### An Interview with Negura Bunget's Negru

posted Aug 2, 2010 at 9:04 PM by [opeiya](#). ([0 Comments](#))

“Every (album we write) is an entire spiritual journey, one which changes us both at a personal level, and as musicians. The more you get into such a generous field, it becomes clear how little you actually know. It’s a humble experience as much as it is fascinating,” says Negru, percussionist for the Romanian black metal band Negura Bunget.

“We always start with the main ideas, the concept that can trigger the whole musical aspect. Once we have those, we start writing different parts, try to shape songs,” he reveals. “I think the concepts are always the most important ones for us. The music we do is a consequence, and a way of transforming them into a musical message. But that’s how things always start: from ideas.”

In March 2010, one of the band's ideas came to fruition in the form of “Maiastru,” a re-recorded version of the 2000 release “Maiastru Sfetnic.” Simultaneously, “Vîrstele Pamîntului,” the Negura Bunget's latest offering of all new material was also released.

Negru discusses the reasons behind the new recording, what it means for the band, and what the future holds for Negura Bunget.

Opeiya: What brought about the decision to re-record 2000's “Maiastru Sfetnic” and what goals did you have in mind?

Negru: We were never satisfied with the original outcome of the album. We felt there was a lot more that we didn’t manage to capture, both in terms of production and performance. So our mindset was to make it right this time, do every little aspect as it should be. It was not easy, and we ended up working on this material maybe more than on a new album, but it was all worth it.

Opeiya: Was any new writing done for this album?

Negru: Our main focus was to make right what we didn’t achieve on the original version, focus more into details, so I can’t say there was much new writing. The work we did was more into re-arranging parts and song structures, better tune instruments together, things like that. But there have been as well some parts that were completely re-written, or even completely removed.

Opeiya: Do you think you accomplished what you set out to do in re-recording the album?

Negru: We are quite satisfied with the result. I think “Maiestrit” can open a new perspective on the album, one we feel represents better our original intentions.

Opeiya: How do you feel the band’s sound has evolved since that initial recording?

Negru: I think every aspect of Negura Bunget has evolved a lot since the times of “Maiestrit Sfetnic.” Not only that we became better musicians, but also the technical aspects changed a lot, we are more familiar and have access to higher technologies, so a lot of things changed. What remained more or less the same were the spiritual

meanings. We are still found with the ideas and concepts we explored on the original album.

Opeiya: What is the most exciting thing about releasing a new work of art for you, even if it's in the form of a new interpretation?

Negru: I'd say it's the feeling of completion, that you finished something you truly believed in, something you put all your efforts in shaping the right way.

Opeiya: What can you tell us about the book it comes with? Who designed it and how does it reflect both the band and this album specifically?

Negru: The art book is somehow of a visual history of the band, since the very beginning and until the times of this release. It focused both on band photos, as well on artwork and landscapes. It offers I'd say an extended experience of the material. I chose the photos myself, and everything was arranged with the help of a friend of ours.

Opeiya: Does the album represent a new beginning of sorts for the band?

Negru: It's more like a symbolical end, actually. It's the last material we did in the original line-up of the band, while "Virstele Pamîntului," which was released around the same time as "Maiestrit," is the first one we did with the new line-up.

Opeiya: Are you planning on re-recording some of your other earlier works?

Negru: Prophecy already re-released all our early work into nice digipak editions. Some of the albums feature as bonus different versions, but that's about all we'll do. There won't be any re-recording for those materials.

Opeiya: What else does the future hold for Negura Bunget?

Negru: We have a lot of plans. If all goes well, we'll have a new MCD out in autumn, just in time for some tour dates we already have arranged, including some along Enslaved. There's also a live DVD coming out this year, making it by far the most intense one in our history.

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