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Review

What separates the Canadian band **Famous Underground** from the pack is vocalist Nicholas Walsh’s gifted songwriting and his ability to produce an amazing-sounding metal guitar riff. Famous Underground are a mixture of late ’80s L.A. sleaze and early ’80s traditional metal, with the right pinch of current flavor. FU is like Skid Row, if Seb & Co. reunited, completely embraced their heavy metal side and forgot about the “18 and Life” dreck. After all, it was the power ballad that killed the popularity of hard rock/metal in the early ’90s. It wasn’t Grunge as history has it. It was the over-saturation and reliance on an inferior song style. In fact, it is the only place where Famous Underground stumbles on their new self-titled album — the two power ballads featured (“Forever and a Day” and “On Broken Wings”) kill the wonderful momentum of the full-tilt stream of ballsy songs on the album. Superior metal compositions called “Wasteland,” “Necropolis,” “Overdrive,” “Wheels of Misfortune” ... they all have the right riffs crunching and metallic melodies exploding like the best that traditional metal can bring in a contemporary market. Good stuff.

“Bullet Train” is the song most worthy of mention. The song is fast and furious with the aforementioned metal riffage and exemplary vocals by Nick Walsh. There is also a wonderful guitar lead that is a cross between K.K. Downing and Tom Morello. Fantastic! It should be the single. The song that fully represents Famous Underground. Hopefully, the band learns from the past and doesn’t push the power ballad as their brand. The metal is the thing to check out with Famous Underground. It is above the fold.

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