

This is probably my favorite metal album of all time, but it didn't start off that way. 3 years passed after *Sanity Obscure*, and then one day Mike "Cappy" Baronas sent me an advance cassette of *Dimensions*. I still remember listening to it in my car, lamenting how I didn't enjoy it nearly as much as I did the previous albums. I think I even griped to Mike over the phone about it being a "letdown" or something because the music was way too complex. And it IS complex: mindblowing, disjointed rhythm change-ups on many tracks, choice production, and off-the-hook solos that rival anything heard on Megadeth's *Rust In Piece*. After several listens, little by little I began to get my head around the complicated arrangements, until I was listening to it at least twice a day for months straight; and I've been singing its praises ever since.

For its time *Dimensions* was an absolutely visionary progressive metal album deserving of mention alongside Cynic, Pestilence, and any other heralded metallic contemporaries pushing the limits of metal. The enlisting of Jim Winters (Conviction, Turmoil, The Promise) and violinist Scott Laird (who was involved with all the Believer albums and Kurt Bachman's high school orchestra teacher) as full time members really primed the pump for the creative dam to burst wide open. Lyrically, Bachman stepped up his game, pondering philosophical questions well suited for the complex music.

With the exception of "Singularity", a tribute to all the German thrash bands that ever influenced them--and the only song which might've fit onto either previous album--the material herein is a quantum leap from anything Believer did previously: pervasive use of hemiola with only short stretches of straightforward rhythm; musical counterpoints and (if you're really paying attention) musical impressionism that really takes the experience to higher levels...the patient listener will be vastly rewarded!! Take, for example, "Trilogy of Knowledge's Movement I: The Lie", which adapts the story of Jesus' temptation in the desert. The coda of this song is stunning if the listener understands that it is representative of the angels' comfort. The fugue in "Movement II: The Truth" is a total musical set up to the lyrical content following it. It's the purposefulness of all the details and sound effects that really sets this album apart from works where a band is trying to be 'clever.' *Dimensions* simply captures a promising band arriving at the zenith of greatness.

Beyond classic in my book. If you crave demanding, imaginative metal, then don't miss out on *Dimensions*. A+

Metal Mind did a nice job on all 3 of these albums, including liner notes specific to each, penned by mainstays Kurt Bachman and drummer Joey Daub. The digipaks are nice, the artwork well produced, and the booklets superior to all versions preceding. The one thing that puzzles me is why there is no place to tuck the booklets? All other Metal Mind releases I've seen (15-20 or so) have a diecut pocket inside the front cover which keeps the booklet from falling out...maybe just a manufacturing oversight this time? The remasters don't sound drastically better than the previous remasters or the originals, although the low end on each does seem to be slightly more in focus

-Mark Fields

