

# REVIEWS

[Home](#) | [News](#) | [Tour News](#) | [Reviews](#) | [Live Reviews](#) | [Interviews](#) | [Black Metal](#) | [Contact Info](#) | [Cradle Of Fun](#) | [Site News](#)

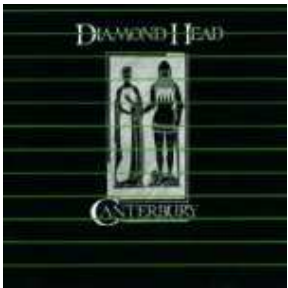
## Diamond Head - Borrowed Time Re-issue (**Metal Mind**) Review by Metal Mark



Has there been anything written about Diamond Head in the last 19 years that didn't mention Metallica? Possibly not because they are likely always going to be associated with the band that chose to cover "Am I Evil?". Diamond Head were of course part of the New Wave of British Heavy Metal movement that spawned so many acts in the early 1980's and changed the whole metal scene worldwide. Surprisingly Diamond Head are far more melodic than you might imagine given their impact on Metallica. Although fairly involved, the music leans as much towards hard rock as it does towards metal and this album in particular shows some definite shades of progressive music as well. Where I think they

shine is in how they take their time developing a number of their songs. I think they pull the listener in a bit more and cause you to really take notice of all that's going on. Certainly this is an album that's more about the playing style than it is about the tones being used. Don't expect to instantly clobbered, but instead sit back and let the whole song play out and then I think that you will appreciate it a little more. It's perhaps a little more low key than I would have liked, but certainly an important album for the time due to the playing and the way they assemble the song as a unit. This version from Metal Mind includes six bonus tracks, two of which are live plus an interview with Sean Harris and Colin Kimberley. Another fine re-issue and an album worth checking out, but set your expectations at good rather than great.

## Diamond Head - Canterbury Re-issue (**Metal Mind**) Review by Metal Mark



Canterbury is a rather diverse album compared to the band's previous efforts. It's fairly well removed from the hard rock/metal style they had come to be known for. Instead they opted for epics with quite a bit of pageantry and build-up plus some very blatant pop leanings as well. Obviously they were reaching out with this album and going in different directions, but it's also very easy to see why fans didn't really embrace it. The epics are generally more appealing than the pop songs here, but even they are a bit too dull and tedious to really be that intriguing. Canterbury is one of those albums where try as I might I could not get into it. Ultimately like Celtic Frost's Cold Lake or Helloween's Chameleon it's an example of an

established band trying very hard to go way into another direction and failing because the direction is too different and the material just isn't that good. If Diamond Head had taken a few elements here and mixed them more with their existing style then maybe it would have been easier to take, but that's not the case. This re-issue includes two bonus tracks that are both live plus an interview with Andy Peebles. The packaging and bonus tracks are up to the usual high Metal Mind standards.

## Emir Hot - Sevdah Metal (**Lion Music**) By: Joe Florez



Emir Hot is pretty much new to the scene. Despite releasing two records a long while back, it's only now that he will get more exposure thanks to the progressive label Lion Music. It's not everyday that you hear of a Bosnian artist, but Emir is a guitarist that is looking to carve a name for himself. This individual handles all guitar and bass duties while he has gone out of his way to hire Mike 'The Animal' Terrana on skins and John West (Ex-Royal Hunt, Artension) on mic. Oh goodie, plenty of talent is on board here, but will it deserve a repeat listen after this? Let's delve in further, shall we?

God damn! Emir's fingers are white hot as he blazes up and down his guitar neck

dishing

out some furious riffs. John's vocals soar beyond orbit and Mike's bashing is just as hard and heavy as ever. It's a blend of neo-classical metal and speed. "World Set On Fire" is a change of pace which I wanted because I want to hear a different side of his style and what you get is a treat. Yes, there is a shredding solo on here, but this more melodic and groovy number has a nice pacing that has a riff that will remain tattooed in your brain and there is an inclusion of traditional Bosnian music which is their brand of blues. It makes for an interesting listen. Something bizarre happens in the middle of the twelve minute epic 'Sevdah Metal Rhapsody.' There is a drum solo that comes out of nowhere. It's pretty odd, but the good thing that keeps this song from putting you to sleep is the fact that there are plenty of change ups here and a lot of ethnic influence inserted. It's surprising that there is only one instrumental on here and not more, but when you have John on board, why risk it?

It's very easy to clump Emir with all of the countless shredders out there, but it's the inclusion of his Bosnian sounds that's brought to the table that saves him ultimately from pushing this to the side forever more. There is some wankery that goes on here, but for the most part, the songs pretty much get right to the point. It's definitely worth a listen especially for the contributors on here. I am sure we will begin to hear and read more about this individual with the likes of Guitar World magazine. Check it out.

[www.lionmusic.com](http://www.lionmusic.com) | [www.emirhot.com](http://www.emirhot.com)

### Jaded Sun - Gypsy Trip (SiAn Records) Review by Steve Green



This one is a toughie to review. I've had this album in my possession for about 6 or 7 weeks, but it feels like it's been one of my favourite albums for the past twenty years. About this time last year I raved about Cornerstone's Two Tales Of One Tomorrow being the best classic rock album since the 80s, well I'm going to stick my neck out once again. Jaded Sun's Gypsy Trip is the best Hard Rock album I've heard in at least the last 20 years.

Jaded Sun, seem to have come from nowhere, as I'd never heard of them before this album arrived, but they've honed their skills on the Irish gig circuit and even supported Bon Jovi at Croke Park in May 2006. And that hard road work has obviously paid off as this album is

as mature as it gets. You'd never guess this was a debut album as they seamlessly blend together the best of Southern greats Lynyrd Skynyrd and Molly Hatchet with the fire of the Rolling Stones, Led Zeppelin and Guns N Roses and this is topped off with the lilting beauty of the Black Crowes at their very best and the feel good factor of Thunder. And while I've just name checked some of the greatest rock bands on the planet, Jaded Sun are right up there with them and this isn't a plagiaristic album, I'm just trying to highlight how damn good this band is and how good the music is.

An obvious focal point for Jaded Sun is frontman John Maher. This man has a fabulous set of lungs and just breathes good old fashioned rock n roll. If pushed, I'd say he's a mixture of Thunders Danny Bowes and The Black Crowes Chris Robinson. And while I can sit back and marvel at his voice, it's the slide guitars that totally win me over here. Pure Southern goodness, although this time, from the Southern states of Ireland. Opener Breaking Through is so good, I'm almost tempted to make this my album of the year on this song alone. But then the kick ass Crazyman comes firing out, all guns blazing and you just know that Jaded Sun are destined for mega stardom. And that is the single fact that makes this album hard to be judgemental about. I feel that I've known every song for years. They feel both familiar & new and exciting at the same time. Every time I hear Neil Young's Rocking In The Free Wold, I'm pumped up and I shout along with the lyrics (There's one more kid that will never go to school - Never get to fall in love, never get to be cool) even though I've heard it 100's of times before. And I believe Jaded Sun have the same quality in their song writing and performance. And trying to choose a favourite song is near on impossible. Best of the Southern influenced numbers though, is probably Can't Stop, which is pure Lynyrd Skynyrd, albeit with Rod Stewart, circa The Faces fronting them. Sweetness shows another side to the band repertoire and reminds me of Aerosmith's Dream On and is definitely a number for the arenas, once the band reaches those lofty heights of course. You know the music business is such a bastard of a place to succeed in, I really hope that Jaded Sun get the success they deserve as its bands like this that keep the music industry alive. I don't normally

promote large online establishments for free, but HMV are doing this, pre-order, for £6.99 post paid in the UK. Do yourself a favour and order this right now and support this band. Album of the year... quite possibly. [www.myspace.com/jadedsun](http://www.myspace.com/jadedsun)

### Masterstroke - Sleep (Dynamic Arts) Review by James Young



Not having heard 2006's Apocalypse, Finland's Masterstroke has been a band I've only heard of in passing, and so I didn't quite know what to expect from this bunch. After the 39 second instrumental opener 'Transition', we have a clean passage at the start of 'Killing Creatures', after which we find exactly what this album is about - large crunchy riffs, a melodic keyboard undercurrent, big solos and bold vocals. This isn't technical enough to be progressive, not sweeping enough to be symphonic, but just balls-to-the-wall heavy metal. Some may call it power metal, but its lack of power chords and cheese separate it from its weaker, more generic brethren. Think the power of Iced Earth meeting with the melodic

sensibilities of Masterplan, all with a Finnish finish, and you may have some idea of what to expect. The problem here is the lack of variation in the sound - whilst the music is good, as well as the production, there's not quite enough to keep you fully entertained for the forty minute duration of this album.

What the band do, they do well - these Finns excel at providing melodic heavy metal which grabs you and makes you want to nod your head. The likes of 'Turn Away' and 'Circle' feature ballsy vocal lines, and huge choruses from vocalist Niko Rauhala. The guitar passages and solos are well-arranged and have a definite Scandinavian feel to them, and 'Under Our Command' contains the speed of Iced Earth and Children of Bodom at their most intense. Adding to the anvil-like heaviness at times is the combination of the guitar riffs of Niko Rauhala and Markus Kekoni and double bass drums of Janne Juutinen. The use of such a tight sound in tracks like 'Being Me' and 'Silent' provides a feel akin to Nevermore, which certainly increases the impact of the music. What this album could have done with however is a ballad, or change in tempo somewhere in the album, because the majority of Sleep seems to fall into the same 'heavy metal' category that can get a little tedious after a while. Not even some keyboard tinkling over the verses in the closer 'Final Journey' and female vocals towards the end of the song could significantly mellow out the band's style.

This is an enjoyable album, but the magnitude of the sound is lost after hearing nine fairly similar songs. Hopefully in the next release we will hear some variation which will release the full potential of this excellent band. Even still, when you hear this release, Sleep will be the last thing on your mind.

[www.myspace.com/masterstrokefinland](http://www.myspace.com/masterstrokefinland) | [www.masterstroke.info](http://www.masterstroke.info)

### Methedras - The Worst Within (Self Release) Review by Steve Green



This MCD is getting a UK release to coincide with Methedras opening for Dismember. The material is a couple of years old, so I'm sure the band have moved on a bit since they recorded this, but it serves its purpose as a nice little introduction to any potential new fans.

Production wise, this is pretty basic and raw, but once your ears settle into the sound, then you begin to realise how good this disc is. Ok, Methedras aren't going to win any prizes for re-inventing the wheel, but that doesn't stop you being able to enjoy the music. Methedras started off covering the likes of Slayer, Testament, Megadeth and Metallica and these 80s influences shines through, although I wouldn't say they particularly sound like any of the

bands, but the structures are pure 80s Thrash, with a hint of Death thrown in for good measure.

With a new album in the pipeline for later this year, Methedras could be one's to watch. I for one, look forward to hearing the new material. Check 'em out via [www.myspace.com/methedrashrash](http://www.myspace.com/methedrashrash) and supporting Dismember in the UK and next month, with Onslaught and Carnal Forge in their native Italy.

## Shatter Messiah - God Burns Like Flesh (Dockyard 1) Review by Robert Beeton



2006 saw Shatter Messiah awake in the metal scene with Curran Murphy (guitar) as its founder (ex Nevermore and Annihilator). In that year they released their debut album "Never to play the Servant" with Greg "Wags" (vocals), Robert Falzano (drums), Jason Chamberlain (bass) and Dusty Holt (guitar) making up the components that made Shatter Messiah. Combining a fusion of sounds such as Hardcore, classic Thrash, Power Metal and Goth, Shatter Messiah deliver a hard, powerful and aggressive sound with a good array of variety.

Listening to "God burns Like Flesh" I wasn't overly impressed and unlike many albums this

didn't catch my attention at all. It's hard and heavy but doesn't say to me that it is different from the rest. It feels like every other average metal record. It has the technicality, the crunch and sharpness that Curran Murphy delivers on guitar but other than that, it made me feel bored. At times I felt the guitars were a bit blurred together and the sound was a bit messy. However, there were a few good tracks to mention, but other than that I felt that there wasn't much else to say. "Stripped Of Faith" I felt was worthy of a mention. This brutal explosion of ferocious beats and dramatic riffs combined with slowed down sections and great solos makes it a great track to bang your head to. The next track I felt was creditable was "This is the day." If you like heaviness and sheer gloom then look no further. A dark blastbeat gem with gruesome tone and itching fretfulness which was fruitful in tearing guitar and emotional acoustics. "This is the day" I would say is the best track they did for "God burns Like Flesh." Looking back at Shatter Messiahs new instalment I had mixed thoughts and among them I had many questions like "where does this stand" and "what is good and bad about it". Well it's definitely an album I wouldn't buy but there are tracks that I would download so if you're a fan of bands such as Nevermore or Annihilator then you might consider buying this otherwise I wouldn't really bother. A good average album but Shatter Messiah really needs more spice and flavour. "God Burns like Flesh" Is out now released by Dockyard 1. [www.dockyard1.com](http://www.dockyard1.com)

## War for War - Kovy Odjinud (Naga Productions) Review by Crin



A strange post Black Metal meets progressive style of Samael like synthetic sounds from the Czech Republic, a land that has given us the raw ramblings of Maniac Butcher, Root, Unclean, etc. The whole musical soundscape emanates from the talents of Lord Morbivod [also in Trollech, Umbrrtka, and the even more illusive, Stiny Plamenu} The lyrical concept is in Czech [and for the most part any barking vocal style could be in a lost Aztec language for all we would know!] The legendary Czech act, Masters Hammer are also a prominent part of this albums muse, with one song namedropping the band, and another being a cover. With the progressive feel to the melodic and modern sound, the production is emphatically

clear. This blunts any raw edges and allows a more fluent flow of ideas come to life. This is still however a rugged album, gruff vocals, strident riffs, and at times fast drum work all fuse to remind you this is not the Arcturus meets Kovenant album it could have become. To grasp the bands style necessitates the second mention of the great Swiss band Samael, as the music here throws up numerous references in tone and style throughout the albums duration. The post Black Metal sound of Rotting Christ is also present in both the vocal and guitar presentation. Now these references are not designed to hinder the music's originality, rather they serve to compliment the pulsating aural dynamics. The Masters Hammer cover, is a faithful, and very likeable rendition of Vykoupeni, originally found on the 1991 album, The Ritual.

[www.naga-productions.com](http://www.naga-productions.com)

