

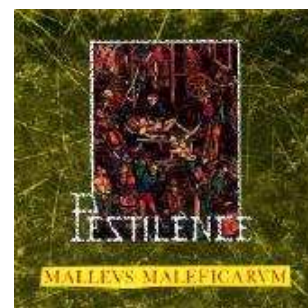


PESTILENCE

"Malleus Maleficarum" (Metal Mind; 1988 / 2008)

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Reviewed by [Metal Mark](#)



I remember buying this on cassette back in 1988 without knowing a whole lot about this band. Back then, I thought that it was very fast and heavy compared to many of the thrash bands of the day. Hearing it again via this re-issue, I realize that Pestilence were playing a style of thrash that was also bordering on an early death metal style. It's fairly aggressive with more pace changes than most and they were still holding on to a slightly underdone production which certainly suits their style rather nicely.

Looking back, this isn't as noisy as, say, the early works of Possessed or Death and certainly not in the hyper-speed-for-the-sake-of-speed approach that bands like Napalm Death were conjuring up back then. Thrash was a movement that came on fast and quickly splintered off into various sub-genres. Around 1986-1987, thrash was a fairly limited style. I mean, you had some difference in pace and approach yet it wasn't that varied. By about '88 - '90 you had bands who were becoming more mainstream and slowing down and then you had other bands that wanted to grow and either become more extreme or diverse.

After this debut, Pestilence would grow beyond their fairly basic thrash origins and by the early 1990s they would be integrating jazz and other sounds into their music. Today they are regarded as one of the bands who helped to create a more technical style of death metal. Their debut is rather basic in some respects, but they were certainly active enough so that this holds up well twenty years after its release. Not every thrash act from back then can say that, as I have gone back and heard acts once loved only to discover that they now sound clunky and amateurish.

"Malleus Maleficarum" is tightly woven and thick enough in its heaviness that I still enjoy it. The lyrics seem to show an equal amount of distrust towards organized religion and the world of science. I can't say that they did enough on the debut to hint at what they would become, but perhaps the ideas were in their heads even then.

Metal Mind's 2008 re-issue includes a booklet with lyrics and a band biography.

Rating Guide:



A classic. This record will kick your ass.



Killer. Not a classic but it will rock your world.



So-so. You've heard better.



Pretty bad. Might make a nice coaster.



Self explanatory. Just the sight of the cover makes you wanna hurl.

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