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EverEve: Seasons/Stormbirds/Regret (Remasters)

Germany's EverEve took its name from a place where dreams come true in J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* and apparently was part of the so-called "cygorome" genre — which stands for "cyber goth rock metal." The band has inexplicably been hailed as a seminal player in the burgeoning dark-metal scene of the late Nineties, but I'll say this much: EverEve's music is as haunting as its history.



These three handsome reissues, remastered on golden discs using 24-bit processing and limited to 2,000 copies each, represent the EverEve era on Nuclear Blast: 1996's *Seasons*, 1998's *Stormbirds* (pictured) and 1999's *Regret*. Formed in 1993, EverEve made a couple of demos before getting signed, so by the time *Seasons* was released, the band already had a strong sense of direction — and it showed. Propelled by the sometimes-shaky clean vocals of Tom Sedotschenko that often morphed into slithering death-metal rasps and creepy, evil-ass whispers, EverEve made emotional, atmospheric music that blurred the lines between death, gothic and black metal. *Stormbirds* took off where the debut ended, as the band experimented with female singing and the Barmbek Symphony Orchestra (which, incidentally, also has recorded with Therion) while drawing comparisons to Moonspell.

EverEve fired Sedotschenko for the usual "artistic differences" in 1999 and hired new vocalist Benjamin Richter, who sounded similarly gruff but didn't growl and whisper nearly as much as his predecessor. In fact, *Regret* is filled with more accessible songs that honor the band's history while also moving EverEve into the new millennium. (That said, an out-of-place cover of the Animals' never-any-good-anyway song "House of the Rising Sun" is highly, um, regrettable.) But perhaps the album takes its name from the fact that Sedotschenko, to whom the disc is dedicated, killed himself while his former bandmates were working on *Regret*. He was not yet 30 years old.

EverEve would drop Richter but record three more albums for Massacre Records, the most recent being 2005's *Tried & Failed*. The band, still active, certainly hasn't failed — although the critics who still fawn over EverEve must surely admit that its brand of "cygorome" (I still don't like that term) is an acquired taste.