



ARTILLERY

When Death Comes

METAL MIND

Light the fuse and stand well back

Artillery have always been underrated. Beloved of thrash cognoscenti and a handful of press champions, it's generally agreed that they never came close to achieving the success that they deserved. Most of their problems can be laid squarely at the door of England's Neat Records, the NWOBHM institution for whom they recorded their first two albums, 1985's *Fear of Tomorrow* and its classic follow-up, *Terror Squad*, released in 1987. With little label support, the Danes found themselves unable

to tour extensively or properly promote either album—by the time they switched to Roadrunner for 1990's *By Inheritance*, thrash had already peaked and, faced with a major lack of progress, the band split in '93.

1999's "comeback" effort, the cunningly-titled *B.A.C.K.*, proved something of a flash in the pan, but all the indicators suggest that *When Death Comes* is a serious move by serious players desperate to show some muscle in a reignited field. The band's signature blend of catchy and complex melds technical flourishes and slammin' old-school riffage with masterful ease, and lovers of Testament and Megadeth would be well-advised to stop by. Exploring the socially and politically-conscious themes that have remained a thrash staple since the '80s, their tales of war, religion and man's inhumanity to man are as relevant as they were 20 years ago, and although Søren Adamsen's vocals are less distinctive than former frontman Flemming Rønsdorf's colossal roar, his debut at the mic is totally convincing. Unlike many of thrash's upstart new breed, these crafty veterans understand that a song isn't just a stack of riffs strung together with a badass title.

—GREG MOFFITT

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