

Reviews : Albums : Pestilence, "Mind Reflections : The Best of Pestilence [reissue]"



Pestilence
Mind Reflections : The Best of Pestilence [reissue]
Metal Mind Records
2007

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This is an interesting way to experience the power that was Pestilence. Originally released in 1994, after Pestilence had broken up, this compilation was put together by Monte Conner, who worked for Roadrunner Records. What you get here is nine tracks that were available on the four Pestilence albums ("Malleus Maleficarum", "Consuming Impulse", "Testimony of the Ancients" and "Spheres"), plus one song "Hatred Within" that was only available on the Teutonic Invasion, Part II compilation, and no less than six live songs (recorded at Dynamo Open Air)... the only live material the band ever released.

What makes this interesting is that Conner mixed and matched the songs from the four albums, eschewing chronological order for a musical journey. You get three from Consuming Impulse ("Out of the Body", "The Process of Suffocation", "Dehydrated"), three from Testimony of the Ancients ("Twisted Truth", "Land of Tears", "The Secrecies

of Horror"), two from Malleus Maleficarum ("Parricide", "Subordinate to the Domination"), one from Spheres ("Mind Reflections") and "Hatred Within", from the Teutonic Invasion Part II. If you're at all familiar with Pestilence, you know that all four albums they created were unique. Their big strength was to be musically adventurous, and they incorporated everything from thrash to death to jazz and fusion during their run. Vocals shifted from cleaner thrash vocals to gruffer death growls. The only song on here I wasn't familiar with was "Hatred Within", which is a raw, Slayer-esque grinder. Having these songs presented out of order gives you an excellent cross section of what Pestilence was all about. Patrick Mameli (guitar) and the other members never rested on the laurels of past glory, and the output reflects their continuous quest for musical growth.

This is one of those bands I picked up on originally because they were on Roadrunner and had cool cover art (more Dan Seagrave classics). Not much else was needed back in those days, you almost couldn't go wrong. Pestilence quickly became a band I couldn't do without, and it's a real pleasure to listen to these songs again. Classic riffing, powerful and inventive drumming, and interesting lyrics... it didn't get much better than this in the early 1990's. The live cuts ("Dehydrated", "Chemotherapy", "Presence of the Dead", "Testimony", "Chronic Infection", and "Out of Body") are a must for any Pestilence fan, and have only been available on this compilation.

This is essential metal. If you don't want to go out and find all four studio albums, this compilation will serve as an excellent introduction to one of the criminally underrated "contemporary death fusion" bands ever.

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