



PESTILENCE

Mind Reflections: The Best Of Pestilence (reissue)

[Metal Mind](#)

Originally released in 1994 as a retrospective, Metal Mind has reissued this disc, which really is a must-have for a couple of reasons.

If you are unfamiliar with Pestilence, then you need to be introduced to this excellent and influential outfit, which began life as a thrash band (*Malleus Maleficarum* debut LP), and then conquered death death metal with the all-time classic *Consuming Impulse* album before evolving further with more progressive elements on their third full length (*Testimony Of The Ancients*) and ending life as a highly progressive death metal band on their fourth and final album (*Spheres*).

If you are already familiar with Pestilence, then this is where you can round out your collection and get a rare track ("Hatred Within," only previously available on a compilation album) and a killer 6-song live set recorded in 1992. This live set is freaking heavy, even if the older material is played tuned back up to E(?).

If you already have the Roadrunner version of this disc, this new version also includes a conceptual video clip of "Mind Reflections."

I have to admit that I wrote these guys off after *Consuming Impulse*. I got *Testimony Of The Ancients* when it first came out, but by that time Martin van Drunen, one of my favorite vocalists ever, had left the band. The guitars were tuned up and, as they were beginning to incorporate more progressive elements, it was heavy but not AS heavy as *Consuming Impulse*. *Spheres* came out in 1993 and, being even more progressive and less death, I gave it a poor rating for the old G.A.S.P. magazine. Listening again here, it seems that I made an error in my previous judgment. On its own merits, the later material stands pretty well on its own.

If you're new to Pestilence, after starting here, you can find online reviews of the individual albums to guide you a bit further; 1-3 tracks off each might not be quite enough for you to make up your mind, especially the way Roadrunner decided the running order on this Best Of (which does include what are probably the strongest tracks off the first two albums, at least), which is random and won't really help the new listener figure out what's what without paying close attention to the CD booklet.

Given the demand for the vintage Roadrunner titles they licensed, Metal Mind could easily have cheated out and slapped together a second-rate, bare bones version for a quick buck and gotten away with it. Instead, no effort was spared to give the fans the definitive presentation of Mind Reflections: liner notes, band bio, full-color expanded booklet, individually numbered digipak case (full color inside and out) with a handsome flood coat of dull varnish, and the bonus video. This was also remastered, but I don't have an original pressing of it to tell you what, if anything, has been improved compared to it; but the tunes pulled from the first two albums do sound heavier and fatter in the lows than the original full-length CD's did. All in all, for the limited production run (2000) and fair price, Metal Mind earns top marks for going to such lengths to deliver a worthwhile product.

A great introduction to a great band.

A- -Mark Fields