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- Kristofer Upjohn

America had the Bay Area. It was fertile soil for the thrash uprising for which that locale is still respected by metalheads. But in Italy, the dirt was rockier and the growth of such music was more challenging. Nonetheless, from the smoky, brimstone pits arose Bulldozer. Bulldozer was sort of Slayer meets Venom, with thrash metal carrying an old school – and I do mean old school – black metal attitude. Speed riffing, diabolical melodies, a throaty rasp that would scare even an exorcist such as Max Von Sydow as Father Merrick, and decidedly evil lyrics. Manifesting during the young years of both thrash and black metal, Bulldozer isn't as influential as either Slayer or Venom but the band certainly deserves accolades for its stubborn insistence on growing in an environment that was at best indifferent and at worst hostile to its music, and for helping shape and maintain two very important genres of metal. Bulldozer is getting a re-introduction thanks to some limited edition (2,000 per album available) re-issuings.

“The Day of Wrath”

This was Bulldozer's debut. It's a raw album, and the production might even be even a little less polished than Slayer's early pre-Rick Rubin albums. But it's the contents that count. And let's not hold it against a band that had an even smaller scene from which to draw – and like less resources – than American bands such as Metallica, Slayer, et. al. Overall, Bulldozer resembles Slayer a little and sounds a lot like Venom. Instrumentally, there are the kind of thrash elements you'd expect from any dark side thrash act. It's classic horns-and-cloven-feet hard metal. Vocally, it sounds like a call from the abyss. Thematically, it was certainly controversial and would still find plenty of opponents today. Some would find the music trite, but the metalhead in the shadows understands just perfectly.

“The Final Separation”

Bulldozer continued its flow of blackened thrash on “The Final Separation,” an album that was stylistically faithful to what had come before but showed signs of improved production. Wickedness still abounds. Fans garnered from the first release had no reason to complain. Bulldozer could have said after the debut, “There's more where that came from,” and they wouldn't have been lying – tribute paid to the Father of Lies notwithstanding. The cover of this album was sillier than that of “The Day of Wrath” - which featured a caped figure cowering before a cross held by a priest who was mostly outside the frame of the picture. This time it was a caped figure surrounded by gesturing at a skull and cross. But it

captured the combination of fun and fear that marked the band's music. "The Final Separation" was by no means Bulldozer's final musical statement.

"IX"

This album actually stirred up some controversy. Apparently the lyrics and pictures were found to be offensive by some. It might seem strange since Bulldozer had never been a politically correct act. Musically, Bulldozer is still Bulldozer, yet this is also a new and improved Bulldozer of sorts. The band can be heard pushing here for harder, heavier thrash elements. The shift is instantly noticeable, with a pummeling thrash groove kicking off the hellishness to follow. "IX" doesn't pull the rug out from under what makes Bulldozer tick, but it steps things up a notch. Arguably the band's best effort thus far in its career. This ends up being Bulldozer's penultimate album, to be followed by ...

"Neurodeliri"

Bulldozer's final album is also probably their strongest. It's as fast as what came before and feels even heavier. The band's career arc showed Bulldozer steadily growing in strength, culminating in this climactic work. "Neurodeliri" is a powerful album, ripping through a batch of devil metal songs that are as fast and hard as fans could hope for. The Venomesque persona of the band is still quite intact as it hammers out horn-finger inspiring Satanic thrash.

Bulldozer is probably overlooked by most stateside fans. Who would ever have guessed Italy produced such metal madness? Well, they did and here's the proof.

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