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Metal Express Rating: 9.0/10

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When Heavy Metal started swarming the USA, many bands arose to the occasion with the aim to spread Metal by the codes of their British's NWOBHM philosophy while trying to add a bit of the American touch. In general, numerous of these bands sounded as upgrades or remakes of what was left of the NWOBHM and created the starting points for US Metal.

Looking at the band from New Haven/Connecticut, Obsession, one can put them on the same list as their fellow American headbangers such as Malice, Armored Saint and Leatherwolf, yet as many of you probably know, every band has its winning secrets. In the case of Obsession, besides their awesome True Metal music, they have Michael Vescera. In the following years, after Obsession, Mike was widely known as one of the lead vocalists of Loudness as he was part of the band's aim to reflect itself to western audiences. In addition, Mike was the lead singer for Malmsteen for a short period, held a Heavy Metal group called MVP, joined Joe Stump in Reign Of Terror and even started his own solo project that already spread out with a debut album. Before Vescera maintained this list of projects and a worldwide reputation, he and Obsession became a powerful force on the American and world scene of Heavy Metal, and with their classic albums of the 80's, broke through the barrier of being just another Classic Metal band.

The band's debut album, *Scarred For Life*, was released on March of 1986, four years after their official formation. The mid 80's era were great years for US Metal as Heavy Metal bands kept on flooding the market with exemplary notable albums. When Obsession released its debut there were other albums out on the streets such as *To Hell With The Devil* by Stryper, *Rage For Order* by Queensryche and Savatage's *Fight For The Rock*. Obsession, after their first EP *Marshall Law* in 1983, recorded an album that is no lesser in any of its attributes to the albums mentioned. Nonetheless, there is that argument whether on those days it was common that a band amazes on its debut official tryout. From this end it seemed that Obsession was a part of that category as they unleashed a well-done Metal classic that holds within it great melodies of both guitars and bass, hard hitting riffs of twin



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axes' rage and classic beats all under the authority of the commander in chief and that is Mike Vescera, the man with the ultimate voice and later one of the greatest vocalists in Metal. Later on with their second release, they broke the argument as this one turned into a blazing hit.

Mike and his fellow band mates delivered the goods with great songs as their influences reached the British Isle tunes of giant bands of Iron Maiden and Judas Priest while taking the spirit of the NWOBHM and putting a bit more heaviness to the mix. Standout tracks of the British use as the fundamental, and one of the band's classics are: "Winner Takes All", the NWOBHM influenced "Losing My Mind", "Bang Em Till They Bleed", "Run Into The Night", "Evil In Her Eyes", "Take No Prisoners" and the mighty "Taking Your Chances". The latter track, if you paid attention, and its peers will be one of the influences of the *On The Prowl* and *Soldier Of Fortune* albums made by Loudness between 1987 to 1989. With the heaviness of NWOBHM, Obsession held some Hard Rock influences for various enhancements to their Metal form. Great tracks that come to mind are "In The End", and "Tomorrow Hides No Lies". In conclusion, this album is a must for every new and old Metalhead (if he doesn't already have it in his/her stock), this is a jewel of Heavy Metal and a musical piece whose style is sadly a bit rare nowadays.

Metal Mayhem Records did a first-rate job on re-mastering this tune box and added two great add-ons to insure a good time for the listeners in the image of two unreleased tracks that in the past came out with the Japanese version of the album.

As for Obsession, they made their comeback in 2006 with the album *Carnival Of Lies* and they released another one two years after as a self-titled effort. Be sure to follow them, as Mike Vescera is still the head and tails of this awesome group. Long Live The 80s!!

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