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Behemoth - Sventevith (Storming Near the Baltic)

[BEHEMOTH](#)

Sventevith (Storming Near the Baltic)

([Metal Mind](#))

Though known best these days as a technical death metal act a la Cynic and Atheist, Poland's Behemoth started as an epic black metal band. Originally released in 1994, **Sventevith (Storming Near the Baltic)** doesn't sound like a debut; the band (here a duo) is accomplished and assured. Well-crafted songs, varied arrangements that use elements like acoustic guitar, synthesized harpsichord and piano (alongside frenzied drums and shit-toned guitar) and the usual sustained brutality hit all the right blackened notes. Songs like "Hidden in the Fog" and "The Touch of Nya" fall near the symphonic end of the extreme metal spectrum without stinting on the violence. Chief songwriter Nergal is less interested in taking down Christianity than in furthering his own pagan beliefs—"Forgotten temples of gods/Welcoming the son of godly Teuton, father of fathers," he growls in "Entering the Faustian Soul." Other songs exhort the "Forgotten Cult of Aldaron," warn that "Wolves Guard My Coffin" and insist that "Hell Dwells in Ice." It may all seem a bit silly to non-believers, of course, but given his thick accent and thoroughly ravaged vokills, the content hardly matters next to the musical impact. Which might very well leave bruises, as the best black metal should. *Michael Toland*

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