

# LISTEN to MY NIGHTMARE

The new faux-soundtrack trend taking place via artists such as Videogram and Slasher Dave, which channels the sound and atmosphere of horror scores to their own original spooky music is a very good thing. Along with the horror soundtrack revival, it's spawning fresh material while bringing newfound respect for the composers so instrumental in creating those celluloid horrors that we lust over.

That said, the one thing that hasn't happened is more creativity in newer soundtracks. Charlie Clouser's "Hello Zepp" music in the *Saw* series is probably the closest we've come to a memorable horror theme in the vein of John Carpenter's *Halloween*. Other than that, most modern horror soundtracks tend to employ either grander orchestral schemes lacking bite, or just rely on a series of loud noises and stingers (probably a reflection of the depth of the movies themselves).

One notable exception is the soundtrack to Franck Khalifoun's *Maniac* (2012) remake, composed by the French musician known as Rob (a.k.a. Robin Coudert). A recruit of producer Alexandre Aja, Rob (who is also in the French band Phoenix) provided a synth-laden score that falls somewhere between John Carpenter and Cliff Martinez's *Drive* soundtrack. Audiences were quick to point it out as one of the movie's major strengths, and *Rue Morgue* had no trouble naming it the best soundtrack of 2013.

"Because of the subjective POV concept, *Maniac* needed a strong score," Rob tells me via email.

"We almost never see the face of the main character, so we've got to create a musical medium to illustrate his state of mind, his madness. *Maniac* is a beautiful gift for a composer, because music has to take the front place."

Aja wasted no time in collaborating with Rob again for his next film, *Horns* (RM#150). For this dark fantasy based on the novel by Joe Hill, Rob ended up going in a completely different direction, following a much more typical orchestral arrangement to tackle the film's classic good-versus-evil conflict.

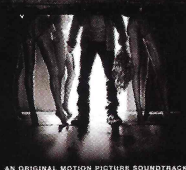
"*Horns* is like a fairy tale," he says, "so it required some timeless music, also something wider, not as introspective as *Maniac*. We needed sort of a legendary theme to go with the birth of the dark hero."

Though undoubtedly beautiful, *Horns* may be a bit of a disappointment to those expecting something in the same vein as the *Maniac* score. That said, Rob is certainly stepping up to take the horror soundtrack to new places. As he explains, it's just something that comes naturally to him.

"I just can't be mainstream. I have this thing. Everytime I tried was a disaster, it sounded catastrophic! Is that because of a lack of professionalism, or because I'm sincerely independent and original? I prefer the second option."

AARON VON LUPTON

MANIAC  
MUSIC BY ROB

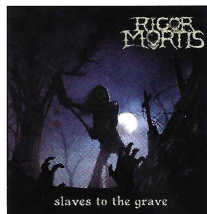


AN ORIGINAL MOTION PICTURE SOUNDTRACK  
FROM THE HORROR FILM MANIAC BY ROB



ORIGINAL MOTION PICTURE SOUNDTRACK

attitude or thrills and chills. Note to all would-be acoustic guitar horror heroes: listen to more of Dax Riggs' heartfelt, dusky opus *We Sing of Only Blood or Love*, and less cookie cutter boo-wop and Hot Topic pop punk. ☠ JS



slaves to the grave

## RIGOR MORTIS

### Slaves to the Grave

RIGOR MORTIS RECORDS

Never quite attaining the "second tier of thrash" status of Testament or Exodus, Texas' Rigor Mortis nonetheless went on to make waves via bassist Casey Orr's stint as Beefcake the Mighty in GWAR, and guitarist Mike Scaccia's lengthy tenure in Ministry. Now, two years after Scaccia's tragic onstage demise, his bandmates unveil a fitting headstone to mark his musical career. Mixing real-world horrors of war ("Rain of Ruin") and serial killer exploits ("Blood Bath") with tales of poltergeists and Draugr (undead Viking nasties), *Slaves to the Grave* doesn't skimp on grim content. "The Infected" may bookend its tale of Romero and Fulci fans' favourite monster with something recalling the sort of cool instrumental sadly abandoned by Iron Maiden after the mid-'80s, but the rest of the album is satisfyingly pure thrash from the tail end of that decade. Whether Scaccia was virtuous or villainous in life, he has no musical sins to atone for here.

☠☠☠ 1/2 GT

METAL

damned cool new EP from Recently Vacated Graves, that's what! Stand-out track "Hgrghrg" will satisfy any fan of the living dead's lust for gray matter, with barely an unhappy grunt uttered. By crafting cold, melodic tunes focusing on the zombie-themed comic *All Undead on the Western Front* (as opposed to the typical, tired blasphemy that has run rampant in black metal for decades), RVG:TZM creates something fun and fresh. Two aspects of horror culture that were once edgy and frightening have become so once again on *Legions of Decay*. ☠☠☠ 1/2 JS



METAL

## DEVILMINT

### The Great And Secret Show

NUCLEAR BLAST

The dashing and diabolical Dani Filth, frontman for vampiric black metallers Cradle of Filth, joins forces with a coven of Suffolk minstrels for his latest convocation of maliciousness, the aptly titled *Devilmint*. The band's inaugural release is a blazing bastion of heavy metal infused with a lyrical grimoire of nightmares. The songs on the record weave Filth's trademark impish growls and demonic howls with Pantera-ish guitars, eerie John Carpenter-style keyboards and beautiful morsels of enchanting female backing vocals. The eclectic combinations of furious and melodic riffs are sure to please the most hardened of Hessians, while drawing in new fanatics to Filth's black-winged fold. Bloodcurdling metaphorical and allegorical subject matter abounds, covering serial killers, *King Kong*'s damsel in distress, Lovecraftian monstrosities, witches, werewolves and, of course, vampires. ☠☠☠☠ CH



## RECENTLY VACATED

### GRAVES: TRUE ZOMBIE METAL

#### Legions of Decay EP

(INDEPENDENT)

What do you get when you mix one of the most played-out subgenres in the history of metal (that would be black) with the most overused creature from the world of horror (that would be zombies)? You get a pretty

METAL

