

ASCENDED

Temple Of Dark Offerings (EP tape)

(Detest Records)

23:31min

In my humble opinion, Death-Doom is a criminally underrated sub-genre in Metal. It is just incredible how great bands committed to the style never got the attention and respect they deserved. Some of them are personal faves such as SORROW (USA), AS SERENITY FADES (FIN), SPINA BIFIDA (NED), THERGOTHON (FIN) and WINTER (USA). ASCENDED could be easily included in that list, based on their sound. But nowadays, I think they will get a lot of well deserved attention! "Temple Of Dark Offerings" embraces you with its overall gloomy, depressive and heavy as hell atmosphere. These 4 tracks, clocking 23 minutes, just leave you wanting more. Guitar-wise, they achieved a brilliant combination of background sludgy riffing with constant melodic lines of the lead guitar, giving some of the songs an "epic" feel. Yet, there are acoustic passages neatly placed to add texture and variety, two very important aspects in ASCENDED's brand of Metal savagery. The rhythm section is somewhat basic, but flawless and powerful in execution. And last, but not least, the vocal delivery of Mr. Tommi Sookari, whose growls and shrieks fit in perfectly, is flawless and full of hate! He reminds me of Mr. Jukka Kolehmainen himself. This EP is a great listening experience. It just crawls into you slowly and painfully, as it was intended to do so. ASCENDED managed a great release that stands as proof of their intelligent hateful brand of Doom-Death Metal. A band to look out for. According to their myspace page, "Enucleation Records is out of the picture", so there is no set date for the vinyl version. They still have CD copies of "Temple Of Dark Offerings" and Detest Records just released a limited run of 200 tapes, so get them while you can! www.myspace.com/ascendedmetal, www.detestrecords.com

Alfonso Perez

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VETERNUS

Perpetual Insanity (Demo)

(self-financed)

12:33min

Pointing fingers is never polite, but someone - or something - deserves the credit for starting the new wave of Swedish Death Metal. I place the thanks squarely on Daniel Ekeröth for bringing Sweden's dark past to our attention again. He and REPUGNANT and KAAMOS, it appears, championed Swedish Death Metal like no others. Since then, however, the town of Uppsala has seemingly taken off on its own. Spearheaded by the Blood Harvest roster, home to bands like KATALYSATOR, EVISCERATED, DEGIAL and TRIBULATION, the last few years witnessed a tiny, but powerful, explosion of new talent. VETERNUS is one such newcomer. Their demo is very limited, so grab it while you can. The strength of this band is overpowering; a palpable darkness shrouds each song. They could have gotten away with adding one or two more songs, but the three that made it on the demo are so good that to add anymore might do more harm than good. Too many times do bands add filler material that brings their otherwise strong records down. Buy this if you can. If not, wait for more, because VETERNUS can't quit now. More info: www.myspace.com/veternusuppsala

Nat Shapiro