

PLUS CD!

arisingrealm

Number 12

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BOLT THROWER
MASTIC SCUM
HEXENHAMMER
BLIND STARE
NOX ARCANIA
EQUILIBRIUM
HATESPHERE
CROMONIC
ARCTURUS
CENTINEX
SERENITY
UESANIA
FEARER

HYPOCRISY

SETZT DEN VIRUS FREI

Nox Arcana creates the haunting melodies and darkly themed orchestrations that are the musical equivalent to Vargo's paintings—threatening and eerie sounds that evoke their favorite horror or medieval themes. It's easy to succumb to the music of the two, which encloses you like a black cloak, tears you from the present and carries you off to places without light. And sometimes you can even hear the dark, sinister voice of Joseph Vargo, which swings threatening like the Sword of Damokles above your head.

It began in 2003 with Darklore Manor, the debut release by Nox Arcana about a haunted mansion with a dark and sinister history. Their second album, Necronomicon, is a spellbinding tribute to H.P. Lovecraft. This latest cd, Winter's Knight, is a tale for the dark and cold months... Could you explain what this album is all about? Is there a similar background story?

Winter's Knight is a musical ghost story that centers around a dark angel who haunts the ruins of a cathedral each year on the night of the Winter Solstice. As the story goes, he tells tales throughout the night, the longest night of the year, and those who heed his message are changed for the better. Lost souls

THE INTERNATIONALLY ACCLAIMED AMERICAN ARTIST JOSEPH VARGO, A DIE-HARD METALHEAD AT HEART, WHO GREW UP LISTENING TO AC/DC, JUDAS PRIEST, BLACK SABBATH AND IRON MAIDEN, AND USED TO SING IN A HEAVY METAL BAND. HE BECAME WELL-KNOWN IN THE GOTHIC SCENE IN 1993, AS HE CAUSED A SENSATION WITH THE RELEASE OF A SERIES OF ART COLLECTIONS ENTITLED *BORN OF THE NIGHT*. HIS FAVOURITE MOTIFS INCLUDE DECAYING MEDIEVAL ARCHITECTURE HAUNTED BY VAMPIRES AND OTHER CREATURES OF THE NIGHT, WHICH HE CAPTURES IN DARK TONES. ASIDE FROM ALL THAT, HE IS ALSO A PUBLISHED AUTHOR, TALENTED COMPOSER AND RECORD PRODUCER. IN 2003 HE FORMED NOX ARCANA WITH FELLOW MUSICIAN WILLIAM PIOTROWSKI.

MISTER VARGO IS NOT ONLY FASCINATING BUT HE TRUMPED THE USUAL BAND INTERVIEW WITH INTELLIGENT STATEMENTS AND DELIBERATE WORDS.

NOX ARCANA



*Interview by Pascal Zuger
Arising Realm, Nov. 2005*

seek redemption and the spirits of the dead reach out to the living to compel them to make a difference in this world while they still can.

I've had this concept in mind for a long time, even before our first CD, *Darklore Manor*, but we didn't want to jump right into doing a holiday album for our debut release. The idea of making an album of darker, haunting music for the winter season came about because all the existing holiday music was bright and cheery, and we wanted to offer an alternative for people with more gothic tastes. The holiday season is traditionally a time of celebration; unfortunately, it has become a major commercial industry in the past few decades. However, it is also a time of year for reflection and sadness. The message of the CD is that when times are darkest, there's always hope. We also wanted the album to stir memories of youth, when the winter holiday season was a magical time.

How is it that a "winter" album got released in summer?

Well, *Necronomicon* was released late in October of 2004, so it didn't give us a lot of time to complete *Winter's Knight* according to our original schedule, and we didn't want to rush things. This worked

out well because we kept adding and tweaking things, and ended up with over an hour of music. This actually turned out to be the best time for us to release this disk since it takes a few months for record stores to order and stock up for the holiday season. However, we aren't having an official release for the CD until closer to December. We've also gotten several letters from fans who have said that listening to *Winter's Knight* during this long, hot summer has actually put them in a cooler state of mind.

What are your feelings about winter? Are you comfortable when it's cold and snowing? And the sun barely shines? Or do you rather prefer the hot months in July and August? I presume for a creature of the night the dark months should fit better...

I live in Cleveland, Ohio, where we have hot summers and very cold and snowy winters. I enjoy both seasons, but after a while I'm always looking forward to a change of climate. As long as it's dark outside, I am in my element.

Have you ever took in consideration to let an orchestra play your music in the studio?

With each new CD, we are adding more and more live instruments and vocals in the studio. *Winter's Knight* has pianos, acoustic guitars, mandolins, cellos and a live gothic choir. Our sound is constantly progressing and maybe someday in the future we will have an orchestra play our music, however, the logistics, cost and time factors involved in getting an entire orchestra into the studio would not be practical for us right now.

What is so fascinating about darkness, coldness, sinister thoughts, medieval themes in general for you? Is your music kind of a mirror of yourself? Do you dwell in those attributes?

I realize that the subject matter of my art and music may not appeal to everyone, but there are a large number of people who find beauty in darkness. The name of our band translates to mean "mysteries of the night," because our music reflects this appreciation for the darker things that lurk in the unknown. My tastes are somewhat eclectic. I don't dwell on the darkside, but I'm very comfortable there.

Do you feel well in a world which is mostly about getting rich, having a big house, driving an expensive car and so on? Does the hypocrisy and greed that most people have nowadays make you sick and you're



kind of expressing those emotions with your music (and canvases)?

My fellow band member, William Piotrowski and I often discuss the subject of hypocrisy in the world. We are both disgusted by it, especially with this new wave of religious fanaticism that has swept across America in recent years. These zealots call themselves "the moral majority" and say they want freedom of religion, but the

"Ich realisiere, dass die Themen meiner Kunst und Musik nicht jedem entsprechen moegen, aber es gibt eine grosse Anzahl von Leuten die Schoenheit an der Dunkelheit finden."

truth is that they only want to cram their own, narrow-minded personal beliefs down other people's throats. They preach that killing is wrong, then they start wars and drop bombs on people. Most people who live in big houses and drive expensive cars are heavily in debt, but they are victims of their own greed. Our music really has



nothing to do with hatred or world affairs. It's purely meant as dark fantasy escapism for our listeners.

America is a very patriotic and conservative country. Are you, Joseph, the opposite of what the USA stands for? You're not the typical American, your music and your paintings are gothic style, European (to be honest, America hasn't got a history). And the art you're expressing is far from the usual stuff you put in place with the US.

In reality, only half of America has this warped sense of patriotism and religious conservatism. The other half actually use their brains to think. The area I'm from is much more liberal-minded. We love our country, but we are disgusted by how bad world affairs have become due to George W. Bush and his terrible actions. We can't believe other Americans actually voted for him. He's totally unqualified, he's a liar and a coward, he represents greedy, corrupt big business, he uses fear and religion to incite panic, and he's making the world a more dangerous place. Please don't judge all Americans by the actions of this president and the morons who voted for him. Half of our country hates this guy with a passion

and are embarrassed by his actions. We're not all conservative warmongers. By the way, as I say this, our economy is suffering, gas prices are skyrocketing, people are being killed in Iraq and George W. Bush is taking a five-week vacation.

I don't think of my art and music as a reflection of these troubled times. They are offered as a fantasy escape from mundane reality. Although America does not have a gothic history, there are many fine examples of gothic architecture here, however, I do admit that these pale in comparison to the magnificent castles and cathedrals of Europe.

It's a shame that your CDs can't be bought in Europe. You've to get in the internet to order them. Have you ever thought about a management or label who could distribute your albums in Europe? So that they would be available in the shops here? I can imagine that a lot of people would like your music, and it would get popular here, if they knew about it.

Yes, we would like to work with a European distributor. If you know of any reliable ones, please send them our way. Our CDs are available through a few select shops in Europe and elsewhere around the globe, but we also sell a great deal of them through NoxArcana.com and ship them to everywhere in the world.

You're already working on your next album Transylvania. Which should be released on Samhain. What can you tell us about the album so far?

We just wrapped up the mixes for *Transylvania*. It's another concept album that takes listeners on a musical journey through the land of vampires, werewolves, witches and ghosts. Bram Stoker's *Dracula* was a major inspiration while we were putting this concept together. The music is a mixture of haunting melodies and ominous symphonic orchestrations. Our gothic choirs have a bigger part in this release and many of the songs have chanting. There are also several sinister narratives as well as sound effects like wolves howling, bats screeching and sentinel gargoyles warning unwelcome visitors of their fate.

We don't take any breaks between albums, so we are already working on our next CD, *Carnival of Lost Souls*. This one is set in a creepy old-time carnival that harbors living nightmares and sinister secrets.



"Wir koennen einfach nicht glauben, dass andere Amerikaner tatsaechlich ihn gewaehlt haben. Er ist total unqualifiziert, er ist ein Luegner und ein Dummkopf. Er repraesentiert habgieriges, korruptes 'Big Business' und gebraucht Furcht und Religion um Panik zu schuenen."



Creature of the Night

Name	Joseph Vargo
Date of birth	November 27
Height	5' 10"
Weight	185

Blood and Bowels

Favourite drink	Pepsi (non-alcoholic), Seven & Seven (alcoholic)
Favourite meal	A good, thick steak (medium rare)

Screams from Hell

Best CD	AC/DC: Highway to Hell
Worst CD	Anything with Rap

Nocturnal Nightmares

George W. Bush	True evil. Arrogant and ignorant.
Demons	An interesting subject to paint and write about.
Gargoyles	A favorite subject to paint. I can't get enough of them.
Ghosts	I'd love to see an actual apparition.
Ghouls	Creepy.
Witches	I love them, both real and fantasy.
Vampires	Dangerous, sensual, romantic. I love to paint them and write about them.
Maniacs	True evil (see George W. Bush, above)
Werewolves	Man's primal and savage alter-ego
Zombies	Walking nightmares.

Canvases Beyond Time and Space

Hieronymus Bosch	Wild stuff.
H.R. Giger	A fantastic visionary artist who can depict beauty in darkness.
Joseph Vargo	Hopefully I'll be remembered along with these great artists.
Leonardo da Vinci	A master artist and a genius far ahead of his time.

Tales From the Crypt

Stephen E. King	The hardest working author in the horror field.
Dean R. Koontz	He has to get someone better to make his film adaptations.
H.P. Lovecraft	One of my favorite writers. A real visionary and the father of the modern horror tale.
Edgar Allan Poe	A fantastic writer and poet. A true goth and innovator of the mystery tale.
Anne Rice	Reinvigorated the gothic vampire tale.
Bram Stoker	<i>Dracula</i> is my favorite vampire novel and a gothic milestone.