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## NEW REVIEWS



### LYNCH MOB

**REvolution**

Mascot Records M 7083 2

Even if you ignore the rifts, the fist fights, and the very public onstage shenanigans; that guitarist George Lynch became increasingly disenchanted with the Dokken sound which made his name, is a matter of public record. Just how deep that disillusionment and resentment went is snapped sharply into focus with the release of 'REvolution', a record which sees him attempt to resurrect the ghost of Lynch Mob once more.

Like some old high school sweetheart, Lynch has always found solace in the arms of Lynch Mob during his turbulent on/off relationship with Dokken (the band and the

man); I'd even go as far as to say that their two early 90's albums were pretty much on a par with anything Dokken released (technically at least, if not commercially). However, after the abysmal 'Smoke This' effort from four years ago, it looked as if Lynch had taken one step too far, leaving all but the most diehard fans adrift as he sought to do the musical equivalent of disappearing up his own arse.

Now reunited once again with former vocal sparring partner Robert Mason (ex Silent Witness), 'REvolution' is not a new Lynch Mob record per se. Instead, what Lynch and Mason have tried to do is to go back and rewrite history in a decidedly more modern vernacular. Taking a dozen or so Dokken and Lynch Mob classics, they've stripped them right back to basics, and then attempted to rebuild them in a radically different way.

Interfering with anyone's cherished memories is always a risky business, the possibility of ridicule and derision exceedingly high – history itself has proved that remakes are rarely anything but pale imitations of the original. However, to be fair to Lynch and Mason, 'REvolution', whilst distinct in many respects, does manage to breath life anew into a set of songs

which were definitely a product of the era in their original format. Darker for sure, heavier, and imbued with a substantially weightier atmosphere, this is one classic hard rock meets nu-metal experiment which actually works to a greater degree.

The first time you hear opening cut 'Tooth And Nail', I guarantee you'll be shocked, the oppressive riffs and guttural vocals a far cry from the Dokken original. Stick with it nonetheless, and by the time you get to closing number 'The Secret' (originally from 92's, self titled Lynch Mob release), it's inherent depth, not to mention the relative strengths of the songs themselves, will come shining through. After all, whilst they may sometimes be barely recognisable, great songs such as 'Kiss Of Death', 'River Of Love', 'She's Evil, But She's Mine', and 'Paris Is Burning' will always remain great songs. And as for Lynch himself, well, let's just say he's not lost any of that 'oomph!' which made him one of the few genuine guitar heroes of the 80's.

Some are gonna hate this for sure as all 13 tracks are quite radical interpretations of much loved classics. Me? I think it's a brave move on Lynch's part, and if it points the way forward, I for one won't be complaining.

8/10

Dave Cockett



### VICTORY

**Instinct**

SPV

085-69372 CD

Comeback season it would seem is well and truly in full flow at the moment. What with all those 80's US hair bands dusting off their spandex and lip gloss (some it has to be said more successfully than others – if you haven't heard the god-awful Poison album yet, do yourself a big favour and don't

bother!), it's even prompted Joey Tempest to set sail in the good ship Europe once again. Then there's the bubbling rumours constantly surrounding White Lion, Journey, Survivor ... hell, the list gets longer by the hour, let alone the day! This one did come as something of a surprise though.

Victory date back some 20 years, where rising phoenix like from the ashes of Fargo, they set about becoming Germany's answer to AC/DC. Fronted firstly by ex Ted Nugent vocalist Charlie Huhn, and latterly by Fernando Garcia (last seen with Biss), they released some fine albums in the late 80's and early 90's, my own favourites being 89's 'Culture Killed The Native', and 'You Bought It You Name It' from three years later – both incidentally featuring Garcia.

My understanding was that Garcia had been approached some time back about a possible reunion, but he declined, preferring instead to continue with other projects. Hence 'Instinct' sees the return of veteran vocalist Charlie Huhn, his first Victory album since the 'That's Live' set when he quit to join the reformed Humble Pie. Completing the line up are former Accept/Sinner guitarist Herman Frank, guitarist Tommy Newton (better known of course these days as a producer), bassist Peter Knorn (didn't he used to be Glenn Hughes' manager?), and drummer Fritz Randow who's currently a fully paid up member of the rejuvenated Saxon.

Having bowed out with the somewhat underrated 'Voiceprint' album back in '96, the band now find themselves competing in a melodic rock scene which has changed almost beyond recognition. So what, I hear you ask, do Victory 2003 have to offer us that a whole raft of eager young upstarts don't? If I'm honest, the answer is probably not a lot really, but what the hell, I always had a soft spot for this lot first time round so you won't hear any complaints from me!

As you'd expect, their sound hasn't really changed that much, the ballsy AC/DCesque undercurrent is still very much in evidence, albeit perhaps now with a slightly more contemporary twist in the tail. Yep,

their sound has been retrofitted here and there with a few down tuned riffs, but fear not, all the old Victory hallmarks are still there – strong melodies, impassioned delivery, and stadium sized atmospherics. Newton and Frank are still the main drivers behind the band, leading from the front with plenty of twin lead breaks in classic Germanic style.

Song wise there's no particular track which stands out from the crowd, all eleven numbers constructed to a similar sort of standard. Personal favourites include 'Victoria's Secrets', 'Running Scared', and 'Instinct', but if you're into no compromise, riff driven rock 'n' roll, you're just as likely to get off on any of the others. No nonsense, no frills, just good old fashioned songs the way it used to be done ... 'nostalgia rules!

Whether this reunion will get beyond the one album is a highly debatable point, but whilst this may not quite be the classic we'd hoped for, at least it doesn't tarnish the Victory name.

7/10 **Dave Cockett**



**SHUGAAZER**  
**Shift**  
Artenzia Records

Sometimes, when I'm playing a video game that takes several weeks to complete and comes with an inch thick instruction manual, all I want is to play a simple, uncomplicated shoot 'em up, but no one seems to make them anymore. If this analogy held any water at all for music, Shugaazer are every shoot 'em up you've ever played. Uncomplicated, sure, but a whole lotta fun.

Formed by vocalist Paul Laine (once pigeonholed as the Canadian Bon Jovi!) and guitarist Chris Matheson, Shugaazer (weird name) just want to make rock music. From

the cracking opener 'Kozmonaut', it's apparent that this means tight production, catchy songs, smooth vocals and ample guitar not swamped by keyboards. Actually, it sounds a little like Feeder, which is no bad thing.

It's always nice when an album grabs you the first time you play it, and 'Shift' does just that. It's so good to hear a straightforward high quality hard rock album made by people who want you to sit back and enjoy it for its own merits, not because of who it is, what they're wearing, or how outrageous the lyrics are. It takes me back to the glory days of the likes of Bryan Adams and Bon Jovi, and though this is no 'Reckless' or 'Slippery When Wet', it's a welcome addition to any collection of classic rock.

This is the first Artenzia band I've heard, and I hope they can keep up the good work. The biog promises that the "disc will not leave your player anytime soon", and I think it's right. Great, uncomplicated music.

7/10 **Alan Holloway**



**THUNDERSTONE**  
**The Burning**  
Nuclear Blast NB 1223-2

All is not well within the Stratovarius camp, the once seemingly unbreakable bond forged in the desolate wastelands of the mid 90's now lies shattered beyond repair. Whether the band will ever fully recover from the tumultuous events of recent months only time will tell, but their previously unassailable position at the summit of the symphonic metal scene is now at its most precarious in nearly a decade. There are perhaps half a dozen or so bands capable, over time of course, of emulating the achievements of Timo Tolkki and company, none more so (to these ears at least)

than fellow Finns Thunderstone.

Having started out as little more than a studio project built around guitarist Nino Laurenne, Thunderstone rapidly grew into a full blown band as his songwriting vision progressed. Talent spotted by the ever vigilant Nuclear Blast organisation, Thunderstone installed themselves in the studio to record their self titled debut album, an album which won them almost universal praise upon its release in the summer of 2002. Now however, with their honeymoon period well and truly at an end, everyone awaits with baited breath to see if the debut was a flash in the pan, or if Thunderstone really can capitalise on that early promise.

Second albums are notoriously difficult beasts to create, especially on the back of a successful debut. Stick too rigidly to the same formula and you'll get slated for self plagiarism, yet stray too far and you'll open yourself up to criticism for not staying true to your roots ... it's a fine line to tread. Mindful of that, Thunderstone set out to create an album which retains the essence of the debut, yet at the same time moves them to the next logical level, and with 'The Burning' they've managed to surpass my every expectation. Towering riffs, explosive solos, layer upon layer of atmospheric keyboards and smouldering vocal melodies abound throughout, intense passions and tortured angst carved in stone to endure for all eternity.

Opener 'Until We Touch The Burning Sun' encapsulates just how far the band have come in such a relatively short space of time. Heralded by a brooding, neo-gothic keyboard sound (very Jens Johansson), its intelligent blend of light and shade (Stratovarius meets Jorn Lande) heightens the inherent dynamics, the heavy atmospherics conjuring up vivid images of ancient myths even Tolkein himself would have been proud of! If there's a better opening track on any album this year, I'm more than keen to hear it

And with the mystical strains of such a powerful hymn still ringing in your ears, Thunderstone then go straight for the jugular with the kerosene fuelled 'Break The Emotions'.

Arguably the closest track in spirit to the debut, it's deceptively simple full on attack masks a highly memorable hook. Their intentions now abundantly clear, Thunderstone deliver a highly emotive set of thought provoking songs, each exploring different moods and emotions. From the plaintive heart-break of 'Sea Of Sorrow', through the shimmering 'Mirror Never Lies' or clipped urgency of 'Drawn To The Flame', right down to the wire with the rousing 'Evil Within', Thunderstone turn in a scintillating display which seems to cherry pick the best facets of Stratovarius, Malmsteen, and Symphony X! But it doesn't end there. Snag yourself a copy of the limited edition digi-pack version and you'll find no less than six bonus cuts, three of which are stirring covers from legends such as Metallica, Judas Priest, and Manowar.

The gloves are off, and believe me, Thunderstone will not be found wanting ... highly recommended!

9/10 **Dave Cockett**

**GREAT WHITE**  
**Revisiting Familiar Waters**  
Mausoleum

I was among the 300 plus crowd who saw Great White play the Cathouse in Glasgow a couple of years back. They were bang on form, full of enthusiasm and complete professionals. No mean feat when you consider they once regularly played stadiums and arenas of 10,000 and more.

None of these songs were in the set, as this is essentially a tribute to the giants of the blues rock genre, recorded live by Bob Kulick in November 1989, and only now released in Europe.

Encompassing music from an elite group which includes the Stones, Free, AC/DC, The Cult and gulp, Status Quo usually means that choosing class songs to cover is a problem only in terms of what to leave out, and often leads to obscure selections. 'Sin City' and 'Lady Love' are cases in point. The first, taken from AC/DC's 1978 'Powerage' album, is a track which the band have recorded live themselves, and gets the full Great White treatment here including a "Rosetta

Stone" remix, culled from the AC/DC Tribute album **'Remixed To Hell'**.

The second cover, from Robin Trowers' 1974 release **'Bride Of Sighs'**, slips into an easy groove, eminently suited to Great White's elegantly flowing blues rock style. More obvious choices are the fairly ordinary covers of The Cult's 'Love Removal Machine', Free's 'Fire And Water' and The 'Stones' 'It's Only Rock And Roll'. None of them totally descend into failure, but neither do any of them ascend into spellbinding greatness.

As is generally the case it's the exceptions to the rule - the trancey dancey bonus tracks 'Unchained' and 'Sin City' remix - and the more esoteric choice of covers that make you sit up and take notice.

6/10 **Brian McGowan**



**MAGNITUDE NINE**  
**Decoding The Soul**  
**Inside Out IOMCD 151**

It's probably fair to say that apart from the likes of Dream Theater, Symphony X and Shadow Gallery, the overwhelming majority of the better progressive metal acts emanate from this side of the Atlantic. Bit of a sweeping statement I know, but check out the reviews pages in any of the magazines or countless websites, and chances are the vast majority of bands picking up the top scores in this genre are European in origin. However, as ever there are always exceptions to any rule, Ohio based progressive metal band Magnitude Nine (or Magnitude 9 as they used to be known) being one of the most remarkable.

Built around the formidable guitar playing talents of Rob Johnson, and the soaring lead vocals of ex Psycho Drama man Corey Brown, Magnitude Nine debuted in the fall of '98

with the surprisingly classy **'Chaos To Control'** album, following that some two years later with the equally impressive **'Reality In Focus'** set. I remember thinking at the time that they had the talent and the songs to compete with the very best the world scene had to offer (Threshold, Vanden Plas, etc., etc.), but since their sophomore album hit the streets, they've been strangely quiet, or at least until now at any rate.

Storming back on to the scene with their third full length offering **'Decoding The Soul'**, the three year hiatus has made Magnitude Nine sharper than ever! Co produced by former Malmsteen/Obsession man Mike Vescera, **'Decoding The Soul'** is a little heavier than the Magnitude Nine of old, yet those effervescent progressive passages and arresting melody lines remain as vibrant as before. Even the loss of renowned bassist Kevin Chown (apparently he's been seduced by the big bucks lure of Uncle Kracker, and who can blame him) hasn't dented their resolute self belief one bit.

Coming across as an expertly crafted fusion of Artension and Shadow Gallery, yet retaining enough of that unique feel of the Magnitude Nine of old, **'Decoding The Soul'** is launched amid the staccato rifferama of 'New Dimension'. A moody, atmospherically charged cut awash with smouldering guitars and emotive vocals, it's the perfect scene setter for what turns out to be a real musical roller-coaster ride. Picking up the pace ever so slightly, following number 'Lies Within The Truth' is one of the straighter cuts on the album, yet it's arguably one of the best, the interplay between Johnson and the keyboard player (I'm assuming it's still Joe Glean although the bio doesn't give too much away on that score) enough to rival that of Romeo and Pinnella, or Staffebach and Kuprij!

And it just gets better and better. There's the sparkling 'Facing The Unknown' for example, it's dramatic mood changes a jumble of Artension and solo Bruce Dickinson; the slightly malevolent undercurrent of 'Torn'; the barely contained rage of 'Thirty Days Of

Night'; and the relatively ethereal 'Walk Through The Fire', each one coming with it's own jumbo sized hook. As a final twist, Magnitude Nine end with the kaleidoscopic schizophrenia of 'Sands Of Time', an eerily surreal song which seems to operate on a myriad of different levels depending upon the mood of the listener.

Just when you thought that the likes of Evergrey and Poverty's No Crime were going to have it all their own way, Magnitude Nine deliver a tremendous blow for American pride! Nice one guys!

9/10 **Dave Cockett**



**RUSH OF USHERS**  
**Delightfully**  
**Artenzia Records**

"Oh. My. God". That's what ran through my head when I heard the intro for 'Collide', the first track on **'Delightfully'**. It sounds like something three maniacally happy people in multi coloured jumpsuits would sing on a kids tv show. Thankfully, things got better afterwards...

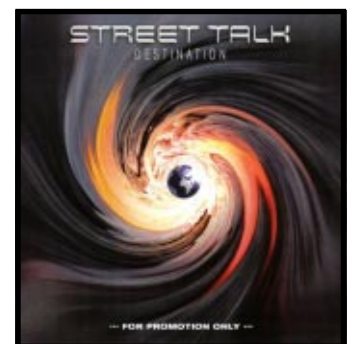
Rush Of Ushers (what is it with Artenzia? Are you not allowed to sign with them unless you have a silly name?) is the collective name for Daniel O'Brien and Jeff 'Wheel' Hull. Based in Los Angeles, the two have teamed up to create the perfect album to smoke dope to with **'Delightfully'**.

Not that this is stoner music. Far from it. It's just that the whole thing is so, well, relaxed, you just want to sit back and let it wash over you. Things rarely get faster than a light canter, and the lyrics are so loopy they'd even make the Beatles chortle. I mean, 'Nothing like worlds collide into blood red happy'. What the hell is that supposed to mean? You can almost imagine the two of

them sitting on a couch, stoned to the eyeballs, one throwing out random nonsense whilst the other says 'Dude. That is so profound' and giggles.

Despite the lack of pace and loopy lyrics, **'Delightfully'** is rather good without being excellent. Some of the tracks are similar to Francis Dunnery, which is a good thing, but there's also a lack of real variety, even though the whole thing is very well produced and arranged (by the boys themselves). At times, it all gets a bit too hippy ('Electro-motion' is a prime suspect here), and at others it's quite soulful and beautiful ('Good Day' stands out a mile). There are no bad songs here, just flower power for the new millennium. If you just want something to chill to this is ideal, and occasionally delightful.

6/10 **Alan Holloway**



**STREET TALK**  
**Destination**  
**MTM Music MTM 0681-88**

When it comes to pure AOR, no one would argue that it's roots lie with US legends such as Journey, Foreigner, and REO Speedwagon. At the height of their successes in the early 80's, these bands shifted albums in their millions, easily eclipsing all the other scene's worldwide combined. Recently though there's been a definite power shift, just as most of the US acts either disappeared or went grunge in a desperate attempt to stay relevant, a new creative powerbase began to open up centred around the then rapidly expanding Swedish scene.

Forgive me if I seem perhaps a little partisan from time to time, but the Yanks have rarely gotten anywhere near ever since, a steady stream of top class melodic hard rock bands continuing to ensure that Sweden reigns supreme. The pedigree of

such luminaries as Alien, Bad Habit, Europe, Masquerade, Treat et al is second to none, and whilst sales might not be what they used to be, musically they're streets ahead of virtually everyone else anywhere in the world.

Formed as long ago as 1994 by ex Shape man Fredrik Bergh, Street Talk epitomise everything that's great about Swedish AOR. Consummate hooks, finely chiselled melodies, and passion oozing from almost every pore; their three album career to date has spawned some of the most inspiring music this genre has given us in the last ten years. From the remarkably classy debut **'Collaboration'** (originally released back in '97), through the sheer hedonistic bliss of **'Transition'**, to 2002's sparkling **'Restoration'** set, I don't think Street Talk have ever recorded a song that's less than essential.

As a celebration to commemorate the end of the first chapter in their history, Bergh (in collaboration with label MTM) has put together **'Destination'** an 18 track 'Best Of' set featuring a mouth-watering selection of cuts from those first three releases. And to appeal to those dedicated fans who already own copies of all three albums, there's a couple of brand new songs laid down last year with long time vocalist Goran Edman, plus two more which originally appeared as Japan only bonus tracks.

Although most of the lead vocals are handled here by one time Malmsteen man Edman, former Valentine/Open Skyz fave and Steve Perry sound-alike Hugo also makes his presence felt on the seductive **'My Heart Beats For You'**, and the dreamy **'Why Is My Heart Feeling Lonely Tonight'** (both drawn from **'Restoration'**). Of the rest, it's hard to even begin to pick a favourite track as each one is special in its own way, be it the upbeat effervescence of **'Ye Gods And Little Fishes'**, the pulsing **'Language Of Love'**, the heartfelt **'Walk Away From Love'**, or the monster hooks of **'Someday (I'll Get Over You)'**. As you'd expect, the two brand new cuts – **'Astray'** and **'Made For Paradise'** – are both up to the usual Bergh standards, each featuring a mouth-watering vocal performance

wrapped around a wonderfully evocative melody.

Whether this is the end, or merely the end of the beginning, only time will tell, but as potential epitaph's go, Street Talk have blessed us with a bit of a cracker!

9/10 **Dave Cockett**

## ADAM BOMB

Third World Roar

Cargo TWR001 CD

Adam Bomb is a chap who has worked with everyone and their dogs since what seems like about 1924. His biography extols the numerous projects and bands he has been part of, and after reading it you wonder how on earth such a talented individual could possibly not be a household name by now. Then you listen to the album.

My only previous experience of Mr Bomb is his 1990 cock rocker **'Pure S.E.X.'**, which was pretty good but never destined to set the sofa alight, let alone the world. It's 2003 (or it is when I'm writing this anyway) and Adam is back with, oh God please let it not be so, an anti terrorism album. Americans! Where would we be without our good ol' friends from across the pond, eh?

It is a lesson in life that you should avoid albums that begin with an instrumental called '911' and end with the **'Star Spangled Banner'**. Sandwiched between these blatantly emotion tugging bits of fluff are eleven songs that tell anyone who is a terrorist that they'd better look out, because we're gonna get them good. I don't advocate terrorism personally, but TWW is so stuffed with crap "God bless us everyone" type lyrics that I'm almost tempted to send Adam Bomb an envelope full of anthrax, and I don't mean the band.

To be fair (and about time too), it's not a bad album if you don't delve too deeply into the political nonsense. Some of the tunes are pretty cool, and the guitarwork is at times exemplary, although Adam's voice is only a couple of shades above average. It's not an album that you would come back to much, unless like me you're unfortunate enough to have to review it and as such have

to listen to it several times. It's gung ho hard rock for gung ho people, but with no fire and no power.

On this evidence, Adam Bomb should stick to being a guitarist for other people, and he definitely shouldn't ever wear combats on an album cover again, because he looks like a dick. File under "Why Bother?".

4/10 **Alan Holloway**



## DOGPOUND

The Hellbum

Lion Music LMC082

Sporting what can only be described as a one of the worst names I've ever heard for a rock band (a name which literally reeks of nu-breed wannabes), not too mention the kind of crass cartoon album cover which makes Bevis and Butthead look sophisticated, Swedish quartet Dogpound would on the whole seem to have the odds decidedly stacked against them. Or at least that's where my thought processes were leading until I actually sat down and popped debut album **'The Hellbum'** into my CD player. At that point, the symphony of noise which met my ears nearly blew me away!

A smouldering mixture of driving rhythms a la Burning Rain, the soaring hook laden melodies of Journey, and the pop rock sensibilities of newer bands such as Marvellous 3 or Attraction 65 (or more especially, later-day Harem Scarem), **'The Hellbum'** is one of closest things I've ever heard to a 'missing link' between the old and new worlds. Formed by guitarist Micke Dahlqvist as recently as 1999, Dogpound were forged at the Nordic School Of Rock Music in Munkfors, Sweden, further proof that talent has to be nurtured at grass roots level, something which we

here in the UK could learn a hell of a lot from.

Aside from Dahlqvist, the other major weapon in the Dogpound armoury is vocalist Henrik 'Hea' Andersson, a guy with a voice cut from the same classic hard rock cloth as both Steve Augeri and David Glen Eisley – powerful, emotive, commanding. Finally, there's the songs themselves, huge swathes of guitars – yep, there's plenty of solo's too – wrapped around some great, soaring hooklines and highly infectious melodies.

After what can only be described as a brief feedback loop, bouncy opener **'End Of Our Days'** arrives astride this huge monster riff straight from the Harem Scarem book of songwriting. Brash, effervescent, and all embracing, it's jaunty good time vibe seems a little at odds with the somewhat sobering lyrics, yet strangely it works. Following cut **'Bleed'** is more deliberate and aware, the Scaremisms moulded into a much more epic type of framework, yet again it's the hook that really grabs you by the balls! **'When The World Comes Down'** has one of the heftiest riffs on the whole album – towering, uncompromising, almost Metallica like at times, the Burning Rain comparisons are obvious as soon as the first verse kicks in, but the multilayered harmonies of the chorus could've come straight from the pen of Harry Hess.

All of a sudden you realise you're three tracks in and the quality hasn't even begun to dip at all, surely they can't keep this up all the way through, right? Wrong! Next up comes the ballsy **'Going Down In Flames'** with it's fluid guitar runs; then it's a change of tempo for the simmering power ballad **'Way Up High'**, itself filled with bombastic guitar fills, yet delivered with such panache and sensitivity. And that's before we even get to the likes of **'Loser On A King's Throne'**, **'You Remain'**, **'For My Sins'**, and **'Welcome To The Mystery'** ... impressive stuff indeed.

Infectious, attention grabbing, addictive ... all adjectives I'd use to describe **'The Hellbum'**. Given the right push, this could indeed be the start of something very special.

8/10 **Dave Cockett**

**NEWS NEWS NEWS NEWS NEWS**

MTM Music have signed Swedish AOR band CROSSFADE. Formed by guitarist Lars Hallbäck and keyboard player Richard Stenström, CROSSFADE also feature vocalist Göran Edman (YNGWIE MALMSTEEN, STREET TALK, KHARMA, MADISON), and renowned Swedish drummer Per Lindval. Their "westcoast" orientated debut album 'White On Blue' will be released in early April.

Majestic Rock will release ROBIN GEORGE's new album 'Bluesongs' next month. Despite the title the album is reputed to be a "collection of wickedly fine melodic rock songs garnished with some very fine guitar playing indeed. Trust us when we say that fans of the man's past endeavors will not be disappointed..."

ANGRA is currently pre-producing its forthcoming studio album, together with producer Dennis Ward (the same of 'Rebirth' and 'Hunters And Prey'). The CD will be recorded during January and February and then mixed in March. The worldwide release will be in May. Shortly after, ANGRA will start touring in Brazil and abroad with some European summer festivals booked.

The debut album by Tommy Denander's DEACON STREET PROJECT is complete and will be released by AOR Heaven in April. According to Tommy, the album is a mix of his own work with RADIOACTIVE, SAYIT and PRISONER and the classic sound of TOTO and GIANT. With Denander on the album are, among others, Geir Rønning, (TOTO), Jeff Northrup (XYZ), Lars Chriss (LION'S SHARE), Marcel Jacob (TALISMAN, MALMSTEEN) and Bruce Gaitsch (RICHARD MARX).

Now & Then have signed new Swedish band CLOUDSCAPE. The band, who consist of Micael Andersson (Vocals), Bjorn Eliasson (Guitars), Patrik Svard (Guitars), Hans Persson (Bass) and Roger Landin (Drums) have already been favourably compared to the likes of CONCEPTION, LAST TRIBE, QUEENSRYCHE, MALMSTEEN, SECTION A and 'Moving Target' era ROYAL HUNT. The debut album will be recorded at the prestigious Roasting House Studios in early April with Anders "Theo" Theander (LAST TRIBE, PATHOS, PAIN OF SALVATION etc) at the production helm. Demo samples can be heard at the band's website [www.cloudscape.just.nu](http://www.cloudscape.just.nu)

Spanish melodic rockers NEXX will play at the third Nemelrock festival. This year the festival is headlined by FIREHOUSE with support from VAUGHN and new Spanish act HARDREAMS, a new band from Barcelona.

NEMELROCK 3: FIREHOUSE, VAUGHN, NEXX, HARDREAMS  
Sunday, March 7th, 19:00 h., Caracol Venue in Madrid (Spain). Tickets: 25 euros until January 31st, 28 euros from February 1st until March 6th and 30 euros at the venue.

Vince L of PROTOTYPE has pointed out that their debut album 'Trinity' will be released on Massacre Records and not Insideout music on January 26th as stated in issue #1. Our apologies to all concerned for the incorrect information

Originators of industrial rock, Ministry are in the studio recording their follow-up to 2003's 'Animositisomina'. Straight from the success of this year's highly acclaimed American and European Fornica-Tour, the band returns to Sonic Ranch deep in the heart of Texas to record. 'Houses Of The Molé' is slated for release on Sanctuary's Mayan Records label in the Spring of 2004 and promises to expand upon the Ministry "wall of sound" that fans expect.

ARCH ENEMY have rescheduled two of the shows they were forced to cancel in December. They will now play Leeds Cockpit on March 7th

(0113 245 5570) and Birmingham Academy II on 8th (0870 771 2000). Original tickets remain valid.

PRETTY BOY FLOYD (with support from the RENEGADE PLAYBOYS) will play the following UK shows in February:

- 15th London - Underworld
- 17th Stourbridge - Rock Café
- 18th Crewe - Limelight
- 19th Mansfield - Town Mill
- 20th Bradford - Rio's
- 21st Nottingham - Rock City
- 23rd Sheffield - Corporation
- 25th Newcastle - Trillions

TESLA will release their new studio album 'Into the Now' on March 9 through Sanctuary Records. The original lineup of vocalist Jeff Keith, guitarist Frank Hannon, guitarist Tommy Skeoch, bass guitarist Brian Wheat and drummer Troy Luccketta have spent more than two years writing and recording 'Into the Now'. After such a long layoff, the band members wondered whether they would be able to write strong songs and produce an album largely by themselves. They agreed that they had to be satisfied with the songs which hadn't always been the case in the past. They realized how important this new album was going to be, and the quality of the songs was the most important consideration. The band often rewrote full sections or entire songs and sometimes recorded as many as three different demos for each one. Writer's block was a problem at times and the members would not settle on songs they weren't comfortable with. They knew instinctively which songs were great and which ones were not. The 12 songs which were are 'Into the Now,' 'Look @ Me,' 'What a Shame,' 'Heaven Nine Eleven,' 'Words Can't Explain,' 'Caught In A Dream,' 'Miles Away,' 'Mighty Mouse,' 'Got No Glory,' 'Come to Me,' 'Recognize' and 'Only You'.

After releasing two albums on Hammerheart Records, ('Timeless Departure' and 'Mind Revolutions') Swedish death metal band SKYFIRE have signed with Arise Records. Their debut album for Arise will be recorded at Los Angered Studios and Underground Studios for release in May 2004.

- PINK CREAM 69 will be touring Europe in March. The dates are:
- |                                    |                                 |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 05 Obermarchtal - Festhalle (D)    | 17 Nürnberg - Hirsch (D)        |
| 06 Kaufbeuren - Zepellinhalle (D)  | 18 Ludwigsburg - Rockfabrik (D) |
| 07 Karlsruhe - Festhalle (D)       | 19 Pirmasens - Quasimodo (D)    |
| 08 Bremen - Aladin (D)             | 21 Zürich - Alpenrock (CH)      |
| 09 Berlin - Halford (D)            | 22 Rosenheim - KUKO (D)         |
| 11 Aschaffenburg - Colos Saal (D)  | 23 Salzburg - Rock House (A)    |
| 12 Ingolstadt - Ohrakel (D)        | 25 Wien - Planet Music (A)      |
| 13 Tuttlingen - Alte Festhalle (D) | 26 Budapest - Tba (H)           |
| 14 Bochum - Matrix (D)             | 31 Montpellier - Rockstore (F)  |
| 16 Hamburg - Markthalle (D)        |                                 |

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