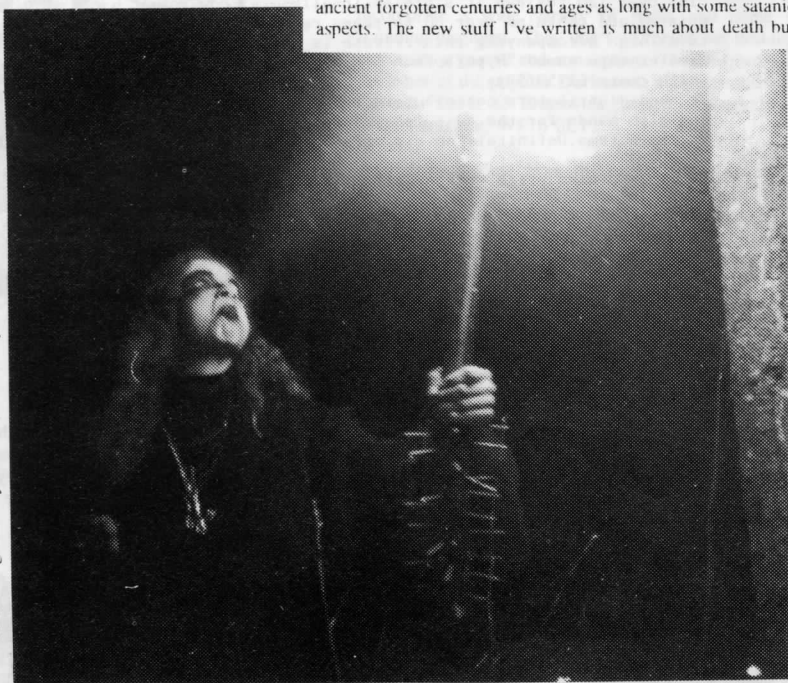


EMPEROR

Ihsahn - guitar, synth & vox in Emperor



The fourth band from the Norwegian circle of hate...

First, tell me something about the roots of Emperor! Yeah. Emperor was started by Samoth -drums, Ihsahn (aka Ygg) -guitar & vocals and Mortiiis -bass in the autumn '91. They released a couple of rehearsal tapes before they, in may '92, recorded their debut demo 'Wrath of the tyrant' which have sold about 400 copies. In the autumn '92 Samoth decided to play guitar instead of drums, so they asked me if I wanted to take over the drums and so I did. Three weeks after that we played our first gig together with Enslaved and some other idiotic bands which came down pretty well. And in the x-mas time we recorded our mini-lp which will be released on Candlelight later this year. A week after that we kicked out Mortiiis and got a new bassist named Ildjarn (or something like that). That's it I suppose.

Why has the old fashioned black metal in the style of Bathory become so popular in Norway suddenly? Is this a typical for Norway, like all the deathmetal bands in Sweden? And is the 'scene' located around Oslo? Well, certainly the norwegian scene has got some attention the last time... But the fact is that it's only about four black metal bands in Norway (Burzum, Mayhem, Darkthrone and Emperor). Take for example a band like Enslaved... They don't label themselves as black metal... Neither do Fester or any other band. But I know there are a lot of black metal fans here and I think it has got something to do with the shop Euronymous was doing before. You know, many people got influenced of this dark and evil shop. The shop was lightened up by candles only and it was painted totally black with evil records on the walls, chains hanging all over, up-side-down-crosses, and obscure effects, people got pretty influenced I think and we sold more and more black metal products. People got tired of the usual stuff like Napalm Death and Blasphemeion. The last time, that stuff didn't sell that much. We sold much more of bands like Darkthrone, Bathory, Burzum etc. Yeah, I guess black metal is pretty typical for Norway nowadays, but I think we should be careful to call it a trend. You don't have a trend just because a few bands are doing the same thing. Someone told me that it was a trend to have a picture of the band on the album-cover (just because Darkthrone, Profanatica and Immortal had it), but that's pure bullshit. You can't call it a trend just because three different bands are having pictures of themselves on the Napalm Death could be black metal if they had satanic lyrics, luckily they haven't. (So we can describe Hypocrisy as a black metal band?! -Ed) Take for example bands like Blasphemy, Death SS, Venom and Merciful Fate. They

are all black metal bands, but sounds totally different from each other. And Bathory is an original band. At that time, when they released their first lp, this was something completely new and different (of course there were bands like Venom and Hellhammer, but that was all.) There aren't many bands which sounds like Bathory today, so those few sick do it, can with safety be counted as original I think.

About what kind of subject do the lyrics handle? And explain me the track title 'I am the black wizards' As I said, it has been Mortiiis who have taken care of the lyrics so far, but I think they deal with ancient mysticism and also ancient forgotten centuries and ages as long with some satanic aspects. The new stuff I've written is much about death but

also about my view on satanism and prayers to satan to take my soul down to hell. I also include some depression-themes in it. I haven't read 'I am the black wizards' that much, so unfortunately I can't say much about it. Nothing, I am afraid. That's pity because I noticed a lack of depth in this kind of culture in many, so called 'evil' bands. It's the only real wisdom in this kind of music. But let's continue about culture... You've chosen the name Faust. Why? Well, why not? I haven't heard of any other band, 'zine or other people which have used that name, so I thought it would be a good idea to monopolize it. Besides, it's also a fist in the face to all those who just look in the 'satanic' bible and pick up a name there. (Yeah, those people could better read some Yoga books). I would rather use a name from some old classical books.

Did you read Goethe's magistral work Faust part one and part two in it's original language? Yeah, I've read it, but not in the original language (I guess that is german? Yes, you're right) That would be rather impossible for me as I only speak about 5 german words. It better be english or norwegian for me...

How long will you continue with Emperor? We have of course not made a specific date when we are gonna stop Emperor, but I suppose we're continue with Emperor as long as no major problem come over us. It's anyway impossible to say for how long we'll continue.

Give me some bands you can recommend and let me hear your last cries! Bands I would recommend would certainly be both Dissection and Katatonia from Sweden. They are album-cover... or what? Well, I don't really think the scene is located around Oslo. There are also people involved in places like Notodden and Bergen and some other places, but I guess Oslo have been reckoned as the main-place within black metal because the shop was there and bands like Mayhem and Darkthrone.

Why did Emperor kick out the bassplayer Mortiiis? Has it to do with a kind of attitude change? It was simply due to personal disagreement within the band and nothing more than that. I guess we're still friends, though I haven't met Mortiiis since we kicked him out.

Who was writing the lyrics for the mini-lp? Mortiiis has written all the lyrics for Emperor so far, so it means that who's left now, got to write some too, but that will be okay I think. As far as I know, two new lyrics are already made.

I thought Emperor got some kind of a record deal on Death-silence. But why has it turned out into a mini-lp on Candlelight records? Yeah, we got a record-deal on Deathlike Silence Prod. for lp's/cd's, but this mini-lp on Candlelight is more as a promotion-release I think. At least I look at it at that way. Just wait for our debut lp/cd which will

be released on DSP later this year (or maybe nest year). It will kill all our earlier stuff.

The first gig of Emperor was with the black metal band Enslaved. Soon you will open for Carcass when they tour in Norway. Do you know there are some people who don't agree with that you will open the Carcass gig as an original black metal band. The Carcass gig is not yet totally decided, but I suppose we'll be the one that opens the show. And yes, I suppose some jerks accuse us for being 'commercial' just because we open for Carcass, but I don't give a damn shit. The two other bands which played together with us and Enslaved (which is not a black metal band by the way) was much worse than Carcass so I don't really care. We just wanna promote the band and play some brutal and evil gigs. Hopefully we will get some 'effects' at the butcher, like blood and entrails. You know, Carcass are vegetarians, so hopefully we will shock them with our stage show... Come on, that's rather impossible considering the old album covers of Carcass! Your Postbox number and address is the same as of Deathlike Silence records. So Emperor must be a part of the black-metal circle in Norway. Can you exactly tell me the point of view of this circle, and what exactly is going on. The postbox number is the same because I live together with Euronymous from Mayhem. Yes, I guess Emperor are a part of the norwegian black metal circle. There are some other bands which wanna be part of it too, but it's not that easy for them. We are very careful with whom we pick up. A dark and evil mentality is needed. Too many 'black' and 'death' metal bands are just normal people who just wanna play and have fun. Such people will never come near us. As I said, we are very careful with what kind of people we have to intercourse with. Our circle's 'mission' is too cultivate darkness and evil and to destroy everything that is good in live (basically). I can of course not tell you exactly what is going on, because we have too much trouble with the police already. Count Grisnackh from Burzum is taken by the police accused for having burnt down 8 churches. He might get 21 years in prison, but due to the lack of evidence, he might also go free soon. People will soon discover that he's innocent...

Do you want to become famous with Emperor? Well, the unemployment is high here in Norway, so I've nothing against earning some money with Emperor, but I don't expect to be able to live on Emperor next month... We first got to build up a name and release some vinyls, then maybe the situation will change then. Time will show.

Do you know Darkthrone is still alive? I've heard some rumours they had trouble with each other... Yeah, Darkthrone are still alive these days, their new album 'Under a funeral moon' will be released by peaceville. It's so extremely great. It's a masterpiece. But the guys are a bit isolated, except from Fenriz who we meet sometimes... Well, if you see gylve again, bring the eternal hails from me to him, even he's too tired to answer my letters, taking part in a discussion and was too weak to put something original as an opening word in Mortician. I know we are trendy! Something about the music. I heard a quite lot of classical sounding keyboards. Is Master's Hammer one of the inspirations of Emperor? I don't really consider Master's Hammer as one of our sources of inspirations, but I shall admit that some of our synth-riffs sounds like Master's Hammer, but that's all. The rest of the music doesn't at all sound like Master's Hammer and I'm lucky to say that I don't play like the drummer of Master's Hammer because he plays so extremely boring (especially at the fast parts) Well, Master's Hammer is playing operetta-metal and that hasn't a typical drumming style. But do you think it's possible to develop a black metal style which is original and not the same as the old Bathory only. Well, I've got to say that it's not the music which decide whether it's black metal or not, it are the lyrics. That means that a band like extremely great. Especially Dissection. They are probably Sweden's best band Katatonia are also totally killer. (How is this possible, but you speak the truth) The Gathering are also extremely great. Although I'm not too found of their lyrics. Besides this, I listen to the old stuff of bands like Manowar (all stuff), Kiss (with paint), Black Sabbath (probably all stuff too), TNT (Their 'knights of the new thunder' lp), Judas Priest (old) etc. Last cries must be that our debut-demo is still for sale (\$6.- Europe or \$7.- elsewhere) and we have also got some raging shirts (\$18.- Europe and \$20.- elsewhere) Praise death and drink blood. Thanks for your true opinion, showing your great taste, dealing with Mortician Magazine and let your dark cries of the old, ancient northern Emperor echoing in the hills, mountains, fjords and woods for ever and ever. Sail your dark ocean!!!

Harold Dekkers

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