

Pierrick, vocalist and guitarist of French Phazm met up for an interview and we mainly treated the new album from these weirdo-metal dudes.

The conversation turned out to be something completely different from what I had expected...

## French mania

# PHAZM

## Deep thought or just plain bull shit?

Text: Caj Källmalm Photo: Osmose From 2008.09.23



**Hello Pierrick, I hope things are doing OK with you.**

- Hello dude, we're ok. Thank you for asking!

**Moving directly into the new album, how was it to record the new album?**

- We went to Paris at the *Sainte-Marthe Studio*, maybe you've heard about Arkhon Infaustus or Hangman's Chair, 'cause they've been recording there as well. It's a very good studio, located underground, near the catacombs. We were a bit lost in this big city, we felt like hobbits in the Mordor, as Paris is full of orcs and trolls.

**Sounds scary... so how did you work in progress when you managed to throw the ring into the fire (metaphoric for getting in to the studio)?**

- Well, we worked in the old-style way, no triggers, just a pure big sound without over-

dubs nor computer effects. We've been composing the songs since our latest album, 'Antebellum Death'n Roll' was out and this is the darkest album I've ever done. The music is so heavy, so black, the sound is huge, deep and big. Composing and recording it was an experience, we wanted to go as far as possible in the concept. Being low-tuned, massive and sinister. This is the accomplishment of two years of work.

### **Cornerstone of the Macabre**

**The songs on 'Cornerstone of the Macabre' are quite unusual compared to many other bands on the metal scene, where does the ideas come from and what are the biggest sources of your inspiration?**

- It just come naturally. I use a seven string guitar, I tune it in a very strange way. I have my own

way of riffing, which combines unusual intervals and groovy rythms. We like our sound to be organic and warm, like old bands such as Motörhead, Morbid Angel and Necrophagia.

**So how do you look at this new album, is it exactly the way you aimed for or better?**

- When you're listening to Black Metal, you're not supposed to think about some musicians recording in a fucking studio but to something related to your worst macabre thoughts. Rock 'n Roll is about plugging your guitar in a fucking amp and playing as hard as you can. Combine those both elements and you'll see what we're all about. We want to play without thinking that we're standing in the lines of a specific style. We love death, black, rock 'n roll, heavy metal... Phazm is a metal band. I compose the music

I wanna hear, let it be heavy or speed. My way of riffing includes strange harmonies, decomposed rhythms, low tuned strings. That's how you'll recognise our style. We can play a lot of different stuff, but the spirit is always here. I'm really proud of this record.

### **Metal with big M**

**Compared to your previous album - what have you done differently on this one compared to 'Antebellum Death 'n Roll'? And are you happy with the progress you've made?**

- 'Cornerstone...' is definitely more metal, with a big M. We wanted to sound darker, more serious and efficient. 'Antebellum...' was dominated by this rock 'n roll vibe, even in the lyrics. It was a hell of twisted fun, and the mood was good. Since

then, life has been a bit rough and we've had some really bad experiences. You know, everybody has to face death, to endure a loss of a father, of a friend. So to say, we were not able to compose with a positive energy. This album is more mature, and maturity comes with sadness. Also, the sound fits us more. Fat and organic.

**Are there any songs on 'Cornerstone of the Macabre' you are extra satisfied with?**

- *Welcome To My Funeral* is about the spirit of a dead man watching his friends from the world of the dead. He's telling them from above his last "Good Bye". I wrote in this song what I would say to my beloved people at my funeral. There's a harmonica part in it and it sounds really cosmic, I really like this one.

- *The Old Smell of the Meat* is the

Zombie Hymn. Written by zombies. The apology of eating flesh, killing and being proud of it. It's a very good song to play live, everybody's mashing and killing their friends.

- *The Worm on the Hook: Domination of Gods on the livings. Humans are made of useless flesh, we're just a bunch of slaves. I feel like James Hetfield when I'm playing it live.*

- *The End* is a message to the person I hate the most, and my hate is so strong I wanna die. The guitar solo is a killer. I can't get enough at listening at it. *Mucho Mojo* is people's favorite one, the more original because of its Tarrantino vibes, and I like it a lot too!

### **Live with big L**

**So that's more or less all the songs on the album? Anyway...**



This reminds me of a horror movie... the killer sneaks up on them is reflected in the glass... scaaaary



Don't ask me what the hell they're doing on this photo, but I guess it has something to do with some kind of Phazmic ritual...

**My feeling is that you guys must be working quite hard if you want to do this songs live, do you agree with me or does Phazm work well as a live act?**

- We're good on stage. 2 guitars, 1 bass, 1 drummer, let it be! We don't need much more, believe me, we have a good sound.

**How often do you play live and do you like it?**

- We play as much as we can, we did several European tours with Impaled Nazarene and Decapitated, but sadly enough we've never played in Sweden. I know your country as I've spent a lot of time in Uppsala at the *Dug Out Studio*. Hello to the metal crew over there, I miss you. Daniel

Bergstrand is somebody I really admire. He's ugly but so wise. I've lost a lot of money playing poker with awesome laddies. Sorry, what was the question?

**Well, I think we came through it... but which bands would you like to play live with if you could dream for a while?**

- Oh yeah, I would love to play with Crowbar and Necrophagia. Lynyrd Skynyrd would be nice too.

### The judgement

**What have you heard from fans, media and other bands about the album and do you agree with whatever they've said?**

- We have our very hardcore

fan team, we always get very good chronics, the media are supporting us a lot. A lot of people are telling us they've been waiting for a band like us for ages. But selling records is a dream. We've been able to record 3 albums, and that's far really cool. A chance. We'll work harder and do our best to make more people listen to our music. The metal scene is so much into bands like Soilwork, In Flames and those kinds of bands. It's hard to get some attention when you're not in this commercial "vibe".

- I'm not interesting in playing hardcore verses, pop refrains, Meshuggah breaks-parts and doing it over and over again, just

to please my fame hunger. Make things possible by supporting innovative bands by not buying pop boring metal shit.

**Yeah, or at least buy those albums as well. So what are you up to at the moment?**

- Rehearsals, gigs, tours, rehearsals, gigs, tours... Driving 10 000 miles to play in a dark venue with 350 drunk freaks, to get laid in a dirty backstage room, to be paid with chips and beers. That's what will probably happen to us.

### Rambling philosophy

**Sounds fun, hehe. Last of all then, could you name the four most original bands in you opi-**

**nion.**

- Cannibal Corpse, Hammerfall, Lividity, Dream Evil, Pierre sais going in to a frenzy of evil laughter. I don't know, really, I don't know. To each their own.

**Thank you very much, Pierre, for taking the time and answering these questions! If there is anything you would like to add, please feel free to add everything you would like to say!**

- There's no hazard. There's a meaning for everything. Look at the wings of an insect, look at the shape of a bark, look at an ice crystal, there's always the same symmetry. Music is the proof that the "soul" exists. Your body is dying, but your soul is eternal. Life

after Death can only be real. Our music is dark, but full of hope. You can't explain everything. But faith mixed with mysteries bring some power to your existence. Phazm express all of that. A society without musicians, poets, actors, writers and so, is a dead society. Don't forget that owning is touching. Get rid of internet, support the scene, turn off your computers. It's sunny outside. Myspace is not true. Only death is real, remember?

With those very... strange and perhaps deep - or rambling - words we end this interview. Thank you and good bye!

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