



Is there a secret behind making a good review? I don't really know, I think it is more hard work than any secret. Hard work in terms of the time it takes to listen to an album in order to know it but also in terms of the research necessary to add that extra dimension of interest to your review.

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Some people have stated that they wonder how the textual idea come up and make it into the text of the reviews I make. My answer is that I have no real idea but some things like band name, album name, similarities, and so on all come into play when it comes to textual content of the review. A band with a name in latin requires a clever touch of some latin phraseology, bad music requires bad jokes and so on in that fashion.

Still, the most important thing when writing a review is to write something that can be constituted as fun while still being informative which I succeed with in very rare cases. I do believe that the main key to making a review

work is to know the material by heart and therefore I tend to listen to them many times, mostly it goes up to ten times or more, some albums have been spinning for over thirty times before they have been written down into the review, I think that the better you know the album and the topic you look to write about, the better the text will become. I am often a bit lazy though so I tend to write without doing that much deeper research other than finding out personnel and stuff and if I stumble upon interesting stuff while doing that it tend to end up in the review.

For me the process of writing a review is short, about an hour a language and maybe half an hour of the research for the left side information, it is the listening that

requires the most time and all in all i usually spend about ten hours or waste about the same amount depending on the album in question. This means just that an album take about ten hours to review in the total time spent on the album that is being reviewed and that is true for every album I review and some even more time like Rock for Japan which required almost forty hours which is more or less a regular working week here in Sweden, The Birthday Massacre's Pins and Needles which I played more than 35 times also of course required something along those lines in time but I think it is worth taking the time to listen even though I have loads of material, it is best to give each and every record enough time to review it fairly.

Thing is though that it is im-

possible to write in a way that is liked by many or all and therefore I do not look for approval by anyone, in the early day maybe a little but now it does not matter and I write whatever comes to mind no matter what it is. Some have complained about the use of words like fuck or hell, mainly Swedish people since I have been more frequent with such bad language in Swedish text but why should I care, I don't give a fuck shit about what the hell they say when it comes to that thing, the language of a review and what is said in it is a merging of ideas during a period of about one hour and then it is done.

So what about length? Some may have seen that we can write somewhat lengthy stuff at times, and I actually had a question if we tried to write a certain amount of words or keep within a certain length but there is nothing like that, I write until I am done and it can be quite lengthy or it can be short depending on how things turn out in the process. In fact there are no rules to how we wri-

te reviews and I don't follow any at all but there is a format I tend to keep towards as it makes sure that important aspects like how it sounds and something about the band and why I think what I think is there, but it can be different and conform to nothing of that but still, I always try and say why I think what I think, how it sounds and add some facts about a band.

You have probably seen the exaggerated kind of parables to things where I can say that I rather get Ebola than listening to a certain album or Cancer or whatever it may be. It is of course not so, no music can be that bad so you rather take your chances with death than listening to a certain kind of music. I have always found such exaggerated facts funny and it has always been used by me so it is only natural that I throw them into my writing as well. I also think it would be easier for someone to take a low scoring review if it was some humour diluting the things said

and not only technical sterile babble about how bad they are, it is easier to be bad in a funny way than to actually be bad for real.

But what about the rating? do you try to have a certain percentage of reviews in each rating? No! The rating is dictated only by the quality of the music in question, it tend to be percentually within the numbers you can expect with some skewing in one direction or another but the overall material is scarily close to the percentages you statistically should expect for the rating scale we have but that is not a something we strive towards it just happens just like 2011 is skewed towards the higher ratings at the moment.

I think that in light of everything I think our reviews should be read with an open mind and also with the knowledge that we are not dead serious about this reviewing business, after all it is about music, not politics or hospital equipment. In the bigger scheme it is not important at all and anyone feeling that we step on





toes or are rude: step back, look again, and consider that it is written for entertainment and not for actually being a serious analysis of a record, I will write such a review at one time and you will see that it is not particularly interesting. I think anyone reviewing music thinking that he/she does an important job and is impartial and non-subjective is fooling him-/herself as it is impossible to be objective about music. We all have preferences and we all must use them, I cannot try to analyse a really bad record to try and understand how people who like bad music see this bad record, people who like a band will probably like their music even though I say it sucks and people who don't, don't. Reviewers play a role as promoting and creating awareness of an album but they can never represent the true quality of it and I work with that knowledge and don't try to describe the true quality I say what I think and nothing else.

Music is based on personal preference and a review is just someone's preference so you can never really take it seriously, but some good reviewers are entertaining and that is what I hope to be some time. While getting there I might get things right from time to time.

If you by any chance wonder about the album covers that top and bottom these pages, they are albums I have reviewed and the ones on the top are the ones I have given a positive rating and the ones on the bottom are the ones with a negative one.

You may also figure that taste has something to do with it, that certain genres generally receive a better or worse rating. In that assessment you be right as I tend to give extreme metal a lower rating but it is not something that is for certain, many extreme band has received a high rating, like Eluveitie, Zuul FX, Samael, Catamenia, Death Angel to name

just a few. Another thing is that you might think history has something to do with rating as well that a band I like always get good ratings and the same for bad, but that is not true either. Take Wolfchant whose Determined Damnation scored a rating of two and the following Call of the Black Winds was awarded a four, the same can be said for Wizard with a three and a five and more of these can be found throughout. A good earlier review does not guarantee a good later one as little as a poor review guarantees another poor review. I let every album speak for itself and when rating them, baggage has no bearing whatsoever.

In the end though I am just looking to describe and tell you my opinion of an album, if I am successful I manage to do it in a funny way that is enjoyable to read otherwise it is hopefully good enough to know more or less what kind of album to expect.

And remember, all I care about

is how it sounds, who made it or what they think about what I write does not really matters. What matters is that it is something for you, our readers. Something you can enjoy reading, something that tells you about what kind of music you can expect to hear on an album and about what quality it may be. No matter what the bands or labels say, we will continue doing our things in our reviews and still not caring what the label or the bands think about it. They could of course stop sending us music to review but how would that help them if we got bigger and more people read what we write? It would not, it is better to be seen in a negative way than not at all if you want to sell music, I think frequent readers can more or less compare their taste to ours and select from that anyway.

I think all music is fantastic in its own way and I am happy to put down all hours needed to try and make the best review possible.

Top Ten 2011 this far:

- 1. Sirenia - The Enigma of Life**
GOTHIC, SYMPHONIC METAL
- 2. Williams Friestedt**
AOR, MELODIC ROCK
- 3. Uriah Heep - Into the Wild**
ROGRESSIVE ROCK/METAL
- 4. Zuul FX - The Torture Never Stops**
THRASH/DEATH METAL
- 5. IAMX - Volatile Times**
ELECTRONIC/PROG ROCK
- 6. Bad Habit - Atmosphere**
AOR/MELODIC HARDCORE
- 7. While Heaven Wept - Fear of Infinity**
PROGRESSIVE METAL
- 8. Ten - Stormwarning**
AOR/MELODIC ROCK
- 9. Samael - Lux Mundi**
PROGRESSIVE DEATH METAL
- 10. Wizard - ...of warivulfs and bloutwarves**
POWER METAL

