

A Pagan's mind

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OBTEST

Lithuanian metal with Nordic mythology

From the tiny Baltic country Lithuania comes the folk metal act called Obtest. Inspired quite a lot from the Nordic mythologies I as a Swede have grown up with, these five men do their metal and translates it directly from their home language to English. This time *The Tree of Life* have their focus.

Osmose Production call it a sensation, or something like that at least, and the band themselves are extremely proud to get the deal – a world wide distribution from the French extreme label. But is this, Obtests fifth album (depending on how you judge), the album that will lead the band to Valhalla? Who knows...

- We just expect that it will be distributed worldwide and it will get as much attention as it is worth of. It opens more opportunities for your music to spread, I hope our fans or potential listeners could find this album even in remote places.

That is the words of *Sadlave*, one of two guitar players in Ob-

test. Dressed up like Vikings, this band takes the image seriously and when I ask them which Viking gods they would be if they could make a comparison, an answer is not tricky to lure out from the Lithuanian.

- *Baalberith*, vocalist would be Thor/*Perkunas*, *Insmuth* the drummer would be Heimdall, bass player *Demonas* would be Loki, *Enrikas* guitar player would be Vidar, and me probably Bragi.

The Tree of Life

Enjoying the beautiful art work of Obtests latest album, in words known as 'Gyvybes Medis' (don't ask me how that is pronounced), one might get the feeling that this

is beautiful music filled with nice melodies and nice vocal harmonies. *Sadlave*, however, describe it as something else.

- We do not use any keyboards, or folk instruments, it's straight rock-like instrumentation: drums, guitars, bass, vocals.

And the album also contain a lot of other cool stuff, or so I've heard.

- 'Gyvybes Medis' album is a story about the tree of life grown up by Baltic people.

- The recording sessions were actually untypical for us, before this we used to work at our home studio, and spent plenty of time on that, so this time we had a time limitation. First of all, we re-

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corded drums and guitars, then after a while vocals and backings were recorded in the same, Hertz studio in Poland, with Wieslawski brothers as sound engineers. The mixing and mastering was

done in Latvian Phoenix studio with Gints Lundbergs. Everything was done by ourselves, I mean without any session musicians or producers.

Well, have you seen on the sto-

mach (a direct translated Swedish expression). What else can we expect from the album?

- This work bounds very different songs into one whole piece. It's more swift and wild than ag-

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The end is begun

So now we know, maybe to much, about this Lithuanian band. So who is their best guess for an audience of 'Gyvybes Medis'?

- Every metalhead could try it on his ears, especially those who like furious and energetic no-remorse metal music.

That sounds like almost the entire world, or almost... Why would they buy it then?

- The best argument would be to try something untypical. I'm sure such words like heathen metal, or folk metal describes more or less a definite style, and here you will find something in between. Ourselves, we describe what we do as pagan metal, where pagan stands for the poetry and the spirit in music, and metal in the sound and the way we do it.

Ah, as clear as the naked leg of a bear big as King Kong... Considering their influences, it might be good, some might argue:

- The main influence creating music is some chocking events in your life, it could come from different sources, because it depends on the state of mind when you are ready to "discharge" the energy you were accumulating for some period of time. These bands made a big impact on me as a musician: Grave, Paradise Lost, Tormentor, Kreator, Death, Bathory. Non metal bands like GR.OB., A-HA, Mark Knopfler, Dead Can Dance, Ataraxia, Einsturzende Neubauten, Thin Lizzy, and a wast amounts of folk, traditional and medieval music.

With all that said, not too much is left to be added, except:

- Obetsts songs are written in Lithuanian language, but is translated to English, because the best way to express your feelings is to do it in your native tongue.

Agreed! Thank you for clearing that out, Sadlave! Good luck in concering the world, pagan style!
Fixxxer

gressive, and more deep lyrically. The most notable change is the recording quality, it gave us the powerful and clear sound, leaving our special Obtest touch, which is kept on our every record. Second important change is a bunch of old-school solos, coming from our second guitar player on this record. I won't compare it to other pagan metal bands, I'm not

good on that topic.

Tours and stuff

With the new deal signed with Osmose, Obtest might have a chance to be more than just an obscure blackish metalish act that no one outside The Baltic have heard of. But then it's important with tours, right?

- This is the new step for the

band, Sadlave sais. The wheel starts to turn faster, I mean the attention we get. Everything else is what we usually do: interviews, rehearsals, composing new songs and wandering the fiery paths. Actually some 10 and more yeas ago we were just dreaming about the deal with Osmose Productions, and now it's reality, so we'll try to be more serious than

ever, Sadlave laughs. It would be nice if we get more invitations to play live shows, after all.

Yeah, but it was a little problem with that particular thing.

- Actually we have few dates confirmed for our mini-tour in the east, Belarus and Russia, in the end of June. The possible tour in Europe would be held in October or later this fall, I hope. The

problem is that at the moment we have no booking manager. So if these obstacles will be removed, everything will go like I said.

But who would like to go watch them after hearing this decription over them selves?

- We are lazy bastards for the rehearsals, filosophers in the studio, rebels on stage and nomads on the road.