

ATHORN

What would happen if an asteroid carrying a virus that brought out the living dead? An age-old question that German band Athorn are trying to answer with their second album that was released earlier this year. We at Hallowed had the fortune to ask the band some questions about the new album and the band in general.

NECROPOLIS





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Carsten Frank, Stefan Schönebeck, Tobias Liedke, Thomas Maiwald and Sören Becker founded Athorn in 2008. They evolved quickly and released the EP "Livable Hatred" in 2009 and following that release they recorded their first album "Phobia" that was released by AFM Records in 2010. A release that led to some good stuff.

- We played lots of shows these days and just enjoyed the album. Time passed and we started writing for our second LP.

But that LP was not to be, not at that moment anyway as they fell

into issues with members pursuing their own thing. But then in 2014 the band was reawakened with a new line up where Björn Spier, Matthias Brandt and Philip Horst join founding members Frank and Liedke. This new constellation started work on the second album "Necropolis" that saw light of day on the 16th of September 2016.

- "Necropolis" is a concept that's been around in our heads for quite a while. Back when we started the work on this album, we had lots of ideas about how it could evolve and how the final result would look. We came up with a pretty neat story and started working on artworks, videos and other material.

This neat story is about a post-

apocalyptic scenario, about the world very different from our world today. The long and bumpy ride working with this album has taken them to telling a story about a darker place where hope is sparse and it is kind of about their city of the dead.

- It's about an asteroid that crashes into earth and brings the living dead. The population has almost been completely decimated. But there is this one guy that hasn't given up hope just yet. He searched the wastelands for some kind of solution and human contact.

- He finds a strange artefact that could help in any way and kind of bumps into a group of other fighting survivors who from then on help him find the path he's

looking for. The main protagonist is driven by his memories of his loved ones and always balances between giving up and going on.

- Wandering through the wastelands, the group is constantly followed by the living dead. In the end the group sacrifices itself so the main protagonist can go on and reach his destiny. His artefact destroys all evil in the world and makes new life thrive. So in the end he sacrifices himself so new life could grow.

The band describes it as a story of good and evil and one's inner strength of positivity that keeps a man going and how it is always worth it to keep going even when things are looking grim. And the reason for making a post-apocalyptic story is that they like con-

cepts like that so it feel naturally for them to chose that path for this new album.

So why chose to make a concept album?

- We just had that idea and we all like concept albums as a work of art. It's not just the songs. It's the story, the artwork, videos, pictures, everything down to even the final product like the design of a fitting digipak and all. When we think of concept albums, we want to have a product in our hands that tell the story visually and that just creates this universal image of what it's about. It's all the icing on the cake for the core, the actual music that expresses all these visual feelings and impressions.

But telling a story through music isn't always an easy thing, as a music writer I have seen both successes and failures when it comes to concept albums. There are different challenges in making one of those compared with making a more standard album where the songs don't have to glue together as a story, but the biggest challenge seems to be more one of tying it all together than making the songs tell the story.

- We guess the biggest challenge for all our albums is that everything we do, everything we record and design and also all the videos are handmade by ourselves. We're lucky enough to have an own recording studio that's also our rehearsal space. But with all the possibilities at hand it is



really hard to come to an actual end.

- With everything at our hands and well, theoretically no time limit, it's hard to come to an end when you constantly search for enhancement. With a concept album that strive is even harder because we really wanted to create a consistent piece of art.

Another thing with a concept album is that it can sometimes be that all tracks tell the story together and you have no standout tracks, well our reviewer had a favourite track, so what about the band?

- That's hard to pin down. But for the whole band the last two tracks, *Born In Flames* that then leads into *Of Pawns And Dra-*

gons, that's where the fireworks in terms of emotionality go off. That's where we really feel the album concluding the story.

Garrying on with the previous subject of our reviewer, he thought the album was great and even bought their strictly limited album along with some merchandise but what about other reviewers? Personally I didn't find much by doing a simple web search but I guess the band has more knowledge on that subject.

- All in all the reception has been great, although it's always hard for a classic concept album to really touch base in nowadays metal scene. So we've had re-

views saying this is the greatest album release of 2016 and we've had reviews saying that this is totally old-school and outdated. All in all we're happy that there are so many folks out there still enjoying handmade music.

So what about the chances of seeing the band live at a venue nearby?

- We are always looking for gigs and opportunities to tour and hope to have some news soon.

And if these news about live dates for Athorn are good and they visit a place nearby and I decide to come look at them, what will I see?

- We have lots of fun on stage. That's what we're all about and that's what our fans get. We

make music so people can enjoy themselves listening to it on CD or live. And we enjoy it with them. So on stage we are pretty energetic and you can always see that we're having a ball.

The album was released a few months ago now and besides wanting to be seen on stage, the band has more things in their pipeline.

- Right now we're just promoting the album and playing some gigs. We're going to release another video next to *Another Day In Hell* which has already been out a while. We always have something in the works, so just stay tuned.

And a new album is also in the works so we shouldn't have to

wait six years for a new album this time.

- Definitely not! We are already in the process of writing our third LP. There are already five or six songs that are quite written and we'll probably start the recording process next spring. So one could carefully say that you can be looking out for new Athorn music by the end of next year.

And with that we thank Athorn for their time and recommend that you take a look at their recent album *Necropolis*, released by DR Music on September 16.

Some additional reading:

Our review of *Necropolis*
Another Day in Hell Video
Athorn's website
Athorn on Youtube

Athorn are:

Carsten Frank - Vocals
Björn Spier - Guitar
Tobias Liedke - Guitar
Matthias Brandt - Bass
Philipp Horst - Drums