

DAWN OF WINTER

The Peaceful dead

A band far from the career dawn is Dawn of Winter. Even though they've been working together for almost 20 years, only two albums has been released. the second one came this winter...

Dawn of Winter was far from what we had when I interviewed this band with that very name. Instead there was about a meter of snow on the fields, well it still is and there was lots of snow and lots of winter when this interview was done. Did I mention that it was about -20°C at mid day? Well at least I did so now.

But really, who are these guys calling themselves Dawn of Winter? According to Gerrit P Mutz the singer of the band they are old and lazy.

- We are four old guys nearly 40 years old, Gerrit starts and then alters his statement slightly: well we could say in the thirties.

In the 30s or 40s hasn't really that much meaning to me but the thing is that this band has been around for quite some time.

- We have been doing this since... well for nearly 20 years, Gerrit explains. We have been working very slow and very relaxed, it makes it all very fresh every time we do something musically and now we're on another break as our guitarist can't rehearse until April because of his day job.

Text: Daniel Källmalm
Photo: Massacre records
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This way of slow working and working with things besides music makes a great way to run a band, at least according to Gerrit.

- It is easy to keep together when you're not that busy, Gerrit states in a solid tone of voice like he knows what he is talking about. We are just lazy and laid back coming and wouldn't want it any other way as we all have other jobs/bands or family.

Don't we all? What if we all could take it in slow motion, how much easier life would be. Sometimes it takes quite some time for this band to release something they record.

- We recorded our first EP back in 1994, Gerrit explains, it was then released in 2003 because the sound sucked, it still does but at least we had it remixed.

At least they did, but before their first recorded EP actually was released the band managed



to release their first album which hit the shelves in the closing years of the 1990s.

- We released our first album in 1997... no 1998, an undecided Gerrit recalls, we recorded it in 1997. We have also done some EPs and compilations, nothing serious. We worked for 4-5 years with 'The Peaceful Dead'; from time to time we had no time to work with it, it took us two years to get into a studio where we could record when we were not too busy.

The Peaceful Dead

'The Peaceful Dead' is only the second album this band has released over the many years they have been doing this. That actually makes them release albums at a slower rate than Boston (and

that is at a slow rate for sure). With two albums it might be somewhat easy to describe the difference between the albums, but what's the difference...

- The first album was more of a collection of many years while the other one was written in two years, Gerrit explains the differences between the albums; then it took us three years to record. Because of that it is more spontaneous. The biggest difference is that we all wrote the songs. On the earlier material the guitarist wrote all the music while I wrote the lyrics. The new material works really good together, it was a shared venture in difference to the first one.

Dawn of Winter on the cemetery

I haven't heard the first one so I cannot really comment on these differences but surely one can hear some diversity on 'The Peaceful Dead' and that may or may not have something to do with this shared venture thing.

It was a long wait for the members before the album really materialised but according to Gerrit it was worth the wait.

- It was worth the wait I think as I am very satisfied. Of course things can be made better but we do what we do and love the music and we're happy to have a label.

And with that comes lots of

other stuff. Like more publicity and more PR-work like interviews and other things.

- That is a step forward as we don't have to pay for everything ourselves. We have also had to do a lot more interviews than usual, we usually have done something like three and now I believe this is the 25th interview now, Gerrit explains.

Musically Dawn of Winter is about old school orthodox slow doom metal. They don't care for anything fancy or complicated just what is absolutely needed, nothing more.

- Just a base, a guitar and a very basic drumkit all topped with whining vocals.

Gerrit also makes a big point about the drumkit being very basic, much like the ones found on the stages where those old rock bands were playing, you know which ones I mean: Elvis Presley and the likes of course, who did you think? Led Zeppelin?

Besides that, I can also put your fears to rest as Gerrit makes it very clear that this band has no plans on conquering the world or to gain world domination, which of course is a good thing as I will not have to fear that they will ruin my plans.

- We don't try to make anything more than it is of it and we are not trying to conquer the world with it. The music is very slow and with a real doom mood.

Reviews and slowness

Any way, well not really any way but anyway, we will move on when it comes to 'The Peaceful Dead', does Gerrit have a favourite song on the record? Of course he does.

- The title track, he replies without hesitation, not everyone can stand it because it is so slow, but it came out easiest and was just there.

And still it is not only for most snowed in or orthodox crazy dark fans of the sloooowest of doom metal, no.

- After I had played this song for my then three-year-old son he took a liking to it and I can remember that he sung the lyrics, it was a big surprise that he remembered the words, it proved to us that it is a good melody.

Now, how many of those big great bands in the genre has done music for kids? I don't suppose **Candlemass** has done that, nor any of the darker growlier bands, but **Dawn of Winter**, maybe the next time we hear them, we hear

their music in the upcoming Disney/Pixar production, or not.

At least that is one good reaction to the record and according to Gerrit the reactions for 'The Peaceful Dead' has been quite mixed but still with a general tilt towards the raving side of things, need I remind you that **Hallowed** deemed it so-so but somewhat above average.

- I have seen 30-40 reviews and of them about 20 was raving, says Gerrit, about 10 were mixed reactions and about five-or-so hated it so that is much better than I had expected.

And after all, even the most revered bands of the genre never got that raving reviews when they released their albums, so maybe **Dawn of Winter** is even better than those bands if the relations between the reviews are as he

has seen them since I honestly never have had any time to really look at the reviews at other places I take his words for it and judging from what I have heard when it comes to 'The Peaceful Dead' I can believe that the reviews are about what he describes and I have no reason to doubt him either. One can only hope these positive reviews leads to increased sales in order to give the band the chance to make more and even better records. After all even the best started out in an uphill struggle.

- When **Candlemass** came they were really crushed in the reviews, every doom band suffers from this. It is not an elite group the doom metal people, but you have to feel it to appreciate it, if you don't then you don't understand and there is nothing wrong with that but it would be nice if those people did not write the reviews.

Before future

Darn, maybe I shouldn't have written that review, after all I have never ever been into the doom genre and I really despise **Candlemass**. Once I saw them live and thought they sounded quite good and bought a record that was terrible. Well no more about that now. One thing I always ask, as that may seem quite relevant when it comes to bands and promoting records, is about touring. **Dawn of Winter** will not make any touring, that much is certain, note the **B5** quote there.

- We don't have the time, Gerrit explains. We get requests for smaller tours but we all have other projects and day jobs so we don't really have the time for it.

However, there is a small chance that the band will perform live, they would like

to do at least one show as they have a backdrop lying about and hasn't been used even once.

- A fan asked if he could make one for us and we said that he could and he did so now we have a backdrop that we have never used. Therefore we have to try it some time.

I couldn't agree more as it would be very much a waste not to use something that has been made for you. After all that is a waste of Earth's natural resources and we all know what wasting them means, temperatures rising without control and we will have no more **Dawn of Winter**. There you have it, the global survival rests in the hands of this band, don't you forget it, buy 'The Peaceful Dead' in order to ensure the **Dawn of Winter** again.

Future

But what about the future? Is

"We won't ever split as we have a gentleman's agreement to stay together"

That's why Winter will last forever

DAWN OF WINTER



there any plans for upcoming things? At least one thing is certain when it comes to this band.

- We won't ever split as we have a gentleman's agreement to stay together, Gerrit Explains and for sure that is interesting, do go on: We made it at the guitarists wedding, the promise that we would never split and that we are never allowed to stop.

That is a noble thing to do, but still lots can happen during the years and no matter how solid things look at the moment, it can change quickly, look at the last quarter of 2008 if you don't believe me.

- We will only stop when one of us dies and hopefully it will be a long time before that happens.

Well that is as good a reason to stop as any and I guess we can agree with him on that point, the death of musicians is never a good thing, politicians is a whole other thing but that I leave for another time. If we look beyond that, you know death and stuff, new album - will it happen? Gerrit says it will but he doesn't want to be more specific than that.

- We will have to see when the next album arrives but I guess it might take a while. We will work on it when we have the time to

do it. Nothing will happen before April as it is only then our guitarist will be able to work with the music again, and then we will play new songs. I have however one song left from this album but it is about 9-10 minutes long and I am not sure the others will accept that.

And with that final note we conclude that and only leaves the final quote to be filled by Gerrit:

- Stay patient. Maybe I will play in Sweden this or next year with **Sacred Steel** and if so: come to the gig all fans of **Dawn of Winter**.

Dir.K