



Multinational band Imperia fronted by Helena "Iren" Michaelsen are releasing their third album the 25 of march this year. It is called Secret Passion and was well received by the hallowed reviewer who gave it a five out of seven. We had the privilege to ask our questions to Helena to learn a little more about the band and how they work and maybe also what lie ahead for them.

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IMAGES BY MASSACRE PROMOTION
PUBLISHED 11/3-2011

Imperia consist of musicians from four different countries and were founded by Norwegian female singer Helena who had her trouble figuring out the name at first and they also had some line up changes to begin with before finding a good team to work with.

- Gerry Verstreken on Bass in the band since the beginning that Imperia hit the stage, Jan "Orkki" Yrlund on Guitar, also the engine behind the band, composing the songs, doing the art work on our cd's and website, and Steve Wolz our Drummer, is the members behind Helena.

As the band members live in different countries it may be seen as difficult to cooperate between

them since there is some inherent logistical problems making it difficult to meet up in person too often.

- We work trough internet, Helena explains.

Contact and sending samples would be quite easy through the internet, Rehearsals would be another thing but the band has that sorted as well.

- Rehearsals we do everyone

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for ourself at home and if there is a gig we come one day earlier together to work on a fine rehearsal and after some drinks, Helena answers with a little laughter.

She also explains that the band only meet in conjunction with shows which she says might change in the future, but suddenly states that she saw the light to why they never argue, of course with a hint of irony and laugh.

Secret Passion

Helena explains that the musical style of the band is a difficult one to describe, it is a very open style she says.

- Most important the song must have feeling. It can be any kind of style as long as the feeling is there and that I can fit the emotion of the music to experiences in my life. We want to play emotional metal. Many people describe us as a gothic female fronted metal band, seems a good description, but we will see how it turns out in all the reviews.

Emotions seem to be one inspiration for the band and their music, other than that it is more of everyday events than other music that inspire.

- I'm a philosopher and a thinker. Im for sure not a talker (nor a spelling champ.) so I end up thinking a lot about life in general and people etc. but many of the lyrics are from experiences in the past but also dreams and hopes of mine. The music heals my soul, she explain.

Musical healing seems like something that is universally approved, I think everyone can feel better from music, if it is for recreating a lost moment or for bringing up emotion, just to ease a burden or memories, for most it is about listening and for some about creating the music. Secret Passion is the third time Imperia creates this music and for Helena personally it is the album she is



most satisfied with.

- It is a big improvement from the first CD, it gives me positive energy when i hear the songs, and i hope that is how the listener feel as well, she explains and adds that it has a lot of catchy phrases.

Improvement from the first CD is one mentioned difference but this album was also made according to Helena for a wider audience and also a try to widen their musical vision. Speaking of musical vision, I love asking about favourite tracks on the albums since all artist are quite reluctant to give up which tracks they favour but as I favour british english and also some of my work over other I believe all artist have their own favourite track and when I point out that my favourite track is track twelve My Sleeping Angel, Helena

points out that it is the track that is closest to her hear even though the admission of a favourite track doesn't come easy.

- All the different tracks have their own life for me, like they are different persons in a way. So I haven't favoured any special song myself but I love sleeping angel as well, it gives me shivers. Oliver Philipps sing very good there also so i understand that its your favourite song. It has so mush emotion, and you feel that, thank you.

Helena also explain that that particular song has a special meaning to her.

- The lyrics and song is for my daughter who her real name is, Angel. So I must admit that indeed this song is the closest to my heart for sure, she explain.

Sexy Photos & touring

Promotion is always important to sell music, the awareness of the band in different media and also touring always help create an awareness and awareness is what sells music, if fans don't know about the band, they will not buy their music. A short while ago I received a mail from the record company about some sexy photos which they pointed out that we could spread to our readers. This article is of course a good forum for this but I decided to ask, just for fun about this, is it a trick to sell more music?

- NO! Thats not why, it's a part of who I am. I'm a woman who is not afraid showing I'm a woman let's say. I like to play in front of a camera. In general i like to play whatever the situation is about, she explains.

So, the sexy photos are not

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about selling music according to Helena, but what about touring? Will there be any Imperia tours to promote this new album? They are of course hoping for it but the need for a good deal is important for the band as they need good fees because of their logistical situation.

- So hope this CD will be successful enough so that venues can pay for us to play. Cause we love to play for our fans and it doesn't matter if its 6000 or 100 in the audience, we just want to play. We love it!

The band is said to be a power-

ful live band which is something they hope to be proving in the future. According to them they view their fans as family and friends and Helena explains that they love to meet and greet with them after the shows.

- We party and spend time with them after the shows cause we love to do so and we have our feet on the ground. We are nothing more than flesh and blood. Just people who struggle to find happiness in this world we ended up in.

If the band were to dream, the venue they would most like to

play at would be all of them, the big and the small all around the world.

- And hope they got sold out, Helena explain laughing.

More Secret Passions

A striking thing about Secret Passion is the cover artwork which has a sort of surreal feel to it and looks really good, it is such an artwork that you might stop and look at when flipping through album covers and therefore I asked about this.

- The photo idea was mine and the clothes and all, but Jan have



done all artwork and he has done an amazing work! He is amazing, Helena replies to this question.

Some gothic albums do have lyrical themes to them and with the fantasy look of Secret Passion there might be something like that for them as well, but Helena explains that it is about hope and seeing positive, about life and everything so it would appear

that there is not any special theme throughout the album.

The reception for the album has been good so far according to Helena.

- Like as I have heard till now, people love it, it sounds a little different but much more open. And the journalists till now have been very positive about the CD. Haven't heard any negative

yet to be honest.

We end with some final words from Helena "Iren" Michaelsen whom we of course thank for her time and answers.

- Thank you for being the reason why we still exist. We would love to come to your country to play for you live, so who knows, until later then.

- Kisses and hugs from Helena.