

# "Out For Blood"



Genre: Melodic Power Metal  
Limb Music

# GHOST MACHINERY

It's been six years since we saw "Haunting Remains" from Finland's Ghost Machinery, the side project of Burning Point's Pete Ahonen; so long it seems odd now to see a second instalment, though I'm glad we have, as "Out For Blood" is one of the finer releases of the past twelve months. There's not a lot to say here really, other than if you like quality melodic metal packed full of top notch performances, crystal clear production and catchy as hell songs, this is gonna do it for ya.

A small bone of contention for me is that ex-Altaria frontman Taage Laiho takes all the vocals here, something that is confusing considering the fine voice Pete has himself. Nevertheless, the vocal work here is exemplary (and Taage sounds a lot like Pete anyway), and what's more, "Out For Blood" manages to be catchy without resorting to

a lot of tricks. It's naturally engaging, with tracks like "Guilty", "Sentenced To Life (In Paradise)" and clean-cut opener "Face Of Evil" all topping the scale for excellence, with others such as "Name Remains In History" and "Send Me An Angel" coming off just as well. Plus, it sounds like a real album, unlike the first tome, which was more like a collection of Burning Point outtakes. This one has great cohesion, with no skip-worthy tracks at all. Swathed in keyboards, peppered with Ahonen's glorious guitar work, and touched by some truly awesome vocal melodies, "Out For Blood" isn't reinventing the wheel, but it's giving it a damn good spin. Roll on album number three.

POWERPOINTS: ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧

BRUCE TURNBULL

the aegis of Daniel Rey, sophomore effort "Vices" duly hit the vinyl emporiums some two years later. Just as good, and if anything even better than the debut, "Vices" was steeped in the same low down 'n' dirty fuck you attitude... only with substantially better songs. The addition of Zowie on bass enabled Gary Sunshine to take on the role of permanent second guitarist, the cut and thrust of his sinewy interaction with Rickey Beck Mahler both enriching and reinforcing the band's trademark bluesy sound.

A beefy amalgam of influences such as The Rolling Stones, AC/DC, The Ramones, MC5, Aerosmith and Iggy Pop, this time around, the Circus Of Power attack was expanded with a healthy injection of southern rock (as evidenced by the likes of the sinewy "Got Hard..."). Attitude and angst are always a great place to start for any hard rock band, but ultimately it's the strength (or lack thereof) of your songs which will win (or indeed lose) the day... an area which saw Circus of Power hit a rich vein of inspiration with "Gates Of Love", "Vices", "Don't Drag Me Down" and "Doctor Potion" (to name but four).

Expertly remastered and temptingly packaged here with all five cuts from the "Live At The Ritz" EP as bonus tracks, this definitive version of "Vices" is a compelling testament to the inability of most major record company execs to recognize talent when

they have it in their grasp!

I know that some of the more dedicated AOR/MHR freaks out there will probably disagree with me, but what I love most about labels like Rock Candy is that they're not afraid to diversify. Sure, no one can argue that albums from the likes of Preview, Icon, Touch and Balance are bona fide classics, but in their own way, titles from Mother's Finest, Detective or Raging Slab are equally as valid. And to add that extra layer of icing to the cake, every once in a while they manage to unearth something of which you had previously been blissfully unaware... personally speaking, the solitary Burning Tree album from 1990 fits nicely into that category.

A classic power trio put together by guitarist/vocalist Marc Ford (later of the Black Crowes), Burning Tree was somewhat asynchronous to the late 80s hard rock scene in LA. Eschewing any kind of hair, glam or even sleaze pretensions, they took the route one approach to hard rock originally pioneered by the likes of Cream and Jimi Hendrix. As attentive students of that particular school of rock will know, a remarkably adept guitarist is an absolute must, and in Ford, Burning Tree certainly had a player of the right calibre.

Steeped in influences from such recognized 'gods' as

Clapton, Hendrix, Beck and Page, in an age where most bands had more going on that was ultimately good for their songs, it's an absolute joy to listen to a master technician who plays from pure feel and emotion! But more than that, there's a kinetic intensity (not to mention chemistry) that underpins the trio as they power their way through twelve slices of classic blues rock that bring back tearfully fond memories of a now (sadly) bygone era.

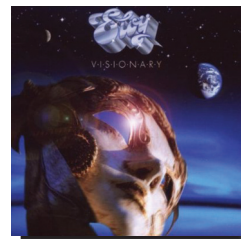
Deftly crafting a wide variety of different moods and tempos and feeding off the dynamic highs and lows that they offer, tracks such as fervent opener "Burning Tree", "Same Old Story", "Mistreated Lover" and "Masquerade" are essentially timeless, and as such still sound as fresh as the day the band first recorded them. Fully remastered and presented with all the usual Rock Candy trappings (Howard Johnson's sleeve notes are particularly excellent), there's a cool bonus in the shape of four additional live tracks recorded in April 1990 at the legendary Marquee Club.

Two more great slices of angst to liven up those dour winter evenings – the latter especially being one of the best reissues this year!

POWERPOINTS: ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨

DAVE COCKETT

## ELOY "Visionary" Genre: Progressive Rock Soul Food Records



This, the seventeenth studio album from German Progressive Rock legends Eloy, is probably one of my favourite of their albums, and I have them all. Originally released in November 2009 this is a reissue probably there to run alongside the release of their "Legacy Box" DVD set. After a decade of inactivity, Eloy returned to the recording

studios to do one more (last) album as a thank you to the many, many loyal fans that supported them throughout their forty-year musical career.

Visionary is instantly recognisable as an Eloy album but it's an album that has songs which have moved with the times. It's not that it doesn't sound like "Dawn" or "Floating" or "Silent Cries And Mighty Echoes" or any other of their albums, it's that it just sounds more balanced and more accessible than some of their earlier work. Whether by design or default, Visionary is a well thought out album and its themes are based around many of the current world issues. It's also one that should encourage anyone that hasn't heard their previous albums to seek them out. All you'd have to do is remember when those were made, what the line-up of the band was at each particular time and what the world circumstances were. Not much to do then. I honestly don't want to appear smug here but in this day and age, grasping the concept of band having such a long career and then equating it (in time) to some kind of sound or song based progression is not something the current generation might be particularly good at. A great album which might be the last that we'll see from Eloy, but you never know.

POWERPOINTS: ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧

ALLAN BANNERMAN

## SILVERLANE "Above The Others" Genre: Power Metal Drakker Records



Ostensibly, Silverlane is the side project of Subway To Sally drummer Simon Michael, although given his commitments with the medieval rockers, this is only album number two in their fifteen year existence. Hopefully, the band will become a little more prolific as this is a real gem of a power metal record, representing everything that is good about

the genre while comfortably avoiding its worst excesses and all too common pitfalls.

The first four songs undoubtedly stand as one of the most hugely impressive opening salvos on any album of this type in recent years, but special mention must be made of the irresistibly catchy "1789" and the fist-pumping yet insanely melodic "Last Day On Earth". "The Dark Side In You" gives Blind Guardian a run for their money; "Ready To Rock" is an arena rock hit single in waiting and the four-part "The White Lady" shows the band to be equally at ease with epic concept pieces as they are with incendiary metal anthems.

Over the fantastic musical backdrop, the dramatic vocals of Ecki Singer excel throughout, bringing a welcome touch of raw grit to a genre too often dominated by one dimensional soaring sopranos.

Being cynical, it could be said that Silverlane sounds like all the best bits of every other high profile power metal band. Skip to anywhere on the CD and sure, you'll find yourself picking out