

IRISH METAL REPORT – part yin

Whilst we've covered a number of Irish acts over the past two issues, we reckoned it was high time to nail together a comprehensive feature on the Irish Metal scene. On both sides of the political border there is an ever-increasing strength of things METAL, and it's truly a New Dark Age for all things vile and nasty. The problem is that coverage of these acts to date has been sparse in the mainstream press... you may have seen an interview or two with Primordial in Terrorizer, or a few demo reviews in Metal Hammer and the like, but that's hardly scratched the wax polish on the inside of the coffin.

As far as I'm aware, this is the first time anyone has actually bothered to draw together a comprehensive overview of the Irish scene in its entirety ie both north and south of 'the border'. Inevitably, I'll have missed a band out... in fact, I know of several bands who I haven't been able to get in contact with (or who simply couldn't be arsed to make the effort to reply), so looks like there's room for 'Irish Metal Report: Part 2' in the next issue. Keep thy eyes peeled...

The only proviso for inclusion in these features is that the band must have some recorded material available for readers to get their gloves of metal on. The contact details for all the bands are listed here as well, to appease the lazy amongst you who couldn't be bothered to hunt through this issue to find 'em dotted about elsewhere. However, we draw the line at coming around to your house to read it out to you. Unless you're a flame-haired nymphet. Oh aye, remember to include an SAE/IRC/whatever for a reply coz, like everyone else these days, the bands are likely to be pushed for cash.

Abaddon Incarnate

(4-piece, 1995- present)

Formed from the ashes of Bereaved, Abaddon Incarnate play filthy, nasty Death Metal... truly brutal and unsettling, with some of the most INTENSE AND CRAZED lead breaks my ears have ever heard. Last year's 'The Last Supper' was a perverse joy to behold. The lyrics? Well,

these guys won't be exploring their feminine sides (check out 'Vermithrax', a true paen to sexual tolerance). They're currently recording album zwei, and with song titles like 'Throne of the Whore' and 'And God Fucked Her', it seems like a similar jugular is being punctured. Splendid. In the best tradition of Irish incest, Steve Maher also plays in Geasa.

Recordings to date: 'When the Demons Come' (demo), 'Aeons of Me Rising' (2-track promo), 'The Last Supper' (album, Seasons of Mist, 1999).

Current line-up: Steve Maher (vocals, guitars), Bill Whelan (guitars), Cory Sloan (bass), Olan Parkinson (drums)

Contact: c/o Bill Whelan, 30 Clontarf Rd, Clontarf, Dublin 3.

Appitne

(2-piece, 2000- present)

Dundalk's Manifest called it a day earlier this year, but John's back for more. Teaming up with Damien

(ex-Prophesy, now also defunct), Appitne's music is best described as eclectic. There's a slight feel of latter-day Carcass meets krunching Metal rifferrama to their sound, as evidenced on 'The Amusement of Battle'... really, it's like the two chaps have melded their Prophesy and Manifest pasts together to create some pretty tasty offspring. With future recordings promising to continue in this engaging vein, keep an eye on this duo.

Recordings to date: untitled demo (2000)

Current line-up: John Rankin, Damien McShane.

Contact: c/o John Rankin, Castletown Mount, Dundalk, Co Louth, Ireland.

Arcane Sun

(3-piece, 1994- present)

Formerly going under the moniker Fifth Dominion, Arcane Sun are one of Ireland's most impressive extreme Metal acts. Combining both Doom and Death Metal has been done so often now that it can bore a Metaller to tears at fifty paces, but Arcane Sun peddle some excellent fayre... the likes of 'Eden's Rain...' is sublime... there's a feeling of the epic to their work (and, no, that don't mean overblown bombast, kiddies) which can in places be truly moving. The band have just completed work on their second album, 'Fade...', which by all accounts is a more experimental opus, touching on the likes of Led Zep in places. In addition to Arcane Sun, Feargal also serves as Primordial's second guitarist for live dates.

Recordings to date: 'Towards Elysium' (demo, 1995), 'Eden Eclipsed' (demo, 1996), 'Arcane Sun' (album, Ars Metall, 1999), 'Fade... a soundtrack for the arcane' (album, Ars Metall, due out this Autumn)

Current line-up: Feargal (bass and guitar), Paul Kearns (vocals), Mark Higgins (drums)

Contact: c/o Paul Kearns, 95 St Declan's Road, Marino, Dublin 3, Ireland.

Cruachan

(5-piece, 1992- 1997, 1999- present)

Formed by Keith Fay after the demise of 'Minas Tirith', Cruachan ply music steeped in Celtic history, mythology and see themselves primarily as storytellers... not quite what you'd imagine from a Metal band? Indeed, they've appeared on the line-ups of trad folk rock events and utilise a great range of traditional instrumentation in

their recordings, such as bodhran, Uilleann pipes, Irish flute and so on. However, there are Black Metal strands in their music, as evidenced on their debut platter (which was hampered by a well-dodgy sound) and continued on this year's 'The Middle Kingdom' album, albeit it in a more Heavy Metal manner, effectively a come-back recording after having called it a day for a couple of years in '97. I've yet to see them live, but seems that they have a penchant for dressing up in authentic Celtic dress, with war-banners as backdrops... sounds tasty.

Recordings to date: 'Celtica' (demo, 1993), 'Tuatha na Gael' (album, Nazgul's Eyrie, 1995), demo '97, 'The Middle Kingdom' (album, Hammerheart, 2000)

Current line-up: Keith Fay (guitars, vocals, bodhran, mandolin), Karen Gilligan (vocals, percussion), John Clohessy (bass), Joe Farrell (drums, percussion), John O'Fathaigh (flute, tin-whistle, Uilleann pipes)

Contact: c/o 178 Killinarden Estate, Tallaght, Dublin

24, Republic of Ireland.

Email: cruachan@ireland.com *website:* <http://cruachan.artshost.com>

Desolate

(4-piece, 1999- present)

FRASH MAYHEM from down south. Which is very good, there's a real buzz of excitement on their demo. Alongside a whole slew of other Irish acts, they'll feature on a compilation CD from Sentinel records later this year (courtesy of Mr Taube), and should also

appear on a compilation being issued by England's Psychophonic Records.

Recordings to date: 'Shadows in Darkness' (demo, 1999).

Line-up: Lep (vocals, guitar), Paul (lead guitar), John (bass), Kev (drums)

Contact: c/o Rory McCrystal, 81 Hampton Cove, Balbriggan, County Dublin, Ireland.

Dreamsfear

(2-piece, 1994- present)

Skintight strides and Iced-Earth tees... Thrash lives! (hey- it never died). This Dublin crew of FRASHHEADS have been (now reduced to a duo) plant their booties firmly in Power/Thrash Metal genre, and their shameless appetite for penning

songs of multi-minute length is firmly backed up by their technical skills and ability to nail together a great ditty or three. However, they're still afflicted by last year's loss of both drummer Colin Purcell (who moved on to Kingdom) and vocalist Rob Buggle, and are seeking to recruit replacements. If yer interested, give 'em a shout... Cathal and Kieran have a few new songs up their sleeves ('Syren Song' and 'Darkening Hour') that they want to get out by the end of the year.

Releases to date: 'Echoes' (demo, 94), 'Prelude to Destiny' (demo, 1999, released on their own Ill-Omen label)

Current line-up: Cathal Rogers (bass), Kieran Hynes (guitar)

Contact: PO Box 6508, Phibsboro, Dublin 7, Republic of Ireland. *Website:* <http://members.tripod.com/~dreamsfear/index.html>

Email: dreamsfear@hotmail.com

Epoch

(3-piece, 1995- present)

As renowned for his otherworldly interests as for his Epoch project, main man Jason Barriskill pilots a huge, hulking monstrosity through the deeps of time, space and sonic stratospherics. Epoch, for the uninitiated, is one of the few truly experimental Irish acts, fusing the progressions of luminaries such as King Crimson and Robert Fripp together with the power of Hawkwind on a blinder and the spite of the likes of Skrew. Mmm... delicious stuff. Get it down 'ye.

Recordings to date: various compilation of material from '96- '98, 'Inside an Open Space' (demo, 1999), split demo single with D.K Disturbia

Current line-up: Jason Barriskill (bass/ vocals, effects), Johnny Cardwell (drums) and Wayne Moan (guitar)

Contact: c/o Jason Barriskill, 35 Whitesideshill, Ballyworkan, Portadown, BT 62 3RJ, N. Ireland, UK.

Geasa

(4-piece, 1995- present)

Geasa's '96 'Starside' demo was a great piece of Black Metal. Whilst then-vocalist Brian has since moved on to Kingdom, Draighean has taken over the throaty-stoatyness, and 'An Angel's Cry' (recorded



Abaddon Incarnate



at Finland's Tico Tico studio) was an impressive platter of impassioned Celtic Black Metal, though the trad 'Spansill Hill' did seem a tad trite. A second album's on the way, as yet untitled, though songs that will be featured will include 'Godslaughter', 'Seas' and 'Heavenfall'.

Recordings to date: 'Starside' (demo, 1996), 'Angel's Cry' (album, Seasons of Mist, 1999).

Current line-up: Steve Maher (guitar), Draighean (vocals, bass), Phillip (guitar) and Simon O'Leary (drums)
Contact: c/o Steve Maher, 1 The Bramblings, Middlethird, Killester, Dublin 5.



Geasa

Hexxed

(4-piece, 1996- present)

Though being formed in '96, it's only in the last year that Hexxed have begun to make their presence felt in the Irish Metal scene when a stable line-up was finally gathered together. Death Metal, with an impressive degree of dexterity and technicality, which quaffs deeply from the chalices of blood of Death, Morbid Angel and Carcass. Given that their second ever gig was as support to Desecration, you'll get an idea of the abilities and confidence of the band.

Recordings to date: 'Perish the Sacred' (demo, 2000)
Current line-up: Owen Boden (guitar), Gerard Bentley (drums), Ciaran Tracey (guitar/ vocals), Gerard Richie (bass)

Contact: c/o Ciaran Tracey, 4 Magheraleve Park South, Lisburn, County Antrim, BT28 3NN, N. Ireland, UK. Email: ciaran62@hotmail.com Website: www.angelfire.com/music/hexxed

Honey For Christ

(5-piece, 1998- present).

HFC have picked up a strong local following over the past couple of years in Belfast, and unless you're under a restraining order that prohibits you from leaving your house, chances are you see 'em. HFC's sound is based upon intense pummelling Heavy Metal (indeed, they describe themselves as '100% raw, unclean, uncut hard and honest heavy fucking Metal') with a taste or two of thrash. Whilst it mightn't be my cup of tea, there's no denying that these guys have got the live act nailed... a good flair for showmanship never goes amiss in this game, and a great many other bands would do well to emulate it. The stir these guys are making in the local scene and even in the mainstream press means you should check 'em out. Increasingly gigging beyond the Belfast area, they'll doubtless be strutting their stuff in a venue near you soon.
Recordings to



Honey For Christ

date: 'Long Way Down and Rising' (demo, 1999), 'The Art of Self Abuse and Soul Erosion' (demo, 2000).

Current line-up: Paul (bass), Andy (Guitar), Jason (vocals) and Chris (Drums)

Contact: c/o Andy Clark, 32 Magherabeg Road, Dromore, Co. Down, BT25 1RS, Northern Ireland, UK. Email: hfc@heavymetal.co.uk Website: www.honeyforchrist.co.uk

Kabinboy, the

(3-piece, 1997- present).

Not exactly Metal, but possessing some hellishly intense riffage that blesses them with entry into the prestigious FKOTLD annals of all things Metallik and ghastrly. Think PAINFULLY LOW AND SLOW riffs that could give Burning Witch a shuffle for their shekels combined with surprisingly uptempo bits and pieces, this Sabbath/Melvins obsessed (or should that be Obsessed?) should appeal. These guys should bin their straight-edge lifestyles, GROW THEIR HAIR and start taking loads of mushrooms methinks.

Recordings to date: 7" (Grey Slate, 1998), 10" (Control records, 1999), split 7" w/ Redneck Manifesto (Grey Slate, 2000), split 7" w/ Large Mound (Road records, 2000), 7" (Dropping Like Flies, 2000)

Current line-up: Gary (guitar), Anna (bass), Ricky (drums).

Contact: c/o Gary Sloan, 109 Melrose Street, Belfast, BT9 7JH, Northern Ireland, UK.

Karnayna

(5-piece, 1993- present)

Doom/ Death Metal from County Kildare. Despite a couple of demo recordings, the band didn't actually get a stable line-up until last year, so it's only really recently that their profile has begun to mushroom. Characterised by melodic Celtic-styled riffing, the music is complimented by dramatic keyboard noodlings and fearsome growling vocals (Darren also encourages vocal polyyps in Mourning Beloveth). Currently looking for a second guitarist, the band have a demo in the can due for release this autumn, with further plans for a split 7-inch with Kingdom later in the year. Incidentally, these guys have the most METAL postal address in this entire listing.

Recordings to date: 'Lords of the Sky' (rehearsal/ demo, 1995), 'An Morigan' (demo, 1996), untitled (demo, 2000)

Current line-up: Ciaran O'Neill (bass), Phillip Mahony (guitar), Darren Moore (vocals), Dermod Smyth (keyboards), Cathal Murphy (drums).

Contact: c/o Nails, PO Box 666, Leixlip, County Kildare, Ireland. Email: Karnayna@eire.net

Kingdom

(5-piece, 1996- present)

Essentially a Black-cum-DOOM Metal project, though it's generally labelled as 'melodic Swedish Death Metal', Kingdom have managed to touch on a variety of genres in their sound. A project bringing together various folk who've served their time in a number of other acts (Geasa, Dreamsfear, Arcane Sun), it's only recently that the line-up has gained the necessary stability for them to start making serious inroads. This autumn sees the release (finally) of their 'Bloodtide' trilogy, which should raise a few eyebrows.

Recordings to date: 'Bloodtide' (demo, 2000)

Current line-up: Brian O'Connor (vokills), Gareth Yeung (guitar), Colin Purcell (drums), Aido Butler (bass), Aaron Murphy (guitar)

Contact: Brian, 269 Grace Park Heights, Dublin 9, Republic of Ireland. Email: kingdom666@hotmail.com Website: www.esatclear.ie/

-kingdom666/

Lesshelp

(4-piece, 1994- present, give or take a wee while of nothingness)

Fronted by the svelte Baggy, Belfast's Lesshelp are Legendz of Metal. The heavier the Metal, the more Metal these guys feel. Infamous for not settling for anything less than the global annihilation of Spides (you'd best check out their interview in this zine if you've no idea what I'm on about), Lesshelp Grind and bludgeon their way through some of the funniest, most inane (and highly proficient) Metal you'll hear in yer miserable little life. Beyond the realms of death, the Hooded Brother Daff's in Nil, Marty's in Spindrifit, whilst new disciple Chris drums for Honey for Christ.

Recordings to date: 'Grinding Metal EP' (28 track demo tape, 1994), 'Alive-Alive-Oh!' (20 track live at the Rosetta Bar tape, Xmas 1994), 'City Knee Deep in Dead Spides' (32 track demo tape, June 1995), 'Don't Settle for Less than Metal' (48 track CD, 2000).

Current line-up: Baggy (Vocals... and um, triangles, maracas and tin whistles in the past), Daff (bass), Marty (guitar), Chris (drums)

Contact: c/o 11 Kilhorne Gardens, Belfast, BT5 6NT, Northern Ireland, UK. Email: lesshelp@heavymetal.co.uk Website: www.ferox.i12.com/lesshelp

Mael Mordha

(4-piece, 1998- present)

Playing what they describe as 'Celtic Doom Metal', Mael Mordha have progressed from a two-piece project. Whilst none of the band themselves profess to be content with the quality of their demo (by all accounts, they hate it), being too 'clean' in their opinion, it still impresses due to the confidence exuded throughout (despite a couple of cheesy moments). Passionate vocals mix with occasional moments of Black-ish harshness, and the overall sound does indeed capture a hearty DOOM atmosphere. Whilst the 'Celtic' angle does feature strongly on a couple of tracks, it's not as too the fore as is the case, say, with Waylander... more along the lines of Cruachan. There's also a couple of interesting touches of melodic keyboard noodlings à la Dimmu Borgir, such as on closer 'Realms of Insanity'.

Recordings to date: 'The Path to Insanity' (demo, 1999).

Current line-up: An Fear Bolg (drums), Joseph Deegan (guitar), 'The Goblin' (Bass/ vocals/ bodhrain) and R.O.B (Vocals/ piano/ whistle).

Contact: c/o 'The Goblin', 128 Kingscourt, Parnell



St. Dublin 1, Ireland.

Moonfog

(3-piece, 1996- present)

Formed under a winter full-moon in '96, these Blackeft Metallers had a few names (including 'Belphegor') before settling on Moonfog. Their first demo, 'Ravenlord', was a pile of shit (even by their own admission), but follow-up, 'Demonbreed', was a FAR STRONGER affair, with its harsh sounds bringing to mind the likes of Immortal and Darkthrone. A third demo, as yet untitled, should be out this autumn, and promises to be faster and even more extreme. If yer into yer Black, pledge thy allegiance now.

Recordings to date: 'Raven Lord' (demo, 1997), 'Demonbreed' (demo, 1998).

Current line-up: Aaron Kirwan (drums), Simon Kirwan (bass/ vocals), James Doran (guitars).

Contact: c/o Simon Kirwan, Logatrina, Dunlavin, Co. Wicklow, Ireland.

Mourning Beloveth

(4-piece, 1992- present).

You want yer DOOM as heavy as a sack of spanners? Suffering from a bit too much joie de vivre of late? Then step this way, my pretties, and experience the ultimate futility of life. Music that will surely dispel any vim or vigour you may have left in your miserable life and reduce to via its audio ATTRITION to a dried husk. Mourning Beloveth conjure up soundscapes of such DESPAIR and hopelessness that their music would make fitting backing music at the place where souls go to die.

Recordings to date: 'Mourning Beloveth' (demo, 1995), 'Autumnal Fires' (demo, 1998).

Current line-up: Adrian Butler (bass), Darren Moore (vocals), Frank Brennan (vocals and guitar), Timmy Johnson (drums).

Contact: c/o Adrian Butler, Luggacurren, Stradbally, Co. Laois, Ireland. *Website:* www.clubi.ie/primordial/beloveth.html



Mourning Beloveth

Primal Dawn

(5-piece, 2000- present).

Probably better known in their previous incarnation as 'Evolutions End', Primal Dawn have ditched the Thrash of yore for a more Death Metal sound. In a way it's frustrating... their 'The World you See' demo was great, but the recent 'Primal Dawn' a tad disappointing. Still, they're a band that are well worth keeping an eye on... there's some good musical ideas rampaging through these guys' minds.

Recordings to date: As *Evolutions End:* 'The World You See' (demo, 1998). As *Primal Dawn:* 'Primal Dawn' (demo, 2000)

Current line-up: John (vocals), Paddy (Lead Guitar), Ciaran (Lead Guitar), Eric (Bass) and Neil (Drums). *Contact:* c/o Pat Kennedy, 7 Glenville Road, Blanchardstown, Dublin 15, Republic of Ireland.



Primordial

Primordial

(4-piece, 1992- present).

Taking the name 'Primordial' in 1992, this crew are perhaps the best known Irish Metal at the present

time. Early set-backs (such as constant label shifts) proved frustrating for the band, but it seems to have been an empowering experience... over time, Primordial have become much more than anyone may have expected. With a sound that's impossible to pigeon-hole, Primordial have far outstripped their Black-ish roots and honed a highly individualistic vibe. Earlier works, particularly 'Journey's End', were pretty tough to listen to... good, but too demanding if you weren't in the correct frame of mood. In contrast, this year's 'Spirit the Earth Aflame' is positively engaging... and whilst there may be more 'immediacy' on this platter, it's by no means a wimp-out, kiddies. Drummer Simon O'Leary also does his stuff with Geasa, and Arcane Sun's Feargal fills in on second guitar for live shows. At the time of writing, Primordial are strutting their stuff on tour with Immortal.

Recordings to date: 'Dark Romanticism... Sorrow's Bitter Harvest' (demo, 1993), 'Imrama' (album, Cacophonous, 1995), 'To Enter Pagan' (split 10" w/ Katatonia, Misanthropy, 1996), 'A Journey's End' (album, Misanthropy, 1998), 'Burning Season' (mini-album, Hammerheart, 1999), 'Spirit The Earth Aflame' (album, Hammerheart, 2000).

Current line-up: Alan Averill (vocals), Ciaran Williams (guitar), Simon O'Leary (drums) and Paul (bass).

Contact: c/o Alan Averill, 95 St Declan's Rd, Marino, Dublin 3, Ireland. *Email:*

nemtheanga@hotmail.com / *macuilliam@hotmail.com*
Websites: www.clubi.ie/primordial/; www.hammerheart.com

Putrefy

(4-piece, 1992- present, with a

few years of nothingness on occasion)

I first remember seeing these guys way back in '93 in the 'Derry pub in Portrush, the vigorous headbanging mania of that evening causing me chuck my guts in the chippie on the way home. Putrefy were making quite an impact at the time, sharing a split MCD with Italian Dethsters 'Altered Vision' on Italy's 'Isolated Records'. However, various folk would come and go, and the band eventually spilt back in '95, with an aborted reformation in '98. Nonetheless, they finally got it together in May of this year (in the interim, Jason had played with hardcore bands Emaciate/ DSFA, before becoming disenchanted with their direction and living to continue his own project). The band have started writing new material, promising to be even more brutal and experimental... essentially keeping the core Putrefy sound, but developing it to a more updated level of sonic abuse (NOT to follow trends or any crap like that).

Recordings to date: 'Presumed Dead' (demo, 1993), split MCD, 1995.

Current line-up: Jason (drums), Dave (vocals), Ricky (guitar), Aaron (bass).

Contact: c/o Jason, 8 Fortview, Dunaghy, Ballymoney, Co. Antrim, BT53 7HQ, Northern Ireland, UK.

Riff Master General

(4-piece, 1998- present)

Seriously good musos, seriously good music. RMG play powerful, twin-lead guitar HEAVY METAL which makes you reach for a couple of beers and kick back and enjoy. We're not talking hackneyed meat'n'potatos Metal here... this is damn fine stuff. There's been a slight line-up change since the demo recording, with Steve Moore (from the now-defunct Psychotribe) replacing Nigel Gordon. At time of writing, RNG are going into the studio to record a single... good to see that this format isn't being overlooked.

Recordings to date: 'Riff Master General' (demo,

2000)

Present line-up: Drew Davison (bass), Andy Baxter (vocals and lead guitar), Steve Moore (rhythm and lead guitar) and Geoff Crabbe (drums and backing vocals).

Contact: c/o Drew Davison, 9 Rathkeel Road, Broughshane, Ballymena, County Antrim, BT42 4NN, N. Ireland, UK. *Email:* drew@riffmastergeneral.com. *Website:* www.riffmastergeneral.com

Scald

(3-piece, 1993- present)

Technical Deathly Metal, with complex, well-considered song structures. Brutal, but not in a low-brow brutal-for-brutality's sake sense, Scald play what vocalist Pete is fond of referring to as "weirdextrememetallicofthebeatheadmelt" Metal. There's a detectable crust/grindcore influence in their music, a legacy of the three hairy-arsed dudes' genesis in several anarcho-punk bands in Belfast in the early 90's (such as 'Bleeding Rectum', 'Cristianity' and 'T.V.P'). Vocally, Carcass springs to mind, and the gearar slays like a thousand razors upon your worthless flesh. SPLENDID STUFF. Scald have been getting rather irate with having by all accounts received a right royal shafting from both Norway's 'Head Not Found' records and Belgium's 'Shiver' records, and so have decided that it's a long way to the top if you wanna rock'n'roll... hence, they're now doing their own thang and have made their 'Born With teeth' and 'N.S.P I-IV' demos available to the public via www.peoplesound.com/artist/scald (check out the free tracks here). Furthermore, they're planning to record 10 more foot-stomping boogies later this year... prolific or wot? Paulrus/ Paul McCarroll is also something of a dab-hand at the air-brush, and his gallery will soon be on-line at www.northdown.co.uk.unhinged

Releases to date: 'Rancid Fuck-hole' (demo, 1994), 'Born With Teeth' (demo, 1997), 'Nematoid Specimens Parts I-IV' (demo, 1999), 'Nematoid Specimens Parts V-VIX' (demo, 2000).

Current line-up: Paul McCarroll (drums), Pete Dempsey (bass/vocals), and Mick T (guitar).

Contact: Scald, c/o Paulrus, 32 Dellmount Rd, Bangor, Co. Down, BT20 4TY, Northern Ireland, UK. *Email:* paulruscald@hotmail.com

Spindrift

(5-piece, 1998- present)

Hardcore. Or is it Metal-core? Or does it really matter what they are? See, live, these chaps take nay prisoners, one of the most energetic shows in Ireland at the mo. Actually, how about 'hypergroovemoshcore'? That'd be a fair description. Their demo fails to capture their pint-droppingly-good live presence, but is nonetheless a decent listen. And if you get the chance to see 'em live, go. Guitarist Marty also

mutilates his geetar in Lesshelp.

Releases to date: 'Spindrift' (demo, 2000)

Current line-up: Micky Higgins (vocals), Steve McCartney (drums), Anthony McKee (bass), Marty Robinson (guitar) and Steve Stronge (guitar).

Contact: , c/o 76 Ivanhoe Avenue, Caryduff, BT8 8BW, County Down, Northern Ireland. *Website:* www.spindrift.org.uk



Scald



Waylander

(6-piece, 1993- present)

Hailing from Co. Armagh, these masters of Deathly Celtic jiggery-pokery have made something for a name for themselves at home and abroad in recent years, what with their debut album on Century Media and their hugely enjoyable live shows (enhanced by their penchant for blue-face-paint and grand capacity for beers). Musically, think of Skyclad kicking Thin Lizzy's arse... and that's only an indication. Splendid. They've got 60 minutes of Metal recorded for release as a second album (to be entitled 'Light, Dark, Endless Knot'), even having started work on material for a third album, but label, um, problems have meant that nowt's been issued since '98. Whether or not they'll remain with Century Media is unknown, though Ars Metallii have been sniffing around this hairy-arsed horde in recent months, as have Merciless and Prophecy.

Recordings to date: 'Once Upon an Era' (demo, 1995), 'Dawning of a New Age' (demo, 1996), 'Reawakening of Pride Once Lost' (Century Media, 1998).

Current line-up: Ciaran (vocals), Fart (whistle), Michael (bass), Dermot (guitar), Den (drums) and Peter (guitar)

Contact: c/o Ciaran O'Hagan, 4 Ballintaggart Road, Battlehill, County Armagh, BT62 4HN, N. Ireland, UK. Email: circleofemeraldfire@genie.co.uk



Waylander

Zerotonin

(4-piece, 1998- present)

Metal... or not? Whatever, we need a 'Z' and these guys'll do fine. Mix DJ scratching with scything geetar and you have the Zerotonin mix... which, by the Godz, works damn well.

Recordings to date: 'Is Innocence Beautiful?' (demo, 1999), 'Needle Jerk' (demo, 2000)

Current line-up: Glendo (vocals, guitar), Gary (drums, vocals), dj 3:b (samples), Andy (bass)

Contact: c/o Glen, 26 Beverly Road, Carnmoney, Newtownabbey, County Antrim, BT36 6QD, N. Ireland, UK. Email: info@zerotonin.co.uk Website: www.zerotonin.co.uk

AND THERE'S MORE...

Yup, indeed there is. Read on, stargazers...

A couple of Metal-specific record labels are establishing themselves at the minute... Dar O'Leary and Alan Averill's **Invictus Records** (invictusproductions@hotmail.com) are doing pretty damn well what with their recent Slaughter Lord demo releases an' all, and **Sentinel Records**, the fetid brainchild of Brain Taube is worth checking out as he's due to put out a double CD taster of extreme Irish Metal this Autumn (sentinelrecords@hotmail.com). Belfast's **FeRoX** (http://www.ferox.i12.com) are likewise planning a similar project, so get in touch if you fancy yer chances.

In terms of distros, there's not really that much going on. A few people have been mumbling about setting a few up for some years now, so don't hold yer breath. Not strictly Metal, but perhaps worth checking out, is '**Full Nelson Distribution**' (16 Doonbeg Drive,

Newtownabbey, Co Antrim, BT37 9HX, N. Ireland)... to be honest, I haven't used this distro, so have no idea as to their reliability, but if it's punk/ industrial/ Hardcore yer after, why not write?

In terms of promotion, **Emerald** are guys to watch. Run by Paul Kearns and Aido Butler, they've managed to bring over Morbid Angel, Dismember, Cannibal Corpse et al in recent months, and seem to be giving bigboys MCD/ Wonderland a run for their money. Which is good.

Belfast's '**Distortion Project**' (the_distortion_project@hotmail.com) are also dabbling in this field, having set up a couple of Irish circuit shows for northern bands. Check out their RockD Saturday afternoon gig events at Katy Daly's, for a mere couple of quid you'll get to see the best of N. Irish Metal and very heavy ROK, or their 'Metal Night' events in Auntie Annie's on alternate Thursdays. The **Intermission** (www.intermission.org.uk), Belfast's premier Goth night, is good so I've heard, and I've every intention of going down to rub my thighs at the PVC-clad nubiles once sales of this accursed zine starts to put a few quid back into my pocket. Elsewhere in town, **The Venue** has two Metal nights (the Friday being terrible, the Saturday ones being much better ie more METAL, less nu-shite) and **The Rosetta Bar** is a good bet for local gigs on a Saturday night, though I have to confess that I haven't been up there in months... still, they've booked The Haunted for November...yum. Dublin's **Valhalla** is an equivalent sort of set-up, hosting regular Friday night Metal gigs, though I'm not entirely sure of the venue.

In terms of zines, there ain't much happening. Both '**Deprived**' and '**Bond of Blood**' have met grizzly endz in the past couple of years, and Paddy Byrne's still to get the second volume of '**Aileacht Na Dorcha**' spewed forth, so there's really only that crap '**Fitted Kitchens of the Living Damned**' rag and the somewhat frustrating '**Fallentine**'. Both these zines are Belfast-based, and Fallentine manages to put out several editions a year which makes me feel pretty lazy what with my yearly efforts.

It's all in the ether now, baby, so check out these sites for useful info and stuff... Andy Clark's '**NI Ob-scene**' (http://go.to/Nlobscene) is an excellent resource for northern Metal, more a thorough directory than anything else, and is definitely worth bookmarking. Andy Allen runs a fairly basic site for the **Rosetta Bar** (http://dnausers.dn-a.net/dnetiVYI/) which has a pretty well used Metal forum that's worth a gander. Seems that the Andy's have NI sewn up. Oh aye, check out **www.fastfude.com** as well. Also, Colin Meade has a decent site, **www.clubi.ie/primordial**, which brings together Primordial, Arcane Sun and Mourning Beloveth sites, but that's about as far as it goes (which is fair enough of course). So all in all, there's a fair bit 'appening, me old chinas...

Motörhead

London Astoria, 4th December 1999

I've a story that I'm fond of telling about Motörhead... back in January 1997, I was visiting a friend who lived at the A30 anti-bypass road protest camp in Exeter, Southwest England. It was a miserable cold month, hardly conducive to living under polythene at the top of a fucking great big tree and as I was going to see Motörhead play in London that weekend (on their 'Overnight Sensation' tour), I suggested she come along to check it out. She had a background in classical music, a graduate in piano from an elite Australian music college, The Conservatory, and had never even heard of the mighty 'head. A highly cultured young lady by any standards. Come the event, we got split up in the crowd, and didn't find each other until it was over... asking her opinion of the gig, she replied "Umm, well, the crowd was interesting. But the music was awful... too fast and too loud". Well, you can't get higher recommendation than that!

Skip forward to 1999... this time, on the guest list with three fellow hairy-arsed paddy bastards, for the final show of Lemmy's two-night UK stand. A sold-out Astoria was teeming with every manner of good, bad and downright ugly, and as Lemmy strode on stage and tore into Bomber, the rest of the evening was set to blur-mode as classic after classic was shot out of the famous Killer and Murder One speaker stacks and tossed casually to the rabid crowd. Photo-pass in hand, I got to the stage front for the first three numbers, to find that my bastard camera had decided to choose that perfect moment to die... shit! Given the sheer size of their back catalogue (25 years and at least a zillion 'official' albums), there was no way that everyone's particular trouser-tighteners would be played, but the set list was an excellent balance between the old and new, from the surprisingly vicious 'Take the Blame' to the amazing 'Dead Men Smell Toe Nails' (as it was rechristened), or 'Killed By Death'... "this one's even older than me" quips Lemmy "...and I wrote it". Bathed in a solitary green light during the epic Orgasmatron, Lemmy becomes nothing short of a deity, a solid antithesis to all that is false and trend-chasing. And what way to close but with the grace of 'Ace of Spades' and 'Overkill'?

Asides from my laughable camera incompetence, the only downer of the whole experience was that after weeks of chasing around for an interview with the great one himself, it all came to nowt, the nearest I got to an interview being a chat with Mikkey Dee whilst having a piss next to him in the gents at the after-show bash. Ah well, you win some, lose some... it's all the same to me...

(Spandex)



God. Live at The Astoria (photo: Graham Finney)

Setlist (in some vague semblance of order...): Bomber, No Class, I'm so Bad (Baby, I Don't Care), Nothing up my Sleeve, Born to Raise Hell, Civil War, Metropolis, Take the Blame, Dead Men Tell No Tales, Sacrifice, Killed By Death, Iron Fist, Orgasmatron, Going to Brazil, Ace of Spades, Overkill.