

Attached you find the original interview before the translation from English to German between Frank for Soundmagnet.eu and Trevor from The Black Dahlia Murder:

Hi Trevor, I hope you and your family are well?

First of all, let me congratulate you on Verminous. It has become an excellent album and is already one of my favourite album of yours because it has a lot of groove. Is there a reason why you are more into groove now?

Thank you first of all. I am glad to hear that and I totally agree with you. Yes, it's a real more groovy album a lot of the influences come from the new guitarist Alen. He brought a lot of that groove into the band and when we toured together he brought a lot of that influences to the band. I am glad you brought that up!

Lyricaly it goes deep underground. Rats, worms and murderers dominate the songs. What is there a certain metaphor behind the lyrics?

Yeah, the idea of the underground in this hidden world. It is a metaphor for the hidden world where we all congruate as rats and cocroaches and bugs and verminous and creatures that no one in society wants, has no knowledge. Its like a secret kind of living. Metal is like a culture hidden for the world. A culture that is hidden for everyone. No one sees how much life it gives us and how much passion we have for metal. In a way I would say Verminous is like an idea of a plague of knowledge and we are spreading it.

Do you see TBDDM still as an underground band? Still after 20 years?

Yes and no! I feel like the band has kind of transcended and become a lot more popular and more visible than I ever imagined for us but we still try to fly the flag for the underground and take cool bands with us on tour when we can and I am always pushing other bands and trying to celebrate other bands and you know I stay a very active member of the underground and buy albums all the time. I check out new bands all the time and this is really what I enjoy in life. It gives me energy to do what we do as TBDM and everything we done like music. Most of it is influenced by underground bands, most of the modern metal. They are ambassadors for this kind of music and I am always trying to fly the flag for this.

I saw on IG that you entered the billboard charts very successful at #4. Is that a new experience for you?

Its crazy! Its definitely the highest we have ever been in the charts! Being high in the charts isn't really important to me personally. What is important to me is making the bands happy and reaching more people with each record and is spreading kind of the plague we were talking about earlier. This plague of music. But you know its really flattering and cool to stand out amongst pop artists which are very popular and you know I think it's a proud moment for extreme metal across abroad and I hope other bands see that too. We haven't compromise in getting in but with the years we also grow and our playing got better with the years. Yes, it's a huge honour...it definitely got me excitedme for the future.

Actually it is very difficult to promote Verminous. How are you promoting Verminous in times of Corona? Are you probably planning a live stream concert with other bands like Necrophobic?

We have some older footage we have professionally mixed after the recording which sounds really good; as good as a live played album and I think we are going to stream that eventually. That was from our last tour with BLS through the states. But yes, it is definitely difficult to promote right now cause we are not on tour right now with Testament how supposed to be right now which would have been our biggest tour ever and you know very high profiled; that's a bummer! We definitely lost some record sales by not being on tour the first week. So when people can't go out to the records store...that definitely hurts us too. But we have some good fans and I hope they show up like they did before. Connecting through IG is a possibility to keep in touch during this lockdown and to communicate safely. Being on the internet is an important channel and I am trying to optimize our social media accounts cause this is all we can really do you know.

Yes, and don't drink disinfections!

laughing...that's a great advice!

Okay,...my next question: Your production is very organic and powerful. How satisfied are you with the work of Tue Madsen?

I think he did a great job! You know we wanted to do it a little more organic like you said, kind of natural sounding. I feel like so many bands now have their albums too polished and sound the same and I think it makes sound all the new albums sound the same. Kind of inexchangeable. We wanted to sound like in the 90s or the early 2000s, kind of before the producers take over. That meant that we captured our drums live, we didn't quarantine the hall out of it. You now we tried to keep the energy, kind more of a timeless classic sound; more than a super super modern sound! And I think he did a great job, I think we must be a pretty difficult band to mix because there is so much of detail and so much of quick steps and lots of technical stuff and it came out very clearly and I am really happy about this.

Which Song from verminous was the one you really like the most to be recorded at studios?

For me it's "Removal of,... which the third track of the album. It was different. You know it's more mid-paced song, we don't play around in those tempos too much and it was a bit more rocking than some other stuff we have done but I love the melody, it's very dark and really majestic. It was a suicide record for me. I was like,..this has to be a vampire song as it has a vampire vibe. I think this song came out really pretty. I mean it's new for us. It's still a bit classic but it also has this new flavour and I think that's exciting!

Is there maybe a special, probably funny story you can tell me that happened during the recording in the studio?

Well, first thing that pops into my mind: We did a bonus track that's on the European versions and the Japanese version. It's called Their Thwarted Patience and is the dog theme song and it's written about Brandon, our guitar player's dog and it sounds like a theme song and I wrote it like this dog is this awesome dog like this space fighter pilot and that was really fun and is my sense of humour. Another thing that pops up in my mind is when we were recording and I was thinking about sounding like King Diamond and so I did this falsetto thing (Trevor singing on Skype) hahaha. But at the end I thought our fans wouldn't like that so much so I laid that down hahahaha

I am coming back to IG. I saw a picture of you there with a bunch of CDs in the background. Was that in your private rooms at home or at the radio station you are working for too?

Actually it is in my room, from where I am talking to you right now, kind of my office. I have around 4000 metal CDs, I have a lot of recks and I just love collecting metal. I love this side of the underground, from the collectors aspect. I buy new albums every week, have tons of mails coming and think my mailman is kind of hating me. Yeah, I just have the same hunger for the underground I had when I was a kid but now I have the opportunity to buy every record I want. I am just going completely insane the last years when everything came out new. It's completely my passion in life.

I think it's impressive that your Metal Blade Records has been loyal to you for 20 years. Is there a special relationship between you and Brian Slagel?

Yes definitely. They took a chance on us and they saw how passionate we were and how hungry we were to get out there and get over and they helped us do that and we resigned contracts with them several times now and I can't imagine being with any other label because they mean kind of family to us and are our friends and whenever we travel to California we go out with these guys and hang up and have parties and yeah we really have some great years now together and I appreciate all their support realizing the potential of the band and standing behind us makes us so thankful for this.

What kind of hint would you give a Newcomer band to come out of the unknown underground?

I would recommend that you wait until you put out your first material like a year or more and really develop your sound. I think young bands are always so excited to get out to the world and you can spoil it by releasing like it could have been. I remember our first demo in 2001 which is a very different TBDM than what you hear now...I don't know how to say it really but make sure you are good when putting out the music to the world. And also young bands that don't have a label I would recommend using Bandcamp. I think that's a great outlet for as you can sell your physical music and also your digital. You can use it and also the music industry knows who is good at Bandcamp and it could be a chance to get a label's attention.

I know you wrote reviews for the obituarist lately and reviewed bands. How important is this support for yourself?

For me ist like giving back to the scene. I am buying all these albums and paying attention and just kind of saw a kind of hole for bands and I like to support them and use my plattformt to spread and help out younger bands. It's a good look to the audience to see the underground. I love the underground so much and so the people can just have a look too.

Tbdm exists by now for 20 years. Are there places you didn't play already but want to?

Yeah there are still some spots on the map we haven't been yet. With every album you see more. Recently we have been to Southafrica which was very cool. I would like to play in Egypt; that would be very cool as there are some rare extreme bands able to do that and that would be a big honour.

Thank you so much for your time, Trevor. Have a great day and lot of success,

Frank W.
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