

HARDER BEAT

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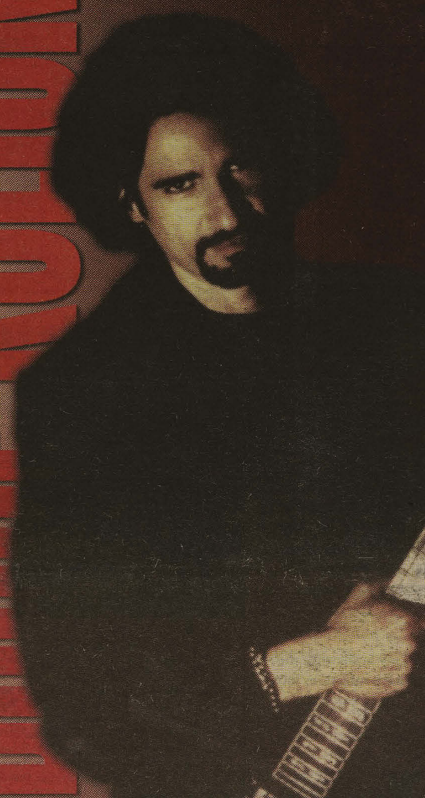
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February 2000

BRUCE WICK



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CARAVAN
PAUL O'NEIL
OF SAVATAGE & T.S.O.
BROTHERS
CREEGGAN

DEF LEPPARD



DON'T FORGET THE
HB SHOWCASE
SAT. 2/12 AT THE TATTOO BAR
With **MUDFLAP** • **GODFEAR**
Temple • **Maudd**



Armored Saint



like "Pay Dirt," "The Pillar," "After Me, The Flood" and the epic "Den Of Thieves" pick up right where their last album left off in the early 90's when they parted ways. Other noteworthy tunes are "What's Your Pleasure" and "Control Issues," which convert this disc into a triumphant set of power anthems. Original members, Joey Vera and Gonzo Sandoval are still kicking it, as do guitarists Phil Sandoval and Jeff Duncan. There is hope for the future of metal, if more bands of this stature continue to get wise, put aside differences and realize just how brilliant they were — and can be again. Until that happens, we have this masterpiece to enjoy. ★★★★★ (Jeff Dennis)

Satyricon — Rebel Extravaganza, Nuclear Blast

I'll be the first to admit I was less than enthusiastic about this release, what with the current state of black metal and all. The mighty Emperor's last album was a little less than inspired. And most other established black metal bands are hoping on board the Goth or sci-fi train. But, Satyricon breathed hope back into the genre. This is perhaps the most original concept that anyone has come up with in black metal so far. Psychosis, demons that live in the walls — Clive Barker would be proud to see someone took up where he left off. The lead-in track, "Tied In Bronze Chains," clocks in at nearly 11 minutes and is worth every second. Not only does it contain every element that makes black metal so good, it also has a few odd but very killer *rock* moments. Other soul defiling tracks, "A Moment Of Clarity" and "FilthGrinder," are enough to get you good and ready for an early Halloween. But every track is worth every second you spend listening to it. Rebel Extravaganza is THE black metal release of 2000. ★★★★★ (Matt Amyx)

Piranio — Shadows In The Forest, Audio Dallas and Indian Trail Studios

This is the new project from Bren Piranio (vocals, guitar), formerly of Stiletto and Zenn. Teaming up with Les Castle (bass, backing vox) and Mal Grogan (drums), Piranio's eponymous new band shows the maturity and savvy of a veteran group.

The music is reminiscent of Kingdom Come (on "Kiss Yourself Goodbye"), Faith No More (on "Water's Edge" and the highlight, "What It's All About") and even shades of Savatage (on "Russian Winter"). Then there are utterly original tunes like "X-Rated," "Don't Go Away" and "Deja Vu."

Despite this wide range of sounds, however, the record still retains a uniformity about it, due in no small part to the sheer talent of the musicians. (Kevin White)

P.O.D — Fundamental Elements of the Southtown, Atlantic Records

ATTENTION ALL MUSIC LOVERS! Are you completely sick of lyrically simple bullshit bands and



Bren Piranio — creating a wide-range of sounds

in need of a change — though not too much in style? If so, I suggest you invest in this compact disc. This album can easily be categorized with Limp Bizkit, Korn and, most definitely, Rage Against the Machine. But at the same time it will refresh your ears, getting the hairs on the back of your neck to stand up! While the album lacks some diversity, in the same breath it has heaps of it, going from the aggressive and mind-blowing "Southtown" to covering U2's "Bullet in the Blue Sky." Even with outstanding free styling throughout and simple basic chords that mainstream bands cling to, P.O.D. is still more original than any band or artist we've seen in a long time. (Brian Rutherford)

Pegasus — Breaking the Chains, Nuclear Blast

Pegasus is the mighty winged stallion. Too bad this heavy progressive band doesn't live up to its namesake. While they surely deserve to be heard, the songs seem a little familiar and tend to run together. The riffs are not lacking and the vocals do soar, as proven in "Metal Forever" and "Tears of the Angels," and "Bastards of War" and "Apache Warrior" have their moments. But when the dust settles, none of the words or choruses are memorable enough to bookmark any song title in your mind. The top track is a remake of the blistering "A Little Time" by Helloween, and it rocks! Ballad, "Chariots of the Gods" will give your lighter a workout. But when the CD is done, instead of reaching for the replay button, you'll probably put it away, because *Breaking the Chains* never really hits the g-spot. ★★★ (Jeff Dennis)

John Christ — Flesh Caffeine, Tang Records

If you're looking for the dark, heavy, eeriness John Christ became famous for with Danzig, look elsewhere. On this record, Christ opts to explore his roots.

Flesh Caffeine smacks of 70s hard rock, with songs like "Tell Me Why," "I'm Gone" and the high-light, "Judgment Day" evoking images of Machine Head-era Deep Purple, Pink Floyd and April Wine. At times, Christ's voice even sounds like a young Rob Halford (the lower octave Halford, that is).

Another surprise is Christ's virtuoso-level guitar playing, with solos that sound more like what you might expect from Vinnie Moore or Gary Hoey than Christ. The only hint at Christ's Danzig years comes in the last track, "Cancer," a chilling little instrumental epilogue that is too scary to listen to with the lights off. ★★★★★ (Kevin White)

The Gathering — Superheat, Century Media

First thing's first. When putting out a live album, don't make the very first track a six-minute, self indulgent ambient track. Try something heavier, a more exciting track to start off with. I had to start listening to this CD twice, because I fell asleep midway through the first track the first time. The Gathering started off as just another death metal band on the Peaceville label in the early 90's. Then, with the addition of one of the most talented and beautiful front woman in music, they arose out of the ashes and put out some brilliant albums, like *Mandyllion*, and *Nighttime Birds*. But, *Superheat* is not an example of their live power. In fact, it's pretty weak. They didn't even include their biggest overseas hit "Leaves." Superheat has some good moments but no great ones. To hear this band in their prime, try one of the aforementioned albums and leave this one alone. ★★ (Matt Amyx)