

★ EXCLUSIVE: 'BLIND FAITH,' BY JOE MCGINNISS, THE AUTHOR OF 'FATAL VISION' ★
UZ2'S 'RATTLE AND HUM,' MICK JAGGER, JAMES BROWN, FASHION TAKES THE NIGHT

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RECORDS



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DANZIG

DEF AMERICAN

'DANZIG' IS THE SORT OF ALBUM THAT puts a sneer on your face and a heady disdain for the rest of the planet in your heart. The songs, sinister and brooding, hint at a secret you're about to be let in on — one you might have been better off not knowing.

That *Danzig* deals almost exclusively with netherworldly subjects won't surprise fans of Glenn Danzig's earlier work: his songwriting for the Misfits reflected an almost obsessive fascination with B-movie horror creatures and garden-variety cloven-footed beasts. Back in his Misfits heyday, Danzig churned out songs like "Skulls" ("Hack the heads off little girls and put 'em on my wall") and "Braineaters" ("Brains at every single meal/Why can't we have some guts?") — songs so literally visceral that they were easily written off as camp. This time around, it isn't so easy to take Glenn Danzig lightly.

Danzig's Satan isn't just a one-sided type of guy. Oh, for the most part, he's the fire-peddling, soul-stealing badass all the good books say he is. But occasionally, Danzig allows us a glimpse of something lurking just beneath the surface — a sort of tortured indecisiveness. Glenn Danzig has managed to endow the Prince of Darkness with mortal emotion, and that is the key to the creepy realism of these songs. Whether this album is the heartfelt product of Danzig's personal beliefs or just an exercise in maudlin role playing, the fact that one even wonders is a tribute to his ability as a lyricist; it's easy to come away from *Danzig* convinced that its author is consumed by some very nasty business indeed.

Rick Rubin's production probably has as much to do with the album's intensity as Danzig's hellish imagery. The melodies are basic — a marriage of beligerent guitar and walloping bass drum — but they're shot through with subtle, haunting detail. On "End of Time" delicate bells filter through to tame a menacing guitar. The barely discernible drone of agonized voices surfaces briefly on "Possession" — after a backward-masked introduction that will undoubtedly send a few curious listeners to the

library for the first time in years. (The spoken sequence, reversed, turns out to be Latin.)

Rubin's keen understanding of dynamics permeates nearly every track. The songs, at once soothing and savage, provide a perfect foil for Danzig, who makes a habit of vocally lulling you into a peaceful state and then scaring the pants off of you with a guttural, tormented wail.

Danzig, two years in the making, is a compelling, eerily seductive work, a fact that makes the album's biggest flaw all the more glaring. That a songsmith of Danzig's ilk would feel the need to include an uncredited cover of Albert King's song "The Hunter" on an album bearing the legend "All Songs Written by Glenn Danzig" is puzzling to say the least. Perhaps the devil made him do it. —*Kim Neely*

RECORD RATINGS

- ★★★★ A CLASSIC
- ★★★★ EXCELLENT
- ★★★ GOOD
- ★★ FAIR
- ★ POOR

Ratings are supervised by the 'Rolling Stone' editors.