

## Merciful Nuns - Hypogeum II (2011)

Written by bluesever

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01. *The Portal*
02. *Hypogeum II*
03. *Sacrosanct Hill*
04. *Evolution*
05. *Sanctuary*
06. *Civilisation One*
07. *3117 BC*
08. *Megalithic Dreas*

Merciful Nuns are: Artaud Seth, Jawa Seth, Jon Tmoh

Merciful Nuns have quickly made a name for themselves over the past year. Their successful debut album 'Lib I' and its follow up EP 'Body Of Light' returned to the mystical, haunting anthems of the early Garden Of Delight sound to the joy of a legion of followers. Now the band's new album 'Hypogeum II' looks to capitalise on this momentum with another collection of modern Gothic rock anthems inspired by the mysteries of the Megalithic culture.

The album sounds a lot more focused and darker than its predecessor with a sharper production style that drops the retro-chic veneer in favour of a more confident modern sound. The opening song 'The Portal' is a strong, esoteric start with it's sense of distorted time and space that slowly builds into a reverential anthem. The title track follows on with a rockier sound that recalls the big '80s Gothic sound in all its glory. 'Sacrosanct Hill' is a softer affair that utilises some nice acoustic guitar work over the strong bass-line and atmospheric keyboards. 'Evolution' on the other hand turns the tempo up for an infectious and danceable track.

'Sanctuary' is the kind of song that Artaud does best – with its driving drums and bass and big

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anthemic chorus – it should leave both new and old listeners satisfied. 'Civilisation One' then returns to the esoteric and progressive strain of the band for a slow and sinister number which is continued in spirit by '3117 BC'. The final song of the album 'Megalithic Dreams' comes full circle with it's reverential anthemic sound returning to the distorted space from which it came.

Merciful Nuns have crafted another great album here that fans of classic Gothic rock can get their teeth into. The modern production does a lot more for the band's sound and better reflects the tightness of their performance. The only downsides are that at times the songs sound like they're holding back a bit, as though purposefully restrained, which can lead to the longer songs on the album feeling a tad flat in places. ---Miranda Yardley, terrorizer.com

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