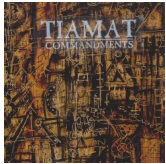


Tiamat – Commandments (2007)

Written by bluesever

Thursday, 07 February 2013 16:50 - Last Updated Saturday, 16 February 2019 22:55

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01 *Where The Serpents Ever Dwell* (05:58) 02 *On Golden Wings* (04:58) 03 *Ancient Entity* (06:15) 04 *The Sleeping Beauty* (04:10) 05 *A Caress Of Stars* (05:22) 06 *Whatever That Hurts* (05:44) 07 *Gaia* (06:24) 08 *Cold Seed* (03:51) 09 *Phantasma De Luxe* (04:57) 10 *Brighter Than The Sun* (04:08) 11 *As Long As You Are Mine* (04:40) 12 *The Return Of The Son Of Nothing* (04:58) 13 *Vote For Love* (04:48) 14 *Cain* (05:06) 15 *Wings Of Heaven* (04:32) 16 *Divided (edit)* (03:58) Members: Johan Edlund – vocals, guitar Anders Iwers – bass Lars Sköld – drums Past members: Jörgen Thullberg – bass (1988-1992) Johnny Hagel – bass (1992-1996) Jonas Malmsten – keyboards (1991) Kenneth Roos – keyboards (1992-1994) P.A. Danielsson - keyboards (1994-1995) Dirk Draeger – keyboards (1997) Stefan Lagergren – guitar (1988-1990) Thomas Petersson – guitar (1990-1994, 1996-2008) Magnus Sahlgren – guitar (1994) Thomas Wyreson – guitar (2008) Fredrik Åkesson – guitar (2004) Andreas Holmberg – drums (1988-1990) Niklas Ekstrand – drums (1990-1994)

Even if this "Commandments" compilation comes to us one year before the last-to-date Tiamat masterpiece, "Amanethes", it still contains pretty much everything you have to know about this awesome Swedish band: from their death metal beginnings, you are taken step by step to their gothic and doom experimentations, finally arriving to Tiamat's newest sound, as expressed in their great 2003 album "Prey". Yes, as you may have understood already, the tracks in this compilation are ordered by date - from the oldest songs to the newest ones - so that even a guy who has never heard of Tiamat before is able not only to enjoy their musical uniqueness but even to understand their numerous genre and style evolutions.

Ignoring the Treblinka-phase of vocalist and mastermind Johan Edlund - Treblinka being his first death metal band - the album starts with *Where the serpents ever dwell*, a great, slow and doom-metal-related track taken by their first 1990 recording, and follows with two tracks taken by their second album that I don't like so much, even if especially *Ancient entity* is pretty famous among their discography; here we have slow, aggressive and doomy passages as before. The

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sleeping beauty comes from the awesome "Clouds" album - a more experimental one - and has some catchy melody (vocalist Edlund loves not only to alternate slow and fast parts but even to create some really catchy melodies and refrains); it's another song they still like to play in concerts, and - along the whole album - it marks the first important change in the sound of Tiamat. The next two tracks are taken by the much praised "Wildhoney" album, and they're arguably two of the best songs of the entire compilation; both Gaia and Whatever that hurts have still a raw style of singing, but they present many acoustic passages along with great vocal lines. Cold seed is a song created with one extremely interesting guitar riff, then we have an astonishing slow ballad, Phantasma de luxe, that contains what I believe is the best guitar solo Edlund has ever written.

The second part of the album, from track 10 to 16, changes significantly in genre and style, shifting to a more commercial, gothic and rock sound, extremely catchy and made up by great refrains and slow/acoustic passages. I'm going to stop the track to track review here - even because I know that it's not an always-fairly-viewed method - and I'm going instead to suggest to the reader a more deep and exhaustive look onto Tiamat's last career - and I'm speaking, of course, of their four latest full-lengths. Songs like Brighter than the sun and Wings of heaven, true masterpieces which are present on this compilation, are not only catchy gothic rock songs: they contain instead complex lyrics, and in their entirety - and this does not happen with many pop and rock songs, as everyone knows - they remain enjoyable after years and years of listening, and they're great to see live. This is my point of view, of course, but even songs like As long as you are mine, dominated by keyboards and easy-listening clean vocals and riffs, are really enjoyable even for those who were accustomed to Edlund's death vocals and to Tiamat's general "primitive" approach that characterized their first works. Last thing I have to mention is the last song, Divided, called by mastermind Edlund himself the best song he has ever written: its piano melody and the female voices Tiamat often uses actually make this song one of the best of the whole compilation.

Lyrics-wise, Edlund has always been what I may call a poet, and the listener needs to read carefully all the lyrics, that mainly talk about love, religion, feelings, ancient (Christian, Latin, Middle-Eastern history) and psychedelic arguments related to the spiritual world - as you can read in masterpieces like Whatever that hurts: I truly suggest to you to pay much attention to Tiamat's lyrics, always written in English of course, and to try to imagine the world Edlund is trying to recreate with his own songs.

This "Commandments" is heavily recommended to those who have never heard of Tiamat before - or who don't know Tiamat so well, but it's even suggested to every Tiamat fan who likes to have a great container of some of their best songs taken from all their discography. The album is produced by the American Century Media, recently abandoned by Tiamat, that shifted to German Nuclear Blast, and it presents a great sound quality even for what concerns the first

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"raw" songs of Tiamat. ---Verd, metal-archives.com

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