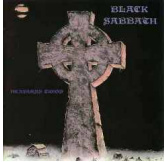


Black Sabbath - Headless Cross (1989)

Written by bluesever

Thursday, 02 February 2017 16:11 - Last Updated Thursday, 09 November 2017 22:34

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01. *The Gates Of Hell* 02. *Headless Cross* 03. *Devil & Daughter* 04. *When Death Calls* 05. *Kill In The Spirit World* 06. *Call Of The Wild* 07. *Black Moon* 08. *Nightwing* 09. *Cloak & Dagger (bonus)* Tony Martin - Vocals Tony Iommi - Guitar Laurence Cottle - Bass Geoff Nicholls - Keyboards Cozy Powell – Drums

By the late '80s everyone had pretty much given up on Black Sabbath...and why not? After all, guitarist Tony Iommi was the only remaining original member, and the band had seen an outrageous number of musicians -- particularly lead singers -- crash through its battered ranks since Ozzy Osbourne's late-'70s sacking. So it was actually quite a shock to anyone still paying attention when no-name vocalist Tony Martin outperformed a string of higher-profile predecessors with his contributions to Sabbath's unexpected 1987 return to form, *The Eternal Idol*, then pulled off the even more remarkable feat of being invited back for a second go-round via 1989's equally satisfying *Headless Cross*. Arguably the finest Black Sabbath album sans Ozzy or Dio, *Headless Cross* also featured one of Black Sabbath's most formidable lineups ever: matching the two Tonys with veteran bassist Neil Murray (Whitesnake, Gary Moore, etc.) and experienced journeyman Cozy Powell (too many associations to list) -- one of the few drummers in possession of an instantly recognizable sound. It's Powell, in fact, who leads the Sabs back out to the battlefield when he detonates the reverie of atmospheric intro "The Gates of Hell" with his echoing, pounding war drums, but naturally everything on offer is ultimately bound to, and dependent upon, Iommi's almighty riffs -- from whence all rivers flow. This includes morbid monster-pieces such as "Kill in the Spirit World" and "Call of the Wild," which quake with simply massive power chords yet still manage to flow seamlessly into slightly more upbeat radio-friendly numbers like "Devil and Daughter" and "Black Moon." Likewise, whereas "When Death Calls" is surely one of Iommi's most spine-chilling compositions ever in terms of sheer malevolent force, the equally bewitching "Nightwing" flips the coin entirely with its delicate acoustic guitars and (dare it be said) highly romantic lyrics. In short, for those wise enough to appreciate Black Sabbath's discography beyond the Osbourne and Dio essentials, there can be no better place to start than *Headless Cross* or its worthy predecessor, *The Eternal Idol*. --- Eduardo Rivadavia, AllMusic Review

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