

'De Mysteriis Dom Sathanas' by Mayhem. Yes, this is the band, where the bassist murdered the guitarist, and the singer shot himself.... (Here is a pause for your reaction, whether that is an outraged gasp, a tired sigh, or just plain laughter). I don't know, but I'm guessing the live shows after these deaths, were pretty damn boring. Just drums? Maybe that wouldn't be so bad if Mayhem were the Dream Theatre of black metal, but they're not. Almost all you'll ever hear from Hellhammer, are beats that resemble relentless machine gun fire. Sound good? Join the army, you'll love it. At least if you did that, you'll hear more rhythms; you'll hear rifle fire, machine gun fire, cannon fire, not the same thing, over and over, again. Now that I think of it, you'll hear plenty of screaming. Yes, bliss for black metal enthusiasts. I guess you'll hear some kind of bass noises coming from vehicles, too. That just leaves the guitars. Hm... I don't know where you'll find those... Maybe the performers of them are busy plotting to kidnap and torture their friends. Allegedly.

So, what's the harmony and melody like, then? Have a guess... Do you think it's like Abba? Of course not, this is grim stuff. This is what uber-fan Lucifer listens to, whenever he feels insignificant. After all, the album title 'De Mysteriis Dom Sathanas', translates into English, as 'About the Mystery of the Lord Satan.' Everyone likes to be thought of as mysterious. The music is also very repetitive, so if you don't like the first few seconds of evil non-diatonic minor chords and such, things aren't going to get any better for you. You may even hate this stuff so much, you'll want to kill yourself. But don't worry, that's what the performers want. Well, they would if they were still living. You read right, this is a band that wants to actually KILL its audience. That's simply not something that happens often in nature, it's totally against logic. It's like an animal that kills no one but its children, for literally no reason whatsoever, but still somehow finds the means to flourish.

Ok, now you know this music is rampaging, with harsh note choices and harsher singing, and hopefully all that will be too much for you, and you'll die. Is there any more to the material than this? Yes, it isn't typical speed metal, there is plenty of reasoning to it. 'So some speed metal has no thought behind it?' Yeah, pretty much; part of the beauty of writing some rock sub genres, is you can literally do whatever you want. You can write pure atonality, approximate atonality, solos that don't take any consideration into the underlying harmony, and ultra cheesy lyrics, such as 'feeding the needing for bleeding'. (That's a gem from Megadeth). Anything goes. Here, however, we find power, drama, intelligent structures and believe it or not, taste. Mayhem have certainly come a long way since they debut 'Deathcrush'; its content featured nothing more than simplified riffs, and endless screeching by former singer 'Maniac'. (So called, because 'he's a maniac'. Please bare in mind, that by definition, everyone involved with this style is a maniac, so relatively speaking this guy must be markedly nutty).

'Wait a second..... Maniac isn't a real name.... and now that I think of it, who the hell is Hellhammer?' Good question. It's kind of a BM tradition, for its performers to assign themselves silly pseudonyms. If there's anything in the world, associated with evil and suffering, some black metallor has probably already stolen its name for himself; 'Frosty Corpse', 'Satan's Super Fork', 'Furfur's Rusty Mallet', etc., etc. Sound dumb? It only gets worse. Some of the artist's videos truly have to be seen to be believed. The corpse-painted performers almost always pull puerile grimaces, whilst dancing round fires in a forest. The bigger the fire the better, and the more

absurd the dance, the more Satanic everything is. 'Come on, there must be some variety?' Of course there is; there is the fiery version of country dance, classical dance, disco dance, and so on. If you want to make a BM video, pick what style you want, and head bang like a man possessed. Your audience will not only love you, they will defend you to the death, when others claim you look like a tosser/muppet/moron, and so on. So swings and roundabouts. All in all.... 8/10! Why not 10/10? Too repetitious. 'Is that all?' Yes, I'll let the comical theatrics slide.