

Master of Puppets, by Metallica; the best thrash metal album of all time... Or is it? Let's have a look at the evidence. It starts off pretty well, with the song 'Battery'. Not only is it a wonderful bundle of hostility, it contains lyrics that shed light on one of the most elusive issues of all time; how to live forever. James Hetfield sings 'cannot kill the family, battery is found in me'. Evidently, if you hate the thought of dying, batter as many people as possible. Either that, or literally SWALLOW a battery. The latter method is probably more likely to be successful than the former, as violent offenders have roughly the same life expectancy, as the rest of the population. As far as I know, anyway. So go to your local supermarket and get shopping.

However, this record is not just wise, it is also plain baffling. There are many moments in the next song, 'Master of Puppets', that have a time signature so bizarre, that no one really knows what it is. Skip to roughly 0:55. Do you think that brief staccato section is a part of 4/4? Try and stamp your foot along to it. You won't be able to, as you will miss the strong beat. The more musical among you may think it's a bar of 5/8, but that doesn't quite fit in, either. Is it 11/16, then? Maybe. However, there is one theory out there that it's actually 23/32. Yes, just a theory. Even Dream Theatre at their most complex ( e.g. 'Dance of Eternity') can be broken down and analysed, so Metallica must be particularly enigmatic and skilled. Try trying counting 23 demi-semi-quavers at 200 bpm. Yeah, and try counting that at half that speed, even...

Up next, we have 'The Thing That Should Not Be'. See, boys and girls of today? You don't have to tune down a whole octave to sound heavy. Just go drop D! Hell, you don't even need distortion, all the time. Nor do you need a title that gives you any clues. I can think of a million things that should not be; one plus one equalling three, mustard with ice cream, etc, etc. So as to the actual meaning, it seems we have another conundrum. Well not really, you can just listen to the lyrics. Anyway, after that, comes 'Welcome Home (Sanitarium)', a song about breaking out of a mental institution. Here is another song with clean guitar parts. Again, they are played with 6 strings, not 7, 8, or even 9.

'Disposable Heroes'! This one is unusual, in that its title never appears in the lyrics. Other such examples of song names not appearing in the words, include 'Paranoid' by Black Sabbath, and 'Achilles Last Stand', by Led Zeppelin. What have these all got in common? Nothing. I won't waste any more time thinking about this one. I'll just add that the machine gun guitars are really cool. Following DH, is 'Leper Messiah'. Here is something else I don't understand. Why does the band count the song in by saying 'one, two, one two, three, four, five?' It's not in 5/4, it's in 4/4.... Isn't it? Am I going mad, here? Ohhh, I think I get it... Madness is the theme of the album, and I'm supposed to lose my mind. Well, it's A theme, anyway. For the sake of balance, what are the riffs like? Very chromatic. Almost atonal, in fact. That's terminology for the musicians out there. For the non-musicians, the riffs are harsh sounding.

'Orion' is an instrumental. Does it sound like the nebula? Maybe. On the other hand, does it sound like an onion, as one could very easily misread? Again, maybe. Who's to say what anything sounds like? The piece of music could sound like an onion, in that both have lots of layers; the vegetable has skin, after skin, after skin, whilst the composition has guitar solos, bass solos, and lots of variety in dynamics. But then again, it could sound like a nebula, in that nebulas also have lots going on.

Personally I prefer 'Onion'. Finally, the LP ends with 'Damage Inc.' Full speed ahead, again. More relentless thrash, and more awesome, violent lyrics, as the name suggests.

And that's it! Having examined the facts, I can conclude Master of Puppets is ONE of the best albums of its kind, ever. However, if you read my superblog (blog 13), you'll find out that 'Rust in Peace', by Megadeth is just a tiny bit better. Or is it? You decide. Do you want to know how MoP could it be improved, even though you can't be bothered to read my previous entry? Not a problem; it could be bettered by having someone like Marty Friedman on lead guitar. That's kind of it, really. The Deth's musicians are so much better. What do I give this album? 10/10! Of course I do, people will easily be able to get this music in the shops, in a thousand years time, I'm sure. Because it's class, and was at the time, unique!