

Surely Dream Theater are one of the best and most skilled heavy metal bands of all time? Many think they can do no wrong, even. If you're one of those people, you're in for a shock when you hear the first song on their 'Images and Words' release, called 'Pull Me Under'. I'm 100% not exaggerating when I say not only does it have one of the worst endings I've heard in my life, it literally has the very worst ending I've EVER heard. It doesn't fade away, nor does it suddenly end on a chord that comes out of nowhere. Nope, it just stops randomly, as if someone turned off your hi-fi. What the reasoning behind it is, I don't know. After doing some research, one explanation of the dodginess is that it represents the sudden nature of death. (Don't worry, dying IS the song's theme). Ok then, that makes sense, but let's just find a quote to back that up. The now ex drummer, Mike Portnoy explains 'we had all this tension (in the song), and it just kept building and building, and we had no idea where to take it, you know?' Oh, I know. You didn't know what to do, so you... so you... no, my idea's gone again. So you came up with the worst solution known to man? That doesn't sound right. Hmm...

Now that that's out of the way, I have very little to criticise. Maybe the band use 4/4 too much. No, not really, that was a prog in joke. I wonder what the most out there time signature DT use in this album is, though. Whatever the meter, I doubt it beats the bars of 23/32 from Metallica's 'Master of Puppets', of all songs. Ok, if you read my earlier review of the same album, you'll see that I say the band may actually use 11/16, which isn't quite as impressive. However, new information suggests that the crazier version IS right. It's an easy mistake to make though as I can safely say no one can count 32nd notes at 212 bpm. They either need the internet to get their sometimes wrong facts, or their life is so exceptionally boring that to them, slowing the song right down and doing complex maths is either fun or at least worthwhile. It's neither. Use Google. Back to DT, what I do know about their Images and Words album however, is that it perhaps sadly doesn't feature the super ridiculousness of 'The Dance of Eternity'. That's the instrumental piece that uses a whopping 108 time changes in a little over 6 minutes. IaW's 'Learning to Live' apparently has 81 changes, but it's just not the same.

Now I'm going to move onto a subject that is a little offbeat: The possible hidden meanings behind the musician's names. Interestingly, the singer is called James LaBrie, which sounds like a French name. I don't know about other languages, but the English translation would be 'James The Cheese', right? Imagine having some special James cheese with some lovely Mike Portnoy (translated from some language to port) to wash it down. Mmm. Delicious. I don't know about you, but I'd want Kevin Moore and Moore of it. (He was the keyboardist at the time). Finally, after all that food and drink, I'd probably need to go to the John Myung/John Petrucci. (The bassist and guitarist, respectively). I'm not sure what the point of this paragraph is from a musical point of view, but if you're into conspiracy theories, you might have got something out of it. 'So THAT'S what their names mean', I'm sure some people at least are thinking... 'Dream Theater are a group of secret chefs/foodies that are so obsessive they are after everyone's grub, including yours!' Who knows? Maybe they are, they certainly have the clout to pinch much of the time. Maybe they have hidden nomnom meanings in their songs, too. The track 'take the time' could refer to how long it takes to cook a meal, but I'm not going into that for the sake of my own sanity.

And now another review is over. This time however (if I've done my job), your eyes

have been opened far more than in my previous critiques. You hopefully have learnt (or been reminded) that Metallica have outdone DT in craziness at least once in their lives which is cool, but possibly more importantly, you've also learnt that surnames HAVE MEANINGS. (Theoretically). You (may) need to prepare yourself for Theater's singer stealing your Brie for himself and the (ex) drummer thieving your wine if you're ever in their company, for example. Naturally you have no need to fear me because Wiedemann sounds like 'we da man'. As in 'we da men'. As in if you're ever around me, we will be cool together. We will be da men. Great, isn't it? Anyway, what rating does this LP get? It gets a good 9.9/10, not a perfect ten for obvious reasons. Apologies for my 23/32 rehashing of material, but it's a wacky rhythm that needs to be memorised for your future anecdotes, right? I sure will be telling EVERYONE about it, probably after giving a brief music theory lesson. And.....

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Byyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyye!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!