

Silver Dust – The Age of Decadence

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Silver Dust – *The Age of Decadence*

Having formed in 2013, Silver Dust is a band just out of its fledging state, starting to take flight and grab the music world by its talons. Since their immensely popular tour with monster rockers Lordi, the Swiss rock band has gone from strength to strength; having recently signed a contract for European release and distribution with agency DKX and labels Fastball and Soulfood Music Distribution; with their rights in their native land still held by Escudero.

Their music is difficult to pin down to a genre entirely, however the band are mastering their unique take on hard rock; with gothic tones, the presence of an electronic soul and the pulse of percussion and classical influences running through its beastly veins. Truly an animal like no other, and one that is already gaining critical acclaim from many music institutions across Europe such as Metal Hammer and Legacy.

The album opens with the electrifying *Welcome*, a French language song which assaults the ears from the start with a thundering guitar riff, the dynamite rhythm section of drummer Mr Killjoy and bassist Kurghan and the death metal growl from vocalist Lord Campbell. The track's soul is unmistakably hard rock, with tinges of metal interlaced within the flesh of the creation.

Heaven Knows and *My Heart is My Savior* take a different path to the intro track, adopting a slower pace disguised as ballads, but still the songs deliver a heavy punchy beat; with the vocals providing a range of tone – both tracks truly incredible compositions. *MHIMS* continues to be my absolute favourite song, starting slow with a synth echoing strings before heading into an atmospheric electronic beat behind Lord Campbell's emotive vocals, and a powerful guitar solo around the 3-minute mark.

Shame on You revisits the galloping pace of *Welcome*, with more deathly snarling vocals and hammering drums akin to thrash metal band Annihilator. It provides an ear-shattering interlude to the previous calm to narrate the horrific culture of hurting animals for entertainment; before the electronic intro of *Princesse de ma Chair* lulls you back into a false sense of security. You think the mania has taken another pause until the chorus hits, and the devastatingly savage beat attacks once more.

Morte D'Aimer, the Death of Love, is the longest track on the album; weaving a haunting and saddening story in French and accompanied by the entrancing sounds of piano. Lord Campbell's vocals are captivating and alluring, reaching seemingly impossible high notes from a *chanteur* who also relishes death metal growls with aplomb.

The next three tracks deliver another deafening salute to the God of rock, with the title track *The Age of Decadence* featuring guttural guitars and sonorous drums, with operatic vocals and haunting keys. *Now We Request* and *The Judgement Day* are more of the same successful formula, hard-hitting percussion and grungy guitars; with more brutal growls from the front-man and electronic synth fillers.

Final song *Forgive Me* is an incredible climax to the whole explosive release, with a scintillating duet between Lord Campbell and guest soprano Carlyn Monnin donating her classical vocals. With soft drumming and acoustic guitars and bass; the track lowers the adrenaline level after the volatile listening experience, the song almost a calming lullaby after a spectacular lucid dream. Although the Lord begs for forgiveness, he actually deserves to be praised for this masterpiece instead.

The album is a rip-ride rollercoaster from start to end, with top-notch programming and impeccable instrumentation – all elements coming together to form something exceptional. There is a reason why this band is gaining attention and turning heads in the industry – because they respectfully deserve it – and many critics are now taking note.

Having listened to the album more times than I can count, I still have to prepare myself for the aural savagery, each listen an assault on my hearing. And after every time it plays, I just end up loving it more. I for one am truly hypnotised by the spell Silver Dust have cast upon me.

Niki Flynn