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Quo Vadis – Defiant Imagination (Skyscraper Music) Review by Scott



Now here's some quality death metal from Canada. Defiant Imagination is an album that took me a couple of listens before I "got it." Not that the album doesn't have an immediate quality to it; one time through and you'll feel as though you've been grabbed by the throat and kicked in the head, especially with those speedy kick-drum blasts. What Quo Vadis does exceedingly well is take the brutality of standard death metal (blasts, growls, etc) and add some rather progressive arrangements, and semi-melodic delivery. In fact, I'd call these guys progressive death metal, rather than technical death metal, as the latter makes me think of bands like Cryptopsy and Nile, and Quo Vadis doesn't fall into that category.

This isn't exactly Swedish melodic death metal either; it's got a bit too much of American DM savagery for it. In the end, what I'm talking about is one hard ass album, but with just enough superb musicianship and hints of melody to raise Quo Vadis apart somewhat from both their American and Scandinavian brethren. For example, after the ferocious blasting of "Silence Calls the Storm" subsides, a beautiful, melodic guitar sequence begins, accented with light keys, before returning again to crushing death metal. "Break the Cycle" is perhaps the album's best track with some memorable vocal lines. Again, there's a whole lot of DM heaviness going on here, yet there is also a prog sequence with soaring guitar work, angular rhythms, and keyboards as well. It's more than just six-string crunch too; the bass lines are thick and meandering, giving even more substance to an already deep album. The vocals fall squarely into death growl territory, yet they aren't the gurgle kind either; harsh and decipherable is primarily the style. There are a couple of brief operatic/classical sections as well. Fortunately, the band never overdoes it from a progressive/technical standpoint. If there were too much of this stuff going on, I'd probably be bored. The balance is just about right. So, leave your home and fly or drive to Canada and check out Quo Vadis. Or you could just visit [www.skyscraper-music.com](http://www.skyscraper-music.com)