



Quo Vadis - Defiant Imagination (*Skyscraper Music*)

By: David E. Gehlke

An album with so much to digest, yet with so many glistening, scorching moments of melodic and technical brilliance, its hard to find fault with an album like Defiant Imagination. Championing a brand of death metal heavy on strong, but not sugary-sweet melodies, merged with technical competence and skill second to none, Quo Vadis have crafted an album of undeniable force and grandeur.

Quo Vadis may perhaps best resemble prog death luminaries Atheist and Death during their Symbolic era. Former Death bassist Steve Digiorio adds his funky, boundless stylings to the proceedings, adding weight and color when needed. Digiorio clearly fits right into the pocket of what Quo Vadis is doing, benefiting greatly from the fluent abilities of the Frydrychowiz/Seghers guitar tandem.

Albums highlights are a plenty, especially the 1-2 punch of album opener 'Silence Calls the Storms' and personal fave 'In Contempt'. The disturbing atmosphere of 'Break The Circle' and Dead Man's Diary' are both something to take note of, while the pensive vibe of 'To the Bitter End' is stocked with classy, sharp riffing. The seamless flow of Defiant Imagination may be what best defines this album, for the song sequence is flawless, providing plenty of moments to catch one's breath, but to also inhale the swirling mass of progressive ingenuity.

Only the sterile, growled vocals of Stephane Pare prevent Quo Vadis from reaching godly status. Perhaps the inclusion of a traditional metal singer would add a whole new palette of colors in which to work with, allowing the sterling musicianship to shine even more proudly. As it stands now, Quo Vadis does very little wrong on Defiant Imagination, making the small gripe about the vocals seem unnecessary.