



'Cruel Magic' – available September 7th, 2018

bio by: Dan Slessor

While standard bearers of the NWOBHM movement and responsible for '83's seminal *Court In the Act* and '87's *Suspended Sentence*, with *Cruel Magic Satan* make it abundantly clear that in 2018 they are not interested in simply capitalizing on past glories. Comprised of 10 tracks of searing metal, it is blatantly and profoundly the work of the Newcastle upon Tyne natives at their very best, infusing their signature sound with a more raw, wild and spontaneous vibe than they showcased on 2015's mighty *Atom By Atom*, in the process displaying more passion and energy than slews of bands half their age.

Having reunited in 2012 and returned to touring duty, *Satan* - comprised of six-stringers Russ Tippins and Steve Ramsey, bassist Graeme English, drummer Sean Taylor and vocalist Brian Ross - once more proved their collective mettle with 2013's *Life Sentence* and follow-up *Atom By Atom*, both records critically acclaimed and maintaining the high standards of their earlier releases. "I'm particularly proud of what we did with *Atom By Atom*, the progression we made from *Life Sentence*" says Tippins, who asserts that they knew they had penned the best song of their career with "The Fall Of Persephone", while the title track and the album's powerful cover art meditate on living through the deterioration of a loved one through dementia. "I think we all know how it feels to lose someone close, but to witness a person you know disappearing 'head first', losing their knowledge, memories, everything that makes them the person they are, that is something else" With such a powerful collection in their hands the band were unsurprisingly eager to take it on the road, and they once again had successful tours and festival runs in Europe, North America and South America, culminating with a slot opening for Pentagram in Helsinki, which Tippins counts as a true honor.

Soon enough, the itch to be making new music prickled at the members, workaholic Tippins in fact recommencing writing almost as soon as they completed *Atom By Atom*, and they began to work on the material that would ultimately comprise *Cruel Magic*. "We don't record a ton of material then pick out ten songs for the record. We vet it as we go until we can't imagine it being any better, and it's not about just adding to the pile. We quite often shorten or cut out whole sections if they aren't earning their keep,

so to speak.” Content-wise, they did not enter into the process with a definitive plan for the album, however, from the start the members knew how they wanted to record it and the overall vibe they wanted to capture. This was in a large part informed by the band increasingly finding themselves turned off by overly polished modern metal records. *“I’ve arrived at a point where as a music consumer I’m no longer as impressed as I used to be by speed, technique, control, heaviness, tone, flawless production and excessive bottom end! These days any band can - and does - achieve all of that, and as a listener I feel like I’m being backed into a corner by five guys flexing their fucking biceps in my face. Everything seems to be a display of strength. Sound and fury signifying nothing.”* While such records are the typification of sterile performances and recording techniques, Satan are aware that **Court In the Act** exists at the polar opposite end of the spectrum, and is beloved over and above all other Satan releases despite - and perhaps even because - of its *“chaotic production, at times shambolic performances, and the naivety of the bloody lyrics!”* It was, therefore, something of a revelation to the guitarist when he sat down and played the recent vinyl reissue of that album, and rather than experiencing the inward cringing he has long associated with listening to their many ‘mistakes’, he found himself inspired by what was pumping from the speakers. *“If anything it seemed more interesting because of the fuck-ups and lack of production - drums and guitars played with reckless abandon, ambitious runs and fills that nearly worked but didn’t, first takes that were kept simply because we made it to the end of the song. There’s something intangible in there, an energy which is missing from those other qualities I mentioned. So, it got me thinking that whatever music we came up with for the next record, when it came to actually recording it we’d make a conscious effort to go for first takes, no matter what fuck-ups/jazz crimes had been committed.”* Exposure to the record makes the fact that they have placed passion first and foremost exuberantly clear, the energy of the performances tied to their unique style of songwriting doing all of the talking. *“So here’s the news: You are going to hear mistakes on the new **Satan** album, some of them pretty clearly if you listen for them, but like us, I believe you’ll be too swept up in the excitement to care.”*

Represented both lyrically and in the record’s artwork, **Cruel Magic** stands as *“a personification of injustice in our world. Anyone who knows us knows we never sing about the Devil except in the most abstract terms. That said, we have no interest in light-hearted subject matter either. You will never hear the words ‘rock and roll’ in a Satan song, nor any references to sex, drugs, fast cars or motorcycles. But, generally bad things that happen in the world, real or imagined, and injustice in particular, has always been a big part of what drives us to write lyrics.”* Responsible for bringing the artwork for **Life Sentence** and **Atom By Atom** to life, artist Eliran Kantor - who has also collaborated with the likes of Iced Earth, Testament and Kataklysm - once again contributed **Cruel Magic**’s striking visuals, though in a manner that the members did not expect - to their delight. *“The strangest thing happened - he ended up going in an entirely different direction to the lyric we’d written for the song “Cruel Magic”. So the title ‘concept’ of Cruel Magic has another meaning to the song, and once again he has come up with a disturbing and quite jarring piece of art. Maybe the most controversial cover we’ve ever had, but utterly brilliant.”* Tracking the album at First Avenue Studio in Newcastle upon Tyne, they further demonstrated their trust and rapport with past collaborators, recruiting engineer Dave Curle and Dario Mollo to handle the mix, letting them handle the technical side of things so the quintet could focus all of their energies on giving the best performances. Confident in the songs they had written and how they wanted them to sound made the process a very easy one, walking out of the studio with a record of which they are understandably proud, and will reign supreme in the speakers and headphones of metalheads the world

over when it drops in Septmeber 2018. *"I truly feel we've got it 100% right this time, the balance between considered content and reckless performance. We always break loose on stage so why not on record?"*

Cruel Magic track-listing

01. Into The Mouth Of Eternity
02. Cruel Magic
03. The Doomsday Clock
04. Legions Hellbound
05. Ophidian
06. My Prophetic Soul
07. Death Knell For A King
08. Who Among Us
09. Ghosts Of Monongah
10. Mortality

Satan line-up:

Brian Ross – Vocals
Russ Tippins – Guitars
Steve Ramsey – Guitars
Graeme English – Bass
Sean Taylor – Drums

Satan online:

<http://www.satanmusic.com/>

<https://www.facebook.com/officialsatanpage>

<https://twitter.com/SatanUK>