

Göden pushing into the slipstream of the legendary winters and filling their footsteps with their debut *Beyond Darkness* absolutely satisfactorily, without having to tinker with their own memorial. As with *No One Knows What the Dead Think* last year, the debut of the trio from New York also leaves it undecided whether Göden has invariably done themselves a favor by extending their project so clearly in advance as the spiritual successor to *Into Darkness*. Knowing about the much-vaunted 90s record belongs to the Doom elementary school, which is why this practice is ultimately an ambivalent one:

What brings start advantages in terms of attention is, of course, also due to the expectations set in this way. A burden and ballast. Due to the aesthetics (and despite a comparatively more Death Doom tendency), Göden's intention along countless cascades of cold riffs and the nihilistic atmosphere remains understandable, but above all makes sense in terms of personnel: With guitarist Stephen Flam and keyboardist Tony Pinnisi. Two thirds of the line-up are former Winter founding members, plus the Hanzel and Greysel singer Vas Kallas at the microphone. Together the trio slips into the roles of Spacewinds ("the time and space in which these characters dwell"), The Prophet of Goden ("who speaks in the name of Goden and is the light,") and NXYTA (Goddess of Night) - "lead vocalist and the darkness" - to stretch a nebulous concept album over the oppressive length of 76 minutes, which basically works best without the obsessive connection to nostalgic mechanisms.

Of course, it would have been even better to shorten this detail in the right places. Whereby the crowd ultimately driven up also contributes to the character of *Beyond Darkness*, feeds the reputation and history of the record, because Göden is always aware that with *Into Darkness* in the rearview mirror he has to transport something ultimate, exhaustive and definitive beyond pure, bestial heaviness: an opus ! So where there is no discussion about whether, shortly before the finale with *Thundering Silence*, it would actually have needed almost five minutes of ambient silence as a calm before the last storm, because at this point you were already sucked so far into the mood of the album. The fact that spatial and temporal standards have begun to disintegrate a good bit doesn't hurt *Beyond Darkness* as blatantly as unheard-of, with elaborate eight interludes - or: numbered manifestations

After all, the mystically spoken narratives condense the aura of a striking, clichéd entity behind the sinister robe. In addition, records develop an engaging spell and also loosen the prevailing monotony of the abusive density. However, this formula doesn't always work out: If Ego Eimie Gy lays in wait in repetitive trance and doesn't want to move, it feels. In spite of the accentuated characteristics of the number itself, it seems like an overly extensive interlude, flanked by two manifestations, the last third creates an otherwise surprisingly entertaining one. A plate - less lengths or empty meters than rather - less substantial passages of the meandering. A phase of weakness, which Göden easily lifted through the class of the substance as a whole.

Glowing Red Sun is basically a long intro that, with massive, also howling strolling guitar walls and heavy rhythms, ideally tunes into the cosmos of the band, later even funnels electric strings into the threatening, darkly rumbling aura - but the synths are never here as elementary as the guitar work, more texture than the supporting element.

Against this background, *Twilight* introduces the gutturally rubbing, gnarled-rattling voice of Kallas, which rides over the rolling reef mountains on an ethereal synthetic carpet and occult message. In *Cosmic Blood* she throws herself over a brilliant organ with roaring fervor in oversized gestures, the slow-motion power of the tectonic instruments pushes as catchy as it is relentlessly slow. At the latest when the solo takes off, the unreal distributed, two-dimensionally produced (in) depth of the record is noticeable, articulated through a simple, but uncompromisingly consistent songwriting - possibly also with obscure means.

Come on Susser Tod (yes, the combo doesn't have the umlauts despite the corresponding artwork) pulls his battlefield with a spherically reciting expression to the fervent manifestation of a broken German and doesn't sound as involuntarily funny as it could be - precisely because the band served every aspect of her brew with such absolute seriousness.

The towering *Dark Nebula* trembles under the phrasing and intonation of the variable Kallas, draws cultic images of oppressive density, damn catchy actually, and varies the dynamics of the monolith *Beyond Darkness*, which is uniform in itself, to the point of playful lightness.

I Am Immortal creates the next quasi-catchy tune with its incantation and drawn hook in the chorus, but the jazzy atonal flirtation of the guitars at the back could have come into focus, before Winter once more abundantly declined all the virtues of the band. All of this may not make *Beyond Darkness* the sequel, the revival or even the reboot that the winter

followers would have asked for without being asked in order to celebrate the 30th anniversary of Into Darkness appropriately - but regardless of this actually unnecessary yardstick, an all-round one terrific, timeless Doom / Metal record. 8/10 points
Beyond Darkness