
Scream Queen

Skadi

Hail Skadi! Firstly, tell us why you have decided to opt for a more or less a self-title for the band from Niflheim to Skadi, has there been a line – up change?

*I finally got fed up with the comments/reminders about the other bands who were also called **Niflheim**. I don't want to be cloned with the rest of them, so I decided to change the name in mid - 2000. At the moment, the band still consists of myself and Aegir, but the name **Skadi** seems more appropriate given the circumstances that the musical, lyrical and general concept is mainly of my creation.*

As far as we know, the last release you had was the split 7" with Antichrist, what are your next plans for a release, will you do a demo or CD, have you any new material written ready to record and put out?

We plan to release a second CD later this year, entitled "Branded in Leather and Steel". I would also like to have another vinyl release, but nothing definite has been planned.

Have you made any recordings, even any thing as yet unreleased under Skadi?

The new album is nearly recorded. A lot of delays have been caused by various things, which has held up the completion of the album considerably, but the end is drawing near.



Can you give us a bit of a preview of any new songs written for Skadi, what are they about, when were they written, how many songs do you have, what new ideas?

*We have nine songs for the album. The musical and lyrical is mainly from my input (Aegir has written the music for two songs). The majority of the new material was written during 1999/2000, though a couple of songs go back further in years. In terms of new ideas for these songs, there is more variable tempo changes, more lead/harmony guitar, some clean vocals. Some examples of the new titles are "The Steed and the Eagle" (an instrumental in the vein of classic **Iron Maiden**), "Branded In leather and Steel" (an anthem type metal song, much like old **Judas Priest**), "Battlefrost" (one of our older songs, with both black and clean vocals), "Leather Clad Slave" (quite different lyrical content than my usual style, with a slower tempo and clean/black vocals), "Lady of Frost" (an acoustic piece with straight female vocals, though this may or may not end up on the album).*

You are the major or only music writer for the band; has there been any other contributions from other band member or any outside the band?

When we wrote/recorded the 1996 demo, the lyrical content was exclusively written by Aegir, with the music being a shared effort. With our debut album, "Myrkvid", the music (apart from one song) was written by myself. This also applied with the lyrics, with Aegir writing one song also. The current upcoming album and future recordings will be solely my lyrical input. I feel that if another person writes the lyrics it doesn't have the same expressive significance for me. With the musical aspect of a song, I don't particularly mind other ideas, but I still prefer to do it my way.

Now that you have changed the name of the band, how have you, as a band, grown musically and lyrically?

*I think most bands; as the years go by, naturally progress. Our new material, in my opinion, is more interesting and displaying a wider range of our personal influences, but this has nothing to do with the name change from **Niflheim**.*

You've done two videos, at least that is all we are aware of, what appeals to you to do them, will you do another and what ideas do you have if you do film another one?

When we released "Sonnenwende" and "Chains of Eternal Bondage", we did them for the hell of it. They were both of bootleg quality, but we found that a lot of people were quite interested to see them (especially overseas metalheads who couldn't see us in the flesh). I would definitely like to do some more video footage in the future, however, I want it to be more professional and perhaps delightfully perverse.

We understand that you do all the artwork for the band, have you done any artwork for others, is this also an interest separate from your influences in the concept of the band, what do you like to paint?

I've never considered myself an artist, but I do enjoy having a drink with a paintbrush in my hand. I've had people and bands interested for me to do some artwork for them (album covers, back – drops, heaps of t – shirt designs), but I often refuse, as I don't have enough time to get everything done. All my expressions with both music and paintings/sketches are linked in a way, so generally they do tend to correspond with one another.

What art ideas do you have for the next album?

The original intention for the "Bonded In Leather and Steel" album cover was a painting of myself in cloaked/leather fury, being surrounded and branded by a horde of shrouded figures. After consideration, we decided that a photo cover would have more impact (we will probably use the original painting for the inner sleeve). The general cover image for the new album will be more dramatic and sexual (in terms of my image), but still keeping within the concept of the battle/metal theme.

What are some bands you like to listen to and also those you see as musical influences?

*I like a lot of old and new metal bands; **Judas Priest**, **Black Sabbath**, **Iron Maiden**, **Ozzy**, **Yngwie J Malmsteen**, **Saxon**, **Bathory**, **Celtic Frost**, **Venom**, **The Scorpions**, **Motorhead**, **Immortal**, **Kreator**, **W.A.S.P**, old **Dimmu Borgir**, **Alice Cooper**, **Megadeth**, **Isengard**, **Deep Purple**, **Diabolical Masquerade**, **Coroner**, **Sodom**, **Manowar**, **Darkthrone** etc...far too many to list here! Most of the bands that I like have probably influenced me in one way or another, however, since the first bands that I listened to were of traditional metal, I suppose this has influenced my style more significantly (especially with my lead playing).*

Do you still do Skadheim Productions, what has been happening with this of late?

*We still run a small distribution with **Skadheim Productions**. It will also be there if we need to release our own material.*

Have you a label as yet or will everything be released through Skadheim Productions?

*At the moment we don't have any definite label ties, as no promos have been sent out. When the time comes for the release of the album, and we haven't secured a deal, we will probably consider releasing it through **Skadheim Productions** again.*

When will Skadi be ready to hit the live scene again?

We were considering doing a few shows a couple of months ago, but we wanted to wait until the recording was completed. Playing live in Australia doesn't really concern me very much. The interest in local metal gigs amongst today's metal crowd has declined terribly. I don't feel like lugging shit around the place, trying to stay half sober and only playing to around twenty people.

Do you consciously focus on Norse mythology and ideology as a concept for Skadi, is this important for you or just a passing interest that you wish to express through the band?

I have an interest, belief and admiration for the Norse ideology, so naturally it has a prominent influence on my musical/creative side. Our new material still bears a lot of Norse concepts, but other aspects are also incorporated (my love of metal and other personal expressions, for example).

Why did you decide to use this as a basis for the band, what of the Norse mythology/themes/ideology do you feel integral to Skadi, is it the Gods and Goddesses, legends, battles, please elaborate?

I suppose some people would find it strange that a band based in Australia would have a strong Nordic influence interwoven in their lyrics and general image, but since I hold no interest to jump on the typical "Satanic" and so – called "evil" bandwagon, I decided that our concept expressed and strengthened my belief's. In terms of what aspects motivate the basis for lyrical and general imagery of the band, I would have to say the complexity of power and purpose of each individual deity (in meditation and magickal workings), the verses found in the sagas, which to me holds a great deal of wisdom and a strong sense of oath keeping and justified revenge (which especially appeals to my personality).

How long have you been interested in the Norse and Pagan themes, how far do your studies extend?

I was lucky enough to never have Christianity forced upon me in my childhood, so a developing interest in occultism/paganism came naturally to me at a young age. I take my beliefs in Norse and general paganism seriously, but there is still much to learn.

What prompted you to name yourself Skadi, for the Goddess, do you feel yourself as a 'mortal' receptacle for her knowledge, power, divinity, perhaps in some manner an incarnation, or was it she just sounded interesting enough for you to adopt her name, is your personality akin to hers?

I named myself after her in reverence of her role of being a strong huntress/Goddess of rightful revenge upon thy enemies. I am not foolish enough to think that I am her mortal counterpart, but I use her influence to protect and aid me in my creative and personal endeavours.

What has the response been like to the music you play, and in particular your vocals, we'd imagine there'd be some who would be rude to you, although when we first heard your earlier demo, we didn't fully realise it was a female handling the vocals?

Every band gets a fair amount of hero worship, hatred or indifference. With our responses we've had people that like the vocals and not the music, or they like the music and aren't sure about the vocals, and then there we get the people (the true fans) that accept us for what we are. They like the fact that we play a more traditional metal style with the black vocals/image.

Do you like to think of yourself as a vocalist or a guitarist, which have you been doing the longest and how did you start on each, what started your black metal style vocals, was this always intended, can you also sing like most other 'normal' female vocalists?

I'll always be a guitarist first, vocalist second. I started playing guitar when I was twelve years old, playing to the old metal bands, learning lead/rhythm techniques from books and also jamming to other music styles (blues, rock, folk, classical, etc). With vocals, I only started doing them in late 1995. I wasn't very confident with opening my mouth in front of a microphone, but then I thought if everyone else can assault the ears, why don't I give it a go. Our new material now has some clean female vocals/chants mixed with my usual style, so it will add a different sound to the songs.



Have you found that some people won't take your band serious once they discover that it's a female black metal vocalist, what are some reactions you have received, since you started and also now?

When people have discovered that I was, in fact, a female, they were a little surprised and a lot of times it made them more interested in the band. I haven't encountered any real face-to-face hostility against me as yet. My bad temper and insane drunken antics have offended people more so than my musical display.

What is your opinion, if we may ask, on the bullshit that females should not be in metal in any way regarding music or otherwise, unless for 'viewing pleasure' (something we are new to discover ourselves, although we hold no feminist views, we think it's fucked)?

I honestly couldn't give a fuck if there are people (men?) with that point of view. If certain blokes think of females as just sexual objects and nothing more...well I pity them, as they obviously lead quite a miserable existence being dickless and dateless.

Do you get into the less harsher female vocal styles like those used in a lot of doom or folk bands, do you think there should be more female black metal bands or vocalists such as yourself, or do you prefer it to be so few, making it more remarkable when such a vocalist or band is discovered?

I always love to hear a good female vocalist. I would like to hear/see more female black metallers playing in bands, but in another sense, since there are a shortage of them, it makes me a little more noticeable.

Are you in contact with any of the other (though few) female black metal vocalists or bands?

I've heard a few bands with the harsher black style, but I am not in any direct contact with them.

Thanks, Skadi, we hope to hear new stuff from you soon, what are your last comments?

Cheers for the interview. Farewell 'til next time. Blessed be...the leather and steel of the night.

Releases:

Self – titled Demo 1996
"Myrkvid" CD 1997
"Riding the Thrymheim Winds/Blood On the Southern Cross" Split 7" with Antichrist 1998
"Branded In Leather and Steel" CD – Upcoming

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