

Urgrund

Greetings Bolthorn, you've released and sold out of your 7", "Warlore", are you pleased with the result, will it ever be re-released?

Yes, our thoughts from the results and feedback have only been of a positive nature. Even though there is only one lyric piece included in the release, surprisingly the crowds seem to roar out the chorus to a lot of our songs, this counts.

Why did you decide to have the first official release for Urgrund on 7", or are we incorrect and was the rehearsal, "In Apocalyptic Ruins - The Rebirth" an official release, what plans do you have now that the 7" is released?

Bleed Records got in contact with us. We could not pass up the idea to work on a 7" EP, so we stuck with the opportunity. I regard this as our debut release, more so than the demo or MCD ("Drenched In Blood" out now). There is an obvious contrast between the two first recordings. I guess we have reached a level where being out of tune and being drunk whilst at rehearsals and recordings have reached it's last days (demo). Ha! Drunken thrashin' black metal.

Which track do you appreciate more from "Warlore"?

"Drenched In Blood" without a doubt. It was the most recent song written for the "Warlore" period. This track also bears an anthemic presence live as I enjoy playing the track.

How long did it take for you to compose the tracks for the rehearsal and for "Warlore"?

I have no recollection of the exact dates, maybe around late 1998. All I can say, it was the right time for me to start something slightly more primitive and barbaric. I was coming out of the strongly Astaru/Heathen based mind which was the focal point for **Baalberith** (still alive). I had an opportunity to expand my knowledge and interests with **Urgrund**. We wanted a traditional structure in our songs instead of leading the audience nowhere. So we kept the tracks rough and simple, but I guess this is changing with our most recent material.

Has the 7" gained you more support than previously, what sort of exposure have you received since, as this release will most likely become a cult vinyl and we understand that it was very successful (sold out)?

Ha! Kult yes. I think Marty did a great job in every aspect. Most feedback has been abroad which is surprising, considering it was limited to 200 copies. Hail to tape traders etc. Yes, we have gained a hell of a lot of support since it's release.

Tell us about the cover of "Warlore", what does it depict and how is it appropriate for the music contained therein, why was it chosen, we also noticed the fact that it's of a bomber plane, does this mean anything to you?

Ha! Luftwaffe death. Yes, I always was always fascinated by heavy artillery, war machines, planes (Spitfire Bombers etc). The cover is a strong representation of something armageddic. Hence, the sequence of sixes on each plane. The Bringers of Devastation. Powerful imagery. But yes, there is a strong war interest. Even though that trend has kicked in as well, we will continue to write songs in the same nature. I don't care what other people do. I wanted to keep the swastika on the tail of the bombers, but controversial attacks would be made without a doubt, especially overseas.

What would be the significance of leaving a swastika on the tail of the bombers?

Serious problems with overseas distributors. However, it's disappointing to discard certain symbols where they belong. I think the skinhead world/ Neo - Nazi groups are attracted to this, which is fine, but we are not an NS band nor hold any race - hate ideology in our music. Swirling strength, power, and life is the meaning of this symbolism.

Are you pleased with the way **Bleed Records** handled the release of "Warlore", will you work with them again?

Most definitely. I would like to work with **Bleed Records** in the future. We shall wait and see.



Would you like to record more Urgrund material on vinyl, are there any particular tracks you'd like to have on vinyl, what label do you think is best for this kind of thing?

Vinyl, yes. That is something that will be limited for the full - length, "The Graven Sign". I understand the need for vinyl, I prefer it myself. However, it's a costly process for labels and distributors worldwide. I am not too familiar with labels that are exclusive to vinyl, but maybe **Damnation Records**, **Osmose Productions** or **Hammerheart Records** may be the victors here.

How are things coming along with "The Graven sign", what is the track listing and anything else of interest?

This was recorded in October last year (2000) and will see the shelf in late June. **Baphomet Records** have finished the layout, so expect its release soon. This raw piece of Graven Barbarism will be available on LP format also.

So, you have a deal for an MCD through **Spikecult Records**, tell us about this release, if you will, how many tracks, titles of the MCD itself and the songs?

Well, not a lot of people know this but due to the great response of "Warlore" and its limited numbers, we re - mixed it, added things here and there and re - recorded the title track from the demo "In Apocalyptic Ruins - The Rebirth" (mind you this was not done out of laziness) and what we have is the MCD, "Drenched in Blood". Even though you are already familiar with our music, you will enjoy this more.

You had some problems regarding the artwork for the MCD that caused the end product be different than originally planned, what can you tell us about this, what were the problems and what was the original artwork supposed to be?

Problems with the printing plant. **Spikecult Records** already financed so much for this release, not to mention its four month delay, that it was right to just release it as it is. The original artwork was an illustration based on the crusades. A very powerful painting indeed. We settled for a simple layout including **Wolfs Angle Cross**.

Where is "Drenched in Blood" available and how is it selling so far?

Europe/USA. 500 sold within one month which is surprising for a band such as ourselves. There will only be 60 - 65 or so available on these shores so in a way Oz misses out once more.

Try **Baphomet Records**, **Spikecult Records**, **Red Stream** and **Bleed Records**.

Have you found a permanent label in **Spikecult Records**, have you had any other offers, which label do you think would suit the needs of **Urgrund** best?

No! Our contact with **Baphomet Records** (USA) is for three releases. **Spikecult Records** (France) is a one off thing (or maybe?). We had other offers but **Baphomet Records** gave us a good deal and seemed like the right one. They have expanded too, having a diverse amount of projects like the great **Puissance** among others.

After "The Graven Sign" is released on **Baphomet Records**, do you have any other plans for the remaining two releases you are contracted for, have you as yet any new material or ideas, what about formats?

Yes, the strong backbone of history has such a large role and interest in the band so the subject matter is ever flowing. We will commence work on our third release in December. That is all I know for now. 2001 will be a destructive path for **Urgrund**.

What will the cover art for "The Graven Sign" be and what are to be included on this release, is this on vinyl?

We recently gained contact with a Swedish graphic artist. So basically we send him pics/info/ideas etc. He will compose the layout himself. I have not seen the progress yet so I cannot say anything.

Are you still going to do the cover of **Burzum's** "A long Forgotten Sad Spirit" for a **Burzum** tribute, who is releasing this compilation, when will it be put out, who else is on it and why was this song in particular covered, are **Urgrund** the only Australian band to have a track on the **Burzum** tribute?

Okay, this was recorded some time ago. **Cymophane** (who initially contacted us) wanted **Urgrund** featured on the double CD. Now they changed their mind, as our version was too heavy for the tribute. They concentrated on synth projects instead of metal bands. So unfortunately, there will not be an **Urgrund** presence on the release.

What other bands have you plans to cover, we were told **W.A.S.P.**, **Darkthrone** and **Bathory**, can you confirm this, have these plans come to fruition as yet, will they, which tracks have you chosen, will they be on any of your own releases or on other compilations?

W.A.S.P.? This must have been a confusion when **Necrovore** was in the band. No, no **W.A.S.P.** covers here. Covers are not a huge priority (especially in recordings), "Woman of Dark Desires" has been great to play, the killer **Bathory** track works well live. I don't like the idea of compilations either. If again, we would do covers live, it will be more powerful versions of old bands.

Tell us what you like to write about that you think is integral to the structure of **Urgrund's** music?

I would have to say European history. Philosophy, fact, barbarism, war. The tract of who we are. I consider this the brewing pot of **Ur - grund**. Of course attacking the church as well. But we are not a concept band. I consider this a waste of originality and interest.

As we have previously been told, **Urgrund** is German for Underground, apart from the style of music, why did you choose to have this as a band name and what made the German word for it the most appealing, do you get any confusion considering the band is Australian?

Ur - old (existence) Grund - Earth (core) then Re - Birth/Ragnarok, philosophy here is obvious. It has a lot of significance towards Germanic Myth as explained. I kept the name for no other reason, manifestation if you will. No, there is no confusion. German U - boats "Urgund" ha! No relevance though.

You have recently experienced a line - up change, have you now a suitable and permanent replacement?

Rhellionfiend and myself are confident that this line - up will see us through for some time. **Kram** has incorporated all the more dimension in the bass side of things. Our first bassist lacked intensity and energy. As for **Thothamon**, what can I say; 1000 000 rounds - a - minute.

We understand that **Urgrund** is made up of more than one band, can you tell us who they are and why **Urgrund** was formed?

Not really. When we started (**Darkensphere**), all members were present but **Thothamon** and **Necrovore**. **Flame** took the drum stool in those days handling the thunder for **Baalberith** as well. **Gryphon** (**Astriaal**) struck the drums during the period of late 1998 - April 2000. **Thothamon** (**Catacomb**) is the battery man now. **Necrovore** is no longer in the band either.

How do things stand with the other bands you are involved with?

Well, there is **Baalberith** (which I formed in 1994). This project is still important (as it is a solo effort, session drummers), however, time with **Urgrund** has kept **Baalberith** in the dust. There is an unreleased full - length. As soon as I find a suitable sponsor, **Baalberith** will ride again. There is new material but I will not talk of this further as the future is undecided. I think I should keep things mysterious here.

Urgrund recently assaulted Sydney (2nd December, 2000), how did you find your set, what drew you to play Sydney, did you enjoy any of the bands you played with (**Secratrain**, **Lycanthia** and **Grenade**)?

It was a good set. It was also good to see a lot of maniacs from the past. We thought we would break the border as part of our mini East Coast tour for the MCD. I think more bands should travel Brisbane to Sydney and vice versa as their longevity and interest will stay strong. There are too many bands that play local too often. I think it's a band's early demise. **Secratrain** were good, **Grenade** (Blue Mountain madness and car explosions) were great too, I didn't get into **Lycanthia** (not my thing I guess), however, I did admire their great musicianship. It's always great to see female members in bands, it gives me something to look at while I'm drinking my lager.

You mentioned to us the difference in the crowds in Sydney compared to the crowds in Queensland, what are your gigs usually like there?

I can only answer on a personal perspective, as there will be a different opinion here and there. I don't think there is a Queensland scene, only on the Gold Coast, Sunshine Coast, and of course, Brisbane. The Brisbane audience differs all the time.



They are a lot more psycho up here. An example is one character that wraps himself in barbed wire and sets himself alight. Lots of blood has been shed at these gigs. But it's good to see some people (at least) that give a damn about music instead of thinking they're in a horror flick. We are attracting other crowds like skinheads which is good too (especially when Vomitor play also). But I don't



favour one over the other when it comes to the two! I did enjoy the Sydney show more this time round, perhaps the thrill of a different venue and crowds. Overall I consider the absence at gigs quite extreme, they are too spoilt. Bands also with their pathetic rivalry bullshit (which everyone knows about). We are not in line to win some music award, you know, so just play your fucking music. We do our own thing.

Does this in any way hinder your enthusiasm to play locally and does it create problems for those metalheads who attend?

Having the variety of audiences such as the skins and metalheads is a great way to expand. If people think there is intimidation at play, that's stupid. Playing locally for us is becoming rare (more so we consider interstate gigs more important). As mentioned earlier, (if) too many bands play too often, people will get sick of it and turn elsewhere, thus losing credibility for these bands. We are not one of those. We will attack from nowhere and deafen.

You also mentioned to us that you were in Sydney in a bid to reach more local distro's and magazines, were you successful, what was the outcome?

There's proof right here, I guess. But yes, it was a thrill to more or less show Sydney what barbarism and aggression Urgrund's style was all about. I am glad that the new contacts secure great support.

Tell us more about the plans for an Eastern states tour this year, what tentative details can you give us so far, what bands are you hoping to have included alongside Urgrund and where will you be playing?

The Graven Assault will be a bombing campaign, which includes the Gold Coast, Brisbane, Newcastle, Sydney, Melbourne throughout May/June. Bands like Gospel of the Horns, Anatomy, Grenade, Vomitor, Destroyer 666 and Astriaal would be ideal.

Tell us about the shirts you have, how many designs are there, what do they have on them, is it only the logo shirt, would you like to do one with perhaps the bomber planes from the 7" cover, do you maybe see this (the bombers) as a representative symbol for Urgrund (that of war and destruction)?

Absolutely, we have given that thought as many people asked about it. Unfortunately, the shirts (Rune design/war metal) are sold out. I can assure you we will print more in the very near future.

We were wondering if you could shed some light for us on the news regarding Urgrund doing some work on videos, such as clips for "Drenched In Blood" and "Oskoreien", also

some live footage, what's happening with this, what other details can you give?

Yes, there are those two tracks and various live footage for two live tracks. I can confirmingly say this is near completion and will be available in late March this year in limited copies of course.

Where do you expect to go with Urgrund, what are your ambitions?

Europe perhaps, strive for excellence with our next releases and to Raze the fucking Globe with our mail - clad fists of Barbarian metal.

Thanks so much for being part of our 'zine, we are truly honoured, do you have any parting words you'd like to leave us with?

Hail the Hunt! Hail the Huntsmen! Cheers again!

This interview was conducted with Bolthorn and received in January 2001, with additions included in March and May 2001. Live pics were taken on the 2nd December, 2000 by Season Decay 'zine, the pic of Bolthorn supplied by the band. UPDATE: Due to Kram no longer being a member of Urgrund, the tour has been cancelled.

Releases:

In Apocalyptic Ruins - "The Rebirth" Demo 1998

"Warlore" 7" EP 1999

"Drenched In Blood" MCD 2000

"The Graven Sign" LP 2001 - Upcoming

Urgrund

PO Box 925

Kenmore, QLD 4069

Australia

Email: perwerter.of@nuns.net

www.virtue.nu/coldsteel

