

## **METAL TEMPLE**

### **Urn - Epiphany**

by Johnny Jackal at 17 February 2016, 2:09 PM

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I dug up a little bit of information on the band before doing my initial review. Most of my research results did not give any specific information on the band and I had to go on their Facebook page to get everything I needed. I always want to research the band beforehand to give me a feeling and a vibe from the band itself.

This is the third full-length release from the Chicago, Illinois Gothic Metal Band. According to the Metal Archives, their music has been used in specials on a few TV channels like Arts and Entertainment (A&E) as well as the Sci-Fi Channel (Syfy).

I added at the end of this review a link to their music video for the song "Epiphany", it's not a very good video clip but I always like the fact that bands want to do these videos for their release. Unfortunately there is not a lot of airplay for music videos nowadays compared to the early to mid 1990's with *Headbanger's Ball* and *Solid Rock* here in Montreal, Quebec, Canada.

They are categorized as Gothic Metal, but other than "Cast in Amber", "My Chosen Path" and the single "Epiphany", I feel they have a lot of Folk and Celtic influences.

The use of harp, keyboards and violin adds a whole new dimension to the songs and a lot of the songs on this album have those Traditional Irish Music elements in them. I highly enjoyed the fact that I was expecting something along the lines of **THE A.X.E. PROJECT**, which I reviewed earlier this month and was pleasantly surprised to have something along the lines of Folk Metal with the Celtic elements.

We can compare them to some of the Celtic Metal bands that are actively touring like **SUIDAKRA** and **ELUVEITIE**. One song in particular that sounds like the traditional Irish folk and drinking song is "Road to St. Patrick's"; the title says it all. This song reminds me of "The Wild Rover", a very old Irish song that is sung all over the world on St. Patty's day. It's a very powerful song and might be the most intense and emotional song on "Epiphany".

Other songs that have these influences are "Autumnal Sunrise", "When the Rain Has Fallen" and "Brisk Snowfall". All these songs have that Irish sounds and are my favorite songs off of the album. This was a breath of fresh air and being a **DROPKICK MURPHYS** fan, I really enjoyed hearing some more Metal (than Punk obviously) but with those same influences!

Two songs come to mind being really different from all the rest and those are: "Silently I'm Still Screaming" and "Black Widow". The first song sounds a lot like **NEVERMORE** off the "Dead Heart in a Dead World" album. I could compare easily to "Inside Four Walls". The singer lacks the emotion and drive of **Warrell Dane** but this is really a solid effort. "Black Widow" sounds a bit like some good old **MOTORHEAD**, well the music sounds a lot like them; Hard Rock with a Punk edge. Though on this song, the band experiments with two vocalists with some harsh and clean vocals. This is probably the most straightforward song off of this album.

The other songs on the album don't have the same energy as the ones I mentioned but they are quite good and they try to use some dual vocals (especially on the single "Epiphany"). I liked the diversity of the songs and they end the album on a high note with "Empty Promises". This is the longest song off of this release. The acoustic guitar solo at the

beginning of the song is really nice and this might be the catchiest song on the album. It has really nice backing vocals and those add a lot of texture to this particular song. They let loose on this one and you have a whole bunch of solos and everyone adds their personal touch. A fitting way to end a very good album! I recommend this to everyone that likes Metal with a Traditional Irish Music Vibe.

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## ***I'M MUSIC MAGAZINE***

Album Review ~ URN ~ Epiphany

[September 9, 2015 jpdeuce73Album Reviews](#)

I will have to admit that when I cracked open the plastic on my copy of *Epiphany* from the band **URN** that I was a newbie to the world of the band and was just beginning to learn about them. With that being said, I had no preconceived notions as to what this CD was supposed to sound like and I was hoping for the best when I put my headphones on and went to push play. I can safely say that I was pleasantly surprised with what I heard over the course of almost an hour.

The band has a unique way of blending symphonic metal with Celtic/folk influences. It was like Riverdance and Trans Siberian Orchestra had a baby and named it Urn. The album opens with "Autumnal Sunrise" and you're immediately taken by the unique blend of styles and the instrumentation. It's followed by "Cast in Amber" which is also the first single and video released from the album. Founder and lead vocalist Dominic St. Charles has a voice that is so distinct and you almost think of him as a storyteller rather than a singer in a symphonic metal band. He definitely has a way of taking you on a journey with his vocal delivery.

The riffs tend to pick up a bit in the next song "Black Widow" which has a killer riff driving the song from beginning to end. You're also graced with some tasty solos in this one as well which helped this track really stand out to me. I swear the riff almost has an Alice in Chains feel to it as I listen to it for the fifth time. "My Chosen Path" starts slowly and peacefully before pushing down on the pedal and quickly taking off. The song even features some death vocals mixed in from bassist Julian Umberger, which add another layer to an already solid song. I felt as if the song "The Road to St. Patrick's" was a bit out of place as it sounded more folky and lacked the metal thrust that many of these other songs did have. On a more positive note, the hard driving title track was one of the more solid tracks on the album and definitely another stand-out to us.

Overall, this album took me on a musical ride that kept my attention from beginning to end and was quite entertaining. Dominic St. Charles definitely has a voice that's unique and compelling, plus he also plays guitar and the keyboard. He's joined on guitar by Christopher Migdalski and, although I am not sure to credit which riffs to, the two of them deliver some intense and intriguing riffs throughout the release. The rhythm section of Liam Hamning on drums and Julian Umberger on bass are a solid team who laid the foundation for these songs to be built on. As I said at the beginning, it is a unique blend of symphonic metal with Celtic/folk music that may just hook you in if you give it an honest chance. The riffs will have

to breaking out your air guitars while the Celtic influences may even have you wanting to dance a bit.

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## **FIFTEEN MINUTE MEDIA**

### [URN Returns from the Ashes](#)

By Alexandria Irving

9/9/15

After several years out of the spotlight, dark metal band URN is back with their third full-length album *Epiphany*. Their first effort since *Scribings of a Forgotten Soul* in 2009 and first produced by Dark Moon Records, the album shows the band's evolution over their 20-year existence.

The brainchild that would come to be *Epiphany* started its creation in 2011 after the band took some time off to focus on their personal lives, family, and "to gain a fresh perspective" following heavy touring to promote *Scribings*. The extreme life changes the members went through in that time period provided easy inspiration for the album's name. "It summed up a great deal of what many of us on an individual level had come to learn about ourselves," said Founder and Frontman Dominic St. Charles.

These life changes and emotions are heavily reflected in *Epiphany*. From the haunting "Empty Promises," which touches on loss, to the self-titled track that delves into the hardships of finding yourself, there is something for any fan to relate to. The album's first single, "Cast in Amber" represents some of the depression the band has faced over the years and triumphed. A sequel to "Etched in Stone" from their 2006 album *Dancing with the Demigods*, the song is written in the form of a suicide letter.

"The true message of what we are trying to convey is no matter how bad life can seem, there is no difficulty too great that it cannot be lessened and that life itself is a beautiful gift meant to be cherished and shared," said St. Charles. The debut video, he said, portrays the sentiment that once someone has left his loved ones behind he hopes that they will one day forgive him and think better of him than he obviously thought of himself.

The album is an emotional one for the band, who lost an integral part of the group earlier this year. Great friend and fill-in bassist Scott Clendenin passed in March after health complications. Formerly of the pioneering death metal band Death, Clendenin had a lot of input in the band's catalog. "It calls to light not to take people for granted, you never really know how much time you have with someone," said St. Charles.

URN lends a lot of their success to their versatility, which has captivated audiences across multiple genres. *Epiphany* focuses on the more Celtic/folk side of the band, which has drawn rave reviews from fans in the past. The album integrates a heavy use of non-traditional rock instruments such as the violin and harp as a departure from the use of keyboards. The group still believes in a symphonic approach, but St. Charles said that "this migration stylistically we felt was a natural progression for us."

The band is currently working on booking a tour to promote *Epiphany*. Though they have been "blessed" to tour with some of their heroes in the past, they have their eye on Paradise Lost and Cradle of Filth to share the stage with.

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## **BRUTAL RESONANCE**

URN

Aug 2015

[Folk](#), [Metal](#)

*Yea, yea, I know, this really isn't electronic underground music or industrial related at all. But, hell, I like to sometimes dive into other genres when I find myself curious enough.*

*Anyway, **URN** is a gothic/folk metal group based in Orlando, Florida of the United States.*

*With their upcoming album "Epiphany" on the horizon, I talked to guitarist and lead singer **Dominic** regarding the album, their signing to Dark Moon Records, and their future plans.*

**You guys have been around since 2000 and I can only imagine it's been a journey. With your next album due out in August, have you noticed a change in style or improvements in the way you write/sing music as URN?**

*Dominic - "I've always felt that a band that's worth its weight will typically see some form of improvement or progression from one album to the next. This recent album had a little more collaboration with its development, something that I was hoping for for quite a long time."*

**The last major release you guys have had was "Scribings of a Forgotten Soul" in 2009. It's been about 6 years since then, and now you're unveiling "Epiphany". Were you working on the album throughout that entire period or was there a bit of a break?**

*Dominic - "We toured extensively for two years for 'Scribings' so we really in earnest didn't begin to work on 'Epiphany' until about 2011. However, around that time we elected to focus on other aspects of our lives and our families. I myself left Chicago for Florida later in 2011 to be with my family more. We did some touring in 2012 and decided to take a little bit of break the following year."*

**What really influenced the music and lyrics on "Epiphany"? Was it another band or musician, or personal interests or relief that brought the album to life?**

*Dominic - "As the title would suggest, it was an intense exploration of self-discovery and self-realization. On an individual, personal level I was transformed dramatically as a person and a great deal of this album's lyrical content were my emotions dealing with the vigorous changes that came with that process. A reflection on lessons learned if you will."*

**What can fans expect to see on the album? How many tracks, the length of it all, any cover songs or collaborations, etc.? What should they be looking forward to?**

*Dominic - "We have eleven songs on this album and they are all original. In fifteen years, this band hasn't done a cover song and most likely will not be doing one in the near future. What URN fans can look forward to is that we heard their voices and we delved more into our Celtic side of the band as we incorporated more non-traditional rock instruments such as violin and 36-string lever harp which really helped enhance the arrangements on many of the songs."*

**How was writing the album altogether? Was it a surreal experience or did it have more downturns than upturns at some points?**

*Dominic - "Our albums in the past, I did the majority of the writing, but with this album we did try to make it more of a collaborative effort. Each of us come from similar, but different backgrounds and we also came from different ways of how we go about songwriting. As a*

result, there were periods where we struggled with the new process. I'd say that Liam and Chris work a little better together, but in the end we all seem to have learned each other better that moving forward we'll be more harmonious."

**Obviously, I'm sure you guys have listened to your own material a million times over by now. What do you personally think of the album yourselves? Are you proud of what you were able to accomplish?**

*Dominic* - "I honestly feel it is our greatest work to date. I've been proud of each of the albums in the past, but this one in particular I have a certain type of pride that I've not felt with the previous releases. This is in part that we did take a much different approach to the overall process of the album's creation."

**Now, you've also signed to Dark Moon Records. How did that occur? Did the label approach you or did they approach you?**

*Dominic* - "Corvis Nocturnum of Dark Moon Productions who wanted to expand his multi-media operations into the music industry approached us. Fortunately for us, he has been a long-time friend and fan of URN and he was really wishing for another URN album and put a great deal of effort into making this all a reality."

**And how has it been being attached to the label? Have they been very supportive of you so far?**

*Dominic* - "The support that they have shown is immense. Albeit, there have been some financial struggles which almost anyone in this time and this world has been encountering, but the cold truth is, if it wasn't for Dark Moon coming and expressing their support to the extents that they have, URN probably never records this album or ever again for that matter."

**And what's next for URN? Are you planning any tours or live shows? An EP or two down the line somewhere?**

*Dominic* - "We have been honored to have partnered up with Bloody Disgusting to have world premiered our promotional video for 'Cast in Amber' the first single off of the new album. So we launched that last month and have already seen incredible feedback. We have a regional tour coming up in September and we have already filmed another video for the title track of this album. As far as another recording in the future, we certainly feel that we would like to, but let's see where 'Epiphany' takes us."

**Is there anything I may have failed to mention that you wish to discuss at this moment?**

*Dominic* - "We are working on a re-launch of our flagship website [www.urncentral.com](http://www.urncentral.com). It will be a complete overhaul from the previous version and will be more interactive as well."

**Lastly, I thank you for this interview and wish you much luck.**

*Dominic* - "It is we who thank you for giving us this opportunity to share a bit of ourselves with your readers. We deeply appreciate all that you do for the music community and the support that you've shown to us!"