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Temujin: 1000 Tears

Given the studio technology available, I shouldn't find it so surprising that just two people can produce such vibrant, heavy and enjoyable music but, you see, the thing is that Australian duo Temujin (Karl & Kelly Lean) have produced such an energetic, raw and live-sounding album that you do almost expect it to have been recorded "live" in the studio. Ok, they may have had help from a lead guitarist on four tracks but this remains essentially a two-person-band, a two-person-album. Well done indeed!



Karl was previously a founding member and bass player from Australian cult metal band Nothing Sacred. Afterwards, he did session work and guest gigs with a number of other metal bands including Angel of Death, Ion Drive and Spawn. A desire to use this experience in a new musical direction led to the formation of Temujin. *1000 Tears* was actually issued in 2007 as a self-produced album and received a strong response from fans. As a result, the band were signed up earlier this year by Renaissance Records, who have now distributed the album throughout the USA, Canada and Mexico.

1000 Tears is billed as goth-metal and I'm not going to disagree with that but I would say that its soundscape borders closely onto conventional rock or metal. Kelly's vocals are good and suit the music and its production but she stays within a fairly narrow vocal range. Unlike what happens with many female goth singers, there are no operatic excursions here. As a result, the voice does not feature as almost the additional instrument that it can become with a singer of a greater vocal range. Indeed, the vocal is actually comparatively low down in the mix on many songs, ensuring that the main feature of Temujin's soundscape is, without a doubt, Karl's guitar thundering and riffing its way through chord after chord, overlaying solos at a whim. The guitar's pace and energy coupled with the rawness of the production make for an extremely

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with the rawness of the production make for an extremely appealing rock sound, to which Kelly adds occasional keyboards for adornment only. It's fun - it's not going to win any Grammys but it's a great up-tempo rock album!

"Spiral"'s soundscape is different: a short instrumental based on a bass-melody played by Karl - very effective given its duration and placing on the album. "Throwing Stones" too is a departure from the normal soundscape, featuring as it does a shared vocal, almost a duet I suppose, between Karl and Kelly. It's a strong number musically with some great guitar work but Karl's vocal sounded like an old man trying to do metal growling and failing! (It's not bad enough to ruin the song though.)

Elsewhere the energy keeps the thing very much afloat. There are changes in pace and variations in mood, but not significant ones. What you get is energetic guitar-driven gothic rock/metal with an affecting vocal performance.

Good album! If there's a follow-up 'll be interested to see whether or not they clean up the production given that this style suits the music.

Track Listing:-

- 1) Find Me (4:21)
- 2) 1000 Tears (4:13)
- 3) So Near (4:06)
- 4) Let You Go (4:44)
- 5) Spiral (2:00)
- 6) Down (3:58)
- 7) Blue Jay (4:00)
- 8) Taken (4:46)
- 9) Sheltered (6:08)
- 10) Haunted (3:50)
- 11) All of You (3:58)
- 12) Throwing Stones (4:44)
- 13) Heart and Soul (5:19)

Added: November 17th 2008

Reviewer: Alex Torres

Score: ★★★★★

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