I had never heard of the German band The Other before I set out to review them, so I had no idea what to expect. My first impression? Total shock! Being a die-hard metalhead, the music I prefer must have balls. And NEW BLOOD (out August 30 in North America from Steamhammer/SPV) will have your fangs on point and blood boiling.

Track 1, “Back to the Cemetery,” begins and the sound of the bass is amazing. Then the absolutely masterful vocals of Rod Usher hit you like a freight train. It’s so impressive how this guy melts into the mix, yet overpowers it at the same time. It carries on into a very metal-edged riff with some cool double bass work. The vocals draw you in and there’s no turning back. It just gets better and better as it plays on, and when it gets to the chorus—“Back to the cemetery, to the cemetery, we must go!”—you may find yourself singing along as if possessed. Bringing on nostalgic flashbacks of what I always thought punk should feel like, it’s just beautiful!

The music is so well put together that I have to assume people into all kinds of heavy music will have no complaints. It is very melodic but also quite heavy. The songs have a very basic structure that’s easy to follow with instruments emitting sounds that are totally suitable for a band called The Other. It would have been a shame for them to have gone for a more raw-sounding record in an effort to be “more punk.” NEW BLOOD sounds very modern, crisp and clean, but that metal edge gives it more than enough kick to appeal to people who don’t usually listen to this type of music.

Their imagery is also truly worthy of the horrorpunk moniker. THE OTHER initially began as a Misfits cover band hailed by the press as “Europe’s most popular horrorpunk band.” A glance at their photos here will show you they are still somewhat in Misfits worship mode—but this is not a bad thing. My guess would be that the Misfits would love the hell out of these guys too!

This is not at all a one-dimensional type of band. The music is not redundant. They show a lot of heart and make their music a lot of fun. If you don’t have the lyrics in front of you, the vocals are very audible, but after taking a look at them I was stuck on one word: brilliant! To make people think of sick things with a smile on their faces is a talent, and these lyrics do just that. They strike a nerve and your funnybone. It’s like a party in a cemetery. You are surrounded by gloom, yet having the time of your life!

One standout track is the Stephen King-themed “Castle Rock.” The music is very upbeat, with the amazing vocals referencing some of King’s greatest work. Lyrically, this is a real treat for any fan of the author’s stories. Edgar Allan Poe also proves worthy of The Other’s homage; “The Burial” is actually their fourth Poe song. H.P. Lovecraft is referenced as well with “Demons Walk the Earth,” yet another ripping song that gets your head banging and makes you want to sing along.

With the music varying in tempo, The Other never lost me. When I hoped for a dose of speed, I got it. When I wondered if something was different was coming, it arrived. When I thought it could not get any better, it did. There are not too many albums with this many songs coming out these days that stay in my player until the end. This one I started over as immediately after it was finished.

Another track that really stands out is “The Lovesick Mind.” One of my first impressions after seeing and hearing The Other was that they’d be a great band to use for a horror-film soundtrack—and it turns out they’re already doing so! Gris Grimly’s Poe-inspired WOUNDED EMBARK OF THE LOVESICK MIND will feature the aforementioned track, which is very different from the rest of the record. It’s a very hypnotic song with vocals that reminded me of the incredible tones of Peter Steele’s higher end. Usher’s range is far greater—and I do not mean to imply he has an especially deep voice, but his delivery is smooth and he stands as one of the greatest vocalists I have heard in a long time.

The Other has a lot to offer; NEW BLOOD blew me away and mark my words, you will be hearing about this band. Scheduled to appear at Wacken this year as well as many other big festivals, The Other has risen from their graves to deliver their undead brand of horrorpunk, and are far too good to go unnoticed.

The Other is:

Vocals: Rod Usher

Guitars, Backing Vocals: Sarge von Rock

Drums: Dr. Caligari

Bass, Backing Vocals: Migore Drake

See the band’s MySpace page here .

{jcomments on}