Megadeth - Countdown To Extinction (1992)



1. Skin O' My Teeth (3:14)
2. Symphony Of Destruction (4:02)
3. Architecture Of Aggression (3:34)
4. Foreclosure Of A Dream (4:17)
5. Sweating Bullets (5:03)
6. This Was My Life (3:42)
7. Countdown To Extinction (4:16)
8. High Speed Dirt (4:12)
9. Psychotron (4:42)
10. Captive Honour (4:14)
11. Ashes In Your Mouth (6:10)
Bass Guitar, Backing Vocals – David Ellefson Drums, Backing Vocals – Nick Menza Lead Guitar, Rhythm Guitar, Acoustic Guitar, Backing Vocals – Marty Friedman Lead Guitar, Rhythm Guitar, Lead Vocals – Dave Mustaine

Megadeth, band with multiple personalities. Like a schizophrenic family member, you just have to love it. All Megadeth albums have strong identities, some of them being softer and more melodic - ok, commercial - and some of them more raw and thrashy. Dave Mustaine has always recreated Megadeth's skin over and over again, but the biggest leap in Megadeth's musical evolution happened between albums So Far, So Good... So What! (1987) and Countdown To Extinction (1992).

Between those albums mentioned above, is of course the brilliant Rust In Peace. The landmark of thrash metal, a burst of newly discovered energy and creativity with Megadeth's most praised line-up Dave Mustaine/Dave Ellefson/Nick Menza/Marty Friedman. With all the success with the album and more professional (and more sober) musicians - all financial and artistic tools to succeed again were there. Dave Mustaine also made a good move by taking the mixer of Rust

In Peace, Max Norman, with him - this time as a co-producer. After spending four months in Enterprise Studios in Burbank California, Countdown To Extinction was ready to hit the charts - and of course the hearts of all the metalheads. Result was Megadeth's biggest commercial success ever, with it debuting second in Billboard Top 200 US, and fifth in Billboard Top 200 UK. Music videos kept on rollin' on MTV, also Grammy nominations and other awards were given to this album.

How about music itself? Did Countdown To Extinction turn out to be a sell-out radio friendly album? More hard rock songs and ballads than actual thrash metal? No, not just yet in my opinion. Those sad and uninspired albums came out years later, and while songs in Countdown To Extinction were shorter than Rust In Peace, and maybe less progressive, too, the album had a certain mean and nasty edge still left in it. The album was well produced and more polished than before, but it wasn't a fat heavy rock dinosaur like Metallica's self-titled album released the same year. The album opener "Skin O' My Teeth", "Symphony Of Destruction" and "High Speed Dirt" represented more straight forward and simpler thrashy rock songs, while "Architecture Of Aggression", "Sweating Bullets" and "Psychotron" were more complex (yet compact) songs - containing more twisted riffs and unusual melodies. Maybe the finest moments in the album for my taste came from the melodic and kind of post-apocalyptic songs like "Foreclosure Of A Dream", "Countdown To Extinction" and "Captive Honour". What about those Marty vs. Dave solo battles that so many enjoyed in Rust In Peace? Closing track on the album, "Ashes In Your Mouth" offers that plenty - what a great contrast between melodic and classical style by Friedman, versus angry and thrashy shredding style by Mustaine. Simply awesome.

As a conclusion, Countdown To Extinction is a great album. Its biggest weakness is maybe having a little too produced and polished sound for old school thrash metal fans, and lack of absolute killer tracks like "Holy Wars", "Tornado of Souls" or "Hangar 18". On the other hand, there are no totally worthless filler tracks either. Dave Mustaine had still that nice nihilistic attitude in his music when it comes to the world, politicians, and human kind. Just what I have always thought that Megadeth is all about. Maybe more than a thrash metal band. ---Thyroid, metalstorm.net

W latach 90. Megadeth poszedł tą samą drogą co Metallica - po osiągnięciu szczytu w thrash

metalowej niszy, oba zespoły postanowiły zacząć tworzyć muzykę mogącą trafić do szerszego grona słuchaczy. "Countdown to Extinction" to właściwie album heavy metalowy, miejscami wręcz hardrockowy. Czasem co prawda zespół zbliża się tutaj do mocniejszego, nowoczesnego (wówczas) grania w stylu Pantery ("Architecture of Aggression", "Ashes in Your Mouth"), przeważają jednak utwory bardzo melodyjne, przebojowe ("Skin O' My Teeth", "Symphony of Destruction", "Countdown to Extinction"). Po raz pierwszy grupa Mustaine'a spróbowała stworzyć balladę, niepozbawioną jednak mocniejszych momentów ("Foreclosure of a Dream"). Nie przekonują tylko mówione partie wokalne w zwrotkach "Sweating Bullets" i "Psychotron", poza tym szczegółem udanych. Mimo zmiany stylu, "Countdown to Extinction" to album równie udany, co "Rust in Peace". Zaś "Symphony of Destruction" stał się najbardziej rozpoznawalnym utworem Megadeth. ---Paweł Pałasz, pablosreviews.blogspot.com

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