

AHAB

AHAB "The Divinity of Oceans"
Style: Nautik Funeral Doom Metal
Country: Germany
Release Date: 24 June 09 (EU), 28 July 09 (US)

Heed the call of the wretched sea and bow to the divinity of oceans...

In what amounts to a monumental wake of despair, Germany's "nautik" doom pioneers, AHAB, have unleashed the third and final instalment of what they refer to as their "Nantucket Saga", "The Divinity of Oceans". The adventure that began with "The Oath" EP in 2005 and continued through "The Call of the Wretched Sea" in 2007 has come to its logical and bitter end. Not that this is the end of AHAB, but rather the final necessary step before starting a new chapter.

Inspired this time around by the books In the Heart of the Sea by Nathaniel Philbrick and The Wreck of the Whaleship Essex by Owen Chase - the latter of which inspired author Herman Melville's legendary work, Moby Dick - AHAB tells the tale of the *Essex* crew and the failed whale hunt which saw the ship end up at the bottom of the sea and doomed its crew to the horrors of cannibalism and an uncertain fate. Like the books, the songs on "The Divinity of Oceans" capture the essence of a horrific turn of events while paying respect to the unwilling participants. Taking measure of the music, it's fair to say AHAB has done the work of Philbrick and Chase justice.

Without a doubt, the members of AHAB offer their own unique brand of doom metal. The typical BLACK SABBATH, CANDLEMASS, and SOLITUDE AETURNUS comparisons used when describing the genre do not apply to "The Divinity of Oceans" - nor have they ever where AHAB is concerned - as the album sets a brooding juggernaut pace that makes a much stronger impact than one might expect. Each song is an epic unto itself; the music is bombastic in spite of what being doom metal is supposedly all about; and Droste's vocals have taken the band in a direction no one would have expected upon diving into "The Call of the Wretched Sea". Calling doom metal unpredictable is a stretch at best, but the term certainly applies where "The Divinity of Oceans" is concerned.

Formed in 2004 by vocalist/guitarist Daniel Droste and guitarist Christian Hector, AHAB's line-up is rounded out by DEAD EYED SLEEPER members Cornelius Althammer (drums) and Stephan Wandernoth (bass), with Althammer pulling double duty as recording engineer and producer. In Hector's estimation it is "the best line-up we ever had in this band." Engineer Markus Stock (THE VISION BLEAK, EMPYRIUM), whom Droste and Hector worked with previously on MIDNATTSOL's 2008 album, "Nordlys", was on board to mix and master the album at Klangschmiede Studio E, and the results are startling.

Hector's initial descriptions of the tracks comprising "The Divinity of Oceans" as being akin to "CARCASS in slo-mo and MORBID ANGEL going beyond the slowness of



"Blessed Are the Sick" are warranted, as are his claims that the album might remind people of DEVIN TOWNSEND gone doom metal. Indeed, on an atmospheric level, in particular where Droste's clean vocals are concerned, "The Divinity of Oceans" may even be seen as the

dark and doom-ridden bookend to Townsend's epic "Terria" from 2001. High praise, perhaps, but well earned.

That said, the greatest strength of AHAB's new album is its ability to appeal to metal fans unaccustomed to or simply uninterested in doom metal. The ultimate achievement for any artist, and one that bodes well for the future no matter how dark it gets...Welcome to "The Divinity of Oceans", the soundtrack for lost souls.

Carl Begai (*Brave Words & Bloody Knuckles*)

Not unlike a baleful Leviathan, AHAB's latest album, "The Divinity of Oceans", emerges from the obscure ocean depths to provide an impressive account of the *Essex* and its condemned crew. Offering a kaleidoscope of human emotions that find tragic conclusion within deep despair and cannibalism, the terrible events are told within the perfect, though dark and disturbing confines of slow doom metal, brutal vocals, and melodic interludes. Markus Stock (Empyrium, The Vision Bleak) of Klangschmiede Studio E gives "The Divinity of Oceans" its finishing touch. With this latest offering, AHAB have managed to more than outdo their debut release, delivering a masterpiece of Nautic Funeral Doom Metal.

AHAB is:

Daniel Droste: Vocals, Guitars
Christian Hector: Guitars
Stephan "Norz" Wandernoth: Bass
Cornelius Althammer: Drums

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