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Imminent Sonic Destruction - "Recurring Themes" (CD)



"Recurring Themes" track listing:

1. Driving Home (10:03)
2. Monster (6:50)
3. With Death (6:40)
4. Breaking Through (13:12)
5. Temple (5:35)
6. Here, It's Over (5:02)
7. Sick (8:56)
8. The Remembering (2:04)
9. Raven (16:36)

Reviewed by heavytothebone2 on February 19, 2012

Detroit, Michigan's Imminent Sonic Destruction is progressive metal for a modern crowd, as listeners will compare this band to everything from Genesis and Dream Theater to Between The Buried And Me and The Human Abstract. Holding little back on their gigantic 75-minute debut album, "Recurring Themes," Imminent Sonic Destruction is not the kind of band to ease a newbie into the genre. This is an album with compelling, if occasionally bloated, musical ideas stemming from love of the '70s prog scene, while harsh vocals and chugging riffs try to get the notice of an audience beyond prog nerds.

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The contemporary techniques are where most of the low points can be found. The screaming vocals are not used primarily, which is an unexpected benefit. They seem like a vain grasp to attract a youthful fan base who doesn't know much about prog, besides that Pink Floyd once released albums about the moon and a wall. Imminent Sonic Destruction tears the meat off a vicious side of themselves on "Monster" and "Sick." The anger that seeps from these tracks can get over-the-top, especially with all the expletives thrown out in the latter tune.

Imminent Sonic Destruction finds an identity in the lengthier cuts, where the wistful keys and uplifting guitar solos have time to spare. Over eight minutes is given to the band exploring their instrumental roots on "Raven," and while that may bore many who came aboard from listening to a song like "Here, It's Over," there are enough thrills to keep the pace lively. Having the freedom to go past ten minutes does hurt the meandering "Breaking Through," which only has enough momentum to last half the time taken up.

That problem is non-existent on the wonderful opening cut "Driving Home." It's doesn't seem like anything substantial in its first few minutes, but that's changes around the halfway mark. The song transforms from a charming acoustic break into an emotional guitar solo that would make John Petrucci tear up. The closest the band gets to recreating that feeling is in the start to "Temple," before the band decides to turn up the electricity, and the solemn piano instrumental "The Remembering"



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decides to turn up the electricity, and the solemn piano instrumental "The Remembering."

"Recurring Themes" does its best to not only rein in fans of progressive metal, but those who aren't used to keyboards all over their music. Seventy-five minutes is a long time for any record to maintain its dexterity, and the band struggles just as many other have in the past to make "Recurring Themes" worth the length taken up. However, songs like "Driving Home" and "Raven" do enough in justifying an exploration of the songs in-between those two mammoths.

Highs: Opening and closing track are fantastic progressive metal epics, band knows their way around their respective instruments, wonderful moments of reflection and calmness

Lows: Harsh vocals are out-of-place, unnecessary use of explicit lyrics, 75 minutes is a little too much

Bottom line: "Recurring Themes" has its bright spots that could have shown brighter if not for some modern concessions built into their progressive metal songwriting.



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Key	
Rating	Description
	Perfection. (No discernable flaws; one of the reviewer's all-time favorites)
	Near Perfection. (An instant classic with some minor imperfections)
	Excellent. (An excellent effort worth picking up)
	Good. (A good effort, worth checking out or picking up)
	Decent. (A decent effort worth checking out if the style fits your tastes)
	Average. (Nothing special; worth checking out if the style fits your taste)
	Fair. (There is better metal out there)
< 2 skulls	Pretty Bad. (Don't bother)

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