

**Kinetic
Dissent
I Will Fight
No More
Forever
Metal Mind**



back in 1991 but even when your musical diet consisted of Last Crack and Crimson Glory, the complexity of such forward-thinking bands sometimes detracted from the basic enjoyment of the material. In some ways however, it's a little strange KD didn't increase in popularity rapidly.

They were perfectly capable of keeping up with the likes of Queensrÿche and also had a thrash/aggressive power metal tinge, which evoked classic Mike Howe-era Metal Church. Most of their peers went on to pen several albums and garner a strong reputation within the scene. KD however disappeared after just one Roadrunner-endorsed record. With little promotion and a difficult band name/album title, perhaps it was no wonder but musically this tight set of songs is approaching the classics of the prog metal genre. It's not overly technical but is undoubtedly intelligent and weaves its magic with the aid of headphones and multiple listens.

I Will Fight No More Forever comprises nine tracks that clock in at just under 40 minutes, but there's a palpable sense that absolutely everything here was created with meticulous, time-consuming precision. Standout cuts are all over the place but the epic "Social Syndrome" breaks the album up perfectly with a blend of virtually all the KD styles on offer. "Novocaine Response" starts off in a manner befitting a British '80s indie band yet morphs into early power metal, taking in several other moods along the way. Along with the opener "Cults Of Unreason," it stands as the "catchiest" song here. Despite being a little too reminiscent of Geoff Tate, the closing cut "Reworked" rounds out proceedings majestically.

Metal Mind have done the sub-Manowar artwork justice here, their prolific, high standard continuing with this digipack and color booklet. Not sure if this is remastered but it sure sounds better than the aging vinyl (weirdly enough I swear I can hear some crackles on this CD), so for both longtime devotees and curious onlookers, this is well worth the money. [www.myspace.com/kineticdissentmusic] — Paul Stenning

**Year Of
No Light
Nord
Crucial Blast**



Disappointed with the last two releases from Isis and Pelican? Bored to tears with Neurosis wannabes Red Sparowes, Cult Of Luna etc.? Was Rosetta's *The Galilean Satellites* 2CD just too damn long for you? Then check out these Frenchies. One of my Top 10 discs of 2006, *Nord* — originally released on Radar Swarm in Europe — now sees the North American light of day. Borrowing more from the lush noise of My Bloody Valentine and gloomy alt rockers The Cure, than their similarly catchy contemporaries Mouth Of The Architect, *Year Of No Light* lay down an art-metal debut brimming with emotion and purpose. Unlike the many meandering post-metallers wasting away at the patch bay composing endurance tests of subtlety, *Year Of No Light* construct a complete album arc with vision. The band's youth shines through occasionally, as with the trite, harmonic-laced lumbering rhythm at the end of the otherwise superb "Traversée," or buried-in-the-mix throat shredding, but these are minor quibbles against promising scene newcomers. [yearofnolight.free.fr] — Natasha Padilla



**Znöwhite
All Hail To
Thee
Kick 'Em When
They're Down
Live Suicide
Metal Mind**

Before I begin, a question: Is anybody else finding that some of these Metal Mind reissues aren't playing in certain CD players? The last four or five Metal Mind discs that have come into my hands won't play in my computer, my portable CD player or my car stereo. Maybe it's whatever they use to make the gold colored disks? Maybe my computer, Discman and car have an aversion to old metal? Maybe I'm jinxed? Whatever the case, if you're also having problems, drop me a line, just so I have the comfort of knowing my world isn't falling apart around me. Thanks.

In terms of '80s metal, I remember the name Znöwhite more than I remember their music. I also remember that guitarist/mainman Ian Tafoya went on to form Cyclone Temple in his post-Znöwhite life and that the Chicago-based band had a unique lineup composition. Here's the scene: It's 1985, you go to a show and see a band with a diminutive, golden-haired, leather-clad, throaty metal queen fronting a group of black dudes playing speed metal. There are people who would still be shocked at that sort of shit in 2007, so you can imagine how this went over 20 years ago. But I'm not here to discuss Znöwhite as race-relations pioneers; I'm here to tell you about this latest reissue which culls the band's *All Hail To Thee* debut, the *Kick 'Em When They're Down* EP (both originally released on major label, Enigma) and the *Live Suicide* EP. Now, I don't really remember Znöwhite making much of an impact on the metal scene at large way back when — Enigma's lack of promotion is blamed in the liner notes — but whoever's fault it is, the band can't be blamed for being terrible. They may have had trouble deciding whether they wanted to be a hard rockin' party band ("Rock City Destination," "Live For The Weekend" and "Saturday Night") or a balls-to-the-curb thrash/speed metal outfit focused on searing riffs, pounding drums and excellent bass playing (courtesy of Ian's brother, Sparks, and later Scott Shafer), but whatever they did, they did it well, except for the absolutely terrible ballad "Never Felt Like This." Nicole Lee's voice could have benefited from the technological advances that came with Auto-Tune, but the girl had heart, soul and a set of lungs! Surprisingly, the band's music has aged rather well and while it'd be obvious to first-time listeners which era of metal tracks like "Sledgehammer," "Somethin' For Nothin'" and "Rest In Peace" hail from, this material has the staying power to appeal to members of the metal fraternity beyond those who aren't crotchety and bitter about not having their moms around to sew patches on their denim jackets. [www.myspace.com/znöwhitethrash]

— Kevin Stewart-Panko

**Tankard
Disco
Destroyer
Locomotive**



This is a reissue of Tankard's 1998 gem, *Disco Destroyer*. "From Frankfurt to Frisco, we destroy every disco," reads the back cover, and a CD that's printed to look like a glittering disco ball is a nice touch to this oddly-named but nevertheless excellent album of German thrash. With just one bonus track, this reissue clocks in at almost 50 minutes — a decent-enough value if you don't already own it.

In an era where people think Temple Of Brutality is great thrash, even a lesser-known release like *Disco Destroyer* shows what real thrash is made of. Like most overseas thrashers, Tankard had their heyday in the '80s with classics like *Zombie Attack* and *Chemical Invasion*, but *Destroyer* is proof positive that over 10 years into their career these beer-drinking metal heroes hadn't lost their attitude. The crunchy guitars, fast tempos, tongue-in-cheek lyrics and distinctive vocals by Andreas Geremia all have a cutting edge you wouldn't necessarily expect, but nevertheless appreciate. If you told an unknowing thrasher this was recorded in '88 instead of '98, you probably wouldn't get an argument.

A notable track is "Tankard Roach Motel," a fast-paced song that blends the oldschool sound and savagery with the band's penchant for humor. The music is perfectly aggressive but the lyrics are about the band's practice space being infested with roaches. It's told from the point of view of a roach named Cy, who likes living with Tankard because they have chips, old beer and porno magazines. If you can appreciate that kind of humor, you'll appreciate *Disco Destroyer*.

The bonus track, "Fast Taker," from 2002 has a noticeably different sound than the rest of the album — it's louder, the production is clearer and it has a noticeable heavy metal influence (you can almost hear Halford singing it). Not a bad addition but also not worth it if this album's been in your archive for the last decade.

[www.tankard.info] — Keith Russo

**Dance Club
Massacre
Feast Of
The Blood
Monsters
Black Market
Activities**



Judging from the band name, the lyrical content and the sound, *Dance Club Massacre* do not take themselves seriously. At least I hope they don't, because this stuff is chock full of uninspired riffs and rudimentary chicken squawks for vocals. Some might call it grindcore, but I refuse to put it in the same category as quality bands like Brutal Truth or Carcass. This is metal for hardcore kids who think owning one Slayer record makes them a metalhead.

The interesting thing about this band is that they have a keyboardist, which is somewhat unheard of for this style. While there is the occasional moment where this seems fitting, most of the time the keys go unnoticed. The band seem content with filler riffs and quite honestly, I'm a bit shocked that this is endorsed by the Red Chord's Guy Kozowyk. Reminds me of hardcore shows in someone's basement, full of DIY 'zines, 7" and bands who couldn't write their way out of a paper bag. Thank god those days are gone.

Sometimes you just have to tell it like it is. All I know is that this stuff is barely worthy of being on a label, let alone on a CD. It's rehashed Converge throw away riffs strictly for those who discovered metal yesterday. The mediocre artwork and logo should be warning enough that the contents within are not going to yield quality. The good news is that this is a re-release of a previous album. We can only pray that the band will break up before another album hits, or that they've miraculously refined their sound to a much more tolerable level. Fans of high-quality metal need not apply. [www.myspace.com/danceclubmassacre]

— Scott McCooe