



Macabre bio 2020
By Jamie Ludwig

In a time of global pandemic, civil unrest and political strife, even an album about murder might feel like a welcome bit of an escape. Enter *Carnival of Killers*, the new album from Chicago's ultimate musical weirdos, Macabre, which arrives nearly a decade after 2011's *Grim Scary Tales* as the band celebrates its 35th anniversary.

Formed in 1985, Macabre's lineup has remained the same since day one—vocalist/guitarist Corporate Death (Lance Lencioni), bassist/vocalist Nefarious (Charles Lescewicz), and drummer Dennis the Menace (Dennis Ritchie). That's a rarity for any band, let alone a band in a genre where peers with similar longevity might not even feature one original member.

The trio is a vanguard of the style they've come to describe as "murder metal," a ferocious mix of death metal, punk rock, grind, jazz fusion, thrash and folk melodies among other sounds with lyrics examining real-life stories of serial killers, mass murderers and more. What else could you call it except Macabre? As much as their fiendish riffs and disturbing subject matter make for brutal listening, their twists of nursery rhymes, parody, familiar childhood ditties and folk tunes (Have you ever imagined a song about Jeffrey Dahmer sung in the style of "She'll Be Coming 'Round the Mountain?" You have now.) give every album a grotesquely unhinged vibe—much like the makeup worn by John Wayne Gacy as he entertained kids as "Pogo the Clown." It's no wonder that the world's most extreme metal musicians have long pointed to Macabre as masters of the morbid.

While some bands bask in comic-book level gore, Macabre approach their topics much like newspaper reporters, documenting facts and depicting imagery, rather than glorifying violence. Corporate Death sees what they do as a means of shedding light on evildoers. "I consider it an art form. I call it creative storytelling. I do it to music, but this is my palette, my art," he says. "If anything, I try to cut these guys down in the songs and say they were bad people, and send a message to people to watch out— it's a crazy world and it's only getting worse."

Despite any bits of humor or musical playfulness, Macabre are deathly serious when it comes to their craft. A karaoke enthusiast, Corporate Death has painstakingly practiced singing in the styles of an enormous variety of singers to improve his chops and increase his range. They've also applied their songwriting to a 2002 acoustic album, *Macabre Minstrels: Morbid Campfire Songs*. Throughout their catalog, every story has been thoroughly researched and the band's

desire to learn more about the minds of people who commit these heinous acts of depravity has taken members to the 1992 trial of Jeffery Dahmer and to Illinois' Menard Correctional Center for several in-person meetings with Gacy. In fact, the title and cover art for *Carnival of Killers* is inspired by a painting that the serial killer made for Corporate Death.

Carnival of Killers features songs that have been lurking in Macabre's arsenal as far back as 1987, when they put out *Grim Reality*. Some tracks, such as opener "Your Window Is Open" (Richard Ramirez) and "Slaughterhouse" (Albert Fish), and "Stinky" (John Wayne Gacy) revisit infamous men who've haunted the band's music for years, while others delve into other diabolical true crime tales. "Now It's Time to Pay" details the crimes of domestic terrorist Timothy McVeigh, while "Tea Cakes" examines the gruesome story of Leonarda Cianciulli, the Italian mother and axe murderer who baked her victims' remains into sweets, believing only human sacrifices would protect her military son as he served under Mussolini.

So step up to the *Carnival of Killers*, where the main attraction is what most ringmasters would hide in a seedy sideshow, and join Macabre in a 35th anniversary celebration that'll blow your mind and haunt your dreams.

MACABRE history

- 1985: Macabre was formed:
 - Corporate Death.....guitar / vocals
 - Dennis the Menace.drums
 - Nefarious.....bass / vocals
- 1987: Macabre introduces the world to "murder metal" with the release of their *Grim Reality* LP
- 1988: *Shit List* demo released. Contains studio and Macabre authorized live tracks.
- 1989: *Gloom* is released on Vinyl Solutions.
- 1990: *Shit List* vinyl released on Gore Records in a limited edition of 666.
- 1991: *Grim Reality / Gloom* split CD re-release.
- 1992: *Night Stalker 7"* released on Relapse Records.
- 1993: *Sinister Slaughter* released worldwide on Nuclear Blast Records featuring the murder anthem "Vampire of Dusseldorf," "Zodiac," and the deadly ballad "Mary Bell."
- 1994: Macabre tours the globe on a 26 country killing spree including Canada, Israel, Mexico, Germany, the UK, the US, and other places we can no longer mention.
- 1995: *Behind the Wall of Sleep* EP released.
- 1996: Macabre introduces the world to "Death Metal Unplugged" with *Macabre Minstrels*. Imagine, if you can, an intertwining classical medley mixed with malevolent vocals set to Macabre classics. Truly inventive and guaranteed to stretch one's mind.
- 1999: *Unabomber* CD released via Decomposed.
- 2000: *Dahmer*, the 26 song murder musical recorded and produced by Neil Kernon is released.
- 2001: *Capitalist Casualties / Macabre split 7"*.
- 2002: Macabre restore aging master tapes onto new analog tapes for Neil Kernon remixes + *Drill Bit Lobotomy 7"* is released on Hater Of God Records.
- 2003: *Murder Metal* is released on Season Of Mist Records.

- 2006: *True Tales of Slaughter and Slaying* DVD is released on Season Of Mist Records.
- 2008: *Grim Reality* re-issue featuring the remastered 1980s version and a Neil Kernon remix version.
- 2010: *Human Monsters* EP.
- 2011: *Grim Scary Tales* full length is released and the band does extensive touring.
- 2012: *Slaughter Thy Poser* 12" EP.
- 2019: Macabre re-sign to Nuclear Blast
- 2020: *Carnival Of Killers* full length is released on Nuclear Blast Records, the band's first full length in almost a decade as well as the bands back catalog remastered and released digitally.