

# AUDIO DROME

DEADLY DANGEROUS DECENT DULL DRIVEL DOA DEAD ON ARRIVAL

REVIEWS BY D.D. CROWLEY, ALEX DELLER, MARK R. HASAN, AARON VON LUPTON, JEFF SZPIRGLAS, AND GLENN TILSON



## LA MASCHERA DEL DEMONIO

Roberto Nicolosi

SPIKEROT RECORDS

*La Maschera Del Demonio*, better known to English-speaking viewers as *Black Sunday*, was the first film officially directed by Maria Bava (he went uncredited on previous efforts) and kicked off a tradition in which the maestro's film scores were replaced for the US market. Deemed too sparse and "too Italian" by American International Pictures, Roberto Nicolosi's doomy, gothic music was switched with a more standard haunted house score by Les Baxter, but the original now arrives on vinyl for the first time with twenty unreleased cues, courtesy of Spikerot Records. Indeed, it's a little on the short side, but opens with a grandiose main theme in the vein of James Bernard's *Dracula*, before descending into quieter, very bassy sequences designed around percussion, brass, and piano. Not quite as colourful sounding as one would expect from an Italian horror original, the beauty of Nicolosi's music remains in the shadows, classic in its sound and bone chilling in its delivery. **AVL**



## THE DEAD DON'T DIE

SACRED BONES RECORDS

It's always interesting when a writer/director gets to wear the composer hat, and in *The Dead Don't Die*, Jim Jarmusch does so under the moniker

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SQÜRL (collaborating with producer Carter Logan). Taking cues from classics like Morricone's *The Thing* and Goblin's *Dawn of the Dead*, the score kicks off with the doomy jam "The Dead Just Don't Wanna Die Today," a wash of distorted, fuzzy guitars strumming minor chord riffs that suggest Jarmusch's idiosyncratic humour is going to be laced with tragedy. Often relying on spacey guitar riffs and ambient sounds, the music stands well in isolation as lengthy, dreamy ruminations of the apocalypse. The album, which mixes SQÜRL's music with dialogue clips of the movie, with one key omission: Sturgill Simpson's instant-classic title track that's the true laid-back soul of the film. That aside, Jarmusch's soundtrack stands on equal footing with other classic zombie scores. **JS**



## DRY BLOOD

System Syn

BURNING WITCHES RECORDS

Long running electro-industrial outfit System Syn (a.k.a. Clint Carney) recently wrote, produced, and starred in the independent horror film *Dry Blood*, and thanks to Carney's day job in music, also lent an intriguing, if minimalist score to the project. Propelled by a steady, plodding beat, Carney adds a haunting piano melody that places the film firmly in '80s slasher movie territory, then layers the whole thing in weird electronic effects, almost as if backmasking were being applied. Side two of this LP from UK synth darling Burning Witches is focused more on melody and autumn-like atmosphere before harsh electronic noise takes over, setting up suspenseful set pieces for the film's climax. The score for *Dry Blood* does indeed reflect a lower budget film, but there is enough

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here in terms of tone and atmosphere to interest horror fans, making System Syn a composer to watch out for. **AVL**



## DANTE TOMASELLI

Out-Of-Body Experience

ELECTRONIC

TUNECORE

Dante Tomaselli's fifth album stays within the composer/filmmaker's realm of deeply immersive audio experiences, but by evoking the synth sounds of video games and electronic instruments of his suburban youth, *Out-of-Body Experience* becomes a decisive narrative that teases the listener with sonic visions of angular, rain-slicked tunnels. Each cue marks a turn or descending stairwell that reverberates with techno beats, melting synth chords, and benthic drones that perpetually shape-shift and swirl across the stereo image. A recurring motif is the voice of infamous cult leader Reverend Jim Jones, but the real attraction goes beyond Tomaselli's renowned sound design;

textures, pulses, synth waves and raining frequencies are crafted with extraordinary clarity. It's a work that demands full attention, yet like his prior recordings, eases the listener into a calm state, even when a child beckons one to "Run!" **MRH**



## SKELETON BEACH

Ritual

ELECTRONIC

GRIEF THIEF RECORDS

*Skeleton Beach* (a.k.a. electronic artist Gene Priest) tackles a unique project on *Ritual*, a concept album about an individual's discovery of the occult and harnessing of the dark arts, delivered through the sound of '80s synth scores and modular music à la Tangerine Dream/Klaus Schulze. From the opening track "Blood Moon," there is an unmistakable John Carpenter-meets-Berlin School of electronic music influence, setting the foundation for an album that is part horror soundtrack homage and part experimental mind trip. *Ritual's* finest moments come from long, contemplative, ambient tracks such as

## PODCAST SPOTLIGHT

THE NO SLEEP PODCAST

**NAME:** The NoSleep Podcast

**THEME:** Scary stories

**FREQUENCY:** Weekly

**FORMAT:** Audio play

What started out as a subreddit for amateur fiction writers to share their scary short stories is now a podcast in its 13th season! Developed in 2011 by showrunner David Cummings, *The NoSleep Podcast* is a radio show where selected stories pulled from the forum are performed by a cast of regular readers and voice actors, making each story its own bite-sized radio drama. With an eclectic range of writers at varying levels of skill and subject matter, the stories are sometimes funny, often disturbing, but always terrifying. The weekly podcast is free but paid members gain access to special, unreleased episodes of some of the scariest stories submitted. A great show to listen to on a dark, autumn night, or any other season for that matter – check out their site for live show tour dates! **DDC**