

Music Review: Ecliptica - *Impetus*

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We're off to Vienna, Austria to see how metal band Ecliptica's first full length album, the self financed *Impetus*, is going down.

They have existed since 2005 and have maintained a stable line up. Since their formation they have been busy building up a following culminating in winning the Austrian 'Metal Battle' of 2007. An EP, *The Awakening*, followed and they have supported US prog-metal band Symphony X. In January 2008 it was time to go back into the studio in Vienna and record the album *Impetus*. Ecliptica are in fact a band of six, all with a pedigree in the Austrian metal scene – Markus Winkler and Bernie Scholz (guitar), Thomas Tieber (vocals), Elisabeth Fangmeyer (vocals), Florian Thur (bass) and Roman Klomfar (drums).

Ecliptica are best described as power-metal combined with some effectively progressive and melodic atmosphere, with two lead vocalist's one male and one female. *Impetus* has ten new self written tracks opening with two of the most instantly effective – "Impetus". Starting acoustically with guitar it suddenly leads, as you know it will, into "My Paradise" a highly impressive metal track and one with a memorable chorus.

It really does bode well for what the band can do and shows passion using the male/female vocal approach to good effect. "Land Of Silence" arrives with a great vibe from the twin guitars and some stonkingly good bass. Again the combination of Thomas and Elisabeth's vocals works well as it does throughout the album. "Carry On" kicks off with a Maiden-esque riff and another killer chorus.

I would like to see how Ecliptica transfer from the studio to the stage but of course they did win the Austrian Metal Battle last year, Austria has a thriving metal scene – Abigor, Summoning, Serenity, and Visions of Atlantis to name but a few – I hope to bring some of them into this Eurorock series shortly. "Twilight Hall" continues the power before the mellow "Turn Away" comes in with its gentle piano intro. Elisabeth sounds a lot more comfortable on this mellower track not having to compete with the band. Having said that her vocals are good throughout the album and add an all important colour to the tracks. Not quite Nightwish in approach but effective all the same. The promise and passion to build a reputation outside Austria are both definitely present.

"Old Man's Memories" and "Watching You" both put the foot back down as Ecliptica show their collective power. "Jester In The Ballroom" is, for me, a stand out track in an impressive set complete with some excellent guitar work that is out front in the mix. "Black Swan" chills us back down with a melodic and hauntingly effective atmosphere that ends the album with one of their strongest tracks in the set. A personal favourite that will have me monitoring this band closely.

Ecliptica have injected passion into *Impetus* and are sitting on some excellent material. There are even commercial moments contained here and they certainly have the ability to write songs that would transfer to a live setting well. Although not quite the finished article yet, they are most definitely heading in the right direction. On the strength of this album, I am sure that Ecliptica will continue to gain support slots to some big name

metal bands and that combined with Festival appearances will hopefully help promote this album.

If you like your metal to have imagination, passion, be melodically progressive and have some killer choruses, *Impetus* is for you. Hopefully the album's title will help give them exactly what it says.

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Jeff is a writer who lives in France. He writes DVD inserts, reviews, and has had a book published about David Byron of Uriah Heep. He is 'busy' exploring the rock scene in Europe with his wife Debbie and dog Dylan. It's Dylan that does the writing of course. There are two series to check out - Eurorock & Classic Eurorock.