

*Agamemnon is back in Mycenae... The triumphant of Troy, the mega warlord, the king of kings all over Greece has returned to his homeland. Another story awaits him there... A story of betrayal and revenge. The greatest story of all times! It was only a matter of time till someone would create a concept based on the "Oresteia" tragedy. And that special someone made sure this concept became an album of adoration. David DeFeis, Virgin Steele mastermind, a true Titan amongst composers and singers, took the myth and transformed it into the mightiest Epic album in the world! "The House Of Atreus Act. I" is the most phantasmagorical album we/you have ever heard, in terms of epic musical "illustration" of a tale. Virgin Steele was giving lessons everywhere with that album and when SPV decided to re-release the two albums as one package... Then the heart of the fan who wants to know everything about that particular album... That heart did speak! Get ready for one magical ride cuz our leader on this trip is David DeFeis himself. David has given us a great deal of his own time and we are grateful to him. Naturally, none of this would have happened without the help of Mirko Marten (SPV), whom we truly thank for making this interview become reality.*

"The House Of Atreus" is considered to be a masterpiece. When I first listened to Act. I, I wrote that "This is the most EPIC album of all times"! What made you write a Metal opera based on the incredible story of Agamemnon's return after the Trojan war?

**I had wanted to do something on a really large scale for quite some time, and when I was asked by the director of the Theatre in Memmingen, Germany to compose...."something like an Opera"...is how he put it...well...when I heard that phrase...my mind immediately flashed THE HOUSE OF ATREUS...so I blurted that out into the phone. And the response I received was...."Errrgghh...Ok sounds great"!**

**I knew the story from when I was a child, and it stayed with me always. For some reason it just resonates with me. I think it is a timeless tale, and is still completely relevant today. I love the passion, the drama, the total spectrum of humanity...even the Gods and Goddesses all behave in a very human-like fashion. They are brought down to their base natures and so are the humans, and sometimes the humans are elevated to a higher state of being...for me that is the beauty of the Greek Myths...these explorations of the mind, body, spirit, and the search for our true or total nature. In addition, I knew that the drama and energy and action of the tale could inspire music of a very dramatic, over the top, bombastic style, and that is where the band needed to be at that point. We had been building up that kind of a large scale Work, and THE HOUSE OF ATREUS ACT 1 & ACT 2 was our release.**

What was the feedback you were getting back then? Fans and press in shock after listening to it?

**Some were, some didn't get it, which happens with all of our albums at first. But others took it immediately to their hearts and understood what we were trying to do. The fact that there were several instrumental sections on there and various characters or roles, (some male and some female)...but only**

**one vocalist playing all those roles confused some, but we didn't want to have a cast of thousands on the record, we just wanted to showcase the members of the group and try to push the boundaries of where we could go on all fronts.**

When did you decide to re-release the whole story and both albums? How do you feel?  
**That was decided back when we signed with SPV. They believe in the Group and want to re-issue the entire Catalogue, so these albums were next in line for the re-issue treatment. I am very happy to have them out again, and I really enjoyed working on re-mastering the tracks, and assembling the whole thing. It gets very crazy when there are so many songs, but I think it is worth doing. The next re-issue will either be VISIONS OF EDEN or THE BOOK OF BURNING....**

Are you going to take "The House" on the road? Thinking about doing special shows, making a production out of it, like you did in the past?

**I would love to do that. If the rest of the Group has the time and can commit to such a huge endeavor I would be more than excited to give it a go.**

"Nocturnes Of Hellfire & Damnation" was released last year. What was the fans and Press response?

**Some people are saying it is the best album we have ever done. Like every album we have ever put out, some people were ecstatic about it and really understood it straightaway, others didn't get it at first, but now several months later are coming around to catching on to where we are at with it. It is a very long album...featuring two discs and 29 songs, so there is a helluva lot of material to digest. On that album we were able to bring forth several sides of what we do in VIRGIN STEELE, from the fiery epic tracks like PERSEPHONE, to the monolithic Bluesy type things like THE PLAGUE AND THE FIRE, to the more "Gothic" type songs like GLAMOUR or FALLEN ANGELS, so it was an interesting album for us to make.**

Is it too early to talk about the new album? What do you have in mind?

**No it isn't too early. I would be happy to discuss it. There are actually several albums in the works at this time...what we will finish first and release next I can't really say, as we are working on so many things simultaneously. But if I could guess based on how the progress is currently going...I think we may complete first this very over the top, Barbaric-Romantic Work that is perhaps like a Greek Tragedy. It is something in the vein of ATREUS...but more compact. We probably will finalize it with one disc.**

Thinking about doing a special feature regarding "The House...", like a video or something like that?

**Yes, I have many plans and if the Group has the time to commit to some more filming it will happen.**

How do you get all this inspiration when you create music? Do you prefer to compose alone?

**For me it is a way of life, a way to make sense of my life, and understand my world and my relationship to the people in it. Composing music, lyrics...or writing of any type, is part "struck by lightning inspiration", and part relentless go for broke, living, breathing, playing, working with the material, until the song or piece of music or whatever takes on a shape that inspires you to wail on even further until completion. I do enjoy working alone. I write all the time...so I have no shortage of ideas to work on. I love living inside each song and wrestling with the universe to bring them out into the light of day and the dark of night. But I also do enjoy collaborating with another person, and trying to excite them about an idea, and have them excite and inspire me equally about an idea. Over the years I have had tremendous pleasure and great creative moments writing with Edward, and we recently did several tracks together that appear on the new "NOCTURNES" album, and I am sure that as time goes by we will continue to collaborate further. I have also just started a new way of working/writing with Josh and I really enjoyed writing WE DISAPPEAR together with him, and I'm sure more tracks will follow that one. Over the past year or so I have written interesting tracks with some good friends of the STEELE...like Dave Ferrara, Lynn Delmato, and Ed Warrin...and I will probably continue to do so as time permits.**

Which album would you say is your magnum opus?

**I love every album and there are certain songs on each album that I am very passionate about. Even some of the new bonus material that we included on the various re-releases we have put out these past few years, has strong new songs that I really love, like UNDER THE GRAVEYARD MOON, and ANOTHER NAIL IN THE CROSS...for example. But to answer your question...for me from what we have released thus far it is probably the VISIONS OF EDEN/BLACK LIGHT BACCHANALIA period of time...I wrote so much material for those albums and for the "Opera" that was staged based on those Works, but only a portion of what was written actually appeared on the albums...However...that being said... I believe that the new albums that we are currently working on and will release next, actually contain some of my best writing thus far. Edward, Josh and everyone else who has come into contact with the latest things we are doing feels the same way.**

Any chance to see you back in Greece again?

**I certainly hope so. I absolutely love Greece and I am always up for traveling there! It is a very special place for me.**

**Cheers and Etharisto Poli for all your questions and for all your strong support...**

**BY THE GODS & GODDESSES,**

**David DeFeis, April 2016**

**Costas Koulis**