

Band: Irontree
Album Title:
The Faceless
Label: Independent
Genre: Abyssic(k)
Heavy Thrash Metal



Description:
Dark. Raw. Powerfull.

Influences for the album:
80's Speed and Heavy,
90's Black and Doom
with a shot of straight
Rock'n'Roll

Band Line-Up:
Brüllfe - vocals
Steffen - guitar
Soze - bass guitar
Mimi - drums

CD Track Listing:
1. False Gods
2. Thy Will Be Done
3. Drowning
4. Fall from Grace
5. Chemical Sleep
6. Crucified
7. Ghosts of the
Irontree
8. Dirt
9. March of the
Faceless

Hailing from Wiesloch, Germany we find Heavy Thrash Metal quartet **IRONTREE**, and the lads have an excellent new nine track album out now called "The Faceless" which runs in at just over forty-five

minutes long and is the bands debut album. It's half-past seven in the evening. The former shopping center where the band's rehearsal space is located is partially illuminated by the artificial light of the street-lamp. For the most part, this huge building is cloaked in shadow. This leaves the numerous car wrecks, containers and the shabby façade barely visible. A glorious eyesore in a stuck-up neighborhood. This is where Irontree feels at home. We walk up the stairs merely consisting of concrete foundation. The owner must have sold the stone plates. A gnarled tree rises-up next to the stairs. It's stem partially grows up and around the banister. With each passing year, Irontree has come to observe how nature has managed to push through this man-made concrete desert. Unflinching. Unstoppable. Guitarist Steffen unlocks the door and we enter. In the dim lighting of a swallow emergency light another staircase leads us further up, surrounded by all kinds of junk. Cases of beverages, empty containers, wine boxes, a tool kit, a doll - watching me with a fixed gaze. The band has taken me between them. Encircled me. They lead me upstairs, to the second floor. As we

reach the top, a motion sensor powers up a floodlight and I can see more.

This entire space in the midst of the building, about four hundred square meters, is also entirely crammed up with old cars, stolen shopping carts, shelves which, apparently without any kind of system ... hold things. More dolls with dead eyes. Basically, the only free space is the walkway that leads to the rehearsal room at the end of the hall.



Suddenly, the drummer Mimi takes a left and is gone. The rest of us are waiting in semi-darkness in front of the door. I can see singer Brüllfee (roaring fairy) smile and she says: "electricity". Then a 'click!' follows and the neon lights awaken to life with a buzz. Although it is lighter now, I can barely make out my surroundings. Too many shadows... even though another light looms out of the sound-proof windows of the rehearsal space. Mimi is back and Steffen

unlocks the doors to the actual rehearsal room. We enter. Cable chaos. Stacked speakers. The bass player Soze breathes in heavily and exclaims: 'home'. Everyone starts laughing while Mimi makes her way across the room and takes his seat behind the drum set. Brüllfe pushes a beer into my hand and Steffen meticulously closes the door behind us. I guess I won't leave this place anytime soon, is all I think while I take a sip. Bassist Soze tosses me a bag of earplugs before the band start up their amplifiers.



The first couple of warm-up songs are indeed played in a hellish volume. When the band is finished and happy, the sweat smells fresh and my beer is empty. They gather around me. As a band Irontree have a pretty long history and they have had a lot of names. £We started off as a cover band. Over

the past twenty years, members have come and gone. Our direction and style has changed every couple of years," explains Steffen. Brüllfe and Steffen stayed. "That's the reason we called ourselves Iron(h)tree. At least, until Soze joined us on the bass and we discarded the H." The combination of each band members personalities and musical preferences, and how their sound has ground makes the band stand out. "Everyone can insert themselves. So, we are not really that different from other bands, I guess – the mix of the influences is just a different one," he points out. Soze does not really have a concept of what makes Irontree different. "I can only see for myself that the other bands I have played with over the years, mostly Punk, always had a clear agenda what it's all about. The past ten years have shown me again and again, that here, there are no musical limits – everything is open. Everyone can find themselves in the music. It has been great for me to find really good friends and soulmates through music later in life – that fuses us together and somehow makes us different to all the other mercenaries in the bands out there," he tells me. They all have different tastes and

preferences in music from punk, thrash, classic, mainstream, rap, metal etc. to national as well as international. "Many different inspirations and ideas all come together which we, all in our own way, can work into our songs. That way, I think, we have a style that it not easily compartmentalized and that distinguishes us from the millions of other bands. One common thing we all share as a band, is that we like our songs.



Again and again, we have the best time celebrating the energy. Awesome," enthuses Mimi. "There are a couple of things that make us unique, in my opinion," continues Brüllfe. "First and foremost, of course the compositions – they can barely be sorted into any of the established genres. This is not in any way our intention, as a kind of style – or a unique selling point, but that's the way it is, our music, it's just us! This becomes especially apparent at our gigs, we are not a studio band. The way I sing, that is somewhat

unusual. I would describe it as unfiltered and real. Which is meant without any judgment. Everyone has to decide for themselves if they like it or not. That is something that you can hear and feel. Especially women give me enthusiastic feedback after our gigs," he laughs.



Another aspect is perhaps, even though many other bands might share this feature, is that we are friends and have gone through life together over the past twenty years," She expresses. Ever since his early youth, Brüllfe has somehow always been involved with music. As a child he was forced to play the melodica – the epitome of a musical worst-case scenario and suffering through this kind of trauma can result in a legitimate reason to hate music for the rest of your life. "But whether consciously or not, I have always been surrounded by musicians (my first boyfriend at twelve was, later in life, a successful drummer). Early on I worked through various

music ideas with Ray Gerold, with whom I used to go to school. I spent a lot of time in the music store Session in Walldorf, in front and behind the bar making coffee," she explains to me. "As I bought my first bass at the age of 17 it just made sense to someday make music myself. Then in the year 2000, more as an act of defiance against the regional live bands which definitely did not correspond with my taste of really awesome music, the idea to start a band was born and the band formation took place in 2000."

Musically Steffen is into bands like Moonspell or Gorefest. Mimi, on the other hand, is hooked on Tool and Slipknot. Soze grew up in punk and crust and is therefore shaped by bands like Bother Inferior or Fall of Efra. "The inspiration comes from the time we spend together.

Lyrically, it culminates in socially critical topics that blend in, a little misanthropy as well and just the everyday emotions that each of us carries inside them and brings to rehearsal," explains Brüllfe.

When he is not writing or performing Steffen is also responsible for the technical side of the sound for Irontree.

"That's one part. I like to be creative as well. A little of this and a little of that. From programming

smaller programs, video editing and the production of our music, to writing books and short stories, as well as art work," he enthuses. "The thing that combines all of this is the computer. By now I would feel amputated without a computer. A mighty tool, no doubt. A double-edged sword? Indeed. Apart from that, I like pretty much everything one would expect of a metal lover. Fantasy, horror, Sci-Fi, PC-role playing games, shooter, alcohol and driving fast. I am a cliché, I'm afraid," he sighs. In his free time, Soze is clearly focused on his wife and daughter.



"The time is running away and everything you miss, won't come back. Especially when it comes to family," he points out. "That's where the energy should go. This also includes the small, former self-supporting farm with a

barn and garden. There's always something to do. While I work on my oldtimer-ratbikes, the bees also need to be taken care of – a time consuming endeavor, especially in spring and summer, that is rewarded later in autumn with honey. I make my own mead and am interested in Vikings. And, well, part of my free time is also invested in the management of the band."



For Mimi music always comes first. "I am also part of many other band projects with different musical directions which take up a lot of free time. Apart from that: mountain biking, fire wood, whittling wood, my family and extended family, Medieval clubs (drummer), festivals. In my non-free time, I work as software programmer. Good wine, whiskey, rum, gin, beer - and time and again conversations, oh yeah, and good food," he adds. Brüllfe has got a variety of things going on his free time. "Starting from ambitiously doing nothing, which hardly ever happens, to hyperactivity in regards to rock climbing or

kayaking. These are all part of it. Time with my family is very important to me. And I love books and movies. Fantasy and horror, bring it on! Okay, perhaps not that surprising, hihi ... I really love to cook, that might be more surprising. Or not," he laughs. "I love spending time with my animals,´. Roaming through the woods with horses and dogs and hunting Orcs. Okay, the thing with the Orcs is not altogether true... Of course music also plays a big part in my time off. Work through vocal lines and lyrics for Irontree, for example. Hm, what else do I like? Sitting around a fire together with my friends, drinking beer and rum, oh yeah. Another cliché, but that's the way it is," he chuckles. 'The Faceless' is the band's new album, for you and me and everyone else on planet rock, but for the band it is pretty old. Over the years, they have played the songs every week, the objectivity is gone. "For me, the release of the album is somewhat like opening a door the record had kept closed before. It is finally done and now we can go on. It is a relief - surely related to the fact that I produced it. No one has listened to the songs as often as I have. From that perspective ... it's great that it's done,"

enthuses Steffen. "Musically, it is exactly how we like it: aggressive, edgy, gloomy, loud and with straight up gallows humor - which is something that we are definitely going to keep. We can't do it any other way. However, I think that in the future it is going to be more layered. I am excited about it." For Soze all of this was a pretty exciting process. Until now, he always only had to lay it down once and done – that's HC punk. But this time, it was important that it fits better. "You have to be on point," he continues. "Steffen was always by my side with all kinds of advice. That way, I learned a lot about software. Musically, it is fundamental to continue to evolve. I am excited about the critique – I do like criticism, even though short term I can't deal with it well and it's not always easy to handle. But, without it, I can't keep evolving and that is probably also true for the band." The new album means a lot for Conny: "It is more than just any album: it is the result of many dreams, a lot of work, numerous attempts to get this album done – by the gods! That was really quite a challenge at some times. For me, the Faceless is a symbol of friendship. Of stamina

and passion. Of – be careful, it's about to get lofty – so many virtues that metal stands for. Yeah, I know. At this point I probably should shower the album with praise, regarding the musical aspects of it. But they are self-evident, I love our music," he says with spirit.

"I am crazy proud of our album. In part because the whole thing, from the first note to the last brushstroke of the artwork, was entirely created by us! It's okay to gush a little over that, isn't it," he smiles. For Mimi the pandemic, the social restrictions, the sealing off of their holy sound cell, that really wasn't easy. "Otherwise, I am sure the album would have been finished considerably earlier. It really hit all of us, the smaller and the larger acts. Steffen really did a great job, amazing! I think blood must have streamed from his ears at some point. I am proud of our work."

Irontree's last release was just a demo, which really was a complete do-it-yourself endeavor. "Every step was up to us. Now, to be able to hand off an element and making jack, really is different. We couldn't keep our fingers off the rest either. Steffen put a lot of work into the sound of the album. The artwork is considerably

more elaborate and there are shirts with our cover," explains Brüllfe "Oh, and the back and forth about how it should end up – we never have had so many discussions. It is also the first time that we get requests from all over Europe and even Russia after the release."

The band decided to start working on 'The Faceless' around four years ago. The album was recorded here in their own rehearsal room which they turned into a small studio. "Everything was completely cabled-up, we got the necessary equipment so we could record a clean sound. There were a couple of hurdles to overcome – I had laryngitis and the building that holds our rehearsal room was closed off for quite some time by the building authority – with all our things and recordings inside of it. Enter only on pain of punishment. We really produced it ourselves," she smiles. The highlight of the album for Brüllfe is that everyone had the opportunity to express themselves throughout 'The Faceless' with all its rough edges and their musical preferences. "I like it when people listen to the album and they don't know which label they can or should put on it," he expresses." There were some interesting

discussions about this. Some say that Abyssick Heavy Metal is the perfect fit, even though they are sick of hearing of new classifications of metal. I don't like this compartmentalizing, everyone should be the way that makes them happy and that they're okay with and that is also true for faceless – that we were able to achieve this is truly the highlight of the album," he says with satisfaction.

The bands planned concerts for 2020 were canceled and a couple are still on hold due to the pandemic situation. A few locations haven't reported back because they either haven't opened their business again or only host very restricted concerts. I would like to enter the stage regularly again and start a small tour through the South of Germany. Most of all, to be able to release all the pent-up energy on stage in a true catharsis. To just play gigs and be on the road," Brüllfe sighs. "We weren't able to see each other for quite some time because everything was in lockdown. Soze and I are both employed in the social field and Steffen also has a lot to do with people. That meant distance for us. All in all, I felt, I'm going to speak for the others as well, that we were undoubtedly

thwarted since we were just about to take off. I wasn't too enthusiastic about trying to make music together online. I was missing the spirit of the rehearsal space.



However, I did get used to a new medium through which we can interact together and now we are using the newly set up Discord Server to communicate." For the future the guys have a lot in the works. "I'm already working on the lyrics for new songs that the boys are just constructing. When I tidied up the rehearsal room, I came across fragments of songs as well as written down riffs. That's what we are working on. In order to release more creative energy, Mimi and Soze are going to expand the rehearsal room. The plan is to have a platform for the drum set and a larger seating area to hang out. Steffen will surely create a couple of videos – the recordings are already

done and a video with lyrics would also be great. Since we didn't manage to get all the song on the album, there will be a little subsequent release" concludes Brüllfe, bringing an end to our conversation. 'The Faceless' is out now via all the usual digital platforms and also on physical CD. Check Irontree out at <https://www.iron-tree.de/> <https://de-de.facebook.com/IRON-TREE-1417516671818070/> https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCAGLVxP8LDHtC_AbZEnhIzA <http://theiron-tree.bandcamp.com/> <https://www.backstagepro.de/iron-tree>