

PETER STEELE - SELF-CONFESSED SONIC MUTILATOR, LEAD SINGER AND BASSIST OF BROOKLYN BASED **TYPE O NEGATIVE** - DELIVERS A SERMON TO ALTERNATIVE MAGAZINE'S SECRETIA ON THE EVE OF THEIR NEW ALBUM LAUNCH 'DEAD AGAIN'.

EXPLORING THE ALTER EGO...

Peter starts by informing me that he has sat through so many of these promos for the new album ("in excess of nine hundred million", apparently) that he's started making up the answers to the questions to keep himself amused. He assures me that the good part of this is that each hack like me gets a scoop - but I can't help wondering to myself what exactly I have been offered a scoop of.

It's been about four years since the last studio album, *Life is Killing Me*, was released and for those unfamiliar with the band, this is not something that is unusual. I had to wonder what they got up to during these sabbaticals. Are they playing weddings and Bar Mitzvahs to make ends meet? "What do we do to pay off the bills?" Steele ponders. "Uh...begging, pleading, manipulating the system, not paying loans back...mugging old ladies. We (me and the other band members) have been getting on with life. For me (being ugly and impotent) I have been living my basement with the parasites. I consider them free food - I have my own concoction with garlic, barbecue sauce, oregano..."

Their new album, *Dead Again*, is their first with German label SPV. So why had they departed from Roadrunner? "That was kind of a strange thing," says Steele, "with *Carnivore* I was signed to them for, like, 600 years. We [Type O Negative] were the second-longest signed band on that label and the contract they gave us just wasn't what we wanted. It's business. We were approached by STD [SPV] and I thought I want one of those!" I was curious to know whether the new label had influenced the upcoming tour that is loaded with European dates. "We have a very large fan base here in the States but in other countries due to the touring, it's smaller. I had been telling people for ages - friends, family members, people on the street - that I wanted to play in countries such as Spain, France and Portugal, and now we have the chance to do it."

Talk turns to the new album itself. I am intrigued by the use of Rasputin on the front cover. "He's my hero," states Steele. "I have a lot in common with him. The guy was an alcoholic, a drug addict, a womaniser and he was a fucking dick. And the communists couldn't kill him. If he was in Type O Negative - he'd be the best looking member of the band."

I mention that the new album sounds almost upbeat for a Type O offering. Not that the themes running through lyrics have altered a great deal but the music itself just sounds a little less gloomy than usual. "I knew you would say that: I'm crushed," complains Steele. After assuring him that this new tack wasn't necessarily a bad thing, I ask what processes the band go through to produce an album. "This last album was written and rehearsed with live drums. On every other album they've been programmed. With this album, the method was, like, for us to go into rehearsal and me being an asshole to the others, I would make things up on the spot. We'd come out with bullshit riffs and if they liked it we'd throw it out and if they definitely hated it we kept it." Really? I couldn't imagine that system working in a studio environment. "Of course not, that statement was completely dishonest: all men are liars," he concludes.

Dead Again is the first album since their debut *Slow, Deep and Hard* that consists of entirely new material, so what had happened to the Type O cover track? There was a simple answer to this. "We had a contract to produce ten songs and the album already ran to seventy seven minutes,"



said Steele matter-of-factly. So did they have anything in the offing? Something that just didn't make it to the finished track list? A discordant version of Boney M's Rasputin, perhaps? "Now, because I'm a bi-Polack [he's of Polish descent and openly talks of his ADD] I do like to write a dirge to other artists' music. I love the Carpenters. I wanted to do..." He goes off into a rendition of Close to You that's about three octaves lower than the original.

With my left eyebrow firmly raised at the concept of Peter Steele singing the Carpenters to me, I decide to broach one of the more unusual themes to run through a Type O Negative album: Christianity. "I do go to church. On my own. I sit at the back," Steele starts. Eh? Did I hear that right? "To be honest with you about a year and a half ago my mother passed away. I was mixing vodka and cocaine regularly. It all made me realise my own mortality. And you know what they say: there are no atheists in foxholes." He pauses and then concedes that there is more to discover with his newfound faith. "I guess in the end I'm a born again HypoChristian: I know the difference between right and wrong and yet I still do wrong."

Words: SECRETIA

The new album 'Dead Again' is available from 19th March. UK tour dates: Manchester Academy 2 - 19th June; Birmingham Academy - 20th June; London Astoria - 21st June.

For further info on Type O Negative visit: www.typeonegative.net

