






A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z #  
New By Author

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**Date:** 4/24/2007  
**Format:** CD (Album)

Release Date: 2007

Track Listing

- 1) Acts Of God (3:37)
- 2) 911 (5:02)
- 3) Threads (6:01)
- 4) Ursa Minor (6:47)
- 5) End In Blue (7:23)
- 6) Martyr (6:35)
- 7) No Place (7:43)
- 8) Choke Loud (4:19)
- 9) Refugee (8:33)

-  [Web Site](#)
-  [AMG Entry](#)
-  [Samples](#)

Some folks will recall the name Glenn Snelwar from his involvement with Sean Malone's Gordian Knot project on the first CD. Glenn's excellent guitar work helped define that album and impressed quite a few folks in the process. After the experience with Gordian Knot, Glenn decided to take some time away from the guitar and pursue his chemistry career. In 2005, Glenn was back and this time with his own project called At War With Self. Joining him for the album *Torn Between Dimensions* were Fates Warning drummer Mark Zonder and bassist extraordinaire Michael Manning. This was an extremely powerful trio and the album was one of the best releases on the Laser's Edge Free Electric Sound label.

While the trio did not remain together for a second album, Snelwar has chosen to retain the name At War With Self for his second CD called *Acts of God*. According to Glenn's website, the seeds for this album were planted in 2002 when he received a demo CD from long-time friend Damon Trotta. Glenn was impressed with the demo and began to layer guitar tracks on top of the demo and before they knew it, the friends from the high school band were back making music together. Damon appears on almost every track, playing a wide range of instruments including bass guitar, synths, didgeridoo and also sings on a couple tracks. Although these two produce most of the music, there are several other musicians involved.

The title track opens up with some very soothing acoustic guitar chords, a bit reminiscent of Anthony Phillips. About halfway through the track there's some very tense and dramatic music with an ominous drum beat signaling that this is going to be the start of something clearly out of the ordinary. One of the things I really like about this album is that although Glenn is an awesome guitar player, the music here is in no way a "chops fest" and while there are some nice solos and lead parts, the main focus is on creating an atmosphere in the music. Things tend to be on the heavy side for most of the first half of the album but it's more of a cerebral metal type thing similar in many ways to something like OSI, with lots of rhythmic programming and an ample use of textural keyboards and guitar effects. One of the things I noticed on further examination of the music is that there are also plenty of psychedelic moments to this album, something that's a bit uncommon with a lot of metal. While there are numerous vocal sections, I would say the main focus is on the music.

For me, things really start to pick up around the sixth track "Martyr". The music takes on a much more abstract quality, I'd even go so far as saying they reach avant-garde territory in a few spots. There seems to be a horror movie soundtrack characteristic that gets mixed in with the metal that's just really cool. It's as if Glenn and company are losing that 'war with self' but the music has totally benefited from the struggle. "Choke Loud" is a very twisted piece that has some unusual programming and guitar work from James VonBuelow who also appears on a few other tracks. The final track sees the project slowly spiraling into complete

insanity. "Refugee" has a plodding, almost industrial drumbeat provided by Steve Decker accompanied by some acoustic slide guitar and foreboding background atmospheres. The regrettably named Mark Sunshine supplies some very gloomy vocals that sound like they could be coming from a suicidal Robert Plant. There's a really disturbing part towards the end where he's chanting "When the saints go marching in" over and over.

I hope I'm not making this whole thing sound too bleak. While much of it does have that quality, I would definitely say this is a very enjoyable and challenging listen. Glenn Snelwar has proven himself as a highly skilled guitar player and now he is proving that he can craft an extraordinary album.

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