

Sea of Tranquility

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Progressive Metal,
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At War with Self: Acts of God

Gordian Knot's Glenn Snelwar is behind this, *At War With Self's* second album. He has teamed up this time with Damon Trotta, a bassist with an experienced background, mostly from the heavier side of rock.



The album opens with an atmospheric but doom-laden sound as it tries to unravel the thinking behind the twin towers attack. In "911", the shock and awe of the event as it unfolded on cameras around the globe is captured by a searing guitar firing over the gradual rhythmic build starting from an acoustic guitar figure and leading to a power metal riff. The climactic surge ebbs back to a solo acoustic guitar to close – dust settling.

In "Threads", I hear a distinct Gordian Knot influence in the arrangements which flow between wistful synths and edgy guitars over a steady rhythmic base. The tempo drops back in "Ursa Minor" to an appropriately spacey, psychedelic feel with the impressively named singer, Mark Sunshine's voice oscillating a reflective lyric in the background. A Gilmour-like guitar accompanies the slow development of the song in places.

"End in Blue" is a desolate song of loss and suicidal inability to cope, featuring an arrangement that at times reminds me of Fates Warning's *Shades of Grey* album. "Martyr" by contrast uses a string-synth arrangement introduction which leads to the band blending a metal guitar riff with a complex bass pattern and swirling synths. This builds up to a point where the sound wanes to a single mandolin, leading to another intricate progression which culminates in a chaotic and confused fade out. One of the most interesting tracks on the album.

The psychedelic feel is back in the doom-laden track, "No place", whilst in "Choke Loud", there is something of a techno influence around the nervous tension and fragmented guitar breaks. "Refugee", the closing track, is a dark and dense song which mixes a distorted version of "when

the saints go marching in” with didgeridoo and a clashing cacophony of rumbling bass, wild voices and drumming in several odd metres.

Track Listing

1. Acts of God
2. 911
3. Threads
4. Ursa Minor
5. End in Blue
6. Martyr
7. No Place
8. Choke Loud
9. Refugee

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Reviewer: [Richard Barnes](#)

Score: ★★★★★

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