

We are Obscurity – Onwards into battle!!!

Hammer-forged from the hardest steel of the Bergisch Land, cast in fire, formed upon the anvil of metal, hardened by the water of the Wupper river. A battle axe, so deadly and sharp – made of the same material as the world-famous blades of Solingen...

Like this you could describe the birth of Obscurity in Velbert (Bergisches Land) in mid-1997.

Five brave warriors (Nezrac, Agalaz, Arganar, Ziu and Dornaz) – though musically inexperienced but full of bellicosity and united in their passion for heaviest metal – formed a force named Obscurity.

The first two years were marked by the earning of the band's first stripes, the forging of two demos, "The Rebirth of the Dark Empire" (1998) and "Christian Decay" (1999), and the finding of their own musical direction and style... ranging from death to black metal and culminating in the present sound of Obscurity.

In 2000, now battle-scarred and more experienced, the first self-produced and much acclaimed album "Bergisch Land" was forged. "Bergisch Land" was named after the German region the band originates from and convincingly delivered heavy and fast songs full of rage, which were paired with melodic hymns of victory. Most suitable for riding into battle!

Three years of glorious battles passed until the second self-produced and successful album "Thurisaz" was crafted in 2003. "Thurisaz" impressed with unrelenting heaviness as well as hymn-like melodies characteristic of the band. The album unleashed the hatred smoldering within everyone of us and called for annihilation of all enemies. For this album Obscurity signed a distribution contract with Twilight.

"Thurisaz" was followed by three years of extensive and successful raids taking place during numerous gigs and tours. However, in 2004 one event cast a shadow over Obscurity's development since the band lost a brother. Guitarist and comrade-in-arms Dornaz unfortunately had to put down his axe for occupational reasons. Even though this was a severe blow to the band another excellent axeman could be found as a worthy replacement: Cortez, who had been a longtime brother-in-arms of them. Cortez fit in very well with the line-up and added an even more powerful sound to the band. Dornaz, however, was still regarded as a brother of Obscurity. After his departure, this consequently meant that the band still consisted of "only" five warriors, but from that day on there would forever be six Bergisch lions.

For the third album "Schlachten & Legenden" (2006) all aspects of Obscurity's previous records were combined to create a true manifest of heavy metal, which established the band firmly in the German scene. Their mixture of teutonic steel and hymns expanded the number of Obscurity's loyal followers many times over. The album release was handled by Massacre Records in 2007. After the release of "Schlachten & Legenden" Obscurity once again took up arms several times and always returned from the stages in triumph.

In 2008 the band suffered a second serious setback when Nezrac, not only being the singer and frontman but also another brother, quit Obscurity. He retired from the squad due to changes of private nature.

Obscurity then consisted of four Bergisch lions with Agalaz now handling the vocals in addition to his guitar work. Agalaz had already proven his ability having taken over many vocal parts on previous records as well as having done background screaming live. Therefore, choosing him as the new front man was just a logical consequence. Every once in a while, Obscurity is supported by another longtime friend: Bony (Japanische Kampfhörspiele) has been a true and dedicated comrade of the band since 2000; he has assumed guitar and vocal duties in a couple of Obscurity's battles so far. Furthermore, Bony firmly stands by Obscurity as their producer!

In mid-2008 the band won the label SMP/Trollzorn over to their side as a mighty companion. They entered the studio again in September 2008 to compose a further piece of music history! The new album was entitled "Várar" and the name said it all... "Várar" is Old Norse and means oath of strong company, which could be felt within the band more than ever. The album for the first time featured lead vocals by Agalaz and offered melodic and hymn-like arrangements as well as violent battle metal. It combined the musical skills of all the band's previous records to emerge as a brute masterpiece. This way the band was able to create an unprecedented intensity and atmosphere, far away from all NSBM-scum and kindergarten-keyboardmetal in the vein of Nightwish.

For the album "Várar" Obscurity were assisted by two guest singers: while Arkadius of Suidakra took over some vocal passages in the song "Wer Wind sät", it was Manuel, another fellow combatant of the band, of death metal kings Path of Golconda who spit out some vocal parts for the track "Battle Metal"! The album "Várar" was released in March 2009 and it was a call to all loyal followers of the band as well as to new warriors to prepare the weapons and to join the band one more time in their march onto the battlefields. "Várar" took both press and metal community by storm. Supported by brilliant reviews and solidly high sales figures Obscurity headed for a promising future.

The next significant step onward was the return of founding member Dornaz to the band. In the release year of the 4th album the band's old companion, still a friend and comrade-in-arms, seized his axe again. The meaning of the album's title "Várar" was thereby implemented and renewed. Henceforth Dornaz officially took over Agalaz's guitar duties so that he could solely concentrate on singing. This was as well met with great approval of the press and metalheads. Now there were five real Bergisch lions again who had been and are still a sworn combat unit.

In the following months, the band fought numerous victorious battles at several festivals and gigs. The band's fame increased rapidly. Through dedicated live shows and the professional realization of these in music and acting Obscurity obtained big support and praise beyond their metal genre and scene. Obscurity celebrated their music with blood, sweat and honest toil, so the band's commitment made them a nationally and internationally established and demanded act.

Since the people in the Bergisch Land are a pugnacious bunch it was already in 2009 that Obscurity began working hard on new songs again. Then in May 2010 the following album "Tenkterra" was forged. Professional recordings at 4CN-Studios in Wuppertal in the heart of the Bergisches Land spawned an album that exceeded all the band's expectations. Once more produced by fellow combatant Bony and fine-tuned by Jacob Bredahl's (ex-Hatesphere / Dead Rat Studio) mix and mastering "Tenkterra" marked a resolute continuation of Obscurity's course. With this album, the band managed one more time to combine the musical skills of all previous records peaking in a true masterpiece and to take heaviness and sound quality to an even higher level. On top of that the band took the plunge working out "Tenkterra" as a concept album. "Tenkterra" was the previous album's equal in every possible way.

With "Tenkterra" Obscurity created a concept album about the epic Celtic/Germanic history. The concept is based on the region's self-conception and historically substantiated events in the Bergisches Land. "Tenkterra" seizes on Celtic and Germanic roots putting them into the context of these events. The concept deals with the time between about 200 B.C. and 800 A.D., thereby spanning a time period of 1000 years. With regards to content the concept comprises the region's Celtic roots, the Germanic expansion, the battle against the superior Roman Empire and the split-up of the late Germanic peoples by Christianization culminating in the epic war between Franks and Saxons.

The album title is characteristic of the concept and the region. "Tenkterra" is a composition made up of the words "Tenkterer" (tencteri; a Germanic tribe) and "Terra" (Latin meaning earth/land) meaning "land of the Tenkterer". It synonymously stands for the Bergisches Land (region in Germany) and its self-conception which was most substantially shaped by the Tencteri.

In the years 2010 and 2011 the five Bergisch lions continued to ravage the metal community. By letting off their arsenal of battle hymns in constant live raids (participation in the Pagan Fest Tour 2011 among others) they consolidated their position as the spearhead of this genre in Germany. 15 years of bravery, might and freedom, five records, countless combats on club and festival stages and still ravenously bloodthirsty – this was Obscurity as they entered their anniversary year 2012. While other bands at this stage tend to start resting on their laurels and only producing best-of records Obscurity kept launching attacks without cease. Their self-titled sixth record released in that year was a testimony of heavy metal firepower. Much-anticipated by the metal scene "Obscurity" was the band's next milestone of violent sounds and lyrical accuracy. It was recorded, mixed and mastered at 4CN-Studios in Wuppertal and produced by Obscurity veteran Bony. Due to high expectations and an enormous number of pre-orders by the army of metalheads, the band's label Trollzorn felt compelled to raise the quantity of the first edition of "Obscurity" even before the release date.

As with "Tenkterra" the artwork and music of the album "Obscurity" were based on a coherent overall concept.

This piece of steel by the horde Obscurity definitely met metal fans' expectations. It was 100% Obscurity! – A bastard of brute heaviness, deadly precise thunderstorms of sound and mighty hymns.

The Bergisch lions remained true to themselves while still showing the required amount of progression and finesse.

In 2012 the time had come: Obscurity, alongside Kampf, Helrunar and Velnias toured Europe. The raid lasted 16 days, cities were pillaged and burned, stages reduced to ashes, oaths of brotherhood renewed and the roaring of the Bergisch lions resounded all over Europe! The five lions were met with overwhelming response, that caused even the most battle-scared warrior to feel shivers running down his spine. Very soon it was clear for the five berserks that they had not finished pursuing their path yet. They knew they owed the great fans out there and themselves to compose another heavy piece of metal tunes and unleash it upon the masses!

After a short time of gathering strength Obscurity began forging out new battle plans, namely the songwriting for their new magnum opus "Vintar". This new blade of the Bergisches Land is razor-sharp hitting you with unequalled force like the blow of an axe. It will strike down doubters and enemies mercilessly and with inhumanly searing pain. What the quintet has created here is uniquely impressive, temptingly catchy and will make the metal scene listen attentively. A true declaration of war, a pretender to the Viking metal throne! 11 songs that combine the albums "Várar", "Tenkterra" and "Obscurity" in an exceptional way, pushing forward the five lions' conquering march relentlessly. The well-engineered sound of the 4CN-Studios rounds off this manifest, yet without lacking rough edges.

The title "Vintar" is a combination of the Scandinavian word for winter ("Vinter") and the Old High German equivalent "Wintar". It is a symbolism of the union of all Germanic peoples. "Vintar" features a lyrical concept, rooted in Norse mythology, a fictional lore after Ragnarok. In the ancient times of Old-Midgard former legislation is repealed, many peoples are afflicted and subjugated, only a few have actually survived the Twilight of the Gods. The core of "Vintar's" tales, narrated by a long-serving warrior, is the new continent "Wodanheim". On their search for a safe haven, this is where the surviving peoples find a new place to live. Geographically Wodanheim is located in the heart of nowadays Europe, its center being the "Bergisch Land". The strong force in Wodanheim is the diehard and stubborn Germanic tribe of the Tenkterer. It is their main intention to unite the surviving peoples, to build up a new efficient cultural community, based on Germanic substructures – a new Germanic alliance. Banded together through the resistance against destructive external influences, a fight is impending – the fight against the "enemies", who regard Wodanheim as a thorn in their side, an unbearable burden, because: not only the alleged "good" has survived Ragnarok...

With their notorious "battle metal" attitude and sometimes with a wink, Obscurity's five warriors narrate the fictitiously adjusted tale of our ancestors and give proof, that no drinking songs, flutes, seminude women or similar stereotypes are needed to raise the banner of Viking Metal in an authentic way.

Obscurity keep their swords and battleaxes at the ready and close in for the kill. The band and the new material promise raging battles and proper bloodshed. 2015 the band entered the Pagan Fest Tour and brought "Vintar" over midgard!

In spring 2016 the band decides to start the songwriting of Vintar's successor. The positive response of the fans, the social media, as well as the writing guild proves that the five Bergisch boys can not chuck their instruments yet. But, when the first songs were born, the band is almost brought to their knees by a heavy and brutal blow. Founding member Arganar informs the band that he will be leaving the lineup for personal reasons at the end of 2016. For nearly 20 years Arganar was the clock on the warship "Obscurity" and now his drums will be silent forever! After a short time, it's clear that this event will not bring the four remaining passionate musicians to their knees and make them return stronger than before from the mists of Hel! It was also Arganar's personal wish that the journey continues.

During many concerts and festivals Obscurity occasionally went to battle with the friendly brothers of "Contradiction" from Wuppertal. So it was obvious to the Bergische Lions: If someone can be Arganar's heir on the drums, it can only be Draugr, the helmsman of the frigate "Contradiction". After a personal meeting between Draugr and Agalaz it quickly became clear: Obscurity have a new drummer! From now on, Draugr will no longer be celebrating his irrepressible and powerful drumming at Contradiction alone, but will also give the Bergisch Lions new strength and open up a variety of possibilities. He brings an incredible talent as well as musical understanding into the ranks of the band, which he immediately proves in the further songwriting to the Vintar successor. At the end of

2016, it is full steam ahead in the impregnable 4CN studios of Tim Schuldt, again as consultant and producer on board, Bony the Bergische Löwe from the Ruhr area.

This well-trying combination of military equipment, the musical know-how of the two producers Bony and Agalaz, combined with the new ingredient of the innovative and precisely marching machine gun drumming by Draugr, shows already in the first few seconds of the recordings: The album title STREITMACHT has been chosen correctly! "Streitmacht" is rearranging the ranks, old fans and new recruits stand side by side and the spearhead of the German Viking Metal forces the musically sharp forged metal deep into the ribs of the globe!

The response within Germany and also globally is unbelievable. The five guys from the tranquil town of Velbert realize through the reviewers and the incoming fan-feedback how important the music from the Bergisch Land has become for many people. This is an incredible story that nobody would have anticipated 20 years ago.

"Streitmacht" is released on the Bergisch Lions' 20th birthday and despite all moaners Obscurity are still there, belying all sinners. The Bergisch force is marching and cannot be stopped!

The new manifesto is a gratitude to the families, friends and fans of the band who have always faithfully accompanied Obscurity and will continue to do so. The vanguard of the new force is the music video for the song "Streitmacht Bergisch Land". In this video, the band gives its fans the opportunity to become part of the historic film set. Approximately 100 warriors gather for the shoot and become part of the movie produced by Sascha Krüger (iMOTION Factory).

Twenty years have now passed: The bones are aching, the hair is disappearing, some heavy blows have been taken and many privations were demanded of each individual. But the Bergisch Lions always leave the "battlefields" with their heads proudly raised and can still look back on their long successful track record with a winking eye.

Forward - as long as our boots carry us! Even with "Streitmacht" the 5 guys from Velbert can not be diverted and remain always honest and authentic to their musical style - Thank you for an unforgettable 20 years!

Furor Teutonicus!

Berge Romerijke!