

Mp3 Conscender - Opus Dei (2004)



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Displays the power of hardcore, with melodic choruses and psychedelic interludes, separating them from many of the other contemporary heavy bands. 8 MP3 Songs METAL: Metalcore, ROCK: Hard Rock

Details: Conscender began in the summer of 2001 with four friends jamming in a garage purely for the love of music. Daniel Peterson (guitar), Alex Johnson (bass), Nick Bonauro (vocals) and Alex Hay (drums), began by playing covers of Rage Against the Machine and the Deftones before moving on to write their own songs fueled with aggression and emotion. It was this lineup that slowly began playing shows in the area at all ages venues under the name Realm Of Conformity. These shows, however, weren't always the epitome of live performance. But not even malfunctioning guitar amps and punk audiences dissuaded the group from honing their performances and developing a local following. After the members graduated high school in 2003, they experienced a patch of rough water when Hay left the band to attend college. The members turned to long time friend and drummer Marc Davis, who quickly filled the slot and kept the band intact. "I basically came in already knowing a lot of the songs, as well as all of the guys," said Davis. "It didn't take long for us to get the chemistry going." With a new drummer onboard the music quickly shifted in new directions. Riffs became faster and more technical, the drumming more intense, and the vocals more heated. Another guitar was also introduced by the hands of Bonauro, adding another element to their rapidly evolving sound. It was at this time that the band began experimenting with eerie textures and psychedelic interludes that would later become one of their original stamps. After completing seven songs with the new lineup and officially changing their name to Conscender, the band headed to Pus Cavern studios in early 2004 to record their first album. The cd, entitled Opus Dei, blended metal vocals, heavy riffs, melodic choruses and thunderous drumming. The song "Stained Minds" demonstrated the bands newfound aggression as well as their attention to

dynamics, with a psychedelic intro that quickly explodes into a rhythmic fury of thrash riffs and concluding with a guitar solo. The time in the studio also allowed Conscender to introduce clean vocals in their music, provided by Peterson. "We started working with singing in our music because sometimes a scream just can't convey the same type of emotion that clean vocals can," said Peterson. "It's a matter of us being able to channel the emotion that the music provides." After releasing Opus Dei, Conscender continued booking shows to promote the cd and enhance their local fan base. The band also decided to immediately delve back into the writing process, eager to continue pushing their music in its newfound direction. By January 2005, Conscender was ready to return to Pus Cavern to record a full length album. This time around, the band was prepared to make a solid record that could accurately convey their ideas and abilities. Prior to heading to the studio, hours of practice time were logged to tighten up the instrumental and develop the vocal ideas to their fullest extent. This time was well spent as "Victims of a Movement" emerged a more mature and polished album all the way through. The album proves that the band has evolved and developed an ear for accessible song structures and catchy arrangements. The tracks show both the melodic and heavy sides that Conscender has adopted. From the unrelenting "Strength In, " to the emotionally fluctuating "Ode to the Circle," the songs take the listener on an emotional journey through blaring instrumental sections and hooky choruses. In addition to displaying their diverse instrumental, Conscender also shows off their vocal versatility, as Bonauro, Johnson, and Peterson all contribute tracks to the album. The vocals confront the listener in pressing bouts of intensity and then slide into ringing harmony. Not to forget their roots, the band also descends into eerie instrumental in the middle of the album closer "Generation Gap." Since the album's release, Conscender has gained a new guitar player (Anthony Sullivan) to accompany Peterson on stage and enable Bonauro to concentrate on delivering the vocals. They are also traveling to play shows throughout California and Nevada and recently had the opportunity to open for Himsa and Sinai Beach in Reno. With a new album under their belt, the band is now focused on getting their music to fans outside the Reno area and showcasing their songs in a live setting. "To me, playing live is one of the very few ways that one can truly express himself," said Bonauro. "Every live experience is different and you never know what will happen."

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