

About "Dissection - The Somberlain - Dan Swanö/Unisound Remaster"

Hi there!

Thanks for your interest in this!

I was super excited to be asked to do this remaster, since what I have heard of other the remasters, wasn't really my cup of coffee! I prefer Peter in de Betou's original one from March 1993. But this new one, is of course, the best there is...So far ;)

First we (me and Johan at the Black Lodge) tried as hard as we could to get in touch with any one that could possibly have the original DAT tape of the mix. Sadly, no luck there.

This record was made at a time when I was super proud to own one DAT machine, and to have two, for safety/archival copies etc. was just a dream at the time. Luckily I did buy another one a bit later!

So Jon and C:o left with the only existing DAT copy, and I know they listened to it at the home of Devo (Marduk/Allegiance etc.) later in the day we had made the final mix...and if that Denon machine would have "eaten" the DAT...well..we'd have to remix it...those were the days ;) Luckily it didn't!

I was not there at Cutting Room when they did the original mastering, but Peter did his usual stuff, and that included running it through, a then very exciting thing, the Sony DAL1000 limiter.

A then ground-breaking crude piece of equipment that turned up the volume of the music on the DAT and then storing it on uMatic tapes!

I am sure the guys were as blown away with the "Before/After the tweaks" moment in Cutting Room as I always was when I was doing attended mastering up there, but back then nobody ever really paid any attention to what happened to the mix when it was magically a lot louder! We all just thought "louder is better" well..it isn't..it's just louder.

So. After not finding the original master (The 16 track 1/2" multi-track tapes were sadly erased just months after the album was mixed – Damn you, cheap label boss!!), a very good condition "First pressing CD" from my own collection was the only available master, and I ripped it in the best possible way, and went to work. And boy did I work. I have no idea how many versions I went through until I realized that there was no re-inventing the wheel here. It already sounded as it should. In some parts at least!

The first thing that struck me was that the sound changed a little bit (to the better) EQ-wise, the longer the album played, but my mixes also got louder after a while, and Peter didn't seem to notice and didn't back off the volume going into the limiter, so the ugly footprint of the Sony DAL1000 is more and more present as the album moves along. This is of course not easy to hear, and some might even say it brings aggression" and "vibe" to the album..well...we'll never know what it would sound like without it...or maybe we will!? Maybe one day the original DAT shows up somewhere...

Because the original was already surprisingly "Loudness-War loud" for 1993 (Some tracks are DR6!!) there wasn't really much to do with the dynamic of things. But some stuff could be done, and the main issue was the consonants from Jon's vocals. I had no de-esser at the time, but I did have a one (!!)

compressor (The legendary Yamaha GC2020B) and it was used while tracking Jon's voice and for every dB it compressed his voice, the consonants got louder to our ears. That is the weird science of it all, and those sharp bursts of hi-frequency energy make compressors and limiters "pump" in total volume quite easily. Since I have a black belt in Melda's "Spectral Dynamics" plug-in, after using it for more than a decade on everything I ever did, I could create a very, very transparent de-esser and only tame the loudest sibilant peaks in a super transparent way. And only tiny bits of super transparent limiting was used to make sure the master was -0.3dB TruePeak (the original CD is clipping at TruePeak)

And the other things I did was to gently EQ the first couple of songs on the album, that I felt was a bit "muddier" to match the more open sound of the second half of the album.

A few small, but very potent tweaks, thanks to the fantastic Har-Bal system, was made and the sound opened up on those tracks and the whole album became a more cohesive listening experience!

And since there was no Full Dynamic Range version to make, the LP's are made from the same masters as the CD, but the biggest "fight" here was to make sure that it became a proper Double Vinyl. No "Three sides and an etching bullshit" ;)

Side A is, apart from being one of the best Side A's in metal history, 15 minutes long, and the limit for "no compromises" in the LP format is 16 minutes per side (That is why so many cool albums are 32 minutes long!!) so adding any other track to this side would have meant losing volume and fidelity, So! Thanks Johan at Black Lodge for going the extra mile and making it a proper Double album!

All in all. You have bought something very close to the sound of the original pressing, and until the (sadly, highly unlikely) day the original DAT appears, this is as good as it gets :)

Enjoy!

Dan Swanö/Unisound