

Tigersclaw Review “Rainer-Kerber.de/Metal at the Gates”

Tigersclaw are a German-Russian co-production. Singer Elena Minina is a soloist at Moscow's Gradsky Hall. Alexander Baier from Tübingen was on tour with many Female Fronted Band in the 90s. The third is the drummer Ralf Neumann, who has worked with Alexander before. Who now believes, because of the great distance this would make the collaboration difficult, will be better informed by this musicians. Alexander composes and writes the texts. Then all instruments are recorded in a German studio. Ralf Neumann only takes over the drumming parts, both the elaboration and the recording. Then Elena can sing the vocal tracks in a Moscow recording studio. The final production is then again in Germany. The result of this work is the album "Princess Of The Dark", with an hour of symphonic power metal flavored with soulful ballads. So you can read it in the info of the band, of which there is not only a German and English version, but also of course a Russian one.

And this is exactly what the trio shows at the opener "World Of The Dead". Right from the start, the voice of Elena Minina can impress me. Although she interprets the song very rocky, you can clearly hear her outstanding classical training. In the title song "Princess Of The Dark" you can then enjoy the clear soprano of the Russian singer, but she also often changes to lower pitches and this shows what immense vocal range she has. This midtempo song is for me one of the highlights of the album. "Storm Of Steel" bangs out of the box. Fast, almost hectic sounding guitars are driven by drifting drums.

And with "Twilight Of The Gods" follows the album's first ballad, emotional melodies, calm drums and Elena's bewitching vocals characterize this song. Already with the first four songs Tigersclaw show their musical range. And this continues for the entire duration of sixty minutes. Symphonic metal anthems ("Like An Angel", "She Rides The Lightning") alternate with pounding rockers ("Phantasia", "Revelation") and beautiful ballads ("Eternity", "Eternal Flame"). For me, however, the Celtic "Cherokee" is the absolute highlight of the album. Elena's singing reminds me partly of Liv Kristine (ex-Leaves' Eyes).

As influences the musicians mention on their Facebook page Nightwish, Evanescence and Dream Theater. And these are also clearly heard. The songs on "Princess Of The Dark" may not have the genius of a Tuomas Holopainen, do not spray the virtuosity of Mike Portney & Co and are not as commercial as those of Amy Lee. However, thirteen sound giants of symphonic power metal, musically superbly implemented and impressively produced, have emerged. And Elena Minina sings in her very own league. For me, she is one of the best singers in rock and metal. A more than successful debut. I'd like more of that.