

FROM SHAMANS TO CYBORGS: THE USE OF MASKS AND SHADOW IN BRANDING HEAVY METAL

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Abstract

All subgenres of metal have displayed prevalent use of masks and shadow in cover art, marketing, and performance to depict the mysterious, the monstrous, the courageous, the villainous, the epic, the transhuman, the posthuman, and the superhuman. Using two of the “seven pieces of code” from Hanlon’s *Primal Branding* (i.e. “The Creation Story” and “The Rituals”), this paper explores how shadows and masks, central to the visual branding of metal, are employed through pictorial semiotics to evoke worldviews and myths that tap our primal motivations and desires for stories. These visual metaphors facilitate storytelling and give metal a readily-identifiable look and expression. Differences in use of these metaphors by artists from doom, traditional, death, black, and thrash metal are briefly noted.

Introduction

The subject matter and visual imagery of metal music and its cover art equal those of film/film posters and fiction/book covers. No other genre of music finds its musicians and fans so enthralled by its art, costume and band logos. The cover art of metal is very recognizable and ranges from cheesy, poor-quality illustration to high end computer art. Depending on the source, metal has between one and two dozen subgenres, each of which has multiple styles (see Encyclopaedia Metallum, 2015; Sonemic, Inc., 2015). The visual identities of the subgenre exhibit distinctions and commonalities. Ideally, the visual imagery of an album complements the lyrics to communicate artistic vision. Since metal’s inception, shadows and masks have been employed as visual metaphors for worldviews and myths that tap our primal motivations and desire for stories.

Masks and facepaint have played a variety of roles in nearly every culture that has walked the earth. Masks, painted or otherwise, are an element of costume:

Skin decoration probably preceded clothing as we conceive it. Staining or painting the body may have been motivated by the impulses to beautify, to terrify the enemy, or to serve in amuletic capacity in warding off evil or danger. Whatever the purpose, it began man’s effort to transform his natural appearance. (Payne, 1965, p. 1)

The universality of masks is seen in myth, ritual, dance, rites, drama, festivals, pageants, and numerous other genres and modes of art, architecture, and performance. Masks can convey emotions, disguise identity, protect, intimidate, excite horror or amusement, distract, and pay homage to gods, demons, spirits, elders, and animals. They can also allow for transitions, transgressions, and personifications (Napier, 1986). From Carnival to Halloween, masks and

facepaint are enjoyed by young and old alike. Mankind's fascination with darkness certainly predates that of masks. What do these phenomena say about us, as humans through the millennia and as headbangers in modern times? This paper is an exposition of metal's two principal symbols and lays the groundwork for future studies.

The power of stories

Heavy metal, with its lyrical themes and artwork concerning the fantastical, the sublime, the wondrous, the horrific, the strange, the grotesque, the macabre, the monstrous, the occult, the unknown, the uncanny, the epic, the courageous, the villainous, the unjust, and the super-/trans-/post-human, is firmly rooted in dark romanticism (see Krämer & Borgards, 2012), science fiction (see Taylor, 2006; Wagner, 2010; Wiebe, 2012), fantasy (see Clute & Grant, 1998), and political criticism (see Navasky, 2013). Sagas, legends, fables, and allegories are mainstays of heavy metal and metal is a bastion in the tradition of myth. Krippner (1996) notes that "mythic narratives are patterns of meaning that state and restate universal human activities. As such, their accounts of creation, conflict, and achievement are metaphors for concerns common to all those who participate in the human adventure" (p. xv). Larsen discusses how we "[develop] a relationship to the archetypal and mythological powers that inform life" (1996, p. 227). Our need for stories and signification has always been with us:

In early cultures the storytellers were teachers: bards, troubadours, minstrels, seanachies, and ollahms. It was the storytellers' work to pass down the epics, myths, sagas, and legends that expressed the history, wisdom, and values of their societies. Following the invention of the printing press, print became the dominant medium for storytelling, and today we see stories told across the airwaves, through film, and through electronic media. Yet the power and appeal of story is in no way diminished. Indeed, despite modernism's attempt to devalue narrative as a way of knowing, the human need for story may be stronger than ever. (Trousdale, 2006, p. 312)

A reason why masks are so prevalent in the storytelling of metal cover art can be found in the lingering aspects of our primal origins. Curran (2007) discusses how storms and other natural elements still terrified early men and women. While they exerted certain powers to regulate their world, such as building shelters and learning to trap prey, other aspects were clearly beyond their control. Consequently, he argues, mankind transferred the concept of its own control over animals and plants to that of "powers and intelligences outside and separate from themselves" (p. 22):

Thus, there was an imperative goal amongst early Men to shape and define that environment into an image they could understand, and in terms they could easily recognize. In this way, the forces of Nature could perhaps be controlled and mediated. Rather than being disparate energies that roamed aimlessly through the countryside or that crackled across the skies, they would be given a form and purpose. In that way they could be appealed to, involved, or commanded by Mankind. By making these forces recognizable, humans also made it possible to interact with them in a recognizable way. Thus, the disembodied spirits and deities began to take on physical characteristics – put in crude terms, they often took on a *face*. (Curran, 2007, p. 24)

Scientists have given a name to our innate tendency to see faces/masks in our environment:

When we look at clouds our brains often make out familiar shapes, such as animal or human forms. This anthropomorphic synthesis and psychological phenomenon known as pareidolia is hard-wired into our brains. Thus as humans across time have stared up at the luminous and blotched lunar surface they have imagined human and animal forms in the patterns that mark the plains and mountain ranges of its near-side surface. In Europe we see a male face – the Man in the Moon. In other cultures it is a woman or a hare. (Williams, 2014, p. 83)

The power that stories impart to product branding is evidenced in the renaissance of beer appellation and labeling that has accompanied the craft brewing craze in recent years. Wright (2015) notes that “at their best, [craft beer labels are] thoughtful and thought-provoking, catchy and beautiful – eloquent and imaginative translations of the complex liquids inside the can or bottle. And as craft beer becomes more paradigm than upstart, beer labeling and design has morphed into one of the main sources of and venues for its inspiration and creativity”. The Hellshire series (Oakshire Brewing, 2015) is a prime example of labels making use of masks and shadow that are reminiscent of heavy metal cover art. The “Hero-series” of beers from Revolution Brewing, such as Jukebox Hero and Galaxy Hero, features a novel take on Green Man as each label features a character with a large green hop flower as its head (Revolution Beer, LLC, 2012).

Literature review

The literature on masks and metal, shadow and metal, or branding and metal is relatively sparse. Rohleder’s (2011) doctoral dissertation offers a Jungian analysis of villains, heroes, masks, and shadow, but does not consider music. Adriano Fiore’s (2011) master’s thesis is perhaps the best extant analysis on masks and metal, but has not officially been translated from Portuguese. In it, Fiore applies Bakhtin’s concept of carnivalization to discuss ways the grotesque, the physically deformed, the monstrous, the skull and Devil are signified in the visual language of hard rock and heavy metal. Fiore’s work with Contani (2014) discusses iconography and marketing of hard rock and metal, but doesn’t consider shadow and focuses less on masks and more on concepts of carnivalization. Fiore and Azevedo (2013) limit their analysis of masks to the use of demonic iconography in metal. Hess (2005) investigates rap artists and masks in his assessment of authenticity and marketability. Applications of Jung’s concept of the Shadow to metal exist (e.g. McKinnon, 2011; Cassano, 2005), but they don’t discuss depictions of shadow in art. Studies of branding within metal and hard rock exist (e.g. Karjalainen, 2012; Laaksonen, Ainamo, & Karjalainen, 2012; Christian, 2011); but, with the exception of Christian’s (2011) discussion of KISS’ makeup, they don’t focus on masks or shadow use in cover art.

Methodology and scope

The impetus for this paper was a desire to understand the branding effectiveness of heavy metal. As such, a written guide to branding which took storytelling into account and addressed music as an industry was sought. Searches of the *Encyclopaedia Metallum* (www.metal-archives.com) indicate that thousands of metal bands have composed lyrical themes related to “epic”, “ancient”, “folklore”, “fantasy”, “history”, “battles”, “warriors”, “legend”, “life”,

“myth/-ological/-ology”, “philosophy”, “sci-fi/science fiction”, “humanity”, “tales”, and “stories”. As a lifelong fan of the music and culture, the author was aware of the prevalence of masks and shadow in metal cover art. Before commencing a perusal of branding guides, it was clear that an investigation of the literatures on shadows and masks was necessary in order to understand parameters. With evidence that mankind’s fascination with masks, shadow, and storytelling goes back to our primal period, Hanlon’s (2006) *Primal Branding: Create Zealots for Your Brand, Your Company, and Your Future* was selected as a template for this paper. Specific reasons were twofold: (1) his approach centers around our need for stories: “the primal code...unlocks the pattern for creating cultural belief systems and allows leaders the opportunity to implement cues we seek as human beings that help us feel we belong” (p. 99); and (2) Hanlon discusses in detail and through case studies (e.g. U2) how his primal code for branding relates to musical brands:

The rituals in rock 'n' roll are the stuff of legend. From Jimi burning his guitar to Townsend’s smashing his Telecaster, to the obligatory lit cigarette lighters, mosh pits, and mud slides, the act of rock has become as important as the music. (p. 186)

“Primal” is defined as “belonging to an ancient time” and, in a psychological sense, “Of, relating to, or designating the needs, fears, behaviour, etc., that are held (esp. in Freudian theory) to form the origins of emotional life” (Primal, adj. and n.). The supposition and questions to be pursued were:

Hypothesis: Masks and shadow are the predominant symbols used in the visual branding of metal, as observed on cover art.

Q1: What constitutes a mask according to the literature and how might the types of masks be grouped for this study?

Q2: What constitutes an instance of shadow and how might the types be grouped?

Q3: If the hypothesis is true, what are some of the reasons why this is the case?

Q4: Are there discernible differences in the visual branding of metal subgenre as it pertains to masks and shadow?

Cover art of releases by hundreds of bands from dozens of countries from 1970 to present were analyzed. The scope of geographic and chronological settings and costumes found within heavy metal cover art spans the widest range of time: recorded history (i.e. the past 5,000 years) and prehistory on Earth; and the imagined supereons (past, present, and future) of countless worlds from science fiction and fantasy.

For this study, the prevailing type of mask used for each album cover was selected. That is, where an album cover featured two or more categories of masks, only one was selected, based on perceived importance, the number of instances, size ratios, album and song titles, etc. Certain categories of masks, in the author’s view, override others. For example, use of a hood or helmet overrides skull/skeleton as the chosen category of mask, if their perceived significance is otherwise equal, and anthropomorphism trumps all three. As Dowling (2011) and Ilya (2014) discuss, skulls, while ever-reinvented, have lost much of their power as they are ubiquitous and hackneyed. Approximately 1,500 “album” covers were analyzed for each of five selected metal subgenre: doom; traditional; thrash; death; and black. Where available, covers for demos, EPs, singles, compilations, splits, and videos were included. Random

artists from each subgenre were selected from the *Encyclopaedia Metallum* and *Rate Your Music* (rateyourmusic.com) websites. In many cases, a Google Image search was performed in order to locate a high resolution image. Limitations included conflicting genre classifications between sites (including BNRmetal.com and Wikipedia). The author's limited familiarity with bands (especially those which have switched from one style of metal to another and, perhaps, back again) and limited time to read reviews or verify styles via video or audio clips caused a reliance on the classifications offered by *Encyclopaedia Metallum*, which represents the greatest known consensus: As of 6 April 2015, the site included "102,202 bands" and "272,758 registered users" (2015). Band selections included specific subgenre styles, e.g. "Funeral Doom Metal", and mixed subgenre labels, such as "Thrash/Speed Metal" and "Doom/Death Metal" (where bands were classified under the first listed subgenre).

Primal branding

Metal is often described as a lifestyle and a community with strong bonds. Hanlon contends that "[b]rands are belief systems [where] a 'brand' is considered to be any product, service, personality, organization, social cause, political ideology, religion, movement, or other entity searching for popular appeal (2006, pp. 6-7). Like Disney, Apple, Coke, Nike, and Starbucks, metal has "the connective tissue that bonds...consumers emotionally [to] powerful brands" (Hanlon, 2006, p. 6). He adds that "[o]nce you look at a brand as a belief system, it automatically gains all the advantages that enterprise strives for: trust, vibrancy, relevance, a sense of values, community, leadership, vision, empathy, commitment, and more (2006, p. 7). Hanlon's seven brand messages are: (1.) The Creation Story; (2.) The Creed; (3.) The Icons; (4.) The Rituals; (5.) The Pagans or non-believers; (6.) The Sacred Words; and (7.) The Leader (2006, pp. 3-85). He contends that "the more pieces [a brand has], the more believable the belief system becomes (2006 p. 9). Because metal, which is in its fifth decade, has all seven pieces, it is what Hanlon calls a "sustainable belief system" (2006, p. 10).

The creation story

Hanlon contends that "[a]ll belief systems come with a story attached. In fact, a brand is often compared to a narrative. How [and where] we originated is the foundation of myth; it fulfils an innate human desire to understand how we came to be" (2009, p. 10-11). The general consensus amongst metal enthusiasts, rock music historians, academics, and journalists, is that metal started with Birmingham's Black Sabbath. Cope refers to the city as "the cradle of all things heavy" (2010, p. 8). Capsule's Home of Metal project has celebrated metal's birthplace through museum exhibits, a scholarly conference, lectures, digital archive, website and other events (see homeofmetal.com). When Sabbath formed during the 1960s, the region was known for its metal industry, where factories were loud, dreary, miserable places. The only member of Black Sabbath to remain through all line-up changes has been guitarist Tony Iommi, who is credited with giving the band their signature sound. The story of the origin of Iommi's guitar tone and stylings, influenced by the loss of two of his fingertips, was a feature element of the *HOME OF METAL: 40 Years of Heavy Metal and its Unique Birthplace* exhibit at the Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery (18 June - 25 Sept., 2011), where a sheetmetal stamping press machine (similar to the one Iommi had worked on) was featured. Retelling the importance of this industrial mishap is a central element to an article about the exhibit and birthplace of metal published two years later (**Bentley, 2013**). This creation story is noteworthy enough to be highlighted in a volume of the Re-

bels of Rock book series for juveniles (see Aberback, 2011). Another well-known element to the creation story of metal is how the members of Black Sabbath chose their name after seeing the Karloff horror film of the same name listed on a cinema marquee across the street from their rehearsal space. Popoff celebrates the music and cover art of the band's eponymous first release:

Sabbath's debut album is the record most agreed upon as ground zero for heavy metal proper, and its doomy, protoprogressive rock strains are reinforced by the crushingly depressive sleeve: a pink sky that appears overcast and a green-faced woman who all too frighteningly resembles a witch. Set amid the scrub in front of an old mill, she is unknown to this day even to Tony, Geezer, Bill, and Oz. (Popoff & Ioannis, 2012, p. 22)

Metal, then, commenced with a cloaked, shadowed, maleficent figure whose face is faintly masked in green and an evil, foreboding eponymous track. Masks, shadow, and horror have been embraced by metal musicians and fans ever since. Peak (2014) contends that:

[H]orror films exist because the experience of fear, when removed from an environment of immediate survival, is considered by many to be pleasurable. Likewise, representations of the impossible are valued in a world that is all-too-real. In other words, we look to horror to remind us that we are alive in the face of mortality...horror films are representations—purposely constructed to frighten—of that which oppresses us, namely suffering and death. (p. 38)

The rituals

The "Primal Code" contends that "[i]n the hubbub of modern life rituals can often be overlooked or understated. But they are no less important today than they were two thousand years ago" (Hanlon, 2006, p. 56). Storytelling is ritual (see Goody, 2010; De Vos, Harris, & Lottridge, 2003) and ritual is comforting (Rituals, 2013). Within the metal community, ritual is frequently experienced vicariously through the stories conveyed via the signifiers of lyrics and cover art. Campbell (1974) commences the preface to his book *The Mythic Image* with: "Pictures invite the eye not to rush along, but to rest a while and dwell with them in enjoyment of their revelation" (p. xi).

Severed heads to marionettes: the types and groupings of masks

A broad interpretation of masks has been applied since the literature defines "masks" as: accessories worn on human heads (full & half masks, makeup, helmets, hoods, veils, blindfolds, and other headpieces); faces or silhouettes used on brooches, belt buckles, rings, bracelets, etc.; proxy masks (e.g. puppets, dolls, marionettes, statues, anthropomorphic figures, golems, cyborgs, androids, robots, artificial intelligences, ghosts, etc.); and uses of faces and masks in art and architecture (paintings, Mayan glyphs and other carvings, gargoyles and other grotesques, pottery vessels and other serving dishes, etc.) (see Emerson, 1891; Kniffin, 1931; Laliberté & Mogelon, 1973; Napier, 1986). Categories used here are: "None" (no mask); "Mask" (obvious instances which don't fit the other categories); "Cyborg" (robot, etc.); "Puppet" (doll, statue, totem pole, etc.); "Anthropomorphic" (restricted to animals and plants represented in humanoid form, shapeshifters); "Severed" (decapitated or visually isolated heads); "Skull" (skeleton, zombie, dead body, mummy); "Helmet" (hat, crown); "Hood" (veil); and "Other" mask (e.g. hands or shadow obscuring

the face, disfigurement or distortion). The mask categories of “Clown” (jester, fool) and “Green Man” were added for Table 2. Examples of each type of masks were found in every era and genre of metal. Anthropomorphism goes back to at least 1971 and Budgie’s debut. Images of cyborgs go back at least as far as 1978 with Judas Priest’s albums “Stained Class” and “Killing Machine”/“Hell Bent for Leather”. Riot V’s 2014 album “Unleash The Fire” continues the cyborg imagery, combining it with their anthropomorphic mascot Johnny.

Darkness prevails

Shadow, like masks, can also hide or obscure objects. “Shadow” is the term used in this paper to refer to the various types of darkness: (1) shadows cast from light sources; (2) night-time; and (3) darkness (e.g. the darkness of the majority of the cosmos; the darkness of deep ocean; and artistic techniques, such as chiaroscuro and certain types of monochromatic photography and artwork). Cover art from the various genres of metal exhibit passions for all three types. Examples of category “1” are Mare’s 2010 EP “Spheres Like Death” and Strangler’s 2003 demo “Infinite Blood Abundance”, which features a standing shadow-figure that casts its own elongated shadow. An example of category “2” is Obituary’s “Cause of Death”. Examples of “3” are the 2006 Totenburg/Menneskerhat split “Waffenbrüder” and Disciples of Mockery’s 1999 album “God of Love”. Settings and time periods are important aspects of the stories being conveyed. A large modern city at night has different elements of mystique, beauty and danger compared to a twilight forest in the Middle Ages. As the scientists, poets, and philosophers brought together by Bogard (2008) discuss, visual and textual imageries allow us to imagine encounters with darkness that are no longer possible, such as night-time before artificial light, and experiences that are not available to us, such as travels to the deepness of space.

In a chapter entitled “The Mystery of the Shadow”, Mills and Dunn (1930) profess our ancient relationship with shadow:

The life of primitive man was full of peril. Out of the struggle to survive the dangers which threatened him on every side came fear and superstition. He developed a great regard for shadows which he could not understand. They were mysterious, they moved and changed, appeared and disappeared. They eluded him and yet pursued him. The shadow became for him a living thing. Gradually he came to look upon his own shadow as his very soul. He felt that he must shield and protect it...Stories of regard for the shadow come from many lands. (p. 205)

Ching and Ching propose, “[t]he shadow. It is the darkness within that...comes by many names: depression, addiction, fear, doubt, failure, abandonment, and many more. It contains the stuff from our subconscious that is obscured to our awareness” (2006, p. 33). The personification of death brings our two metaphors together as Death is generally portrayed (1) in a black hooded monk’s habit, with his face either masked by shadow or in the form of skull or decaying corpse or (2) as the anthropomorphic Angel of Death (see Wendell, 1996). Anthropomorphic images of Baphomet, the Devil, and other demons are very common in metal cover art. The meanings of masks and shadows, then, derive in large part from our fear of death.

Beauty in darkness

Fear, however, can also be beneficial and used to ensure our survival of threats or violence (De Becker, 1998) and darkness can be associated with beauty. Tanizaki asserts that “darkness is an indispensable element of the beauty [of things]” (1977, p. 13). Dim lighting, he contends, allow us to see aesthetics (such as depth, richness, quiddity) that are not as obvious under bright light. Shadows, according to Tanizaki (1977), allow us to meditate on the beauty in life. His description of serving dishes in a dimly lit restaurant provide an example:

Lacquerware decorated in gold is not something to be seen in brilliant light, to be taken in at a single glance; it should be left in the dark, a part here and a part there picked up by a faint light. Its florid patterns recede into the darkness, conjuring in their stead an inexpressible aura of depth and mystery, of overtones but partly suggested...luring one into a state of reverie...[a] spell...from the dream world built by that strange light of candle and lamp... (p. 14)

In a similar fashion, Lafcadio Hearn (who lived from 1850 to 1904) advocated the beauty in darkness. Pulvers (2014) notes that Hearn “recreated a Japan that was receding into the shadows—for he had always preferred shadows to light—and plunged into them, wallowing in the illusion that this alone was the ‘real’ Japan...the old Japanese character and folk culture...” (p. 2). Pulvers describes Hearn as “the shadow-maker, the illusionist who conjured up his own visions of Japan and gladly lost himself in them” (p. 5). He also quotes Hearn as having said, “I think a man must devote himself to one thing in order to succeed, so I have pledged (myself) to the worship of the Odd, the Queer, the Strange, the Exotic, the Monstrous” (2014, p. 6).

The Hypothesis is proved to be correct by the high percentages of use of masks and shadows indicated by Tables 1 and 2. The books on popular metal albums used for Table 1 represent “mainstream” examples of our visual metaphors. Table 2 is a more accurate estimation of the frequency of these symbols as its statistics comprise more cover art by more bands from more countries, including numerous lesser-known and obscure bands, some of which have released only demos.

Table 1: Counts of mask types on albums featured in 6 books; with percentages for mask and shadow usage.

	None	Mask	Cyborg	Puppet	Anthro	Severed	Skull	Helmet	Hood	Other	% Mask	% Shadow
Keck (2008)	27	7	2	6	68	1	16	0	1	4	79.55%	37.88%
Mudrian (2009)	7	2	1	1	2	0	7	1	1	3	72.00%	92.00%
Bond (2009)	29	13	5	7	8	0	20	2	0	16	71.00%	97.00%
Aldis & Sherry (2006)	79	68	16	9	33	3	61	23	11	80	79.90%	80.41%
Popoff & Ioannis (2012)	55	28	6	6	15	10	20	22	2	49	74.18%	96.24%
Popoff & Dome (2013)	87	70	24	7	51	0	66	21	12	64	78.35%	86.82%

Table 2: Percentages of mask and shadow use by metal subgenre.

	None	Mask	Cyborg	Puppet	Anthro	Severed	Skull	Helmet	Hood	Clown	Green	other	Shadow	Total % Mask
Doom	33.63	7.35	0.42	4.45	9.73	6.47	9.37	4.69	6.41	0.24	1.07	16.2	94.66	66.37
Traditional	32.47	8.16	2.66	1.39	8.16	6.39	7.22	6.9	2.09	2.47	0.13	21.97	76.71	67.53
Thrash	22.15	11.21	2.65	2.39	9.88	9.22	13.13	8.62	3.32	2.59	0.2	14.66	87.47	77.85
Death	18.55	10.11	1.79	2.11	14.01	7.42	17.66	4.35	3.9	0.64	0.58	18.87	94.88	81.45
Black	27.91	11.45	0.24	2.35	13.56	6.69	7.05	11.87	6.63	0.12	0.42	11.7	91.26	72.08

Decisions were subjective. As noted above, the overriding category was determined based multiple factors. The cover of Meshuggah's *Destroy Erase Improve*, for example, was determined to be a cyborg. The 2011 compilation "The Creation of Uncreation" by the Spanish death metal band Uncreation, was determined to be an isolated head even though the cover also features skulls, anthropomorphism, corpsepaint and hoods. The 2015 debut album from Tau Cross, which combines a scarecrow (classified here as "Puppet") with a mummified corpse (categorized here under "Skull"), was determined to be a puppet.

See Figure 1 for an example of an isolated dragon's head. This festival poster from the 2012 Ragnarokkr Metal Apocalypse in Chicago, absent band logos and text, also shows elements of the cyborg, skull, helmet, and shadow. Figure 2, the 2014 Ragnarokkr poster, provides another example of an isolated head and shadow. This anthropomorphic demon image stares down at an example of "other" (the small shadow-masked figure).

Figure 1. Festival poster from the 2012 Ragnarokkr Metal Apocalypse, Credits: Dusan Markovic.



Figure 2. Ragnarokkr Metal Apocalypse, Credit: Ragnarokkr Metal Apocalypse.



“[T]he Hero, the Outlaw, and the Magician”, all widely used images in metal, often depicted with masks and shadow, are:

powerful archetypes cut from the same cloth [who] take a stand against some limiting, restrictive or harmful reality. The Hero (who is often seen as Warrior) takes a great personal risk in order to defeat evil forces to protect society or

sacred values. The Outlaw acts as a disruptive force, violating cultural norms and rules for the good of others...for adventure and personal gain...or out of desperate alienation...The Magician acts as a catalyst for social or institutional transformation or healing. In all three cases, the underlying desire is to take action and exert power. The underlying fear is of allowing life to just happen to you—of being a victim or wimp. (Mark & Pearson, 2001, pp. 101-102)

Themes where archetypes face destruction or humanity's self-designed demise are common in metal. Rushing and Frenz (1995) contend that:

with the demise of our shamanistic heritage, the hunter's weapon evolves into a cyborg which then hunts the hunter. In an increasingly technological culture devoid of spiritual influence, the ego-driven, exploitative hunter loses the soul connection with his weapon [which] eventually breaks free from his control, becomes technologically perfected, and, in a final profane reversal, turns against the very hand that was used to wield it. The result is a threatened technological apocalypse in which humanity is replaced or destroyed by what it has made. (p. 5)

Conclusion

Metal is a strong, multifaceted, yet very recognizable brand. Masks and shadows bring unity to the branding of metal as their use bridges all subgenres and styles from each decade. The application of Hanlon's "Primal Code" to heavy metal helps explain the genre's passionate, loyal fans and its endurance. Fans seem to like the old and the new when it comes to symbols and stories. Along with science fiction, metal has been at the forefront of intrigue with trans- and post-humanism. At the same time, metal keeps myth, legend, and lore alive. Through its music, art, and culture, metal offer enthusiasts serenity, stability, and a sense of belonging in what is often a cold and chaotic world. Areas for further study include: analyses of specific album covers; individual visual artists, such as Dan Seagrave, Richard Serra, Stelarc, Zdzisław Beksiński, and Cindy Sherman; and applications of lenses such as pictorial semiotics, visual anthropology, corporeality, animal studies, monster theory, phenomenological analysis, queer theory, and transhumanism.

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