

MISTCAVERN – THE VOICE OF A DISTANT AND TIMELESS VASTNESS BEYOND ALL

Mistcavern are a quartet hailing from Hungary that was formed in 2019, picking up the torch left behind by the second-wave Nordic acts with their works of pure and otherworldly atmospheres in the first half of the 1990s. In many ways, the resulting *"Into Twilight"* EP is 26 minutes of veritable time-warp, but with a different take. *"Into Twilight"* reveals its own ancient imagination, far from mere "retro" replication or insincere genre exercise. This four-piece deeply understand the rich mystical vibrations underlying those hallowed tomes of yore, building on the duality of both concealed and boundless imagery. Showcasing scenes buried in thick fog, far from the dwellings of man and deeply rooted in nature's embrace, while also glorifying the infinite emptiness and the longing for the end of all. We spoke with Osseum, visionary behind Mistcavern's music. (JOKKE)



Mistcavern is a fairly new band even though its members are, or have been, active for more than twenty years in several other bands. What brought the 4 of you together? And what urge or desire was the spark that ignited Mistcavern?

In the past, I played in bands where the music was mostly written by other members. In the year of our demo, I reached a (creative) gateway and started making songs with the intention to transmit these ideas and atmospheres which now build up Mistcavern. No big plans or calculations were preceding it. I had the right people next to me. We have 20 years of shared past and are connected by the passion for this artform, so the band formed naturally.

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Mistcavern's first output is the 2019 demo "*Winds of Misery*", at first self-released in super-limited quantities, but then made widely available by Iron Bonehead at the dawn of 2020. How many copies have been made of the first version and was this demo used to send to labels, or rather to spread amongst friends and like-minded individuals? Is there any difference compared to the re-release by Iron Bonehead? Is a tape still the ideal format to spread a demo according to you?

We had 30 home dubbed copies and most of it were spread locally. The re-release got a new cover but apart from that, it's the same material. I had no problem with CDR demos when it was the current thing, but tape is the preferred format.



Mistcavern's influences undoubtedly go back to second-wave Nordic acts, such as Burzum and Emperor, but most noticeable the first two Satyricon records. Many bands out there try to copy or recreate a specific sound from the 90s-era. But, as you told me, that is absolutely not the case with Mistcavern. Sinister atmospheres and rich mystical vibrations seem primordial to your sound, with "*Into twilight*" also showcasing some ambient influences. Was it difficult to create that specific sound you had in mind in the surroundings of a studio?

Our influences are clear, but it was not a goal to be a 90s Black Metal worshipping band with all the usual trimmings. There was no planning on what kind of soundscape would fit to this music. It sounds the way it has to. It doesn't serve up everything on a plate, ready to consume, and is clearly not for everyone as it requires awareness and observation from the listener, who must step in to embrace it while excluding external factors as much as possible.

To quote Mithyrming's D.G. from their 2019 interview with Bardo Methodology: *"But it's funny you should use the expression 'atmospheric Black Metal'; the rare occasions I bother voicing my opinion on social media is mostly when ranting about this very term. It bothers me so ridiculously much – does it imply that Black Metal is not atmospheric per definition? Is 'brutal Death Metal' more brutal than Death Metal? What's next, rhythmic Techno?"* Do you agree with him that it makes no sense to add a prefix to Black or Death metal?

Makes no sense. The term Atmospheric Black Metal is an example of total incompetence.

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What's your opinion on live shows? Will you ever play some with Mistcavern or do you deem it impossible to recreate your ethereal and otherworldly atmospheres on stage?

I don't feel the need to try it currently. In my view, this is not concert music and also, we'd rather focus and spend our time on recording.

During almost 3 decades after the first wave of Black Metal, it has gone through different ideological changes. Starting with Satanism as the main essence of this style, what is the situation today? Is Satan as important as it was in the beginning? Many years ago, NSBM was the leading trend, followed by more and more DSBM bands. Then it changed to the dissonant style, the orthodox/occult current, the post-Black explosion and now raw Black Metal seems to be the taste of the week. Is this the evolution of Black Metal? Or vice versa – regression?

These Black Metal trends are things I avoid. In most cases, today's Black Metal means big tryhard band identities with insincere and ultra-superficial music, crowned with vocals of shallowness. In the worst cases, all this is presented with a sterile contemporary sound to reach wider audiences. Probably many have told this before me, but today's Black Metal is losing its foundations, the depth, and the spirit. Superficiality reigns.



Which records are, according to you, unparalleled in terms of atmosphere? Is atmosphere less, more or equally as important as ideology when speaking about Black Metal?

I don't know if we can measure these utterly different things but there should be balance.

It would be pointless to list 90s classics here but if we stay with recent Black Metal unparalleled in terms of atmosphere and also the best Black Metal record of the past ten years, I'd say "*Harpes of the Ancient Temples*" by Nocternity.

What is the main ideological concept of Mistcavern? Not only the band name but also the new EP song titles make it clear that mist and fog are central natural themes in Mistcavern's universe. Is there some kind of larger meaning hidden behind the way you use mist and fog in lyrics?

Mistcavern is a humble glorification of the universe's final harvest upon all, and represents total disdain towards the modern man, its existence, goals, and beliefs.

Mist and twilight are phenomena I am captivated by since I was a kid. Both hide and quiet the world and cause a more spiritually alert state of mind. A touch of eternity.

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Does nature play an important aspect in your daily lives and routines? Is the band based in rural or a more urban area?

We are living in the capital city and in its immediate surroundings. I moved out from the city some years ago, but I still work there. It's a constant struggle to find enough time to be secluded in nature.

Why is Black Metal your preferred music style to express yourself?

Black Metal can be a channel with the depth I search for. The voice of a distant and timeless vastness beyond all.

I really like your band logo, which is not a standard Black Metal one. Who did the design, and was it the kind of logo you had in mind from the beginning?

It was made by Joonas Räsänen / EvM Art. I felt that the clandestine and organic nature of his work would fit to Mistcavern, and I'm very satisfied with the outcome. He also painted the demo's cover for us.



In the demo tape booklet, Mistcavern's band members are not wearing any corpsepaint, although the individual that is roaming in the darkness on the cover of "Into Twilight" is wearing some paint. Do you use corpse paint only on special occasions? What idea does it carry?

It is not a mandatory accessory. Corpsepaint got completely degraded by the undemanding. A bucket of paint every time without understanding nor vision, just to prove that you are a Black Metal band.

I must admit that I don't have a profound knowledge of Hungarian Black Metal, besides the more well-known acts as the legendary Tormentor or Sear Bliss. What's going on in the today's scene in Hungary and how have you seen it develop during the past 2 decades? Any underground bands that I should check?

There was a decade long flare-up between 2000-2010, which resulted in good materials but I'm not actively following since that. Regarding recent Hungarian Black Metal, I have to mention the Inner Awakening Circle and the related bands, the veteran band Ahriman, Vorkuta from the Gőcsej region and the hermit Black Metal of Marblebog.

What is the next step for Mistcavern? A full-length, or will you first do some more exploration of your sound on smaller releases?

The first Mistcavern album is written. We are heading to rehearse it, and to complete the material with the band.

I want to continue on this path with Mistcavern, and I'm looking forward to where these atmospheres will guide our music.

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