# LEGENDS MAGAZINE

HE DARKER THE MUSIC ~ THE BRIGHTER THE MIND CONTENTS



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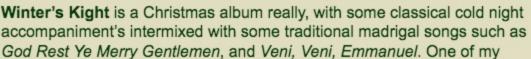


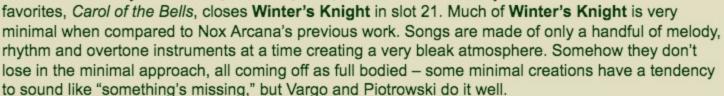
## **CD Review**

#### Nox Arcana - "Winter's Knight"

By Marcus Pan

As the wind and bone wrenching code envelops you this Christmas season, my suggestion is to let the latest brilliant dirge by Nox Arcana(1) increase the effect with their Christmas effort, **Winter's Knight**. The duo of Joseph Vargo and William Piotroswki subdues the cold outside and replaces it with a deeper one from inside, but somehow interweave warmth into the otherwise bleak dirges they produce, a subtlety that is not missed on this reviewer.





Vigil opens us with a short spoken word from Joseph Vargo as he takes us into the mood of the album. And First Snow is made with the minimalist approach; a simple melody, harpsichord sounding backing rhythm and some chorale overtones. The rest is left to your imagination as the track flutters along to completion to be met by Evening Star's piano which weaves into another choral background. Again the melody is simple but effective with a power of its own built on its very loneliness. Reflections of Long Ago is very small in sound and gives you that feeling of being lost before December Winds builds into a crescendo of classical chorales, tolling bell choruses and strings.

Phantom Toccata takes an operatic feel with its swift organ, one of the faster moving tracks throughout Winter's Knight. Gregorian Hymn's tolling bell calls to you. Coventry Carol is gorgeous, taking you back to medieval times with its tradition and sung beautifully by guest Jeff Endemann. Lullaby is twisted and dark, but subtlety plays a key role here as the darker elements of the music box accompaniment is kept underneath. At its first strains it almost sounds pretty, but close your eyes as the chorals sneak in and it becomes a waltz of despair. The closing Carol of the Bells is easily one of the most brilliantly produced versions of my favorite traditional Christmas song.

Nox Arcana tone it down a bit this time, taking a bleak theme of winter, mixing in some classical carols and don't overstep the melancholy of the season. They step into a little bit of minimalism applied to their more heady efforts from before and still manage to create a full bodied moving sound. If you like the holidays, and most do I would suspect, and you like the dark solitude that winter brings and you'd like that reflected in the sounds that surround it, then you'll certainly enjoy Nox Arcana's latest, Winter's Knight.

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