

DÉTRESSE interview on TNT Radio, by J. A. Marroqui “Brujo”

First of all, thank you for joining TNT Radio and sharing your time with us. First of all, I'd like to know your thoughts on the release of “Pessimismes,” now that it's out.

Thanks a lot for the invite! ‘Pessimismes’ marks our debut album and even if it’s the first sign of life for Détresse in public it contains everything the band essentially stands for. It’s Black Metal, at times straightforward, at times atmospheric which in combination with the lyrics being written in German and French brings forward the duality of life. There’s always a dark side to light whereas even in the deepest shadows sometimes a glimpse of hope can be found.

Détresse is a relatively young band formed in 2023 by musicians from Austria and Canada. How did this union come about, and what motivated you to create music together at that time?

Détresse has been brought together out of a common sense and the sheer necessity to create music in order to express our inner struggles and values. With this in mind, intercontinental borders don’t play a big role. All members live in Europe now though, which makes playing shows as well as touring easier.

The name Détresse already suggests a clear emotional charge. What does it mean to you, and how does it fit with what you wanted to convey from the beginning?

The name clearly does convey an emotional charge as you already implied, even though it is not solely limited to that. Being in distress can trigger various reactions, from fear, to restlessness, to anger. All these emotions are reflected in the music itself and of course the lyrics.

You use both German and French in your lyrics. What does each language bring to your expressive work, and how do you decide which one to use for each song?

The decision on using both German and French lies in the languages themselves and how they express best what is needed for each individual song. German carries a lot of harshness within making it fit best to the songs with a more direct and aggressive sound. French on the other side sounds a bit more refined, making it a good choice for songs that might be a bit more on the atmospheric side. Of course there can be exceptions to that, sometimes the language also counters the instrumental parts, adding an additional layer of depth.

The lyrics are permeated by anxiety and emotional tension. What did you want to convey with them, and what was the writing process like?

As already written above the music and therefore also the lyrics reflect our inner struggles and values. Most of them are not laying on the surface and rather hidden in sort of stories or simply strings of words. Whereas there is a clear emotional direction in them the interpretation of their meaning should be left to the listener.

In “Pessimismes,” there is a very marked structural rigidity, repetitive riffs, and a use of rhythm that sometimes borders on the ritualistic in songs like “In Asche gehüllt.” What references or influences have been most decisive in defining this approach?

It’s always difficult to talk about influences, especially names. It is clear that in today's world with 24/7 access to all sorts of music a songwriting approach is biased up to a certain extent but we did our best to steer clear of being directly influenced and rather focussed on building a unique sound for Détresse instead.

If you want to talk about influences outside the music world the answer is rather simple: Life.

“Die Ruhe Trägt” seems to me to be one of the most complete tracks on the album. I think it brings together all the textures and sounds we can find in “Pessimismes.” Tell me about this song.

That is a good observation. It indeed carries all the sounds being found on the album making the placement as the last song before the acoustic closing track ‘Pessimisme’ an obvious choice. The music as well as the lyrics carry the sort of restlessness we already talked about earlier in the interview. The title ‘Die Ruhe trägt’ translates to ‘The calm carries’, and at first glance it seems to be the opposite of what the song is about. The lyrics are talking about an individual being chased but it is not specified by whom or for what reason. Eventually being buried under falling stones calmness and solitude return leaving the world in silence for a minute. Whereas the exact interpretation should be left to the listener as

earlier suggested, the direction for this song is clear: What are we, as individuals running from in our lives? What are we running towards, if not our inevitable demise? And how can we influence our way by our decisions made during our life on earth?

Although the sound of “Pessimismes” is mostly dense and oppressive, there are moments, like in “Vision Funeste” or “Der Alte Weg,” where the tempo accelerates. What role do these rhythmic changes play in the album?

The rhythmic changes in our songs are in direct relation to the feeling we want to transport in those moments.

“Pessimismes” is an unadorned album, almost hostile in its presentation. What was your intention in approaching it with such a raw and direct production?

The production should of course reflect what the album and music itself stands for. Therefore a certain rawness was needed while still maintaining a clear sound, giving all elements the space they need.

The album maintains the tension until the very end. What role does control play for you in the composition of something that, at times, sounds like an emotional collapse?

Even though it might sound like on the edge of collapse at times, everything on the album - including the vocals - is 100% controlled. This is important to transport the exact sound and message we had in mind and it would feel wrong to settle for anything less.

The final track, "Pessimisme," eliminates distortion and adds acoustic elements along with the sound of the sea, although the tension doesn't disappear. How did that decision come about, and what does it represent on the album?

The closing track ,Pessimisme‘, solely relying on acoustic guitars without any additional lyrics is the perfect ending to both its predecessor ,Die Ruhe trägt‘ and the album itself. It gives space to reflect and process what has been heard before and to be left alone with one’s most inner thoughts for a moment. Something only rarely found in the busy world we live in.

Do you intend to take this material live, or is it a project that will live solely in the studio for now?

We certainly plan to play more live shows in the future. Our first two shows in November 2024, one of them being at Messe des Morts in Montréal, were very well received by the audience making the decision to continue presenting our music live an easy one for us.

Finally, what message would you leave for those who are discovering Détresse?

Death is the most vivid picture of life.