

## Infected Mushroom - Vicious Delicious (BNE)

Contributed by damion psyreviews

We all thought it was going to be shit. It isn't. We live in confusing times

You are probably expecting the psyreviews take on the new Infected to be full of bile, and to mention the word "shit" seventeen times. In truth, that's what I was expecting too. But Vicious Delicious isn't as shit as we thought it was going to be.

Infected have made it abundantly clear that we aren't to consider them as a psytrance act. Indeed, anyone on a web forum who moans that it isn't psychedelic is missing the point entirely. Vegetarians suggested a new direction, and Supervisor saw that direction carried on to a disgusting, unlistenable conclusion. Vicious Delicious, on the other hand, is intriguing: I'm finally starting to believe in them.

Tipped to sell around the 100,000 mark, what we're looking at is a crossover of metal, emo-pop, trance, and an as-yet-unclassified style of music that we might as well call CD2 Of Converting Vegetarians. The shit bits are incredibly shit, the good bits are incredibly good. And the overall effect of the album is satisfyingly perplexing, to the point that you want to listen to it again: I couldn't even listen through Supervisor once, but this I've gone through about six times.

Becoming Insane is largely dreadful. The vocals sound like Joe Pesci voicing Pinocchio, the guitars are pure layered ego, and the vaguely Arabian theme swirling around like a pungent odour doesn't help it sit well.

Artillery is where things start to get perplexing. The track opens up into a strange cross between Fun Lovin' Criminals and Linkin Park, with adequate rapping (not, I boldly predict, penned by an Israeli). It's an interesting track, until the three-and-a-half-minute mark where that daft Joe Pesci voice comes in and forms extra background; once again, Infected seem to be falling down that trap of starting something interesting, then singing over it. No surprises there.

The title track, and I realise I may lose you here, is bloody fantastic. It's an incredible piece of dance music: simple arpeggios and layering bring drive it along toward this insanely good peak. Seriously, it just builds and builds and builds. Simple: yes. Stupid: yes. Effective: fuck yes. It has echoes of Size 9's "I'm Ready, Binary Finery" 1998, and Energy 52's "Café Del Mar". There are classic elements of Balearic terraces here, I'm a jaded cynical old git but the drop makes me want to reach for the lasers, all of them, every laser ever ever invented in the history of lasers ever.

Heavyweight sounds like Metallica doing something Japanese-y sounding, possibly for a videogame, remixed in a hurry by Hallucinogen. The midsection goes 4/4 has some nice vocal manipulation, and then it comes back into that emo / metal heavy guitar and we're in Linkin Park territory again. It's baffling, yet strangely compelling.

Suliman is one you'll think you've heard a billion times before, probably because you have. It's their current "rave anthem", and while it's a bit of a pain to listen to, the melody and signature are interesting enough to have it stuck in your head for a while; but as the inevitable apex of the live set we're all bound to be exposed to at some point this year, it's going to grate.

With Forgive Me, we have Duvdev using a vocoder, very bad lyrics, stupid chord changes, and a finale that reminds me of Nickelback. Still, at 3:29 it's perfect for radio, which is probably the idea; likewise In Front Of Me, an emo-pop anthem-in-waiting. Special Place is a teasing bastard. It starts out a bit like older Infected material (really), then goes terrible with more shit vocals.

Luckily Eat It Raw, the only vocal-free dancefloor track, fills in the gaps. Change The Formality is the worst track of the lot. It's basically everything that Supervizah was made of, and what I expected the whole of this album to be about. It's boring, it's retrodden, it's filler, and with incredibly shit vocals. And then finally, Before sounds a bit like old Blue Planet Corp, reasonably floaty and cruisy with some nice runs and an overall airy, progressive-sunrise vibe; but nothing desperately special.

There's a strangely magnetic quality about this. Like I said, previous Infected albums barely received a single play

(and for the record I always though their early stuff was overrated, more style than substance.) Yet this sounds like something lasting.

Put this up against your psychedelic quality matrix, and of course it fails. But then, as I said before, Infected don't want us to judge them on that criteria. This isn't for everyone; but I would expect that even the most hardened cynic will find something interesting here. Varied, compelling, and immaculately-produced, this is one hell of a pleasant surprise. 8