

drills, but I'm glad I listened to this at least once. —JEFF TREPPEL



INSECT ARK

The Vanishing
PROFOUND LORE

The eyes have it

Insect Ark play the kind of metal that you'd see performed at a museum. This electric guitar-less duo consists of frequent M. Gira collaborator Dana Schechter on bass, lap steel and synths, with former SubRosa drummer Andy Patterson on, well, drums. That pedigree should help clue you in as to what you're in for with *The Vanishing*: something very tasteful, very heavy and very bleak.

The lap steel gives these songs a uniquely mournful quality. It's similar at times to Across Tundras' prairie doom, but while that band's work has a rural feel, this feels more urban—which makes sense considering Schechter's New York City home. This music lives in abandoned warehouses and burned-out tower blocks, all concrete angles and shattered panes of glass. The distorted noise rock bass in "Tectonics" certainly helps set that tone, and it carries through the whole time. They excel at creating a sense of suffocating claustrophobia by using post-rock and avant-metal structures.

On the flip side, the music's post-rock formality can make it feel distant, giving songs like "Philae" a sense of foreboding and melancholy without necessarily drawing the listener in. They're much more successful with the mood pieces like "Swollen Sun"—and especially the harrowing title track. Whether or not the album is intended to evoke the terrible uncertainty of the 1988 Dutch film of the same name, it does a fantastic job of capturing that movie's tightening tension. Like a well-curated exhibit, it sticks with you. —JEFF TREPPEL

8

have a heartwarming origin story to whip up parties ("an Argentinian, Chilean, Brazilian two good ol' Georgia boys walk into a rehearsal room...") and industry heavyweights in the corner. So, yeah, expect to see Irist blaring print and banner ads, as well as (hopefully NB's sake) all over metal radio. There's a lot of money to recoup.

The rub is that, while Irist are decently powered by above average players who channel their proficiency into a classy and huge sound, it's still more a pie chart of their influences than their own creation cooling on Mama Me windowsill. And mostly, the slight smattering of Converge in the rare fast 'n' weird part is a bridge between Roots-era Sepultura and a long-step guitar lurch, tremendous tonality, and way Rodrigo Carvalho apes Joe Duplantier what might as well be a not-so-subtle, partially recorded audition tape.

Overall, there's a discouraging tentativeness to *Order of the Mind*. Popped-collar restraint is the most blustery of moments, like the track, whose staccato accents should be filled with anger and arm-barring the listener to a concussed submission. Instead, it feels like a spit-shine and knowing wink that, while they know their heavy, but haven't yet lost their soul, swing and knockout punch that the sands jumping in unison in a European field. —KEVIN STEWART-PANKO



LORNA SHO

Immortal
CENTURY MED

The death th

When it comes
advancement

I didn't expect it would come in the form of symphonic deathcore. But Lorna Sho is doing that, and on *Immortal*, boy, t