

= Seasons in the Abyss =

Seasons in the Abyss is the fifth studio album by American thrash metal band Slayer . It was released on October 9 , 1990 , through Def American Records , and later through American Recordings after the record label changed its name . The album 's recording sessions began in March 1990 . The sessions began at Hit City West , Hollywood Sound , and in June , the sessions ended at Record Plant in Los Angeles , California . It was the band 's last studio album to feature original drummer Dave Lombardo until 2006 's Christ Illusion .

The musical style of the album is similar and was compared by critics to the band 's previous two albums : South of Heaven and Reign in Blood . The album 's reception was generally positive . It peaked number 18 in the United Kingdom and also charted on the Billboard 200 at number 40 . It was certified gold in the United States and Canada .

= = Recording and production = =

The album was recorded from January to June 1990 in two separate studios : Hit City West , Hollywood Sound , and Record Plant in Los Angeles , California . Seasons in the Abyss was produced by Rick Rubin , who had also produced their previous two albums Reign in Blood and South of Heaven .

Track eight , " Temptation " , featured an overdub of lead vocalist Tom Araya 's singing ; the vocal arrangement on the track was unintentional . Araya sang the song twice : once the way he felt it sounded best ; the second time at the insistence of Kerry King the way he thought it should be sung . By accident both tracks were played back simultaneously on the instrumental background , and the producer suggested that both vocal tracks should be used on the album .

= = Music and lyrics = =

According to Nathan Brackett , author of The Rolling Stone Album Guide , Seasons in the Abyss continued the band 's sound as displayed in their first four albums . The songs on the album have complex guitar riffs that proceed at both " blinding speed " tempos and mid @-@ tempo hefts . Brackett said that the songs ' themes shy away from the " fantasy and into the hells here on Earth " and instead was " music to conquer nations by . "

The album combines " grim " vocals and " frenetic " guitars . Blabbermouth.net said that the album is " considered to be among the genre 's all @-@ time classics " . " War Ensemble " , " Dead Skin Mask " , and " Seasons In The Abyss " were described as setting the album 's standard and the songs , according to the site , produced a sound that could not be matched by anyone else .

AllMusic said that it combines the mid @-@ tempo grooves of South of Heaven with " manic bursts of aggression " à la Reign in Blood . Allmusic also said that when writing the album 's lyrics , Slayer " rarely turns to demonic visions of the afterlife anymore , preferring instead to find tangible horror in real life ? war , murder , [and] human weakness . There 's even full @-@ fledged social criticism , which should convince any doubters that Slayer aren 't trying to promote the subjects they sing about . "

= = Release and reception = =

Slayer released Seasons in the Abyss on October 9 , 1990 , through Def American Records . Later that year it was released again through Warner Music Group . It was re @-@ released in 1994 through American Recordings . Although it was " unwelcome " to music shows and rock ? radio outlets , it got substantial airplay on MTV 's now @-@ defunct " Headbangers Ball " . Seasons in the Abyss features Slayer 's first music video , filmed in Cairo .

The album received generally positive reviews by critics . CMJ New Music Report said that the album cover was " a culinary goof on the veteran metal band " . AllMusic 's Steve Huey said that it " brought back some of the pounding speed of Reign in Blood for their third major @-@ label album "

, and addressed it to be " their most accessible album , displaying the full range of their abilities all in one place , with sharp , clean production " . Huey later wrote that the album " paints Reagan @-@ era America as a cesspool of corruption and cruelty , and the music is as devilishly effective as ever " .

J. D. Considine noted about " War Ensemble " : " it 's not a pretty song by any means . An aural blitzkrieg whose chorus climaxes with the lines , ' The final swing is not a drill / It 's how many people I can kill , ' it is filled with brutal images and blaring guitars , all propelled at the breathless pace of thrash metal . " Considine would later say that the album 's music " so accurately sums up the controlled panic of combat that the Army itself has been using Slayer songs to psych its troops for military maneuvers in the Saudi desert " . Mike Stagno from SputnikMusic said that the album was a well @-@ received return by Slayer . Entertainment Weekly reviewer David Browne said that listening to Seasons in the Abyss was " like listening to a single speed @-@ metal song ? the world 's longest " .

The album peaked at number 40 on the Billboard 200 and number 18 on the UK Albums Chart . Seasons in the Abyss was certified gold in both the United States and Canada . The title track and " War Ensemble " earned Slayer its heaviest airplay on MTV to date . In an October 2007 interview , Evile frontman Matt Drake described Seasons in the Abyss as " the perfect mix " between the two styles (" speed " and " slow material ") showcased on Reign in Blood and South of Heaven respectively . Children of Bodom bassist Henkka T. Blacksmith hailed Seasons in the Abyss as " the best metal album ever " . The thrash / crossover supergroup S.O.D. released a single named " Seasoning The Obese " in tribute to the album .

= = Track listing = =

= = Personnel = =

Slayer

Tom Araya ? bass , lead vocals

Jeff Hanneman ? lead and rhythm guitar

Kerry King ? lead and rhythm guitar

Dave Lombardo ? drums

Production

Rick Rubin ? production

Andy Wallace ? co @-@ production , engineering , mixing

Larry Carroll ? artwork , illustrations

Chris Rich ? assistant engineer

David Tobocman ? assistant engineer

Allen Abrahamson ? assistant engineer

Robert Fisher ? graphic design

Rick Sales ? management

Howie Weinberg ? mastering

Sunny Bak ? photography

Marty Temme ? photography

= = Charts and certifications = =