



LIVE REVIEW

From Exile 529 // ATLANTA, GA // DECEMBER 13

It's being generous to say that 150 people could fit into 529. On this night, From Exile pushed that limit. Because their music is faster, more intricate, and overwhelmingly more complex than almost anything else in Atlanta, it's not difficult to see why these guys are drawing such huge crowds. In one of their first shows back after an extended break to write and record their album *Monolith*, they have already outgrown 529's space. At this rate, they will surely continue to expand into larger venues.

Live, as on record, From Exile is technical, precise, and in constant motion. The peaks and valleys of *Monolith* were all intact - and, in fact, the band played all of the album tracks in a varying order - but they were executed in such a way that they seemed to take on a life of their own when played live. Interspersed with the album's eight tracks were two new songs and segues which connected several of the tracks and created near-classical structures. To balance the tightly planned compositions, these segues were regularly improvised. Truly, these guys could do it all.

From Exile makes what they do seem effortless. They relentlessly switch time signatures, waver between bouts of thrash and melody, and tread a thin line between what is obviously careful composition and unhinged spontaneity. Although From Exile is firmly rooted in metal, they manage to be so progressive in their approach that they transcend the genre. The drive of songs like "Monolith," the complexities evident in pieces like "Arrival," and the twin leads on "The Unlearning Descent" were all highlights of the evening, but this night was not about highlights. It was about moving parts working together in precision. From Exile are architects of something uniform, whole, and massive.

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