

# Death Magnetic 'loudness war' rages on

Fans sign online petition to get Metallica album remastered. Lars Ulrich responds by shutting his eyes, sticking his fingers in his ears and going 'la-la-la I can't hear you'

Sean Michaels

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Metallica's new album isn't awful - it just sounds awful. As criticism of the production and mastering of Death Magnetic continues to pile up, drummer Lars Ulrich has lashed out, displaying the same acuity of observation as in his 2,000 attacks on file-sharing.

"Listen, there's nothing up with the audio quality," he told Blender in a recent interview. "I'm not gonna sit here and get caught up in whether [the sound] 'clips' or it doesn't 'clip'." (It clips.) The most important thing, Ulrich said, is that the record is "fuckin' smokin'" - and that the CD version sounds just as good as the Guitar Hero one.

Still, almost 13,000 fans have signed an online petition calling for Death Magnetic to be remastered. Metallica, they say, are "caught up in the loudness war that is ruining modern music."

Though Ulrich defended Death Magnetic's sound, he has not denied the band's aggressive approach to mastering. "It's 2008, and that's how we make records," he said. "[Producer] Rick Rubin's whole thing is to try and get it to sound lively, to get it sound loud, to get it to sound exciting, to get it to jump out of the speakers. Of course, I've heard that there are a few people complaining. But I've been listening to it the last couple of days in my car, and it sounds fuckin' smokin'."

Ah yes, the car. What better place to evaluate a CD's dynamic range than while speeding down the highway at 100 mph with the windows down? "I don't know what kind of stereos these people listen on," Ulrich said.

Ultimately, Ulrich dismissed the whole furore as the stuff of online trolls - people like us, just trying to keep Metallica down. "The internet gives everybody a voice, and the internet has a tendency to give the complainers a louder voice," he said.

"Listen, I can't keep up with this shit. Part of being in Metallica is that there's always somebody who's got a problem with something that you're doing."

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