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## Hellfighter – Damnations Wings review (CD)

January 10th, 2011

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HELLFIGHTER "Damnation's Wings"

[www.hellfighter.co.uk](http://www.hellfighter.co.uk)

HELLFIGHTER'S origins can be traced back to UK Metal band Xentrix, who were at the forefront of the European thrash metal scene in the 1990s. They released three albums and toured Europe extensively with bands such as Testament, Sabbath and Tankard, receiving widespread critical acclaim. They are now acknowledged as one of the foremost British exponents of the Thrash Metal genre.

Even though Xentrix split up in 1996, they still have a website going, so check out <http://www.xentrix.co.uk/> for the full story.

After a period spent working on different projects ex-Xentrix members, Kristian Havard (guitar), Den Gasser (drums) and Simon Gordon (vocals) reformed in 2007, recruiting Pete Smith (ex Kill II This) and bassist Mel Gasser to complete the line up of HELLFIGHTER. In 2008/9 the band played a number of UK shows, including the Bloodstock and Metalfest festivals as well as recording a demo.

"Damnation's Wings," showcases ten new songs and sees HELLFIGHTER sticking to their Thrash and Metal roots whilst introducing a strong, modern, melodic edge.

In a recent interview Kristian Havard (guitar) talked about the making of the album: "In some ways we have revisited the bands and sounds that we loved as kids: Bands like Maiden, Priest, Forbidden, Testament, Anthrax, but really we've just made the sort of record that we want to hear today.

Sounds good, so what's it like ?

Well at a first glance of the credits, there's one thing which springs out straight away, Andy Sneap has been involved, the award winning producer who has worked with such greats as Megadeth, Opeth, Testament, [Trivium](#) and many many more.

However, what is a surprise is that the production and engineering credits are shared between Kristian and Andy, a brave move by Andy ?, or well founded faith in Kristian ?

This is a question I will have to ask.

After just one listen, its immense, the drums hit you from all sides, all at once, and never let up from beginning to end, though never over powering the songs, they compliment them beautifully.

Kristian/Pete have some great riffs up their sleeve's and the solo's are just outstanding, along with the solid bass from Mel, and the soaring yet melodic vocals from Simon, this release could be well up there in my top 10 of 2011.

Track by Track.

*Tower of sin* opens this thrash masterpiece in fine style, crunching riffs with squealing guitar's and a pounding rhythm section crash together before simon joins in with a high pitch soaring vocal scream, chunky riffs and nice soloing keep this song going nicely.

*A lesser god* opens with a slow guitar part, with Simon singing a gentle first verse before the band crash straight into a monster riff driven song.

*Legacy of hate* is the stand out song for me, powerful vocals match the riffs effortlessly, think a heavy Judas Priest song and you can't go far wrong.

*Faith in Lies* Pounding drums drive this song along effortlessly, chunky riffage match the fast paced drumming until the solo takes over, magic.

*Damnations wings* is the title track, and by now we know exactly what Hellfighter are all about. Fast brutal drumming, bone crunching riffs and soaring vocals.

*Revolution within* follows in the now familiar Hellfighter style, and along with the next track, *Epitaph*,



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showing off their superior song writing skills. *Epitaph* in particular is a riff heavy song but with the vocals still loud and clear, one of my favorite songs.

*Bring only pain* is the 1<sup>st</sup> of two, over 7 minute long songs, and this gives a chance for the guitars to do what they do best, chunky riffs, with some great solo's, this is quickly followed by *Descent*, one of the hardest songs on the cd in my opinion, with a wicked guitar hook.

The last song is another 7 minute masterpiece entitled *Firewalker*, it starts of slow with a nifty guitar intro riff, before crashing headlong in a rip roaring fast paced moshfest of chunky riffs and stunning solo's.

Bottom line, this is a milestone in British thrash and needs to be heard by all fans of metal.

Tracklist:



01. Tower of Sin
02. A lesser God
03. Legacy of hate
04. Faith in lies
05. Damnations Wings
06. Revolution Within
07. Epitaph
08. Bring only pain
09. Descent
10. Firewalker

Rate: 7/10

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by David Farrell

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