

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18, 2009

Stemm - "Blood Scent" CD



Raised in Buffalo, this modern metalcore act brings the thunder, with crystalline radio-ready production and a sound that brings to mind Pantera and Metallica - both enviable (though predictable)

inspirations. The

group's crunch is loud and aggressive, taking elements from heavy thrash as well as power-groove metal. Standouts? How about the powerful opener, 'Blood Soaked', which is a prime example of the group's synthesis of metallic styles. Songs like the midtempo 'Beneath My Skin' fall pretty close to the mainstream, but it's all remedied with their cover of Nine Inch Nails' thrashy 'Wish', which manages to harness the punchy, disheveled anger of the original. It's even followed up with an unexpected and grim experimental soundscape to close it out - can't fault that. Taken as a whole though, 'Blood Scent' is hard-hitting, mean, and covers just about everything you need in a new metal act. They may not take as many chances as I'd like to hear, but it's certainly a solid effort. If these guys don't catch on, it's a shame. (Catch 22)

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