

Blasting-Zone.com

Xentrix

Reviews

For Whose Advantage?

(MVD Audio/
Metal Mind Productions)

Just when I thought my ever-increasingly damaged ears had already been graced with every conceivably worthwhile “classic” Heavy Metal re-issue, a disc that actually manages to genuinely pique my interest lands on my desk. Don’t get me wrong; as long as I still have the strength to raise a clenched fist and at least half a voice shout along with, I will undoubtedly continue to gleefully enjoy even the most ridiculously obscure and questionable of auditory offerings. I just wish more record companies would take the freakin’ time and energy to re-release a few of the more lesser known titles (seriously...how many times has the AC/DC catalog been re-released in the past five years?). Fortunately, this just happens to be the case with the long awaited re-release of For Whose Advantage? From acclaimed British Thrash titans Xentrix.

On the brilliant For Whose Advantage (2007), an ingeniously assembled sixteen track collection of ‘...thinking man’s...’ Thrash Metal, each track, beginning with the thought-provoking “Questions”, the politically charged title track, and the mosh-inducing “The Bitter End”, instantly assaults one’s senses with a refreshingly seamless, mostly full-throttle barrage of menacing vocals, searing, “Guitar God”-worthy fretwork and imaginatively punishing rhythms. Openly embracing their more than considerable NWOBHM-fueled roots without succumbing to the somewhat shameless tactics so often embraced by their more successful brethren (which is just as well since I can’t honestly remember the last time a release from a “widely accepted” group kicked my ass), the group almost immediately goes for the throat.

Continuing with the haunting interlude “New Beginnings”, the blistering “Desperate Remedies”, and a masterful take on the Ian Gillan chestnut “Running White Face City Boy”, the airtight combination of vocalist/rhythm guitarist Chris Astley, lead guitarist Kristian Havard, bassist Paul MacKenzie and drummer Dennis Gasser steamroll ahead at a carefully calculated pace. Characterized throughout by an impressively modern, ‘...beefy...’ overall tone and a crystal clear tone courtesy of Katowice, Poland-based Metal Mind Production’s acclaimed re-master series (which also includes titles from Atrophy, Last Crack and Sodus, to name only a few), the majority--if not all--of the decidedly forceful wares contained herein serve as a much-welcomed reminder of the Thrash Metal genre’s fabled glory days.

Jam-packed with enough rarities, both studio and live, (taken from the group’s often overlooked *Dilute To Taste* EP) to satisfy even the most ridiculously die-hard completeists, other standouts, including the stunning, acoustic-tinged “Shadows Of Doubt”, the scalding “Crimes”, and a deliciously tongue-in-cheek

take on Ray Parker Jr.'s classic "Ghostbusters" theme, offer a wealth of compelling further sonic evidence in support of the group's generally underrated lyrical and musical wizardry. Arguably the group's most lyrically mature and musically diverse effort, veteran producer John Cuniberti (Dead Kennedys, Forbidden and Joe Satriani, among others) deftly captured the group operating amid an obvious creative peak, the results of which still resonate from within each carefully crafted track a full sixteen years (!) later.

Although the group's recent reunion tour has sadly come to a seemingly abrupt end (with the group citing '...we all have different lives to lead now...' as the primary reason for the quartet's latest and possibly most disappointing demise), the multi-dimensional blast of highly intelligent Thrash Metal that is the mighty *For Whose Advantage?* is likely to forever remain as a kick-you-in-the-teeth reminder of the genre's already much-celebrated past. Limited to a mere two thousand hand-numbered and lavishly appointed digi pack copies (which, fortunately for all parties involved, are available domestically via the recently anointed audio division of Music Video Distributors), believe me folks...this is one bonus-laden, misty-eyed trip down memory lane you most definitely don't wanna miss. Trust me, you won't be disappointed.

Select Discography

Scourge (1996) **

The Order Of Chaos (EP) (1992) *

Kin (1992) *

Dilute To Taste (EP) (1991) *

For Whose Advantage? (1990) *

Ghostbusters (EP) (1989) *

Shattered Existence (1989) *

* features vocalist/guitarist Chris Astley

** features vocalist Simon Gordon

xentrix.co.uk