

[Reviews](#) : [Albums](#) : [Xentrix](#), "Kin [reissue]"

Xentrix

Kin [reissue]

[Metal Mind Records](#)

2007

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Xentrix, "Kin [reissue]"

I truly like this band, and have heaped praise upon them for years; but this album is problematic. Xentrix were one of the brightest spots in the British thrash scene, and their previous two releases ("Shattered Existence" and "For Whose Advantage") had grabbed me by the balls. But Kin was a stylistic shift for the band as they backed off the thrash and went for a purer rock/heavy metal sound. The thrash scene worldwide in 1992 was struggling; death metal and black metal had climbed out of the grave to conquer the underground, and the mainstream was drowning under the flannel tsunami. Xentrix chose mutation over extinction.

As the first notes of "The Order of Chaos" drop, it seems like typical Xentrix... I'm waiting for the intro to end and the ripping to begin... and... it just doesn't. The song begins, but where they used to slam sixteen or more notes into a measure, it's been dropped back to a stately hard rock. It's not bad, in fact, for what it is. My issue is with expectations; I see the logo for "Xentrix" and to me that means speedy, molten metal, not decent hard rock. But that's where Kin is at, and if I don't like it, that's my issue. Certainly the guys in Xentrix weren't apologetic at the time of this release, and seemed to be working hard to put the thrash past behind them and yet maintain the musical directions they found interesting.

Sounds familiar, right? In the liner notes of this album, it even says, "Escaping the thrash boundaries, the band recorded an album which for them was as important as The Black Album for Metallica." Well, there it is... that's a line drawn in the sand for most metal fans. I think what Kin misses more than anything is a knock out punch like "Enter Sandman" or "Holier Than Thou"; there's lots of feinting and jabbing but no uppercut to the jaw. And it doesn't help that after three pretty decent songs to open the album, the rest

are much more laid back and ballady. There's nary a bright spot until you get to the last track, "Another Day", which turns up the heat just a tad.

Production is spot on, plenty of separation between all instruments, everything clear and precise, even the bass comes through nicely. A little too clinical, perhaps... a good rock and roll record should be a little nasty under the skirt, with unexpected piercings and a therapeutic hairbrush. Good playing all around; Paul McKenzie's bass playing is a bit looser than usual. It's not a bad record, it just doesn't kick my ass the way the first two did.

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Standout Tracks

The Order of Chaos
Another Day