

## **Withershin Interview**

### ***Hammerheart Fanzine, #5, 2011***

**1. Hi mates, as most of our readers will not know you, please introduce to us your band. When did all start and how serious are you when it comes to rehearse and push the band forward?**

Withershin was created in 2006 and sprung from ambitions and energies that had been growing in me for some time. There was an immense amount of energy and force right from the start, and we quickly found the right form to channel it. We are very serious about what we do and do not take our work lightly. The music, lyrics, visual presentations and all other aspects are all parts of the whole. And the goal is to manifest and express the energies that feed us and the force that lives within us.

**2. Why did you decide to play Black Metal? Was this a clear fact when you formed the band or were you interested in other kinds of Metal, too?**

It was not clearly stated from the start that it would be black metal, but everything pointed to it and it quickly became clear that there was no other way. Black metal can of course encompass many different styles and attitudes, but the black metal we play is what builds in our hearts and minds. One should not create music with the aim of adhering to a specific style, but rather close one's eyes and let things flow forth. We are a vessel for something greater, in that we draw strength and inspiration from deeper sources and shape them with our hands.

It can be likened to the sculptor shaping a lump of clay into a work of art. For us that lump of clays is the black, putrid essence of death and the spiraling chaos, and that's where our black metal comes from.

**3. Is Withershin a satanic band or what inspires you to play this kind of music?**

We are satanic in the way that we represent an opposing force to the "normal" world. This is what all rock and metal music should be; a spear in the spine of comfortable ignorance. We draw upon primal energies and the force of ultimate chaos, and seek to channel this in the best way we can. The essence of rock 'n roll should always be opposition, rebellion and exist outside the laws and rules of the established society.

Satan is but one of many names for the force we draw strength from. It is the Reaper, it is Chaos, it is the Black Flame, it is Satan, it is the Opposer, it is all those things and much more.

**4. What does your bandname Withershin represents to you personally and why did you select this name for your band? I tried to translate it from English language, but this does not seem to make any sense to me... where is this name taken from?**

It is a modern adaptation of an old celtic word. Its meaning is to go counterclockwise and against time and the light of day. In short: To reject the linear view on time and the white light itself, and to oppose and go against. The name represents what we are all about. Walking backwards into the night to explore the forbidden and feared, to have no limitations and to seek knowledge where others turn and flee.

#### **5. Why did you decide to change your really good looking old logo?**

We use both logos in different contexts. The new logo was created for a reason and in some ways suits us better, but the old one still has its place and purpose.

#### **6. Musically wise I think you sound similar to bands like Watain or Dissection. Do you agree and are these specific bands your main influence when it comes to celebrate Swedish Black Metal?**

I can understand that we are often compared to those bands, since there are similarities in our sound and song structures etc. But they are no more influences for us than any other band. Dissection's earlier albums has always been an inspiration I think, but not a conscious one. I have always listened to them and the style has probably influenced my own in some way, but so has many other bands like Bathory, Mercyful Fate, early Metallica, Iron Maiden and many, many others. If our music sounds similar to those bands I'd say one reason is that we drink from the same fountain, so to speak.

#### **7. How do you judge Dissection's last album "Reinkaos" and the suicide of Jon Nödtveidt?**

Musically, I prefer the old Dissection albums before Reinkaos, but everyone who screamed about Dissection having become "melodic death metal" missed the point of that album. Read the fucking lyrics and think! It is not just a metal album, it is a religious artifact. And I very sincerely respect Nödtveidt for what he accomplished with Reinkaos. It is the ultimate manifestation of what he wanted to do.

As for his suicide, it was a strong death. It was a conscious decision based on that he had accomplished what he wanted in this world. He had reached a doorway and it was time to pass through it to reach something else.

#### **8. As you are coming from Sweden, how do you judge the Black Metal scene of your country? In comparison to other scenes, the Swedish one is really big, but there are also a lot of crap bands... even some of the bigger names turned out to just copy themselves for countless times. Do you think glory days of Swedish Black Metal will come back sometime?**

What does "glory days" even mean? I don't think in those terms. Black metal has been watered down into something that people can laugh at and shake off. It is not seen as something dangerous any more. And I myself often laugh at all the pathetic bands one encounters. But there are storm clouds on the horizon. There are several bands right now that take black metal seriously and have a good

understanding of what it should always be. Black metal in its true form is disgusting, scary, unlawful and horrible. It is war and very dangerous indeed. But whining about “true” and “old style” etc is beside the point and only shows a weak and narrow mind.

**9. When we take a look at your website, we can see that there are 6 bands linked only (Bathory, Celtic Frost, Nifelheim, Mayhem, Diabolical and Flagellant). Are these the most important bands you can identify with or why did you decide to link just these ones?**

It is also stated on the website that the bands linked are there for a specific reason. Some are friends, while Bathory, for example, is there because without Bathory there would be no Withershin.

**10. I think “The hungry void” got a great sound for such a Black Metal release Necromorbus Studio produced some of the best albums yet. What makes this studio so special and how is the atmosphere when you record there? Did you get the sound you wanted to have and will you return for the next release there?**

Necromorbus is a great studio and we will record our next album there as well. S. Widgren is also by far the best producer we have worked with. We got exactly the sound we wanted. The atmosphere was very special when we recorded “The Hungry Void”, but is not the same for every band of course. Necromorbus provides a good setting to start with, and then you make it want you want it to be. It is a place where we can concentrate and focus the energies contained within the band and our music, and it makes for a quite strong experience that would not suite everyone, to say the least.

**11. Unfortunately the EP only lasts for 15 minutes, why? Didn't you have enough new material ready to release or was it more important to you to keep the level high in this short time than to add more songs?**

The tracks on the EP are a trinity, represent different aspects of the same thing and belong together. Any other track on that EP would have disrupted the trinity. That simple.

**12. The titletrack “The hungry void” starts with a long intro/soundsample. What do you see for your inner eyes when you listen to this intro?**

It is not an intro, but a ritual. When I hear it I see the scene from when it was recorded. There was pieces of torn flesh and blood on the floor, ripped clothes, ashes, broken furniture and general chaos. The whispered invocation was recorded in that same evening in one take. It was as powerful experience.

**13. What can you tell us about the lyrics of “The hungry void”? Do they belong together as a unit or does every song stand on its own?**

Both. As songs they stand on their own, but they belong together as they represent different aspects of the same thing. The central themes are Death, Lilith, and the beyond. It is probably easier to understand if you reverse the order of the tracks as such: Crossing the Threshold – The Hungering Void – Wherein I Exalt. You will have to read the lyrics, and also some applicable literature, to understand their purpose.

**14. Where do you see the biggest progression since your debut album “Ashen banners” and the new EP? Would you like to change something afterwards?**

The EP was the natural next step for us, in the continuing process of delving deeper into the black madness that fuels the band. We are always refining our work in every way and “The Hungering Void” is what Withershin was at that particular time. There is a natural progression for our work, but much of it can only be seen in retrospect, as the creative process and the energies within the band are somewhat unpredictable. The sound is very different between the two releases, as we recorded in different studios and with slightly different mindsets. I believe that we found the right sound for “The Hungering Void”, but it would not necessarily have been right for “Ashen Banners”. There are always details one can could have done differently, but there is nothing I would want to change to make it better.

**15. In what way is “The hungry void” a precursor of the next album under the spell of Withershin? Do you work on a new album yet and will you continue this way as on the EP?**

We have recently completed the first pre-recordings for what is to become the new album. The work is very much under way and “The Hungering Void” was a taste of what is to come. The next album will not necessarily sound the same, and probably be a lot more varied, but general themes, ideas and atmosphere will be easily recognizable I think. We will enter Necromorbus again during the fall/winter of 2011.

**16. Last year you toured Russia. Please tell us about the response you got there and were you the only band on this tour? How many people did attend on your shows there? Is Withershin well known in Russia or why did you decide to tour this country?**

The response was extremely good and the Russian audience was very dedicated. They are not as jaded as the European audience and really get into it. Every gig on the tour was followed by a lot of autograph signing and interested questions about philosophy etc. A gig and venue that would draw maybe 50 people in Sweden drew 200 there. The tour happened because of a good offer from a Russian manager and because we felt it was a great opportunity. Russian people are not as lazy and spoiled as many Europeans. Things are difficult in Russia and not at all funny. Thus the true essence of black metal is more easily understood there. Chaos and hate have very real and concrete meanings for many people we met during the tour.

**17. I saw some clips of Withershin on youtube and I have to say that you are a great live beast on stage. How often do you play live and how important is it for you personally to play in front of people?**

We do not play live very often, which is both good and bad. We intend to increase this in the near future though. Performing live is of course a means of making the band better known and spreading the word, but ultimately it is about manifesting the forces in our music in a very real way. It is not like anything else. As we fully believe in what we do and create music with our hearts and souls, performing live is concentrating every aspect of everything that we do into a very intense experience. It is equal amounts rock concert, ritual and performance, depending on your perspective. People who don't really understand what we are about should experience a great, albeit fearsome, concert. Those who DO understand the deeper aspects should be profoundly affected by the experience.

**18. Why the blood on stage? What does blood mean to you personally to wear it in front of people?**

The blood has several purposes. It contributes to the atmosphere on stage, it strengthens us and it helps creating the bond, or link, that we want to establish. Blood is life, and also death. Blood is our physical essence, in a way, and also a gateway. Blood has the same purpose for us as it does in a ritual to Maha Kali or in a sacrifice to Qayin Mortifer. It is all about the same thing.

**19. "The hungry void" was released through Canonical Hours, which I never heard of before. How did you meet up with them? With such a promising release it should not be too difficult to find a bigger, maybe more fitting label for Withershin... any news here?**

Canonical Hours hours offered us a good deal after we had released our first demo. We chose to sign with them and released Ashen Banners. It was a new underground label at that time and considering that they performed well. The only thing I can complain about is that distribution was not optimal, but it was still better than for many other underground bands.

When we recorded The Hungering Void we had several other offers on the table, but Canonical Hours still came out on top. They have served us well so far. As of now we have nothing new that we want to disclose regarding label discussions.

**20. Anything we should also know about Withershin?**

Know that we are the emissaries. Know that your future will end and that the pillars of this world will not stand much longer. Know yourself and know the darkness. Seek the light between the stars...the light of aeons.