



Interview by Sleepwalker

Sweden's Withershin have recently released a 3 song EP entitled 'The Hungering Void' on Canonical Hours Records. I spoke with Guitarist Hizon about their recent black metal madness...

Tell me how your new release, 'The Hungering Void' fits into your previous works...is it completely different or an extension of previous ideas from 'Ashen Banners'?

It is not an extension of previous ideas, rather the next step in a continuous process.

We are constantly delving deeper into the black madness that fuels the band, refining our work and covering new ground. "The Hungering Void" is where we are right now. All our works are connected to each other, but we are always moving forward.

Why do only a 3 song EP? I like the packaging with full lyrics, that is great but isn't it a little short?

It may seem short but we decided not to include any more songs since the three featured on "The Hungering Void" belong together. For us, every sound and every aspect of the EP is part of the whole, everything fits together, and in that way it is conceptual in nature.

Do you have a full length you are about to release...? Any more new tracks in the near future?

We are working on the next album, but it will not be released this year. The EP can be seen as a teaser for the coming album in some ways, since it hints at what the next album will sound like.

'The Hungering Void'...is it a concept album? Is there a theme that runs through the 3 songs?

It is not a concept album per se, but conceptual to the extent that it is focused around certain aspects and that the three songs all stem from the same source. The lyrics focus on different perspectives though. "Wherein I Exalt" deals with the blind, pathetic views and practices of humanity in general and the futility of this world from our perspective, which is that of rising above the throne of the demiurg, pissing on creation and spearheading the final war. "The Hungering Void" is what has always been and will always be, the consuming emptiness that will swallow this world. "Crossing the Threshold" is the personal experience of transcending this existence and taking the necessary steps on the path of the burning Black Flame, channeling the energy of Ama Lilith and entering the thoughtless darkness which is The Hungering Void.

Tell me about the cover art...who did the art and what is your interpretation of it?

It was designed by Necromantic Art to represent the thematic focus and atmosphere

of the EP. It is a visual representation of the central aspects of this work: The abyss, the Dragon and Lilith.

'The Hungering Void' was recorded in Necromorbus Studio...a rather popular place for making terrifying black metal albums...why did you choose this studio after having previously recorded at Endarker Studios?

We wanted a sound with more atmosphere, clarity and edge that better suited the musical

direction. While Endarker is by all means a great studio, it is not the right place to achieve the sound we wanted this time.

Necromorbus was the obvious and perfect choice in many ways. We also chose to work with S. Widgren since we know him personally and felt confident that he could engineer everything

towards the result we were looking for. And he did.

Do you have any comparisons as far as the two studios are concerned...I love recording so I want to ask! Where will you record your next album?

Necromorbus is perhaps the more professional studio of the two in some respects. Both have their unique qualities but slightly different approaches regarding equipment etc. I would definitely recommend both, depending on what you're after. They both have a sort of "trademark sound". For us, there is no better choice than Necromorbus right now, and that is where we will record our next album as well.

What was the recording process like for



you? Is it painful and full of details of do you simply go in, hammer out the tracks and then go have a beer?

I wouldn't call it painful, but it is certainly full of details. The recording sessions are a mix of chaos and concentration. We are in complete control of the process itself, while in some other aspects acting as a vessel for the energies we draw strength from. It is a very intense experience, a lot of raw, primordial energy and an almost fanatic concentration. The recordings are when all that has been building for a certain amount of time is unleashed and channeled. It is strengthening and exhausting at the same time.

Tell me about the writing process... how are songs crafted in the world of Withershin?

We don't have a fixed modus operandi, as it is not in our interest to erect some sort of framework or structure around the creative process. Sometimes everything starts with one riff, sometimes the lyrics come first. More often than not, the songs are a sort of manifestation of many different things that come together in a perfect way at a certain time. The workings that take place in the rehearsal space in relation to the creative process are for the band alone to partake in.

Is the lyrical content of 'The Hungering Void' solely the work of vocalist Nine or is it a group effort?

The lyrics for "Wherein I Exalt" and "The Hungering Void", were originally written by Nine. He and I worked on them together during a period of time so the end result is very much a common effort. "Crossing the Threshold" was written by me.

Tell me about your relationship with Canonical Hours Records...did they

release your full length, 'Ashen Banners'? Is it good being with an American label?

We signed with Canonical Hours for "Ashen Banners", since they offered a deal that suited us at the time. We had interesting offers from some other labels for "The Hungering Void" but Canonical came out on top again. It's a serious label and we are satisfied with their work. Having an American label has its upsides, but it would of course be smoother in many ways to work with a Swedish or European label. So far everything is working good though. They do

what they're supposed to do.

Tell me a little about the origins of



Withershin...you haven't had any line up changes, have you?

Not since we fired the original vocalist and Nine became part of the band. Me and Zek started Withershin and Hex came in very early as well. We're all on the same track ideologically and musically and it would be insane to fuck with the unity and atmosphere we have. There are energies and forces behind and within the band that both ties us together and fuels everything we do. Originally, Withershin grew from ideas and visions that had existed within me for some time. It was a matter of exploring the perfect way to channel the black, primordial terror that is our ultimate source and inspiration.

Your sound is, to me, definitely Swedish but some of the lead guitar work on 'The Hungering Void' makes you stand out...in what ways do you feel your songs break from the typical Swedish Black Sound?

I am not sure what you mean by the "typical Swedish sound" but I believe that our conviction and dedication is evident in our music, and that separates us from many black

metal bands, since they often lack depth and focus. Our riff-work and lead guitar parts differentiate us a bit as well, and perhaps that's why some think of our music as "black metal with death metal influences". Another explanation for that is probably our vocal arrangements. We have a thicker and more well-produced sound than most traditional black metal bands. Then again, there are a few Swedish bands that we do have some similarities with. We make good use of the bass guitar instead of just having it pumping low in the mix and put a lot of effort into the drums as well. Nothing is random or left to chance.

Are there any tour plans or festival dates this summer?

There is a lot of planning going on at the moment. There will be a release event in the very near future where we will perform alongside a supporting band.

What would be your dream gig? Who would you share the stage with?

There are of course likeminded bands that we hold in high regard and would be interested in performing with. But I don't think in terms of a "dream gig". If there is such a thing it would probably be to perform to our fullest extent while the world burns around us and everything ends.

What do you dislike about what you do as a musician? Are there things that make it a pain in the ass for you?

Yes and no. It's important to remember that everything you do is always your own choice. I sincerely fucking hate everything that has to do with Myspace and things like that, but at the same time it's our own decision to have a Myspace page to spread propaganda. We do everything ourselves, and that has pros and cons of course. The vital things for me are the music, lyrics, artwork and everything else that directly is the work of the band. The administrative stuff falls into the "necessary evil"-category. Then why do everything ourselves? Because everything

is part of the whole and we are not interested in leaving control of any aspect of the band in the hands of outsiders.

What albums are you listening to right now?

Some albums that are spinning a lot right now are Saint Vitus – "Hallow's Victim", Morgoth – "The Eternal Fall", Gateways to Ascension – "With Burning Tongues" and Myrkr – "Black Illumination".

What does the name 'Withershin' mean to you?

Opposition. It means walking against all currents and rejecting the framework of time and the order of the world. In opposition and in alliance with The Great Adversary.

Tell me about what influences you to write music...philosophy, other music, visual arts...?

Everything ultimately springs from the same source, but a variety of different things can trigger inspiration. Philosophy, music, visual arts, literature, society – everything plays its part I suppose. But it is always the same forces that speak, only through different media. The nameless abyss, the everlasting chaos and the serpent dragon choking the world; these are the only true influences. Speak through me, Death, for I shall be thy vessel...

Read me your last words!

Choose a path, and put your words into action...

www.withershin.se