





Smith and Scales in typical 'Nitch habitat.

Pic: Anton Corbijn

THESE FALLISH THINGS

THE FALL

Hex Enduction Hour (Kamens)

Everyone gets too nervous about The Fall.

Mark E Smith, November 1981

LET'S GET serious. Let's see The Fall as the scabrous powder of the grey area between ruckey garage playing the guilty code of songwriting mechanics, chords and forms and stuff like that. Or let's see them as the first and only anti-rock rock group based on an inventive impotence in its attack on the buttresses of the machine. Or as the eburne hungry apertures in the phantom zone of pop art.

Or, more realistically, as none of these. The Fall have never said what they seem. They have become an emblem of alien abstraction. Outside of the Magic Band — whose

other wordy imagings of rock's basest R&B roots question any categorisation anyway — there is no other group to harness rock's primal eye-movement energy with such an intuitive sense of deconstruction that extends from Smith's, seven-off lyrics and constantly provocative vocals through the inspired rule breaking in the actual playing to the ethereal and resonant production. Hence fact: The 'new' rockabilly or 'modern folk'. Only The Fall, every English group, made it each year. Replicable, repetitive rock primer to such desperate extremes. The Fall's reason to be is that order is imposed partly because its insularity cannot be breached.

'Hex Enduction Hour' is like minutes of The Fall with all their previous innovations honed to a bitrary

highlining degree. Though it's easy to elude them with being infuriatingly obtuse in the past it is now clear that Smith has disciplined the progress of his group with an iron logic. Listening to 'Hex' is as hilariously ungrateful as listening to 'Dragnet' was in 1979, but the steps forward are tangible. The advances sked out over the series of AEs and LPs between the two poles — precision, a strengthening of studio sound without resorting to glamorisation and the simplification of the internal combustion peculiar to a Fall tune when it herdes into life — were imparted like a general rediscovery of musical art. 'The Fall' and 'Fantastic LP' simulated a group of stupendous intensity. By 1982, the Fall were resolved to the spirit of a primitive piece like 'It's The New Thing'.

More than ever, 'Hex' perpetuates the idea of The Fall blurred into a single, readily apt, throwing rock to public. Smith's vocals are habitually deconstructed and emerge like a top-heavy hemisphere from a fog of guitar acrobatics that unresolves into any necessary riff as if by magic. The only new story is in the few drum beats which literally lays most of these — songs.

Or clumsy dissertations, spewed outages, and monologues... Mark Smith's latest phase of thought really makes no concession to the accessibility he mentioned the record would have last year. When Smith's scabrous commentary is decipherable only odd phrases come through, often shown in the scrawled montage on the cover. It is enough that his scoundrel rhetoric is intact, perhaps. Only 'The Priest', a self-denial of dedication to the with correspondingly serene, seems of all clear.

What is most vital is the recognition of the other players. Although previous Fall LPs haven't done the job straight to that incomparably accented voice, 'Hex' makes Smith take his place beside the severe concentration of the other. 'Winter' and 'Winter 2' take in and out, formless, ragged remits that sound like a backing track which runs endlessly through their heads, forever recycled with a gleeful compulsion. Beside these, the headless, bullet-hard expression of 'Jacobine And The Air-Fitter' or 'Fortress/Over Fall' seems almost a prelude, just as the closing two minutes of 'And This Day', a six sea of riddled bassline assault and a blindingly dominant that's second cousin to 'Pete' resound us of their steady unendingness.

As for the other, 'The Priest' is the 'What Makes The Priest?' is the 'Impatient-to-Hey! Hey!' soundtrack of 'Island'. The Fall approach such spare atmospheres with the same revealing success.

The dilemma now would seem to be where Smith can take them next, before dimming returns eventually set in. Deprived of their audience — the lighted proletariat Smith's work draws on are too busy buying jazz records to bother with The Fall — their problem lies in how to evolve further a music which has already turned in on itself. Because Mark Smith is determined to play rock music (despite a secret rock reactionary humanism) requires he find some answers? Remember 'The Dream Of A Casket' and 'For God's sake New' start 'impulsively' of the most superficial kind The Fall have never been in a position they can never be an influence because nobody can progress on what they have done except The Fall themselves.

Either way, what they have done on 'Hex Enduction Hour' is create their masterpiece to date. Seriously.

Richard Cook



Have A Bleedin' Guess: The Story of Hex Enduction

Hour by Paul Hanley

★★★★☆ 4.7 out of 5

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Prologue: The Dawning of a New Era

In the twilight of the 1980s, as the embers of the first wave of black metal smoldered, a new chapter was about to be written. From the depths of Norway, a duo emerged that would forever alter the trajectory of the genre: Darkthrone.

Fenriz and Nocturno Culto, united by their shared passion for the darkness within, embarked on a quest to create a musical artifact that would transcend the conventions of their time. The result was Hex Enduction Hour, an album that would become a seminal masterpiece, a touchstone for generations of black metal enthusiasts.

Genesis: Forging the Dark Symphony

Driven by an insatiable desire to push the boundaries of extremity, Fenriz and Nocturno Culto immersed themselves in the subterranean depths of their creativity. They drew inspiration from the bleak landscapes of their homeland, the haunting melodies of traditional Norwegian folk music, and the raw energy of punk rock.

With each note they conjured, they wove a tapestry of darkness that was both primal and otherworldly. The songs on Hex Enduction Hour are an

incantation, a summoning of ancient spirits and a celebration of the untamed forces of nature.

Symbolism: Unveiling the Hidden Truths

Beyond its sonic brilliance, Hex Enduction Hour is also a repository of cryptic symbolism that invites the listener to embark on a journey of introspection and self-discovery. The album's cover art, adorned with a pentagram and a goat's head, is a potent visual representation of the duality inherent in the human soul.

Throughout the album's lyrics, references to paganism, witchcraft, and the occult abound. Fenriz and Nocturno Culto used these ancient symbols as vessels to explore themes of existential dread, cosmic horror, and the futility of human existence.

Legacy: A Timeless Monument to Darkness

From the moment it was unleashed upon the world, Hex Enduction Hour became a cult phenomenon. Its unique blend of rawness, atmosphere, and symbolism resonated with a generation of listeners who were disillusioned with the mainstream and sought solace in the darkness of the underground.

Over the decades, the album's influence has only grown stronger. It has been cited as an inspiration by countless black metal bands, and its iconic status has solidified it as a must-listen for anyone interested in the history and evolution of the genre.

Epilogue: A Cosmic Tapestry Unfurled

The Story of Hex Enduction Hour is a testament to the power of art to transcend time and transcend boundaries. It is a cosmic journey into the

heart of darkness, a reflection of the human condition, and a celebration of the untamed spirit that resides within us all.

Whether you are a seasoned black metal enthusiast or a newcomer to the genre, this book unravels the enigmatic history of Hex Enduction Hour and offers a profound exploration of its symbolism and lasting influence.

Join us on this dark and illuminating odyssey, and discover the hidden truths that lie at the core of one of the most iconic albums in the annals of heavy music.



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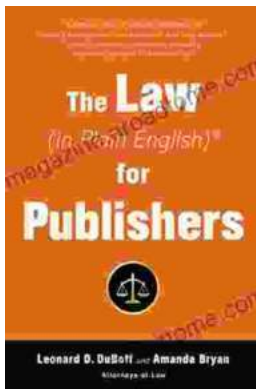
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