After reading some of the loudmouth insane rants of vocalist Mike Abominator, I knew I had to hear Gravehill. This band will leave you in need of a straitjacket, since it’s impossible to listen to them without going absolutely insane!

GRAVEHILL makes it clear from the start that they are a death metal band. Satanic and evil, yes, but this is old-school metal executed with precision, and their sound is perfect. They play their music to the limit and leave even the most die-hard old-schoolers in shock. This is not just a few chords strummed in half-time under blazing drums, but a perfect mix of traditional notey death-metal riffs and chords placed within the music that allow you to really feel where they’re coming from lyrically. The material is well-written, too, not a bunch of nonsense thrown together in an attempt to be brutal.

The RITES OF THE PENTAGRAM CD starts off with the title track, and this song kills! The unrelenting viciousness of the initial riff just grabs and possesses you with a demonic rage that gets your head banging. The production is damn good, though I do wish the drums were a bit louder. Mike’s vocals are harsh and remind me of something like Mille from Kreator gone death-metal. These guys love this stuff!

One high point of this album is the song “Bloodsoaked.” When I saw Gravehill live in concert recently, they opened the shows with this song, and the crowds erupted into a frenzy of unbelievable mayhem. Even the band members looked somewhat shocked. Keep in mind that Mike takes the stage not clad in his armor, but also covered in blood.

“The Luciferian Mark” is a truly evil track, albeit a bit more upbeat than the rest. “By Scourge and Wrath” is mid-paced and kind of Euro-sounding, but its lyrics are fitting, memorable and

inspiring. “Monuments of Shit/Pray until you’re dead/Everything you worship/Is all in your head.”

Song after song, this album held my attention. My one complaint is track seven, which is an acoustic guitar piece, and I really feel the lineup would have been the same with or without it. I’m assuming they wanted to bring things down a bit before annihilating you with the final cut, which is also the fastest, but it does not play as well as the others. Still, RITES OF THE PENTAGRAM comes to a solid finish, and for those who remember what metal was like before all those overproduced digital stylings took over, it’s a must-have. Gravehill is now on Ibex Moon Records and will be touring soon. Do not miss them! Highly recommended! Gravehill rules!

Track listing

1. “Rites of the Pentagram”

2. “Decibel Ritual”

3. “Bloodsoaked”

4. “Pissing on Your Grave”

5. “The Luciferian Mark”

6. “By Scourge and Wrath”

7. “A Celebration of Wounds”

8. “Reckoning [B.C.F.S.]”

9. “One Million Dead and Counting”

Gravehill is:

Mike Abominator: Armageddon vomits and misanthropic diatribes

Bodybag Bob: decibel axecutions and drunken rampages

J. Corpsemolester: low-fidelity carpet bombing and romantic grave violations

Zyklon-A: 666-string raids and seasoning the dead

Thorgrimm: per(con)cussive assaults and nasal hellsaw

Check out the band on MySpace here .

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{jcomments on}