

## HELLXHERE – HELLXHERE

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The French heavy metal scene isn't known for its international impact – personally, and without the aid of Google or Wikipedia, I can count less than a handful bands who have made any sort of significant impact outside their homeland: Trust, of course, who in turn give us the living legend that is Nicko McBrain, the awesome Gojira and Vorkreist... after that, it's pushing it a bit and the resources of the interweb have to be called upon to stimulate the old brain cells.

Of course, it is out there. Well, more accurately, over there: on the other side of the English Channel (or 'La Manche' as our cousins Française like to call it). Well, it must be, because this little lot hail from over yonder and sing with funny accents, don't you know old boy...

HellXhere are a four-piece, made up of the very French sounding Fred Hamm on guitar and vocals, Mirwan on the other guitar, Alexis on bass and Julie on drums. And this is their first album. So, that's the polite English bit (not bad seeing as your reviewer hails from Norn Iron) of introducing the bleeders, let's get down to business.

It's not a bad offering. Not a great one, but not a bad one either. Sort of somewhere in between. The overall impression left by the nine tracks offered on this debut is of a mid-period, mid-tempo Megadeth: certainly, Hamm has that Mustaine snarl to his vocal delivery and the first three tracks – 'Hell is Here', 'Hitman' and 'Vows Of Deicide' – could be lifted straight out of material out' Dave may have left lying on the studio editing floor. 'Change Of Baseline' offers just that, and is almost jazzy in places, as for the first time you feel that the four musicians are really stretching themselves, with the twin guitarists swapping solos and melodies and a particularly impressive performance from the female drummer (who, if her rather fuzzy Facebook photo is anything to go by, is also drop-dead-gorgeous, in case any of you perverts out there are interested in such mundanities as looks over talent – in this instance, young Julie has both in abundance).

Apart from the lengthy instrumental, 'Pyramid', the second half of the album is again very firmly entrenched in sub-thrash Megadeth-tribute territory, with the highlight of the latter part being the battering ram of 'Die By My Word'.

A solid debut, but I don't think we need alert the Cameron/Clegg regime to raise the defences against a new French invasion.

6.5 / 10 (with 8.5 for the drumming).

'HellXhere' is out now on Brennus Music and can be bought here: [http://www.brennus-music.com/boutique/advanced\\_search\\_result.php?keywords=hellxhere&manufacturers\\_id=](http://www.brennus-music.com/boutique/advanced_search_result.php?keywords=hellxhere&manufacturers_id=)